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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

ROYAL COMMISSION UPON DECENTRALIZATION.

THIRTY-NINTH DAY.

NAGPUR, *Wednesday, 5th February,* 1908.

PRESENT:

C. E. H. HOBHOUSE, Esq., M.P., Under Secretary of State for India, *Chairman.*

Sir FREDERIC LELY, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Sir STEYNING EDGERLEY, K.C.V.O., C.I.E., I.C.S.
R. C. DUTT, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.
W. S. MEYER, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.
W. L. HICHENS, Esq.

Mr. F. S. A. SLOCOCK was called and examined.

Mr. F. S. A. Slocock.

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24756. (*Chairman.*) You are the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces? —Yes.

No change in the general financial system is suggested, but there are some matters of detail in which a change might be made. There is no reason, now that the provinces have a regular financial settlement of their own, why the provincial budget should be subject to detailed criticism and alteration by the Finance Department of the Government of India. The Chief Commissioner should be allowed to pass his own provincial budget. The chief object of the divided heads in the financial settlement is understood to be the necessity of giving the Government of India an equal interest with the provincial Government in certain growing revenues, and not any idea of administrative necessity. The system of divided heads, where the expenditure as well as the revenue is divided, results in inconvenience whenever any unlooked-for expenditure is necessary, as it is difficult to find any other imperial head from which re-appropriation can be made. It is therefore suggested that even where the revenue has to be divided, the expenditure should remain wholly provincial, either as in the case of land revenue at present, or, if that is likely to throw an unfair burden on the provincial share of revenues, by dividing the net revenue only, *i.e.*, the revenue left after charging the whole expenditure to provincial. This would simplify matters from an account point of view.

It is not suggested that the Local Government should have borrowing powers; the present system is good enough and cheaper.

The rules of the Civil Account Code might be relaxed in regard to criticism and objection by the provincial Accountant-General or Comptroller of the actions of the Local Government. The same stringency should not be applied in audit of sanctions by the Local Government as of those passed by subordinate officers. The rules at present, as interpreted by some Accounts Officers, give them undue power of interference with the Local Government.

In administrative matters no change in system is advocated. The Government of India's sphere is that of general control, of prescription of general principles, leaving Local Governments to work out details, and it generally confines itself to that sphere. In some matters it seems to go outside them and to reserve to itself powers which might well be delegated to the Local Government. For, instance, the Chief Commissioner has to report for India's sanction the appointment of an officer as Commissioner or as his Chief Secretary, or the supersession of any officer in the Commission. He should be allowed to do this without report. Any officer who considers himself aggrieved has a right of appeal to India, and that is enough. The appointment of Judicial Commissioner and Financial Commissioner, if we get one, should remain subject to India's sanction. The Chief Commissioner should be able to appoint any Head of a Department except the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals and the Chief Conservator of Forests, without reference to India. Again, certain posts in the Commission are listed for officers of the Provincial Civil Service, but sanction has to be obtained for appointment of any Provincial Civil Service officer to such a post. This should be unnecessary, but a change would mean legislation in Parliament.

Where any delegation of powers necessitates legislation the changes should be made by special legislation and not by a general Act.

No administrative financial control should be delegated to any officer; it is not that individual officers cannot be trusted to exercise such control, but they have not the same advice at hand as the Local Government has with its provincial Accounts Officers and its expert Finance Department in the Secretariat. Budgets must all be passed by the Local Government and the decision must rest in all financial administration with the Local Government, or there would be great confusion. But greater executive powers may well be delegated, more especially in regard to supplies, services, and contingencies, *vide* Chapter 6 of the Civil Account Code, and specially Article 98. But all powers given to subordinate authorities should be for exercise only within budget limits, and no original power of sanction of new posts should be given them.

Subject to the above remarks, the power of Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, and Heads of Departments in regard to petty sanctions can be usefully extended in many ways. The general lines on which the Administration runs and on which any changes should proceed are indicated in Chief Commissioner's note, viz.:—(1) Maintain and strengthen the Commissioner; (2) delegate powers to the Deputy Commissioner through the Commissioner, *i.e.*, allow the Commissioner to delegate them to any Deputy Commissioner whom he considers fit; (3) maintain and strengthen the position of the Deputy Commissioner as the chief Administrative and Executive Officer of the district in all branches of the Administration.

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Similarly, the Chief Commissioner has expressed a general opinion on the subject of local self-government. I however give some instances in which I think a change is needed:—

In semi-Judicial cases the Deputy Commissioner should be made the highest Court of Original Jurisdiction. This would mean his disposing of such cases as partitions, sales of land in execution of decree, transfer of *sir*, which now go up to Commissioners or Chief Commissioner.

The Deputy Commissioner should hear appeals from his Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners exercising the powers of a Deputy Commissioner, which at present go to the Commissioner. This is an obvious and most necessary reform. I would also except from the general rule that second appeals should lie in all cases in which the Commissioner confirms on appeal the order of a Deputy Commissioner. (The rare cases in which an order confirmed by both Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner would need revision could be dealt with under revisional powers of Chief Commissioner.)

The Local Executive Officer of the Public Works Department should be made subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner in the same way as the Forest Officer and Civil Surgeon are already. In regard to the Public Works Department, a change is needed not merely as regards the relations of the local officer to the Deputy Commissioner, but also in the higher grades. I am inclined to think that the elimination of the Public Works Department Secretariat as such and the restriction of the functions of the Chief Engineer (Secretary, Public Works Department) to the Head of the Department only would be beneficial. The Secretariat business relating to the Public Works Department would then come to the Civil Secretariat first, as that of all other departments does.

The connection between Deputy Commissioners and District Boards should be made closer; the Deputy Commissioner should be in all cases *ex-officio* Chairman. I consider this better than leaving him to exercise his influence from outside. The functions of the Local Boards can be widened most usefully by giving them more funds for all purposes. I would transfer all roads to Local Boards and abolish the connection of provincial funds with roads. To enable this funds would have to be given freely from provincial revenues to local. Official interference with Municipal Committees should be decreased as far as possible and there should be the minimum of official representation on Committees. The financial powers of Local Boards and Municipal Committees should be as full as possible; general control should be left to Commissioners and Chief Commissioner, but they should have as little voice in details as is consistent with such control.

The knowledge of the vernaculars among Executive Officers is far too small. A very intimate knowledge of the vernacular should be insisted on. Our system of Departmental Examinations is quite at fault. We might eliminate the law and make the language far harder.

24757. You were transferred to the Central Provinces from Madras in 1898? Is there any rule regarding the transfer of officers from another province?—By your covenant you are bound to go wherever you are required to go. Such transfers are very rare.

24758. On being transferred from Madras, you found a difference between the system of working through a Board of Revenue and that of working through Commissioners. Which, on the whole, of these two systems works the better?—In Madras I had not much experience, because I was only an Assistant Collector. I should say that, generally speaking, the system of Commissioners is preferable in the matter of keeping the men together. The Commissioner sees a great deal more of the men in his division than any member of the Board of Revenue could possibly see of all the men in the whole of the province. There is also the advantage of the personal, as opposed to the impersonal, administration of a Board.

24759. Generally speaking, does the position of the Collector in Madras correspond to the position of a Commissioner here?—I should say, in Madras, the Collector is something between a Commissioner and a Deputy Commissioner in the Central Provinces.

24760. He would keep his men in his district together as a Commissioner would do in his division?—Undoubtedly in his district, but a Collector has perhaps only half a dozen men under him, whereas a Commissioner has half a dozen men in each of his four or five districts. The Madras Collector stands midway between the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner both in power and position. The powers of a Commissioner are not as strong as those of a Board of Revenue, at least not in these provinces.

24761. You prefer the system of Commissioners here?—Yes.

24762. We are told that there has been a tendency to send men, who are not considered fit for posts in the larger provinces, to the Central Provinces. Without mentioning any names, would you, as Chief Secretary, tell us whether there is a certain proportion of men in the province with whom, if the system of selection was rigidly applied, you would be desirous of dispensing?—I am afraid I could not say that myself. I understand that the criticism refers only to the Heads of Departments like the Medical Department or the Education Department.

24763. Supposing the system of selection was rigidly applied here, both in the past and in the present, are there certain officers whose services could be advantageously dispensed with?—I believe it is a fact that men who have reached near the top of the tree have been thought good enough to be sent as Heads of Departments to these provinces, although they would not have been selected for a bigger province; it has been thought that it was worth while to give them something at the end of their service.

24764. Is the work easier here than in other provinces?—Undoubtedly it must be a great deal lighter. It is increasing enormously in volume and complexity. The question you were just putting could be best answered by the Government of India, who makes the selection of these officers. I should not say that it applied to the Forest Department; they would send men as carefully for the Forest Department in these provinces as they would in any other part of India.

24765. Is the Forest Service in the Central Provinces an important one?—Yes; we used to be joined with the Punjab, being both on one list, but they have separated them now under a new scheme recently sanctioned.

24766. In this province annual conferences are held of Commissioners. Who presides on those occasions?—The senior Commissioner.

24767. How long do conferences last?—Commissioners come up about the end of May, at the end of the season at Pachmarhi, and stay for a month; they have more or less formal conference for about ten days; the rest of the time is spent in generally talking about various matters informally with them. Any important questions, about which their advice is wanted, are generally shunted until the end of the Pachmarhi season, when you either consult the Commissioners formally at their conferences, or separately.

24768. Has that annual conference had any practical result?—I do not know that I could point to any definite result.

24769. Does it save a great deal of correspondence that would otherwise take place?—Yes; you put cases aside which you would otherwise have to circulate and wait for letters in reply.

24770. Is it easier to decide on questions of policy subsequently on account of that expression of opinion on the part of the Commissioners?—Undoubtedly; very often before sending out a case for opinion you put it before the Commissioners and get their ideas of the lines upon which you should address them; then, again, the Conservators

of Forests come up, and they discuss forest questions with the Commissioners.

24771. Is it necessary first of all to hold a formal conference of Commissioners on a subject, and then to address them equally formally as to what their opinions are?—It is generally a good thing. You can discuss general lines personally and then you may have to send them to the Commissioners to consult with subordinate officers on various details.

24772. Might it save time if you gave the Commissioners a sort of agenda of what you were going to discuss and got them to obtain beforehand the opinions of their District Officers?—In some cases that is done.

24773. Otherwise your conference, which is meant to save time, may merely lead to a duplication of work?—It might in a way, but on the whole the advantage of personal discussion is that you are able to prune down the excrescences of a case; you can fine down the issues you are going to put; and the personal advice of senior officers is always an advantage.

24774. Would it not save the subsequent circulation of papers for opinion if you gave the Commissioners the opportunity of consulting their District Officers before they came for the conference?—It is difficult to go on general lines. In one case one course might be the better, in another case another.

24775. Do the Commissioners themselves hold conferences with their District Officers?—Yes.

24776. Is that by instruction from the Secretariat?—No, there are no instructions. Generally in the rains Commissioners ask their District Officers in to speak about matters.

24777. I understand it is the view of the Chief Commissioner that the position of the Commissioners should be not merely maintained, but strengthened. In what direction?—That the Commissioner should be more clearly recognised as the Chief Administrative Officer of the division in all departments in respect of his relations with Heads of Departments.

24778. What particular Heads of Departments?—All Heads of Departments generally. As to some the connection between the Commissioner and the District Officer is closer than it is as to others, especially in the matter of the Public Works Department.

24779. Is that what is principally in your mind—the relations of the Commissioner with the Public Works Department?—Yes.

24780. The view of the Government of the Central Provinces is that the District Officer is to be the pivot of the administration, and that every sort of department which works in the district is to be concentrated more or less around him?—Yes.

24781. He is to be kept informed at every step of the working of hospitals, and the system of working forests, and so forth?—Yes.

24782. How can any single officer be so fully acquainted with all these subjects as to practically have control over them?—He comes into contact with them in the course of his ordinary duties. He would not interfere in technical details.

24783. Then what is the kind of control which it is desired that the Deputy Commissioner should have?—You might call it mere administrative control. Take the case of forests, for instance: the control that the Deputy Commissioner would have over the forests would cover the question of opening forests to grazing; we have a system in the Central Provinces of commutation; the villagers commute for various things including grazing and minor produce, taking fuel for their houses and so on. There might be a question whether certain villagers should be admitted to this system of commutation, and what areas should be opened.

24784. Is it said that he is to be kept informed at every step; if he is to be kept informed at every step, is not that rather, not decentralization, but centralization?—It is centralization in the District Officer, undoubtedly.

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24785. And that, you think, is a good thing?—Yes.

24786. It is particularly suggested that this should take place with regard to the Public Works Department. The Executive Engineer is to be the assistant of the Deputy Commissioner, and the Superintending Engineer the coadjutor of the Commissioner?—Yes.

24787. In what way is he to be coadjutor: is he to be referred to as to every scheme?—Not in details of estimates, for instance. Take the instance of opening out new roads. Even as things are at present no new roads would be actually undertaken without the advice, or at the suggestion, of the Commissioner; but we have road schemes for each district; certain roads are suggested by the District Officer and the Commissioner to the Public Works Department, and no new road is put on that scheme without their recommending it; but when once they are on the roads scheme it is not always known whether this road or that road is going to be undertaken in any particular year. The actual allocation of funds is determined by the Public Works Department, and very often it occurs that a road which is on the roads scheme, and which has been recommended to be undertaken, is actually undertaken before anybody but the Public Works Department officer knows anything of it.

24788. Are there a very large number of roads on the roads scheme?—A good many; on the average ten in every district.

24789. You wish that the Commissioner should be able to select the priority in which they should be executed?—He does select the priority, but he may be told, for instance, that next year such and such a road will be begun; next year, without his being informed, it is struck off the programme for that year.

24790. It is said that most of the chief advisers in the Public Works Department are officers who are singularly free from departmental prejudice. Surely in those circumstances, the Public Works Officers would write to the Commissioner and say, "I am going to begin with this road, or I am going to begin with that road"?—They would ordinarily, but cases have occurred in which they have not done so. They were probably exceptional cases.

24791. Then you want to make a general rule in order to meet an exceptional case?—I should say, to make a general rule which would prevent such exceptional cases arising; that is to say, not to leave it to the determination of a single officer whether he will write or not, but to make him write as a matter of course.

24792. It is said that returns are capable of further reduction. Has any attempt been made in this province to reduce returns?—We did try it on one occasion when a reference came down from the Government of India about it, in Lord Curzon's time. I do not think there has been any general attempt. Every now and then you knock off a return, just as you sometimes add one on.

24793. Can you say at all which returns are capable of reduction?—I could not say off-hand.

24794. I understand it has been the practice to put Deputy Commissioners in charge of districts when they are very junior in the service?—It has been, owing to the shortness of the service and the weakness of the *cadre*.

24795. After what service should a Deputy Commissioner take over a district?—Ordinarily he ought to be capable of working a district after about nine or ten years' service, not before.

24796. Except just for the purpose of relieving an officer for a short time?—Yes, that is another thing.

24797. Is there any general power of delegating powers which the Chief Commissioner here possesses which has not been exercised?—No, I do not think there is any general power.

24798. Is there any considerable amount of particular powers?—During the past ten years a great many delegations of power have been made in these

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provinces. One of the things that struck me when I first came up from Madras was that powers were exercised by the Chief Commissioner which in Madras would have been exercised by a District Officer.

24799. Has that state of things been remedied?—It has to a great extent; there are still some powers which might be delegated.

24800. Which the Government of the Central Provinces should delegate at its own initiative?—I could not say definitely now, but a great many of them are powers which are retained by the Chief Commissioner under rules made by him and his predecessors.

24801. Was that partly on account of the junior standing of the staff, or because the matter had not been duly considered?—Partly that, and partly the way in which the provinces have grown. These provinces have grown up from a Commissionership; the Nagpur province started as a Commissionership directly administered by the Government of India; the head of the province was only a Commissioner, and of course his powers were much more restricted. Then, when the provinces were formed into a Chief Commissionership, many powers which would have been ordinarily exercised by a Local Government or Administration were still retained by the Government of India. Those powers have been delegated gradually by the Government of India to the Chief Commissioner; but in many ways the delegations to subordinate officers have not kept pace. A good deal remains which this Government could delegate.

24802. Who comes next to the Chief Commissioner in the hierarchy of Government?—The Commissioner. There is no Financial Commissioner, but we have proposals before the Government of India to appoint one.

24803. Below the Commissioner?—There are the Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners. The Extra-Asistant Commissioners are of the Provincial Service, filled by natives of India; the Assistant Commissioners are Civilians. Below them are the tahsildars. The tahsildar is the bottom of the list; but there are also revenue inspectors and patwaris.

24804. The tahsildar is the lowest officer who has charge of an area?—Yes; sometimes the *tahsil* is divided between the tahsildar and the naib-tahsildar.

24805. Is the jurisdiction of the Deputy Commissioner and the tahsildar a jurisdiction by subjects or by area?—By area.

24806. Then below the tahsildar and the naib-tahsildar, are there village officers?—There are revenue inspectors; they are purely for land record work; then come the *patwaris*; they are the village accountants; they have circles of about eight villages each, and they simply keep the land records. Then there is the *malguzar*, or, when they are co-sharer *malguzars*, the *lambardar* who is generally the *mukaddam*. The representative of the co-sharers is what is called the *mukaddam*; he is charged with certain duties under the Land Revenue Act, but he is not remunerated in any way; it is simply the incidence attaching to his status as the proprietor of land. Then also in the village there is the *kotwar*, the village watchman; he is paid by fees from the villages.

24807. What is the lowest class of Government paid servant?—For administrative purposes, the tahsildar.

24808. It is proposed that the executive unit of the Divisional Commissioner should coincide with the executive unit of the Public Works division?—It does not actually coincide. The Executive Engineer generally holds a division, which is made up of two or even three districts, but at each district there is an Assistant Engineer or a Sub-Divisional Officer who is the executive officer for the district, or in some cases for half of the district; there may be more than one in one district.

24809. The suggestion that has been made is that an Executive Engineer might be directly responsible to two or three Deputy Commissioners?—Yes, if you regard the Executive Engineer as the local executive officer of the Public Works Department.

24810. Would that lead to any difficulty?—No, I do not think so.

24811. Might it not be that both these District Officers might be calling for his services at the same moment?—It might occur of course; I do not think it would lead to any difficulty; the local Assistant Engineer would be regarded as the Executive Officer of the Public Works in his division; he is under the orders of the Executive Engineer. Public works are not sufficiently important to have an Executive Engineer in every district.

24812. So that in some places it might be the Assistant Engineer and in some places the Executive Engineer?—Yes.

24813. With regard to the Settlement Officers, of whom apparently there are six, are any officers on their first arrival sent to be trained under Settlement Officers?—All Assistant Commissioners undergo a settlement training course. Sometimes they are sent at the commencement of their service, but the idea is that they should serve in a district and pick up some knowledge of land revenue procedure and land records before they are sent for their training.

24814. How long do they serve before they are sent to settlement work?—This year we have refused to send anyone of less than three years' service.

24815. Does an officer get such a good chance of learning the vernacular at a district headquarters as he would under a Settlement Officer?—I think so.

24816. Have they the same opportunities of coming in contact with the people?—Undoubtedly, if they are not kept entirely at headquarters and made to do either case-work or any kind of work which prevents them coming into contact with the people—if they are taken out on tour, for instance, by the District Officer.

24817. It is represented that that is precisely what does take place—that the young officer is tied to case-work?—For his first year he is not tied to case-work; he is given a few third class cases, but what he is chiefly tied to is reading up his law books for his departmental examinations in the law and treasury accounts and that kind of thing.

24818. So that practically he does not get that opportunity of converse with the people which leads to a complete knowledge of the vernacular?—I should say that he does not in practice; but there would be nothing to prevent an officer getting sufficient knowledge. The case-work does not keep him for more than an hour a day at the outside. Very often for days together he would not have any case-work.

24819. As a rule have officers in the province a good knowledge of the vernacular?—I do not think they have enough knowledge of the vernacular.

24820. Might that not be due to the fact that they do not start under a right system?—Quite possibly; in fact, I should say it was so.

24821. Is the present method of training the young officer on his arrival a good one?—It depends so much on the personality of the man under whom the young officer serves.

24822. But if the knowledge of the vernacular possessed by the whole of the officers is short, does that not lead to the impression that it may be due not so much to the fault of the individual as to the fault of the system?—It may be it is the fault of the system, but having regard to the periodical examinations that we have to pass in law and so on, I do not thing a sufficiently high standard in the vernacular is insisted upon. The tendency all over the world will be, once a man has passed his examination, to go on no further, except in occasional cases where you have a man who is particularly keen on finding out the habits of the people and so on. Any young officer can learn just as much as will enable him to pass his examination. In that way it is the fault of the system entirely. What I should like to do is to practically abolish the law and accounts examinations, and insist on a very high standard in the vernacular. Personally

I suffer from not knowing the vernacular, because I have come from another province, and perhaps I am not so qualified to speak up here. I started in Madras where nearly every one speaks English; you can hardly go to a village without meeting an English-knowing man. I have met a village *kotwar* in Madras who could speak English. One always heard that in other provinces the knowledge of the vernacular was not to be compared with the knowledge of the vernacular in Madras, but when I came up here it was my impression that most of the officers did not know much more of Hindustani than we did of Tamil in Madras.

24823. Is Hindi practically universal here?—In some districts in the south, in the Nagpur Division and Berar, it may not be understood at all; Marathi prevails in the Nagpur Division and Berar; Hindi will practically take you everywhere; Marathi will only carry you through those districts.

24824. Would you favour a system of training which sent the young officer out under a Settlement Officer, say, after a year at his district headquarters?—If you want him to learn settlement it is not much use sending him out after a year, but if you want him to pick up the vernacular he might possibly learn more in settlement than in ordinary work.

24825. Speaking generally, you would not favour anything of that sort?—No. I do not think it is necessary.

24826. How is the work divided among the Secretaries to Government; does it go by the officer or by the individual?—Certain sections always go to the Chief Secretary; the others are shifted about according to the particular line of the individual Secretary.

24827. But are certain departments always attached to the Chief Secretary?—The Appointments, Political, Military and Police are always attached to the Chief Secretary; as to the others, he may take some that the others have now got and they may take some that he has got. I was officiating as Chief Secretary in 1906 for some time; I took with me the departments I had been running before, and simply took over those departments—Police, Political, and Military—in addition.

24828. Is there any distinct difference of status between the various Secretaries and Under Secretaries; one is the Chief Secretary with an Under Secretary; the next is the Second Secretary with an Under Secretary; the next is the Third Secretary with an Assistant Secretary?—It is simply a name that comes from the old organisation of the Secretariat. There is no difference of status. The Assistant Secretary is not a member of the Indian Civil Service. The office was re-organised about two years ago, and the Assistant Secretary became an Under Secretary; both the Under Secretaries are Assistant Commissioners on the Central Provinces Commission, with an allowance of Rs. 100 a month.

24829. Commissioners here are appointed after sanction by the Government of India, and it is proposed that the Chief Commissioner should have the full rights of appointment?—The appointment of a Commissioner by the Government of India is a formality as a rule. I do not think the Government of India have ever overruled a nomination by the Chief Commissioner.

24830. What is meant when you say that no administrative financial control should be delegated to any officer?—I would give increased sanction in certain petty details. A tremendous lot of cases come up, as to the purchase of books and so forth. But I would not give any determination of budgets, or the power to create new appointments. I refer to purely provincial finance.

24831. Would you allow the Commissioner no freedom, say, in the case of the Public Works?—I would not give him the final settlement of the budget for his division.

24832. Is there any system obtaining here of an allotment being made to a Commissioner for minor Public Works purposes?—Yes, he is given power to sanction works up to Rs. 2,500.

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24833. But is a distinct allotment made to him of so much in cash?—Yes, in the Public Works budget. It depends on the division; it used to average about Rs. 10,000 in each division per annum; the Commissioner could spend that as he liked on any works not costing about Rs. 2,000.

24834. You tell us that the connection between the Deputy Commissioner and a District Board should be made closer, and that he should in all cases be *ex-officio* Chairman; is that not so at present?—No. The Chairman is elected and he is generally (but not in all cases) a non-official. It is not so in Berar; there I am not sure whether he is *ex-officio* or whether as a matter of course he is always elected Chairman; but in these provinces the principle laid down is that the Deputy Commissioner if he is to exercise any influence on local self-government should do it from outside and not from inside. As a rule one of his Assistant Commissioners is appointed a member; he may be Chairman or he may be Secretary, or simply a member, but the Deputy Commissioner himself is never a member of the District Council in this province.

24835. What is the result, comparing your experience in Madras, where the District Board always, I think, has the Collector as Chairman, and the system which obtains here?—I am afraid it is impossible to compare the two, because the District Councils in these provinces are more or less of a farce; the money at their disposal is so small that there is no room for anything to be done by them.

24836. How are the funds raised?—There is a cess on land called the Education Cess, and a cess called the Road Cess.

24837. Is any money granted by Government?—Within the last few years the money granted by Government is probably double all the income from other sources.

24838. It is not, as in other provinces, 25 per cent. of the income?—We have given them 25 per cent. of their income as a minimum, but we have also had to give a lot more, otherwise they could not have carried on even the petty work they have.

24839. Is the cess lighter here than in other provinces?—Rather light, I think; it amounts to 5 per cent., whereas in other parts it is one anna in the rupee; but the revenue is so small.

24840. Would it have been better if the Deputy Commissioner had been Chairman?—It would not really have made much difference.

24841. Is such work as is done done fairly?—Yes, but it is purely official; the Executive Officer of the District Council is the President of the *taluk* Board, and the President of the *taluk* Board is a tahsildar, and practically the tahsildar does all the work and spends all the money that is spent, except such as is spent on establishments like hospitals and schools establishment.

24842. Is the tahsildar merely a member of the District Board?—I do not think, as a rule, he is a member of the District Board; he is a member of the *taluk* Board.

24843. And, notwithstanding that, he does the whole of the work of the District Board?—It is done through the Local Board; the Local Board is supposed to be the executive authority for the District Board. There is a Local Board for each *tahsil*.

24844. So that, notwithstanding the fact that the Collector has no connection with the District Board, the whole of the District Board is done by his subordinates?—Yes.

24845. Who themselves are not members of the District Board?—They may be members of the District Board or they may not, but they are members of the Local Board and may be members of the District Board, as well.

24846. Do you ascribe the practical failure of the District Boards merely to a want of income?—Almost entirely, I should say.

24847. Do they work by sub-committees?—They do to a very small extent; practically every penny

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of the District Board's funds is earmarked for some purpose, such as hospitals, schools, and veterinary hospitals, or a few small roads.

24848. Is there any rule which applies to appointments to the Secretariat here; must an officer have had a certain amount of district experience?—There is no rule. The practice is simply the selection of the Chief Commissioner.

24849. Is there any rule which applies to the duration of appointments?—I think not.

24850. A Secretary may stay as long as he likes?—As long as he is kept on; of course it is purely a selection appointment.

24851. Does he stay for an indefinite time in the Secretariat?—In these provinces he does not. Most officers in the Secretariat have had a very good share of district work, and after doing Secretariat work for a time they go back to district or divisional work.

24852. After doing Secretariat work for how long?—I should say three years altogether.

24853. Then they go back to the district for how long?—They may go back to the district until their time comes for promotion.

24854. Would that be six months or a year afterwards?—It may be any time. I should say that as a rule the Chief Secretary is an officer who will be near his time for appointment to be a Commissioner when he leaves the Secretariat.

24855. Does an Assistant Secretary go on to become a Secretary?—No. The Under Secretary is an Assistant Commissioner of about six years' standing; he serves for a couple of years (that is the unwritten rule that is generally observed) as Under Secretary and then goes back to district work; he may stay in the district for the rest of his service and never come back at all.

24856. Suppose a man has been a brilliant success?—Then he probably would come back. If he went out eight years' service he might come back as a Secretary in three or four years' time.

24857. Would he go straight on to a Secretaryship?—No. I should think very rarely; I do not think I could mention any case in which that has occurred here.

24858. What is the practice; does the Secretariat officer go back to district work?—Yes. Secretariat officers come from district work and then go back to it.

24859. The case of a man who spends his service in the Secretariat is practically unknown?—I do not think I could mention any case of that kind.

24860. Do officers go from you to the Secretariat of the Government of India?—Yes, occasionally.

24861. You lead us to believe that transfers are less frequent than they used to be?—Yes, I should think they were. There are a certain number of transfers, especially among Assistant Commissioners, that you cannot avoid, but among Deputy Commissioners we have managed to avoid transfers fairly successfully.

24862. Why is it particularly difficult among Assistant Commissioners?—Probably because our staff has been short for some time; we are about working up to full strength now, but the difficulty has been not only as to the strength of the Commission, but also of the Extra-Assistant Commissioners who are members of the Provincial Service but do the same work.

24863. An officer has at the outset to remain in the country eight years before he gets leave?—Eight years before he gets furlough.

24864. Is that too long a period?—There have been cases in which I should say it was too long.

24865. Does it lead, later on, to ill-health which causes transfers?—Possibly. One comes across so many cases of transfers where men have had to go on leave on account of their health before the eight years, that it would, in a way, be rather a good thing if the period was made less.

24866. Many transfers are consequent upon some officer or other going on sick leave?—That is one cause of transfers.

24867. Other things equal, how long should an officer be kept in a district?—Three years—certainly not less than two years, and three years is about the maximum.

24868. Not more than three years?—No, I should say he ought to be transferred after three years.

24869. We have had a great deal of evidence suggesting that the period should be five years; would that be too long?—I am rather inclined to think it is; I have no particular evidence for saying so

24870. As far as possible, when officers return from leave, are they brought back to the district that they went away from?—If they have gone on fairly short leave, and if they had not been very long in that district before they went.

24871. Within the limits of time that you suggest would it be desirable to bring them back to the same district?—Yes.

24872. There are a certain number of questions which come to you from the Commissioners, and so forth; how many of those questions do you dispose of yourself and how many do you send on to the Chief Commissioner?—About one-third I settle myself.

24873. Could most of those questions be settled by officers below you?—Many of them are questions which, though I can dispose of them in the light of precedents, should come to the Secretariat because they require the advice perhaps of the Comptroller in the Finance Department. Very often what appears to be a very trivial case may be absolutely inadmissible because it is directly against all the account rules. On the advice of the Comptroller one would sanction or refuse without referring to the Chief Commissioner, simply because there was a precedent for it. It does not follow because the Secretary can dispose of such a case that, therefore, powers can be delegated.

24874. Would it not be possible to issue from time to time such general information to the Commissioners as would enable them to decide on the precedents?—No; on the whole the easiest way is to let them come up.

24875. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You think that the Chief Commissioner should be able to appoint any Head of a Department except the Inspector-General of Hospitals and the Chief Conservator of Forests. What distinction do you draw between those two officers and the Head of the Public Works Department?—I am not quite certain about the system of recruitment in the Public Works Department, but I believe that it is now supposed to be self-contained, *i.e.*, recruitment in the province to provide for all posts including Chief Engineer.

24876. Is it not on the same footing as the Medical Department and the Forest Department?—I believe the Public Works Department of the provinces is supposed to be recruited for the province; I am not up in the subject.

24877. It is on that assumption that you make this recommendation?—I was not thinking of the Public Works Department at all; I was referring to all the other branches of administration.

24878. You say that the disforestment of reserved forests should not need reference to India. Would that not in some cases mean the abandonment of a policy that has been patiently carried on for 50 years?—Not so far as regards the instances I have seen.

24879. Were those of small areas?—Generally—either land required for cultivation and unsuitable for forest growth, or for the rectification of forest boundaries.

24880. Would you not put a limitation of area upon this recommendation?—The Chief Commissioner would not be likely to sanction anything which would be an abandonment of a general policy. I do not think a limit would be necessary.

24881. Comparing your experience in Madras, would you say that the sub-divisional system in the

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Central Provinces is fully developed?—No, it is not fully developed. In these provinces Sub-Divisional Officers still remain at district headquarters; in Madras they have seperate headquarters, not that I think that that is a drawback.

24882. Would you say that there is any further desirable development of the sub-divisional system in the Central Provinces?—I should not be prepared to say that there is.

24883. Generally is each sub-division conterminous with the *tahsil*?—Yes, we have made every *tahsil* a sub-division.

24884. That is to say, every Sub-Divisional Officer has one tahsildar serving under him?—He may have more than one. We sometimes make him a Sub-Divisional Officer of two *tahsils*, but for the purpose of the Criminal Procedure Code and the Land Revenue Code we have made each *tahsil* a sub-division; we may join two together and put them under one Sub-Divisional Officer.

24885. Ordinarily is it only one *tahsil*?—In 80 per cent. of the cases I should think it would be one *tahsil* to one sub-division, with one Sub-Divisional Officer.

24886. Does that not mean either that the Sub-Divisional Officer has too little work, or that the tahsildar has too much?—No; what it amounts to is that the work of the Assistant and Extra-Assistant Commissioners is divided territorially instead of by cases.

24887. But if one tahsildar can do the work of the whole sub-division, does not that seem to imply that that is not quite sufficient for a Sub-Divisional Officer?—But the work that the Sub-Divisional Officer does is not the same work that a tahsildar does.

24888. It is supervision?—Supervision, and a considerable amount of case-work—criminal cases and revenue cases.

24889. Ought not one Sub-Divisional Officer to be able to supervise the work of two tahsildars at least?—Ordinarily he ought to be able to do so.

24890. What is the average size of your *tahsils*; are they too large?—They are, on the whole; they are very large indeed.

24891. Is it more than an average tahsildar can manage?—Many of them are; I should say not all. We have had to appoint a great many additional tahsildars.

24892. The Sub-Divisional Officer does not reside in his sub-division as a rule?—No, the sub-divisional headquarters is his headquarters during the camping season, roughly from the 1st of November to the end of April.

24893. Is there usually at least one bungalow in each *tahsil*?—There is a dâk bungalow, but he could not live in that, and he would not be actually at headquarters; he would be touring in his sub-division.

24894. There is not a bungalow into which he could go whenever he wished to make a journey through his sub-division?—There is nothing but the dâk bungalow.

24895. What are the general rules as to the touring of a Sub-Divisional Officer and of a Deputy Commissioner?—I think the Deputy Comissioner is supposed to spend five months in camp, but there are no rules.

24896. Is there any rule as to the amount of time he should spend in each particular camp?—No. The practice is on the whole to do rapid marching.

24897. Is that a good thing?—I am not quite certain; some men say that it is better to do rapid marching and see as much of your district as you can; other men say you should halt at each camp for four or five days at least, and make visits to all the surrounding country. If you can work it, I am rather inclined to think that the latter is the better system; that is like the Madras system of *jamabandi*.

24898. Is the touring of officers considered a burden by the people?—I do not know that the touring of District Officers is considered a burden; you hear complaint about what they call the *begar* for touring officers, but it is not the District Officers that they complain of so much; they complain rather of the tours of extra officers, like Heads of Departments and all the numerous branches, the veterinary, the agricultural, the excise people and so on; there has been a larger number of Heads of Departments going on tour within recent years, and this means extra camping and extra officers touring in the district. They do object to these officers who do not belong to the district camping in their villages and having to find free rations for their subordinates.

24899. Is the travelling allowance generally sufficient?—I think so, on the whole.

24900. As to the position of the Deputy Commissioner in the district, would you say generally that, pending the orders of Government, nothing in any department should be done in the district which is against his judgment; or would that be going too far?—I do not think it would, if you said "pending the orders of the Government." If the Deputy Commissioner objected to any departmental officer doing anything, I do not think that officer should do it until it is referred to the Commissioner:

24901. If the Commissioner objects it should automatically go to Government?—It should be left undone unless the departmental officer sends it up.

24902. In Public Works matters, you would give the Head of the district more power, on the ground that he takes a non-departmental view, whereas the Public Works Department is actuated entirely by technical considerations?—Quite so.

24903. Is it not a matter of popular complaint that there is a great deal of waste in the Public Works Department?—I have heard that said.

24904. Would you give the Head of the district any *locus standi* in the case of that being alleged about any particular work?—It would be an excellent thing to do so.

24905. He should be allowed to notice it?—At present he certainly cannot. If he heard complaints against the Public Works Department in his district he certainly could not take action unless it was an allegation of a criminal offence; all he could do would be to write to the superior officer of the Public Works Department, the Executive Engineer or Superintending Engineer.

24906. But even that would be considered interfering?—I have met those who might consider it interfering, but, on the whole, I should not say so.

24907. He is not expected to take any formal action at present?—He is not expected to take any action unless he has pretty good grounds to go upon; he could not start an inquiry, for instance, against an officer of the Public Works Department.

24908. But he would be expected to bring it to notice if it came to his knowledge that there was something unquestionably wrong going on?—Certainly; if there is anything wrong it is his business to bring it to notice; the District Officer is supposed to look after things in every department in that way.

24909. Not so many years ago was there not a change in the Court of Wards Act which transferred a good many powers hitherto exercised by the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner?—The Deputy Commissioner was the Court of Wards under the old Act, and now the Commissioner is the Court of Wards.

24910. Was that change justifiable?—I see no objection to the change, which, I believe, was due to the fact that there were a great many very junior Deputy Commissioners who did not run their Court of Wards work very well.

24911. Would you prefer to keep it as it is now?—Yes, but I would allow the Commissioner to delegate. Where he is fit to be the Court of Wards, the District Officer should be the Court of Wards for the district.

24912. Would you support the suggestion that the Commissioner should have a separate general

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budget of his own for the Public Works of his division?—I should like the Commissioner either to prepare the budget for his division in the Public Works Department, or to criticise it before it goes up to the Local Government. He could not be allowed finally to pass any budget.

24913. You would not approve of an allotment being made to him for him to budget against?—No, on the whole I should prefer to let him prepare his budget and then let it be criticised at headquarters and so much given as could be given.

24914. Has not Berar special land tenures and a special system generally?—Yes.

24915. There is in the Secretariat a Secretary who has had special experience in Berar?—Yes.

24916. Does he deal with all questions relating to Berar?—No, only with land revenue, but any papers affecting Berar are sent to the special Secretary to look at.

24917. Does he not deal with any other questions connected with Berar?—Any other questions go to the particular department concerned.

24918. Certain suggestions have been made for the curtailment of settlement procedure; what are your views regarding them?—Mr. Miller started it when he was here as Chief Commissioner. When he went to the Government of India he sent down a proposal to alter the procedure and make it more simple; at present it is a very cumbrous procedure.

24919. Are revenue inspectors now appointed by the Director of Land Records?—Yes.

24920. Has the Head of the district no voice whatever in appointments or promotions?—He certainly has a voice; he recommends.

24921. Is his approval necessary, or does he merely suggest names?—I do not think it is laid down that his approval is necessary.

24922. Do you not think that the land records inspector is such an integral part of the administration of the district that it is necessary that the Deputy Commissioner should have a voice in appointments and promotions?—In practice it is undoubtedly necessary. I think a revenue inspector might just as well be appointed and promoted by the Head of the district, but I do not hold the same view with regard to the Superintendent of Land Records.

24923. Have you any further suggestion to make for reducing the number of transfers?—No, I do not think there are any more suggestions to be made.

24924. If a Deputy Commissioner is going away for three months, would you ordinarily appoint to fill his place the man on the spot, irrespective of seniority?—We make a point of doing that where possible.

24925. Would you give local experience precedence of seniority for as much as six months?—We might, but it would be more doubtful; we have often put in an Extra-Assistant Commissioner to officiate for a short period if there is no officer of the Indian Civil Service in the district.

24926. Supposing a Deputy Commissionership falls vacant, and suppose it is well understood that the man whose next turn it is is going on leave in three or four months' time, would you still put him in?—No, not necessarily.

24927. Supposing the appointment falls vacant now, and it is known that the man next for promotion is going on leave in July, would you put him in, or pass him over?—We should probably put him in because very probably there would be somebody coming out about the time that he goes on leave who could be put in his place; it would be a temporary appointment in any case.

24928. What would you say to making it a rule that a man placed in charge of a district should undertake to remain there for three years?—There would be a great many hard cases. I think it would lead to more hardship than good.

24929. You say that examinations ought to be made stricter. How would you stiffen the language examination?—I would make the colloquial test a great deal stricter.

24930. What would you say to making the examinations entirely colloquial?—I would not go so far as that; I think literary knowledge is necessary.

24931. You say you would cut down accounts; do you not think it is necessary that an officer should be examined in accounts?—I would not cut it out altogether. If it could be worked, I would have an examination in accounts and law which should be more or less a practical examination—a *vivâ voce* examination with the books. A man should be given actual cases that have occurred which necessitate a reference to books, and he should be allowed the use of those books, and asked to work out the case.

24932. (*Mr. Dutt.*) In paragraph 14 of the Chief Commissioner's note he says: "In regard to police, medical, education and forests the relation of the Deputy Commissioner with the department is on the whole well maintained because such departments are well established, but there is some slight tendency towards slipping back, and in new branches of administration the requisite touch is still lacking." Do I understand that to mean that the control of the Deputy Commissioner has been relaxed to some extent?—No; what I think is meant is that there is a tendency on the part of a keen Head of a Department to run things through his department rather than through the District Officer.

24933. That means a proportionate decrease in the control of the Deputy Commissioner?—If the Deputy Commissioner allows it. If you get a keen Head of a Department and a keen Deputy Commissioner it may lead to friction, or it may lead to good; it very often leads to friction; if you get a slack Deputy Commissioner and a keen Head of a Department, everything is run by the Head of the Department through his department; if you get a keen Deputy Commissioner and a slack Head of a Department, the Deputy Commissioner gets the whole thing in his hands.

24934. Has there been any alteration in the rules which has taken away some of the control of the Deputy Commissioner?—No, I think not.

24935. What have been the actual results of the new system of working the police according to the recommendations of the Police Commission?—We have only introduced that new system in two districts, Raipur and Drug, and I have no knowledge of either of them; I should say at present it is still "fermenting," and one could not reply one way or the other.

24936. So far as you have seen of the general principles of the system, have some powers now been taken away from the Deputy Commissioner and given over to the department?—I think not.

24937. I mean with regard to the hearing of appeals and the promotion of sub-inspectors and so on?—No.

24938. Has the Deputy Commissioner sufficient control over the police, education, and forests?—Yes; I should say he has less control in the matter of education; that was my experience; I do not know whether it is different now.

24939. Would you recommend greater powers to the Deputy Commissioner with regard to education than he has at present?—Not greater powers, but he should put into practice the powers that he has already. He is supposed to be the chief Educational Officer of the district in administrative matters, as to the establishment of new schools and as to financial control. The tendency was that the inspectors of schools worked rather through their deputy inspectors, and very often, unless the Deputy Commissioner was keen on education work in his district, a lot of things might go on of which he knew nothing; the inspector would do things without letting him know what he was doing, and if the deputy inspector did not let the deputy Commissioner know, he had no means of finding out.

24940. Is the district forest officer a subordinate of the Deputy Commissioner except in technical matters?—Yes.

24941. And the same in regard to the Medical Department?—Yes.

24942. With regard to Public Works, do you suggest that works undertaken each year in the district should be settled with the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner?—Not with the sanction, because he would not have the power of sanction, but on his recommendation.

24943. In his memorandum the Chief Commissioner suggests that village panchayats may be elected by house-holders in the village; at present have you a headman in each village?—There is a *malguzar*; we have no headman; the *malguzar* is the leading man of the village.

24944. You make him the *mukaddam*?—Yes, if he resides there; if he does not reside there he has to appoint a *gomashta*.

24945. Is it suggested that he should be assisted by a number of other men?—That is a very rough outline, and I do not think Mr. Craddock meant it to be as in any way a definite suggestion. I think he would agree that it is practically impossible in the *malguzari* system to have a village panchayat, because the *malguzar* is the man with all the power; all the other members of the panchayat would be his tenants, and what could they say if he disagreed with them?

24946. But there are many villages where there are no resident *malguzars*?—There are a number of villages owned by one *malguzar*.

24947. And in those villages would it be easier to have village panchayats?—Yes; but if they are big villages the *malguzar* would have his local agent, who is just as big a man and sometimes a bigger man than his master.

24948. Then it is suggested that groups of these villages might send members to the Local Board. What is meant by the Local Board there?—The *tahsil* Board—the *taluk* Board.

24949. Is there a Local Board in each *tahsil*?—In every district in which the Local Self-Government Act has been applied there is a Local Board for each *tahsil* and a District Council for each district; there is one district still left in which the Act has not been applied, but we have the system exactly the same as if it was under the Local Self-Government Act—a system of District Committees—which is practically the same thing.

24950. The suggestion is that the Local Boards or the *tahsil* Boards should return members to the District Council?—Yes.

24951. In that way there would a continuous chain of representation from the village to the District?—Yes, we have that system now. The members of the *taluk* Board are elected by *mukaddams* of villages; there are certain groups formed, and they elect a member for a given group; he has to be a *mukaddam* himself; one member for each group makes up the "*mukaddam* members" of the Local Board; then certain members are elected to represent the mercantile interests of the whole *tahsil*, and those make up the local membership of the Local Board.

24952. So that this plan is only an elaboration of the system that already exists?—Just so.

24953. You say that all the District Councils in this province are now under non-official Chairmen?—I do not say, as a fact, that they are all under non-official Chairmen, but they *may be* under non-official Chairmen. Generally they are under non-official Chairmen.

24954. Why do you wish to change that system and make the Deputy Commissioner Chairman?—Because the work of the District Council is work in which the Deputy Commissioner should be interested and he will work a great deal better with his Council if he is a member of it than if he has to exert his influence on a District Council working from outside.

24955. Do not Deputy Commissioners as a rule take sufficient interest in the work of the Council?—I think there is very little to induce them to take much interest in District Council work. I should think he takes less interest than he would if he were Chairman.

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24956. Has that ever been brought out in the annual reviews of the work of District Councils?—No, this point is purely my own personal opinion.

24957. So that, when you say that the present work is unsatisfactory, your opinion on this particular point is not corroborated by the reviews of the District Councils' work which are brought out annually?—No, I should not say that it has ever been noticed. The principle laid down in the District Council Manual is that the Deputy Commissioner shall not be a member, and therefore it is not very likely that any annual review would be likely to condemn the system.

24958. Judging from the reviews published from year to year, has the work been as fairly satisfactory here as in the other provinces?—Yes, the work has been all right, not as to local self-government, but simply as to carrying out certain branches of the administration.

24959. We have had evidence before us that if rules are laid down, and if the Accountant-General has to interpret the rules, he cannot make any exception—it is his duty to interpret them strictly?—Undoubtedly; I admit that it would be a difficult thing to work out. My idea is that a Local Government, even a local administration run by a Chief Commissioner, is less likely to be swayed by personal considerations than an officer who may send up a case which might be his own case or might affect him hereafter. He cannot see the question from all sides in the same way as the Chief Commissioner can, looking at it from above. All administrations would probably say the same—that they have had, on occasion, friction on account of the Accountant-General.

24960. So far as the Accountant-General himself is concerned you quite see that he could not possibly interpret rules more liberally in one case than in another?—I quite agree, and also it is very often the case of the personal equation coming in. One man thinks it his duty simply to point out mistakes, and not show how you get out of them, and another man thinks it better to show where you may go wrong or what you could do and to let you know beforehand in order to prevent you making the mistake. Of course you cannot make any rules in regard to such cases; it depends on the personal equation a great deal.

24961. You say that in certain matters the provincial administrations should have power to conduct operations without the previous sanction of the Government of India, and one of the matters you mention is the inception and confirmation of the resettlement of a district. I suppose in resettling a district you have to send the rates proposed to the Government of India for their sanction?—First, you send up what is called an inception report; you say the last settlement was sanctioned for so many years; that time is now expired, and you give your reasons for showing that it is desirable to undertake the resettlement, and not to extend the time of the present settlement. That has to be sanctioned by the Government of India. In it you give a very rough forecast of the probable financial results and of the administrative results.

24962. Then what would be the confirmation report?—That is simply a report sent in generally four years after the settlement is introduced; it is sent up for the orders of the Government of India.

24963. Suppose the Government of India desired to say that the revenue should be 50 per cent. instead of 55 per cent. of the assets, at what stage would they pass that order?—It would be stated in the inception report what rate you proposed, but the actual rate is sanctioned for each *tahsil*. What is called a preliminary report for each *tahsil* is sent up after the Settlement Officer has worked for one year in each *tahsil*, and in that the rates at which the assessment of the holdings is to be made and the rate at which the revenue is to be taken on the assessment are sanctioned for the *tahsil*.

24964. That requires the sanction of the Government of India?—Yes.

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24965. Is it desirable that the Government of India should have the power of sanctioning or not sanctioning, or modifying those details?—The general principles upon which assessments have been made have been so clearly laid down now that it is hardly necessary for the Government of India to retain the power of sanction in regard to details; I do not think, for instance, that the local administration would desire to go above the rates that it has already taken.

24966. The rate has not been fixed definitely?—It has not been fixed definitely, but the standard at which you should aim has been laid down as 50 per cent. of the assets.

24967. It varies very much?—Yes. I have known it to go down as low as 35 and to go up as high as 65.

24968. Do you not think that the Government of India should have some control as to the particular rate to be fixed in assessing revenue?—It does not make much difference, except that it means a long report sent to the Government of India beforehand. I do not think that necessary, because the principle of aiming at a 50 per cent. revenue on assets is recognised; it has been laid down by the Government of India; and that is the standard at which we aim in each succeeding settlement. But the actual figures to be taken in any individual village will depend on the figures taken at the last settlement. For instance, we may find one village at 35 per cent. and another village at 80 per cent.; at a new settlement we should probably raise the 35 per cent. village to 40 or 45, and reduce the 80 per cent. village to 60.

24969. There again would you require the sanction of the Government of India?—No, that does not require the sanction of the Government of India; they do not come in with regard to the details of the assessment, but the total for the *tahsil* must not be exceeded.

24970. Your settlement is based on the soil-unit system. Who generally works out that system?—The Settlement Officer.

24971. One of your proposals is that power to make rules under section 162 of the Land Revenue Act should not need the previous sanction of the Government of India. Who framed the Act?—I fancy it would be framed by the Government of India.

24972. If it was framed by the Government of India should not any alterations in the Act require the sanction of the Government of India?—Of course this would need legislation in the Viceroy's Council. As a matter of fact I have looked up that question since, and so far as I can make out, there is no necessity ever to make any rules under section 162, because in practice all the rules are made under separate sections.

24973. There are four Divisional Sessions Judges in this province now. Do all sessions cases from the different districts go to the Divisional Sessions Judges for trial?—Yes.

24974. And all the appeals from First Class Magistrates in all the different districts have to go to them for hearing?—Yes, except appeals in cases disposed of by the District Magistrate under his special powers; those go to the Judicial Commissioner.

24975. Your munsiffs here belong to the Subordinate Service? What pay do they get?—They used to get Rs. 100 rising to Rs. 200; we have just had the Service reorganised, and they now get Rs. 150 to Rs. 250.

24976. They do not belong to the same class as Deputy Collectors?—No, they correspond more to tahsildars.

24977. Does the Sub-Divisional Officer dispose of most of the criminal cases in the sub-division?—He disposes of all first class cases, and when he is an Assistant Magistrate, he is often given appellate powers, and disposes of appeals from Third Class and Second Class Magistrates.

24978. Does that put the parties to some inconvenience in following him about?—No, rather the reverse, because in the camping season he would be in camp anyhow; if his work is confined to one *tahsil* the parties would have less distance to go.

24979. Can he always arrange so as to take up a case as near the village as possible?—That is one of the ideas.

24980. Can he, in fact, carry that out?—Yes, I think so.

24981. Is the system of the Sub-Divisional Officer staying six months at the headquarters of the district convenient for the people of the sub-division or would it be more convenient if the Sub-Divisional Officer resided in his sub-division?—I suppose it would be probably more convenient for the people if he resided in the sub-division.

24982. You say that it would be desirable, in some cases at least, to increase the number of *tahsils*?—We are increasing them; we have increased one here and one there, and no doubt in the course of the next ten years we shall probably divide up three or four more *tahsils*.

24983. The tahsildars dispose of all the petty cases?—They are Second Class Magistrates as a rule, and they also dispose of certain revenue cases.

24984. Has the tahsildar got a *tahsil* treasury?—Yes.

24985. Are daily or monthly balance sheets sent from the *tahsil* treasury to the district treasury direct?—A daily account is sent.

24986. It does not go either through the Sub-Divisional Officer or the District Officer?—No, it goes direct to the district treasury.

24987. At present you have got a patwari in each village?—Not in each village.

24988. You have a sort of *mukaddam* in each village?—Yes.

24989. Is the *kotwar* the servant of the village?—He is the village watchman. He is the servant of the village; he is paid by fees from the villagers.

24990. I understand that an officer is likely nowadays to become a Deputy Commissioner after about eight or ten years service?—In the Central Provinces in the present state of the *cadre* an officer will not become a Deputy Commissioner until he has had eight or ten years' service; we have men at the present moment who have had eleven years' service who have not had charge of a district.

24991. During that period, to some extent, he is in training for the position of Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

24992. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Would it be a sound thing that he should spend a small portion of that time in another province or provinces?—It would be a good thing in many ways; of course there are difficulties about the language.

24993. For example, has the varied experience that you have had in Madras and here been of advantage to you?—In many ways having been in Madras has been an advantage to me here.

24994. If a junior officer went, let us say, to Madras for a year, he might not be much use to Madras, and perhaps one would not send him there on the assumption that he would be, but when he came back here the experience he gained there might be of advantage to him here?—Undoubtedly.

24995. And the fact that he was not learning the language of the Central Provinces would not make very much difference to him in the long run?—That is so.

24996. Would you advocate that?—I do not think I would, because I do not think it would be workable; you would have an enormous number of men lying idle.

24997. Would it be possible to do it in regard to a certain proportion?—It might be possible.

24998. If you did it on a large scale, it would mean increasing your staff very much, and it would not be worth while?—Just so.

24999. What is the average size of your districts here?—About 4,561 square miles.

25000. How does that compare with Madras?—I should think it is about the same on the average.

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In the Central Provinces our big districts are half jungle. My first experience in Madras was in South Arcot; that was about 5,000 square miles; it had eight *taluks*, a land revenue of 42 lakhs, and a population of over two millions.

25001. You say that District Boards are very badly off at the present time and ought to have more money; have you any suggestion to make as to how they are to get more?—One suggestion is that we should abolish our provincial Roads Department. Practically all our roads, that are roads at all, are managed by the provincial Public Works Department. I do not know how much they cost; I suppose they cost about 20 lakhs every year. Communications is a thing that is best left to local self-government. Of course if these roads were transferred it would mean handing over a certain sum of money from the provincial revenues to the Local Boards to spend. We could not increase the income of the District Boards by raising our local cesses, because in order to get a reasonable sum you would not have to fix your rates at something like 25 or 30 per cent. on the land revenue, and the people would not appreciate that at all.

25002. Your suggestion would be that you should apportion the money, which is to-day spent by the provincial Government on roads, amongst the District Boards?—It might be possible to do that; it would mean doles, of course, which is not a satisfactory system.

25003. Would it be possible, or desirable, to give them some definite proportion of the land revenue?—That would be a matter to be worked out if the principle were accepted. I should not care to give any definite opinion. It should be possible to work it out.

25004. At any rate, you think it is desirable?—There are one or two matters besides roads that might be transferred; which instead of being a provincial activity might be a local activity.

25005. You think their funds should be increased?—If their work is to be made real, their funds must be increased.

25006. Suppose you took roads away from the Public Works Department, what would they have left?—They would have buildings, and they have the beginnings of an Irrigation Branch; it is quite a small matter at present started as protective irrigation merely.

25007. Buildings do not amount to much?—No.

25008. Buildings would hardly be a source of friction between the Deputy Commissioner and the local Public Works Department?—Not usually; they are sometimes.

25009. So that your difficulty as to the relations between the District Officer and the Public Works Department would be got over if you had that change?—Yes. Of course it would mean a great reduction in the provincial Public Works Department; the staff necessary for keeping up the roads would be paid by the Local Boards, as it is in Madras. On comparing the two, I should say that the roads, on the whole, are more cheaply and better kept up in Madras by the District Boards than they are here.

25010. At the same time, if you gave increased powers and an increased money grant to the District Boards, would it not be desirable that the District Officer should be more closely associated than he is to-day?—I think so.

25011. And possibly under those conditions it would be more readily accepted by the people as a reasonable arrangement?—I think so.

25012. In paragraph 20 of the Chief Commissioner's note he says that returns are largely increased by questions in the House of Parliament, and that one of the means of reducing the returns would be if the questions could be curtailed there. Have you any reason to suppose that there are any definite classes of returns that would not be given but for those questions?—I could not say. One has a general impression that a question is asked in Parliament and that information is called for, and that the return is made more or less a permanent one afterwards, and that in that way many returns have been introduced.

25013. You cannot put you finger on any one, much less a number?—No; that is the general impression one gets from reading the returns that one has to sign.

25014. Are the powers of the Chief Commissioner substantially different from those of a Lieutenant-Governor?—They have been gradually approximating more to those of a Lieutenant-Governor; they have been widened; I do not suppose they are quite as full.

25015. There are certain appointments which a Lieutenant-Governor can make which a Chief Commissioner cannot make?—The only ones I can think of are those I have mentioned; the Director of Public Instruction may possibly be appointed in other provinces, and also Commissioners, but I could not tell you what the powers of a Lieutenant-Governor are.

25016. For all practical purposes has the Chief Commissioner been given the powers of a Local Government?—Practically, yes.

25017. You say, "The system of divided heads, where the expenditure as well as the revenue is divided, results in inconvenience, whenever any unlooked-for expenditure is necessary, as it is difficult to find any other imperial head from which re-appropriation can be made"; is that the only objection you have to make?—I think that is about the only one.

25018. Is it a very serious one?—No, but it is rather annoying to have to go up for sanction. You may have, for instance, a very large saving in your provincial budget, but suppose you want to spend an extra Rs. 50,000, Rs. 25,000 of which is imperial, you can meet your Rs. 25,000 in the provincial budget from your own balance, but you have no head from which you can meet the Rs. 25,000, the imperial share, and you have to write for sanction. I believe that these divided heads are divided not so much from administrative as from financial reasons, and that therefore there would be no harm in treating them on exactly the same level as purely provincial expenditure.

25019. But in itself it is merely a question of writing a letter to the Government of India and getting sanction?—That is practically all it is.

25020. Which may not necessarily occur more than every now and then?—Quite so.

25021. You say that in some cases the powers of the Chief Commissioner seem to be unnecessarily limited in regard to the grant of certain allowances. Have you thought out at all how far you would be prepared to go in giving the Chief Commissioner further powers?—I have not thought out any details; one or two questions have occurred which seem to me to necessitate rather trivial references to the Government of India.

25022. Would you be prepared to give him unrestricted powers?—No, you would have to lay down principles, general restrictions, within which he could sanction.

25023. It would not do to lay down a general principle and let him carry that out?—It would have to be laid down fairly strictly, because there is rather a tendency to sanction allowances.

25024. To sanction allowances which should not be sanctioned?—Not necessarily that, but one does not know what is done in other provinces.

25025. Does it much matter what is done in other provinces?—I think it might. Take the case of a branch like Hospital Assistants, who are recruited on an imperial basis. You give a Hospital Assistant a personal allowance, which is not given in any other province; it might mean agitation all over the rest of India, to get similar allowances in other provinces. They are paid on the same scale in every province.

25026. Is there any particular reason why they should be?—I cannot say, but there are general orders of the Government of India as to the scale

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of pay of Assistant Surgeons and Hospital Assistants.

25027. Your idea is that there are certain details (which you have not thought out) which might be amended, but that the general rules should still be maintained?—Yes.

25028. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You have told us that the Madras Collector has more power than the Central Provinces Deputy Commissioner; will you say, very generally, in what respects?—I should say that his powers as a Revenue Administrative Officer are wider.

25029. You mean in matters like the suspension and remission of revenue?—Yes.

25030. Do you think that the Central Provinces Deputy Commissioner might be levelled up to the position of the Madras Collector?—I think not. As we have got a Commissioner, there are many powers which should be left to him which the Collector exercises in Madras.

25031. You say that the Commissioner has less power than the Madras Board of Revenue. Might you not, as a measure of decentralization, give the Commissioner here powers corresponding to the powers of the Board of Revenue in Madras, and give the Deputy Commissioner powers corresponding to the powers of the Madras Collector?—I should prefer to give the power to the Commissioner, and leave him to give extended powers to his Deputy Commissioners, if he thought them fit to exercise those powers.

25032. He might give them to Smith and not to Jones?—He might.

25033. Would that not be invidious?—I think not. You might have a very junior man and a senior man; the senior man might be very unfit to exercise the powers, and the junior might be a good man.

25034. Do you and the Chief Commissioner desire to make this differentiation depend upon length of service or on the personality of the officers?—Rather on the personality of the officers.

25035. Then would that not be invidious, and become unworkable in practice?—I suppose it is invidious, but one officer would not necessarily know what powers were delegated to another.

25036. Do they not meet here at Nagpur occasionally?—They may.

25037. Might it not be more feasible, if you have a distinction, to make it depend on length of service—to give more powers to a first grade Deputy Commissioner than to a second grade Deputy Commissioner, and so on?—It might be; I do not see that necessarily it should be; a third grade Deputy Commissioner might be a better man than a first.

25038. The question arises whether when you have a man of long service who is a Deputy Commissioner and who is not fit to have powers, he is fit to be a Deputy Commissioner at all?—That is the question.

25039. Would you be prepared to face that, and to remove these inefficient men, assuming that you could give them a fairly liberal pension?—There is something to be said for the proposal. The selection should be made before he is appointed. If a man goes on and he is superseded once or twice, and he is still found to be unfit to be a Deputy Commissioner, he should be made to retire.

25040. You think that a man who is not fit to be a Deputy Commissioner should not be appointed when the permanent vacancy comes; he will have had his chance in the way of acting appointments, and when he is next for a permanent appointment you would pass him over and retire him?—Yes; it would not be necessary to retire him at once, directly he is passed over; I would give him another chance, but eventually he ought to be retired.

25041. You may get a man in as Deputy Commissioner; he is quite good at the time, but later on he goes to pieces; would you be prepared to retire him then?—It is rather a difficult question to answer. It is a case that one would be very unwilling to take up without very strong reasons.

25042. You would be prepared therefore, if you had your way, to make this personal differentiation of powers?—I would make a personal differentiation of powers, and of course put the less efficient man in some small district.

25043. Is that not a loss of power to the Public Service?—Undoubtedly it must be.

25044. You would prefer that to the trouble to the department that would be created by turning out X on a proportionate pension?—I think one would be inclined to prefer it.

25045. You mentioned that it was contemplated to have a Financial Commissioner in this province. Will that decrease the powers of the Commissioner at all?—No. He will get his powers by delegation from the Chief Commissioner, not by annexation from the Commissioners.

25046. There has been some discussion as to the method in which the Financial Commissioner, if appointed, will do his work. Are you prepared to say what the ideas of the Chief Commissioner are on the subject?—The proposal originally made was that the Financial Commissioner should be a sort of member of the Administration; that he should dispose of cases in the name of the Administration; that he should not have a separate office, but that cases should be sent up by the Secretaries to the Financial Commissioner, the only difference being that he, as Financial Commissioner, will be able to give hearings in final appeals, which the Chief Commissioner is unable to do. That was the original proposal. I could not say how exactly it stands now, but the Government of India were inclined rather to fancy the Financial Commissioner as a separate officer from the Chief Commissioner, having a man with a separate office and a sort of extra link put between the Chief Commissioner and the Commissioner. I believe a compromise of those two positions has now been recommended.

25047. There was a Secretary of State's despatch on the subject, which asked for a further expression of opinion from the present Chief Commissioner; are you in a position to tell us what is the opinion of the Chief Commissioner?—The case is at present with the Chief Commissioner; it is being discussed in connection with the position of the Financial Commissioner with regard to excise.

25048. Was not one solution recommended that the Financial Commissioner should have the same Secretariat as the Chief Commissioner but should send up cases to him unofficially?—Yes.

25049. Is that the suggestion that holds the field now?—Yes; he would issue orders as Financial Commissioner.

25050. He would have a double function; he would be a Financial Commissioner and issue orders as such, but in matters in which the control of the Chief Commissioner was necessary he would become, so to speak, the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes.

25051. Are your Sub-Divisional Officers generally on the same plane as in Madras as regards their powers?—They have considerably less powers.

25052. Do they take the ordinary appeals from tahsildars in revenue matters?—None of them have been given powers to take appeals in revenue cases. In criminal matters some of them have been given appellate powers, but not the majority.

25053. Therefore, as regards all the revenue work, and most of the criminal work, the appeal lies straight from the tahsildar or subordinate Magistrate to the Deputy Commissioner; is that necessary?—I think it is a good thing; it keeps the Deputy Commissioner in touch with everything that is going on in his district.

25054. Does it keep the Sub-Divisional Officer equally in touch with his tahsildars?—Tahsildars have very few powers of disposing of cases in these provinces; even the simplest little revenue cases are sent up by the tahsildar for the orders of the Sub-Divisional Officer.

25055. In Madras, in most of those petty cases, the original orders stop with the Sub-Divisional Officer, though there may be an appeal to the Collector?—There are appeals here in all revenue cases.

25056. But can the Sub-Divisional Officer pass an original order as freely as he can in Madras?—I should say rather less; there are many cases go to the Deputy Commissioner which would be disposed of by the Sub-Divisional Officer in Madras.

25057. Would you be prepared to give the Sub-Divisional Officer larger powers?—I should say he might be given larger powers.

25058. But you do not desire to make him an appellate authority over the tahsildar?—No.

25059. Is it not likely that as time goes on the Deputy Commissioner will get overburdened with these appeals?—The tendency, with the increase of work, would probably be that way.

25060. Are appeals here, like everything else, increasing?—I have not got the figures.

25061. Anyhow, there would not be so many here as in Madras?—Not now. Most of the Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners after they have passed their departmental examinations are invested with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner under the Land Revenue Act; there are certain powers which are reserved for the Deputy Commissioner of the district, as distinct from the powers of a Deputy Commissioner.

25062. Is this power of taking appeals direct from tahsildars and so on one of the functions which are reserved by the Act for the Deputy Commissioner, but which the Deputy Commissioner can delegate if he chooses?—I rather think that those are kept by the Deputy Commissioner of the district by law. The matter is a very small one, because tahsildars have no original powers; they are reporting officers.

25063. Are there not a number of cases which might be delegated to the tahsildar?—Yes, mutations of proprietary rights, and things of that sort.

25064. In revenue matters there are generally two appeals at least, that is to say, from the Sub-Divisional Officer to the Deputy Commissioner and from the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner?—From the Sub-Divisional Officer with the powers of the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner.

25065. Skipping the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

25066. You think that the Deputy Commissioner should hear those appeals?—Yes.

25067. Is it necessary to go on with the second appeal in questions of fact. I am speaking of revenue and other administrative cases?—It is quite possible that it might be better to exclude appeals on questions of fact.

25068. At present, practically, every original action by a Sub-Divisional Officer is liable to appeal to the Commissioner?—That is so.

25069. Is not the Commissioner rather swamped with details in that way?—He receives a lot of appeals on petty matters, which are generally rejected summarily.

25070. You mention some original matters which even a Deputy Commissioner cannot dispose of now, such as the sale of land in execution of decrees; what exactly do you mean by that?—That is where land is attached by the Civil Court and ordered to be sold either in execution of a decree or in pursuance of some order; that has to be transferred under Section 320 of the Civil Procedure Code to the Collector; but under the rules we have made in those provinces, all such cases go to the Chief Commissioner.

25071. What is transfer of *sir*?—*Sir* land is the home-farm of the proprietor of a village—of the *malguzar*; it is land in which no one can acquire tenancy rights if he leases it out.

25072. In all these matters and in partitions you think the Deputy Commissioner should be able to decide, subject of course to an appeal by an aggrieved party?—Yes.

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25073. Are these matters fixed by your Land Revenue Law, or are they simply by the practice which has arisen and which could be altered?—The transfer of *sir* cases is a matter that was introduced into the law in 1898 when the Tenancy Act was amended; the power of sanctioning transfers of cultivating rights in *sir* land were given to the Chief Commissioner by the Act; it would necessitate an amendment of the Act in order to give the Deputy Commissioner the power.

25074. You spoke of the increase of work in the Secretariat; is not that very largely due to this tremendous centralization in relatively petty cases?—I think some of it may be.

25075. Are you in favour of giving the province a separate *cadre* for forests, that is to say, enabling the Chief Commissioner to appoint his own Conservators, instead of having them appointed by the Government of India?—We have been ordered by the Government of India to make our proposals for giving the province a separate *cadre*, which is to include Chief Conservators and Conservators.

25076. Similarly, in the Public Works Department, at present you can appoint your Executive Engineers, but you cannot appoint your own Superintending and Chief Engineers; the Government of India appoints them. Do you think the Public Works *cadre* is big enough to be self-contained, and to let the Local Government appoint, perhaps getting in a Chief Engineer from outside?—I should think it was.

25077. Are your conferences of Commissioners attended by the Heads of Departments and by Secretaries?—Yes.

25078. Are they ever attended by non-officials?—No.

25079. Would that be a good thing?—Yes; if any case came up in which non-officials could be interested, it would not be a bad thing, but it is not very easy to secure their attendance.

25080. Why does not the Chief Commissioner preside at these conferences?—As a rule we have meetings at which Heads of Departments (if they are concerned), the Commissioners and the Secretaries all attend; they discuss the case, and then at the end the results are taken before the Chief Commissioner and we have a conference with him.

25081. So that you have two conferences instead of one?—We have one day or a couple of day with him, and give him the results of all the conferences that have been held during the week or ten days.

25082. Might it not be better that the Chief Commissioner should attend when any important matter has to be decided, so as to get into touch with his heads of Departments and Commissioners?—I think he would probably obtain that from private conversation with each of them.

25083. Having private conversations with a series of men is rather different from having a general discussion across the table?—It would interfere enormously with his work if the Chief Commissioner had to attend the conferences.

25084. You see no other objection?—No.

25085. You are against giving the Commissioner an allotment which he could spend on Public Works; at the same time, you are prepared to go a good deal further, because you are prepared to break up the provincial budget in the case of roads altogether, and make it all over to the District Boards, that is, mainly to the Deputy Commissioner. If the Deputy Commissioners could deal with these allotments for roads, *a priori* could not the Commissioner deal with them?—Yes, but there are a lot of other things besides the budgets; I argue in favour of making the roads local from an administrative, not from a financial, point of view.

25086. But assuming the present conditions to continue, why should not the Commissioner be able to decide what roads within his division should be taken up?—There is no particular objection to it.

25087. You are prepared to have it done at headquarters; does not that mean a general scramble, and that the Commissioner who is ready first, or

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who has got the most plausible pen, may get an advantage over other Commissioners?—That is more or less always the case, but I understood the question to have relation to the preparation of the budget—whether each Commissioner should be given a lump sum and apportion it between roads, buildings, and everything within his division, or whether the budget should be prepared and sent through the Commissioner, and that when the total amount is known it should be allotted according to the urgency of the works in the different divisions.

25088. The proposal would be that each Commissioner should have a certain amount which would be spent in his division, and that then there would be necessarily a certain balance at headquarters to be allotted at the discretion of the Chief Commissioner?—You might do it in that way; you must retain a certain balance as well, because you might find that one Commissioner could not utilise the whole of his allotment and another Commissioner might utilise more.

25089. But assuming that you must keep a balance at headquarters for emergencies and for the most important works, you see no objection to the rest being distributed amongst divisions and the Collector getting power to sanction works? He has 5 lakhs, say; out of that he says, "I am going to allot Rs. 50,000 to road A, Rs. 80,000 to road B, and Rs. 30,000 to such and such a building." Of course the engineers have got to prepare the plans and check the estimates; do you see any objection to that?—On the whole I should prefer the final allotment to be left to headquarters.

25090. You say you would not like to give to Commissioners any power of creating appointments; does that extend to temporary appointments as well as permanent appointments?—There is no harm in having a lump sum given to them each year and letting them make temporary appointments—ministerial appointments, for instance.

25091. But you would not give them power to make permanent appointments?—No.

25092. Speaking generally, what you would like to do would be to give them larger powers in revenue matters?—A few larger powers; I do not think there are so many ways in which their powers could be extended.

25093. Have they any power of remission?—No, only suspension.

25094. No revenue, however small, can be remitted except by the Chief Commissioner?—That is so.

25095. Is that not very undue centralization?—Perhaps it is. I would give powers of remissioin to Commissioners in what are called local calamities.

25096. Definite principles have been laid down by the Government of India in what are called the Calamity Rules as to the amount of suspension, and possible remission, which shall follow a proportionate loss of crops. Subject to those rules, is there any reason why you should not give your District Officers and your Deputy Commissioners fairly large powers?—No, I do not see any objection to it.

25097. That is as to revenue both on dry and wet cultivation?—We have no distinction here; our revenue is based on the assessment of the *malguzar*.

25098. In Berar it is raiyatwari?—Yes; there they have nothing but dry.

25099. Who appoints tahsildars and naib-tahsildars?—The Commissioner appoints naib-tahsildars and tahsildars up to three months. They are made permanent by the Chief Commissioner. They are on a provincial list.

25100. Is there any objection to letting the Commissioner appoint the tahsildar?—That is a question that has been discussed often, and the general opinion is that it is better to keep them on a provincial list. You have a larger selection, and a larger field of proportion.

25101. And at the same time you have a much larger number of transfers; you get a man sent from one end of the province to another?—Not very often; you sometimes transfer a man from one division to another, and then you leave it to the Commissioner to post him.

25102. In Madras the tahsildar spends his time in his district as a rule. Is it not rather important that the tahsildar should have minute local knowledge?—It is.

25103. Nevertheless you would not even put your tahsildars in a divisional list?—I think it works very well as at present.

25104. Does the Commissioner post Assistant or Extra-Assistant Commissioners?—No, the Chief Commissioner posts them, but the Commissioner is always consulted.

25105. Might he not post them within his division?—It is done sometimes; we sometimes post them to a division and tell the Commissioner to post them as he likes.

25106. Might not you extend that?—Yes, I see no harm.

25107. As regards the extension of magisterial powers, everything now has to come up to Government? Subject to general conditions as to fitness, and so on, would you allow the Commissioner to confer magisterial powers?—Yes, I do not see any strong objection. The cases are nearly all treated as routine when they come up; they are nearly always gazetted as a matter of course.

25108. Similarly as regards your appointments of local bodies, are they gazetted by the Local Government?—They are inserted in the Gazette, but they are sanctioned by the Commissioner.

25109. Does that work satisfactorily?—Yes.

25110. Generally speaking, what powers has the Commissioner in regard to municipalities and District Boards; does he pass their budgets and their administration reports?—He passes their budgets, receives their administration reports, reviews them, sends their reviews to the Local Government, and with regard to the Councils he is given most minute powers of sanction.

25111. Is there much that comes up through the Commissioner?—There are a good many cases come up to the Local Government.

25112. Can you tell us generally of what description?—I have not seen anything of Local Boards work for some time. I think both Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners might have much larger powers.

25113. Do you have many petty cases under the Land Acquisition Act?—Yes, numbers; they are often very petty—an acre, and that sort of thing.

25114. Might the Commissioner deal with those?—When I first came here practically everything had to go up to the Local Government; now where cases come up to the Local Government there are certain rules as to the multiples of the land revenue to be given as compensation; if you get a multiple exceeding 30 or 25 times the land revenue it needs the Chief Commissioner's sanction. There are certain rules laid down and, within those rules, the Commissioner sanctions compensation.

25115. I was not speaking so much of compensation as of the preliminaries required to take up the land; you have to get at least two notifications?—One as a rule; section 4 does not usually come in.

25116. In regard to these petty areas might not the Commissioner take the place of the Local Government?—I see no objection at all to that.

25117. As regards your District Boards, how is it that they are so poor; they get the land cess, as in other provinces—only slightly lower?—They get 3 per cent. for roads and 2 per cent. for education.

25118. Your District Boards are absolutely relieved from the charge of roads, except small roads, and they do not do much outside work except schools and

medical relief; why is it that they are so impoverished?—The amount is very small—5 per cent. on a revenue of 80 lakhs; it is not much.

25119. And also, of course, your assessments are not as large as they would be in Madras?—That is so, and we do not get the whole of the assessment; and then we only get 50 per cent. of it.

25120. I understand that the planting of trees on the high road, and so forth, have been taken away from the local bodies?—I believe there have been some other orders lately, but local bodies used to do it along their own roads and the Public Works Department did it along the Public Works roads.

25121. Who pays for the rural schools, the primary and middle schools, that the District Board maintains?—The District Board.

25122. Does it also manage them?—It manages through School Committees.

25123. In what relation do the District Boards stand to the *tahsil* Board; is it the same as in the case of the *taluk* Boards in Madras?—No, the District Board is supposed to be an advisory and consultative body, and the *tahsil* Board is supposed to be the executive body, but in actual practice, the amounts of income and expenditure being so small, the District Board is not only advisory and consultative but also executive; they practically give no power at all to their *tahsil* Boards.

25124. The District Board gives information to the *tahsil* Board—"We have sanctioned so much for schools in your *tahsil*, now you look after them and see that the money is properly spent," and the same with regard to sanitation?—Yes.

25125. Is that a good system?—The amounts, if you distribute them over the *tahsil* Boards, would be so very small; it has always been the policy to try and give more powers of financial sanction to *tahsil* Boards, but that is the difficulty.

25126. Do you want a solemnly elected District Board for that sort of thing; if you take the *tahsil* Boards as subordinate to the District Boards, is it necessary to have an elaborate machinery for them?—It is hardly necessary, but there is the Local Self-Government Act.

25127. You cannot make any material alteration in your Famine Code without reference to the Government of India?—No.

25128. Is that a good thing on the whole?—I do not think the Government of India would be likely to object to any alterations that we wanted to make; perhaps we might be left with power to do it ourselves.

25129. Would you be in favour of general principles as regards famine relief operations being laid down by the Government of India, but that the details of the Code might be left to the provincial Government?—Yes.

25130. Do your District Officers require any more powers as to the granting of agricultural loans?—The maximum limit perhaps might be increased; it is Rs. 1000 now.

25131. Is there any ground for giving tahsildars and Sub-Divisional Officers larger powers?—Their powers might be increased too.

25132. The laws that are current in the Central Provinces are notified for Berar also?—Yes; some are not, but most are.

25133. So that you are working under a uniform law in the provinces?—Yes.

25134. But it is a very cumbrous procedure. You have to issue a double set of rules, one under the Act itself, the other under the Act as applied to Berar?—Yes; I will give you an instance; we want to abolish the central jails at Amraoti and Akola because there are not enough prisoners in them to justify the retention of a central jail; the long-term prisoners under that arrangement will be transferred to Nagpur; for the transfer of every prisoner from Amraoti and Akola to Nagpur there will have to be an order of the Inspector-General of Prisons; without that no prisoner can be committed from Berar to Nagpur.

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25135. Therefore if any plan could be devised without offending political susceptibilities to obviate this, it would be desirable?—Of course, that is the difficulty.

25136. Do you have many transfers of officers between Berar and the Central Provinces?—We are now transferring members of the Commission more freely; the first two or three years we sent members of the Commission there for training and so on; now a lot of members of the Berar Commission are on leave, and we are sending two Central Provinces officers to officiate as Deputy Commissioners.

25137. In view of the differences of language and differences of law and practice, to some extent, and the difference of tenure, is it advisable to make these transfers frequently?—No; frequent transfers would not be good; if you send a man from Berar to the Central Provinces you must leave him there long enough to pick up the Central Provinces land revenue system.

25138. How long would you leave him there?—Probably four or five years at the very least.

25139. You would not transfer him more than once or twice in his service?—As we go on and get Assistant Commissioners who have had experience of both provinces there is no reason why they should not be transferred a little more frequently. I would not like to say that a man because he is sent down as Assistant Commissioner to Berar shall stay in Berar for the next ten years, or that if he ever gets transferred back to the Central Province he shall end up in Berar, any more than I would put it the other way.

25140. They would get to know the language?—You have Marathi spoken in Nagpur as well; Marathi is not very well known; there are only two or three men in the province who really know it.

25141. It is also a little bewildering to a man to be constantly moved between a raiyatwari and a zamindari area?—Yes; on the other hand he also learns a lot of useful things from seeing both systems at work.

25142. You say here, "There is no reason, now that the provinces have a regular financial settlement of their own, why the provincial budget should be subject to detailed criticism and alteration by the Finance Department of the Government of India." Is it subject to detailed criticism and alteration?—I believe so.

25143. Have you had much experience that way?—When I was doing the Financial Secretary's work we used to have a lot of correspondence with the Comptroller about the alterations made; I think they were simply account alterations—estimating.

25144. The alterations made were in the interests of accurate estimating?—Yes.

25145. And as a matter of fact were they not justified?—Yes, I expect they were generally.

25146. For instance, taking the last year 1906-07, the provincial expenditure was estimated by the Local Government at 192 lakhs; the Government of India cut it down to 189½ lakhs; as a matter of fact it was only 180 lakhs. There are similar figures for other years. The fault of the Government of India, if there was a fault, was that it did not cut more?—One knows that there is a lot of inaccurate estimating.

25147. You say the Chief Commissioner should be allowed to pass his own provincial budget. Do you mean that in these matters the Government of India should accept the Chief Commissioner's figures without question?—It would not do any harm.

25148. Would not the estimates be out more than they are at present?—I think the tendency would be eventually that more accurate estimating would be made by the provincial Government.

25149. The present systém is one of divided heads largely?—Land revenue, excise, income-tax, stamps, and forests are divided.

25150. In all these matters the Government of India take half the receipts?—Yes.

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25151. Therefore, if your figures are wrong, it not merely affects the provincial surplus, but it materially affects the imperial surplus, and taking figures which are inaccurate might lead the Government of India into serious embarrassment?—It might.

25152. You do not stand alone; there are seven other provinces to deal with. Therefore, as long as the present system continues from that point of view the Government of India must check esti- ; in which they are materially interested?— oubt.

.53. You propose that the present divided ; of expenditure shall become wholly pro- al; you do not think the present system par- rly inconvenient?—No.

154. You mentioned a case in which you ed Rs. 50,000 more for forests, and because it a divided head you said you could find the incial half, but there was a difficulty about the rial half; surely it is the same in land ue?—Not with regard to expenditure.

155. But there are other divided heads?—Yes.

156. And there are imperial divided heads h you administer?—Yes.

157. Is there any difficulty in your finding the re- ed balance?—We did not do it in the particular I have referred to.

158. You have come up to the Government of a in times past for these re-allotments which not really necessary?—I believe we have.

159. Suppose to meet this inconvenience you all the expenditure provincial, you would re- e a certain larger share of revenue to meet liabilities?—I suppose we should slightly.

5160. Would that not lead to friction again? to your excise, for instance, suppose you have ertaken considerable expenditure, that the le of that expenditure fell upon you, but the ernment of India shared the enhanced receipts ch arose from that expenditure; would not there ly to be some feeling about that?—There might ater on; that was why I threw out that sugges- about dividing the net income only.

5161. Take small figures; your revenue is Rs. , your expenditure is Rs. 60; at present the ernment of India gets half of the Rs. 100, that Rs. 50; it bears half the expenditure, that is 30, and it gets a net receipt of Rs. 20; how you propose to manage?—I would make the 60 provincial, and divide the balance of Rs. 40 f between imperial and provincial.

5162. Still, if your expenditure had caused you largely increase your receipts, you would feel t the Government of India was getting an un- ned increment?—I do not think so, any more n it would now.

25163. Your expenditure, say, is Rs. 100, and ir receipts, thanks to that expenditure, go up Rs. 200, so that there is a surplus of Rs. 100 be divided; the Government of India take Rs. ; would you not say that that was rather hard en you had found the whole of the expenditure ich resulted in that increased receipts?—But, st of all, the extra expenditure has been ducted.

25164. However, is it worth while to upset the esent system in order to do this?—It is simply suggestion.

25165. Is it a suggestion to which you attach ry great importance?—No.

25166. Now, you have told us that the Accoun- nt-General cannot relax things for the Local overnment: what exactly do you mean?—There ight be possibly some alterations of the rules at might be passed; I expect it would be rather ifficult to work out; but one has had what one ather regards as trifling objections.

25167. You say here, "Certain posts in the Com- ission are listed for officers of the Provincial ivil Service, but sanction has to be obtained"; urely that is not altogether correct?—Sanction as to be obtained.

25168. Is it not only when a man is appointed permanently as a Deputy Commissioner or Judge?—Those are the posts I refer to; the listed appointments.

25169. Your position is that when an appointment has been listed, that is, taken away from the Imperial Civil Service, the filling of it ought to rest entirely with the Local Government?—Yes; any recommendation of the Local Government is always accepted.

25170. You say that any change would require the sanction of Parliament; could it not be done by rules made by the Secretary of State?—I was under the impression that it was under the Indian Civil Service Act; I am open to correction on that point.

25171. You are at present restricted in regard to these listed posts to officers of the Provincial Service? It might happen that for a judgeship you might want a man who was not an officer of the Provincial Service, an Indian *vakil*, perhaps; ought the Local Government to have power to appoint there?—Yes, I think so.

25172. That is a similar case?—It is not quite a similar case, I think; it would be a case possibly of giving dissatisfaction to the members of the Provincial Service. Perhaps it would not be advisable in that case, unless you distinctly listed that the office was open to members of the Bar; then of course they would know what they were liable to.

25173. I understand that education is actually under the Deputy Commissioner, that is to say, the education met from provincial funds, as well as the education met from local funds?—Yes.

25174. Primarily, middle and vernacular education is under Local Boards and municipalities, and secondary education is under Government control?—Yes.

25175. In both cases the Collector is the supreme authority?—He is supposed to be; he actually is not.

25176. You say he has the deputy inspector of schools as an assistant; is he as subordinate to the Collector as the district forest officer is in non-technical forest matters?—He is quite subordinate; he is actually a member of the district office staff.

25177. I gathered from your answer that you thought there was a change going on and that he is not quite so subordinate now as he used to be?—He is subordinate, but the tendency is rather for the inspector, who is a circle officer having five districts, to administer the schools through the deputy inspector without reference to the Deputy Commissioner.

25178. The idea of appointing him was that he should be a purely inspecting officer?—Yes, and he is rather inclined to an administrative officer.

25179. If in his inspection he found anything that was wrong he could bring it to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

25180. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Which schools do you refer to—the higher schools, secondary schools or primary schools?—The vernacular, the middle, and the primary schools; the high schools are not under the deputy inspectors.

25181. In many cases you suggest that there should be delegation of one sort and another, and a good deal of it you suggest should be based on personal considerations of the officer who is to receive the power. At the same time you suggest that whenever that touches an Act, the delegation of power should be made by special legislation. I do not quite understand how you would work that; is it not almost impossible?—Yes, I suppose it would be.

25182. Is there any advantage in special legislation over a general Act, which requires prior notification of intended delegation?—I do not really see any particular advantages.

25183. Do you think that a general Act which insisted on prior notification of the intention to delegate would practically come to the same thing?—I should think it would.

25184. And you would have no objection to that?—No.

25185. You say that you have started the re-organisation of the police in two districts?—That is, the system of having no others than sub-inspectors in charge of stations.

25186. Have you broken up your old stations?—Yes; we have abolished out-posts and increased the number of stations.

25187. What is the average area under a police station?—I think it runs about 200 square miles to a station in those districts.

25188. Has it led to an increase of the force in those two districts?—Yes.

25189. For the rest of your province you have not yet worked out the figures?—I cannot say whether it has been introduced within the last month, but it is certainly being introduced in three other districts.

25190. Have you got the increase necessary for the whole province worked out and sanctioned?—Yes; you mean the final ultimate scales for the whole police force?—That has been sanctioned. It was worked out by the Inspector-General on an examination of each district.

25191. What was the whole increase of expenditure in the province?—I think it will ultimately work out to about 13½ or 14 lakhs.

25192. And you have got that money promised you?—We shall get most of it from the Government of India; we have received, I think, 8½ lakhs.

25193. Was there any difficulty in getting that through; did you get the officers you wanted for each of your stations?—That is the reason why it has to be done gradually, one district at a time. There is the difficulty of getting men.

25194. But did you get the Government of India's sanction to the strength you wanted?—Yes; there was a considerable amount of discussion with the Government of India on the staff we were to get, more especially about sub-inspectors; we asked for more than they were prepared to give; then they gave us a few more; I fancy that the numbers they have fixed will do us very well.

25195. And as to constables and head constables?—I am not sure whether we did not reduce the numbers in those two grades.

25196. One of your Deputy Commissioners says that "the Deputy Commissioner's acquaintance with the outlying parts of his district is less thorough than it used to be, partly because the work has increased of late years, partly because the present low rate of travelling allowance does not permit him to tour in reasonable comfort without loss of money"; do you agree with that second reason?—I know that personally I have always lost on my travelling; the rates are very illogical at present; you have an Assistant Commissioner who has just arrived in the country; he goes about by himself with a couple of small tents; he gets precisely the same rates as a man of twenty years' service, with a wife and family; that must be obviously illogical.

25197. The latter man, even apart from the fact of his having a wife and family, would necessarily be supposed to travel in a more dignified manner?—He has larger tents, and so forth. But I do not think you can call the travelling allowance rates unfair; they are certainly a great deal better than they were in Madras.

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25198. Several of the officers here have suggested that the Government ought to give loans to assist in the liquidation of the debts of encumbered estates; they cannot give loans at present?—I think not.

25199. Are the owners of these encumbered estates men of fair position?—You have a lot of men of quite good position, and you get a lot of men very poor.

25200. Men whose position it would be a political advantage to keep up?—Undoubtedly.

25201. And you cannot do it?—No; rather, you have to do it in various ways.

25202. Another suggestion that has been made is that the Local Government ought to have power to guarantee feeder lines of railway or small loans for small Public Works, and it is said that the result of having to trust to the Government of India for money is that, though these are shown to be remunerative, they are always crushed out by more imposing schemes; the suggestion is that local interest might find money which might not be attracted by the loans of the Government of India; is there anything in that?—I should think there are possibly cases in which that might be true.

25203. You say that generally speaking you are not in favour of the Local Government going in for that sort of work?—No, I do not think the Government of India has ever shown a disposition to refuse loans where they have been shown to be necessary, and the Government of India would probably get the money more cheaply than the Local Government could.

25204. (*Chairman.*) Do you receive from the Commissioners their annual administration reports?—Yes.

25205. Are they as a rule very lengthy documents?—They are certainly long; they are just coming in now; I should say they generally run to about 10 or 20 pages of print.

25206. Are they compiled by the Divisional Officers?—Each Commissioner compiles his own, and compiles it from reports received from the District Officers.

25207. Are they confined to land revenue?—Yes; of course there are reports in other branches, but what is called the annual report is the annual report on the administration of the land revenue.

25208. We had it suggested that it would be much better compiled by the Commissioner himself from his own notes, than it would be by a series of reports from each District Officer?—I do not think so; as a Deputy Commissioner I should much prefer to write my own administration report for my district, than to have my Commissioner do it for me.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. G. S. HART was called and examined.

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25209. (*Chairman.*) You are the Conservator of Forests in the Southern Circle of the Central Provinces?—Yes, I have also served in the Punjab.

Provincial Governments should be given extended powers as regards the creation of new appointments and the enhancement of salaries. I do not think it advisable to permit provincial Governments to alter in any way the number or pay of Imperial Service Officers or the pay of Provincial Service Officers, though it should be possible for the Government of India to deal with this latter subject on the representation of Local Governments without any further reference to the Secretary of State. But it should be possible for the Local Government to increase the number of appointments in the Provincial Service and to make the necessary redistribution among the grades of that Service. Again the Local Government should have an absolutely free hand in dealing with the Subordinate Service. If it finds that it requires increases in that Service, or regrading in order to compensate for unduly slow promotion or an increase in the pay of the lowest grade in any class in order to induce men of the desired stamp to enter the Service, the Local Administration should be empowered to deal with these matters, without any reference whatever to higher authority.

It is not necessary to give the Heads of the Forest Department any particular increase in financial powers as regards the creation of new

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appointments or the enhancement of salaries. Conservators have already received powers to appointment of temporary establishment subject to budget provision and within limits defined. In a few cases these limits might be expanded, but that is a matter which can probably be arranged direct with the Local Administration without difficulty.

I do not think that in their dealings with the Forest Department the Government of India are dominated by considerations of immediate increases in revenue. On the contrary in reviews on provincial Forest Administration Reports the Government of India have continually urged on Local Governments the importance of spending money on the improvement of their forest estates by the provision of better roads and of adequate buildings for the staff, etc.

It is of great importance that the Inspector-General of Forests in his dealings with the Forest Departments of the various provinces should remain an advisory officer and should not be given administrative powers. He can never be very intimate with the conditions affecting forest work in provinces other than those in which he may have himself served recently and to give him administrative powers might tend to these conditions not receiving sufficient attention.

There can be no question that most of the recent administrative reforms which have affected this department, such as the appointment of Chief Conservators, the increase in the pay of Imperial Service Officers, and the proposed corresponding increase in the emoluments of the Provincial Service, grant of increased powers, etc., have been due to the initiation of the Government of India.

It is not desirable to limit the right of appeal to the Government of India either in respect to administrative action or to orders affecting officers personally, nor am I in favour of limiting the existing right of appeal to the Local Administration either in respect of administrative action or in respect of orders affecting officers personally. The existing orders permit of all subordinate officials appealing once to the authority immediately superior to the officer who passed the order. A right of second appeal to the Local Administration is granted only to subordinates drawing Rs. 50 per month, or more than this salary.

I have only two small matters to note as regards the grant of extended powers to Commissioners of divisions regarding matters of general administration. It has come to my notice that persons applying for licences to prospect for manganese complain of the great delay that occurs in disposing of their applications, and I think that the power to grant exploring and prospecting licences might be delegated to the Commissioners of the divisions, applications for mining leases only going to the Chief Commissioner. The second point is one in connection with the grazing rules in force in these provinces. The rules provide for the charge of commercial rates to professional cattle-breeders, or in exceptional cases where grazing is of special value. The Commissioner and Conservator in consultation can fix the classes to whom such rates shall be applicable, but they cannot fix the rates without the previous approval of the Chief Commissioner. The Commissioner and Conservator might very well be left to settle this matter also.

I have not found that the Secretariat in these provinces is either impersonal or too much dominated by considerations of revenue. On the contrary, the Local Administration is decidedly generous in all matters connected with forest administration and improvements.

The officers of the Forest Department have ample opportunities for personal contact with the people, as they spend some two-thirds of each year in camp. Naturally they are principally brought into contact with the villages situated near the forest and with the forest tribes; their knowledge of the vernacular is generally good.

The staff of the Forest Department is notoriously inadequate in the executive and subordinate branches. But schemes for the reorganisation of the Imperial and Provincial Services and of the Subordinate Service are now under consideration. No general reduction in the area of forest divisional charges is necessary at present, though in the course of time it may be advisable to split up one or two of the present forest divisions.

I do not think that transfers among Forest Officers are unnecessarily frequent, though they are unhappily numerous. Thus, since 1900 there have been five changes of Conservators in this circle, excluding privilege leave vacancies. One method by which transfers could be reduced would be to rule that an officer retained a lien on his appointment during any absences on leave not exceeding six months, instead of the present limit of three months. Since the grant of the privilege of combining leave the practice of taking six months' combined leave is almost as common as former absences on three months' privilege leave.

25210. You are responsible for about 6,700 square miles of forest?—Yes.

25211. *How many circles* are there in the Central Provinces?—Three, including Berar.

25212. How many district forest officers has each circle?—About seven; there are seven in this circle, and I think there are seven or eight in the Northern Circle.

25213. You are under the control of the Chief Conservator?—Yes; we have the Chief Conservator over the three Conservators.

25214. Who prepares the working plans of forests?—The Divisional Forest Officers under the control of the Conservator.

25215. The forest working plan comes up to you and you check it?—It is prepared entirely under the Conservator's supervision by the Divisional Officer.

25216. You submit it to the Chief Conservator, and he submits it in turn to the Inspector-General?—Yes.

25217. Is all that detailed examination necessary?—It is a good thing that the Inspector-General should see the working plans.

25218. How much service have you as a Conservator?—Two years. I have been in the Service just over twenty years.

25219. How much service will a Chief Conservator here have?—He has about 27 or 28 years.

25220. But he has no power to sanction any forest working plan, however small?—No; he has no power of sanction; the Local Administration sanction the working plans; the Inspector-General merely advises the Local Administration.

25221. The Local Administration cannot sanction until after the Inspector-General has approved?—No; working plans have to go through the Inspector-General.

25222. Might there be some limit of size of area which the Chief Conservator might approve, in place of the Inspector-General?—Personally I am in favour of all working plans going to the Inspector-General; of course, it depends entirely on their size; now we are generally bringing them out for the whole of the forest division together, and it is a good thing that they should go to the Inspector-General.

25223. Do you think that that gives the Chief Conservator or the principal Conservator, as the case may be, a full sense of responsibility, if he has no authority of approval?—He can criticise the Conservators if he chooses.

25224. Do you think that he experiences a full sense of responsibility for a plan when he never has the final approval of it?—Possible he does not; my own opinion is that plans should go to the Inspector-General.

25225. You think that an officer does feel a full sense of responsibility and takes the fullest possible care in preparing his plans?—Certainly a Conservator does; he is absolutely responsible that the plan is drawn up in accordance with his approval; the Conservator is absolutely responsible that he does not send up the plan until he approves of everything in it.

25226. Are there any alterations of the working plans submitted by the Inspector-General?—There have been, but as a rule there are not many alterations.

25227. Does it cause much delay in sending up these plans to the Inspector-General?—No; unless he refuses to sanction them altogether and sends them back; in the ordinary way it does not cause more than two or three months' delay.

25228. Does he often send them back?—No; I have known one or two cases in which the Inspector-General has sent them back and altogether refused sanction; he generally just suggests minor alterations. There is one thing in which the action of the Inspector-General is quite unnecessary, that is, in regard to what are called control forms; that is, details of the work and description of the work; these forms at present have to be filled up by Divisional Officers and sent to the Conservators and passed by them, then they go to the Chief Conservator and then to the Inspector-General; they might be left to the Conservator *entirely*; they need not go further at all; the present procedure gives most unnecessary trouble.

25229. Have you any reason to believe that the Inspector-General of Forests interferes in any way administratively in your department?—I do not think he can possibly.

25230. Do you think that he attempts to do so?—Since I have been here I have known of no cases of his attempting to interfere.

25231. You think that on the whole the kind of advisory work that he does is good and necessary work?—Very.

25232. You tell us that the Government of India are not very much dominated by immediate increases in revenue; do you lay any stress on the word "immediate"?—No; I did not intend to lay stress on the word; they are fully prepared to spend money on forest improvements. All these improvements are aimed ultimately at an increased revenue; the more we open up the forests with roads and buildings, the more we are able to work them and the better revenue we get.

25233. You do not think the Government of India are inclined to schedule areas which have been left open and which are of no use as forests?—No.

25234. You think that the powers in connection with exploring and prospecting licences might easily be delegated to Commissioners?—That has been done recently.

25235. You say that quite lately the financial and administrative powers of yourself and the Divisional Forest Officers have been extended; in what direction?—Larger powers in connection with promotion and dismissal of establishment, and larger financial powers generally.

25236. Are those general powers given throughout the country or only in this province?—They are general powers throughout the country, under the Forest Code.

25237. When were these orders issued?—In the last two or three years Government has been gradually increasing the powers.

25238. Do you think any further expansion is desirable; who appoints the forest rangers, for example?—If the rangers are trained at the Imperial Forest College they are appointed direct by the Conservator; if they have not been trained there, or if they have only taken what is called the lower certificate, they must put in a certain number of years first, and then the Conservator can appoint them. If they are men who have not been trained at all, who have gradually risen from the ranger's grade, they are appointed by the Chief Conservator; I think that is fair.

25239. Who posts the Divisional Officers?—The Local Administration. The Chief Conservator advises.

25240. Might the Chief Conservator have power to post?—I do not see any reason for giving him the power of posting; the Chief Conservator may be an officer who has hardly served in the Central Provinces at all.

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25241. Are these Divisional Officers posted on the recommendation of the Chief Conservator?—You mean transferred to different districts, yes; that is done on his recommendation if the Local Government agrees with him.

25242. Does the Local Government often interfere?—I could not say; the question of posting does not come through me at all.

25243. Have you any power as Conservator to transfer any of your subordinates?—Anybody except a Divisional Officer or a Gazetted Officer; I cannot transfer a Deputy Conservator without asking the Local Administration.

25244. Is it desirable that you should do that?—Yes, I think so as regards officers doing the work of an assistant in a division; I do not mean Divisional Officers; but it would be very improbable that Government would refuse permission to transfer a man.

25245. Practically you do transfer them now, although nominally it goes through Government?—Yes; it is unlikely that they would object if one said that one wanted a man transferred.

25246. On the whole do the forest rules, or rather the administration of the forest rules, cause dissatisfaction among the people?—No, not on the whole. Certainly in the Punjab, in the hills, where I have put in most of my service, there is very little dissatisfaction, and very little cause for dissatisfaction; down here, of course, there is perhaps more occasionally.

25247. Is corruption among subordinates noticeable?—I should say not more noticeable than in any other service where you have subordinates left, as they often are, entirely to themselves.

25248. What is the pay of a ranger?—He begins at Rs. 50 a year after coming from the school; my own opinion is that that is too low; a man goes to the school generally with a stipend of Rs. 50 paid by the Government while he is there, and he comes out and gets the same pay; it is very difficult at present to get anything like good men.

25249. Are the forest guards corrupt?—Not more so than any other men in the same position; I would not guarantee their honesty at all, but I do not think they are worse than anybody else.

25250. Would they deliberately produce infringements of the forest rules or allege infringements of the forest rules in order to make money?—They are very likely to do so if they are not looked after. You have a man on 6 or 8 rupees a month, he has considerable power of giving trouble, and if he is not looked after he will probably take advantage of that power.

25251. You say transfers of Forest Officers are very frequent?—They have been certainly rather frequent down here; that is mainly caused by men going on leave or falling sick.

25252. How long do you think an officer ought to be retained in a circle or in a division?—Not less than five years, and probably not much more.

25253. You say that some of the difficulties of transfers have arisen from the practice of taking six months' combined leave; will you tell me what you mean?—Transfers would be less if an officer who only took his six months' combined leave did not thereby necessarily lose the charge in which he was at the time.

24254. Cannot they bring him back to the same charge?—They could if they wished to, but an officer who takes simply three months' privilege leave comes back to his charge as a matter of course; if he takes six months, the chances are that he will not come back to his charge.

25255. If the Chief Conservator had a free hand in the posting of his subordinates, would he not post an officer back after he returned from six months' leave?—*It depends how long* he had been in the charge.

25256. It has been said of the Inspector-General that he deals mostly with technical matters?—The Inspector-General of course is purely an advisor of the Government of India, and he does not interfere

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in the administration of the province at all until he is asked for his opinion; in the matter of working plans everything goes to him.

25257. You have not found him intervene in anything except technical matters?—No.

25258. Do you find that the increased powers which have been given to you lately have increased your work?—Certainly not; they save a certain amount of reference to the Government of India and Local Government.

25259. Is there any difference between a Divisional Forest Officer and a Deputy Conservator?—A Divisional Forest Officer may also be an Assistant Conservator; a Deputy Conservator, under the recent reorganisation, depends entirely on the length of service; a man may be, and generally is, in charge of a forest division before he becomes a Deputy Conservator.

25260. It is nothing to do with his work?—No; it simply denotes that he has a certain length of service.

25261. Do you think that the accounts that Forest Officers have to keep are very complicated?—It is very difficult to say; we have been trying to cut them down; they are not very complicated; they are troublesome.

25262. Are they unnecessarily complicated?—I do not see how you could keep up the check that you must keep without them. It might be possible to simplify them a little, but I do not think you can do very much.

25263. Has any attempt been made so to simplify them?—We are always trying to cut down unnecessary forms and things of that sort. I do not think any definite attempt has been made.

25264. Do you regard the Forest Code as altogether satisfactory?—Yes, I think so; it is a most unfortunate occurrence that although it has only just been issued it is full of addenda and corrigenda; it is very difficult to find anything in it.

25265. But apart from that you do not think that the instructions laid down in it are too detailed?—Of course they have to apply to every part of India. I do not know of any portion of the Code which I should like to cut out.

25266. What language did you learn in the Punjab?—Urdu and Punjabi.

25267. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Do those carry you through here?—They carry me through with all the subordinate establishments.

25268. Has the transfer from province to province made your work very difficult here?—It did at first, certainly, not now.

25269. How long did you feel it?—The first six months.

25270. Can you communicate easily with the people of the forest villages and so on?—Not personally, no.

25271. Is that not a great handicap?—Not in a Conservator's work.

25272. Were you here before the Chief Conservator was appointed?—I was here for about eight or nine months before he was appointed.

25273. What change in procedure has it led to?—It means that upon certain things in which you previously addressed the Local Administration as Conservator, you now address the Chief Conservator, and he either disposes of them himself or sends them on to the Local Administration. The Chief Conservator's work is largely connected with the Secretariat.

25274. Helping and advising the Local Administration on forest cases?—Yes.

25275. What was the arrangement before?—Each Conservator went up direct to the Local Administration, and they passed orders.

25276. It means simply that they have got a headquarters consultative officer?—That is it.

25277. Have they delegated much control to him?—Yes, they have delegated a good deal to him.

25278. And in consequence of that you have less to do with the Commissioner than you used to have?—No, it has not interfered in any way with one's connection with the civil officers.

25279. What is a Conservator's connection with the Commissioner of the division?—All matters as regards grazing and concessions and things of that sort in connection with the people go either through the Commissioner or through the Deputy Commissioner to the District Forest Officer, or come from the District Forest Officer through the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner.

25280. If you have to send up a case, to whom do you send it?—Directly to the Secretary to Government.

25281. Not to the Chief Conservator, or the Commissioner?—Certain things go to the Chief Conservator; the majority of the things go direct to the Local Administration, and they consult the Chief Conservator if they wish to do so.

25282. You have no correspondence with the Commissioner at all?—I have if I want it, but I have no regular correspondence with the Commissioner; I do not suppose that the Commissioner either sends to me, or I to him, 50 letters in a year.

25283. The Divisional Forest Officer is an Assistant Conservator?—Either an Assistant Conservator, a Deputy Conservator, or, if a member of the Provincial Service, and Extra Assistant or Extra Deputy Conservator.

25284. Does all his correspondence go through you?—No.

25285. You have schedules A and B dividing the correspondence?—I do not know; I have not served as a Divisional Officer in these Provinces.

25286. Have you got them in the Punjab?—No; in the Punjab the Forest Officer in all matters in which the people are connected works through the Deputy Commissioner. In all his own work he works through the Conservator, and that is practically the custom here.

25287. We were told that in the Bengal Presidency and in Upper India the correspondence which a Forest Officer has with the revenue authorities or with his superior technical officers is divided into schedules A and B, so that he knows exactly where to send each class of correspondence?—I can only say I have never heard of them; they are certainly never used in the Punjab.

25288. You refer to free grants to village communities; is that settled by the Commissioner or by the Chief Conservator at present?—Up to a certain limit it is settled by the Conservator direct; beyond that limit you go to the Chief Conservator, and beyond that again to the Local Administration.

25289. On whose recommendation?—On the recommendation of the District Forest Officer and the Deputy Commissioner; all that sort of thing would come through the Deputy Commissioner.

25290. The Deputy Commissioner has no power?—He does not sanction himself.

25291. Nor the Commissioner?—No, it would come straight through the Deputy Commissioner to the Conservator.

25292. Then really in forest matters the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner are merely advisory officers of the Forest Department?—Certain correspondence goes through them; they do not issue any direct orders here in forest matters.

25293. Not even about the privileges of the people?—The privileges of the people are governed by the orders of the Local Administration once and for all; they are entitled to certain privileges.

25294. I was speaking generally of these free grants?—The Deputy Commissioner would not sanction free grants of forest produce, however small.

25295. Nor the Commissioner?—As far as I know, no.

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25296. Matters of that sort are either sanctioned by the Conservator or by the Local Government, and the subordinate revenue authorities have no power at all beyond advice?—That is so.

25297. What is exactly "the annual plan of operations"?—That is an annual plan of working drawn up in connection with the budget.

25298. It is a sort of estimate of what has to be done for the following year?—That is so, project by project; that again would come through the Deputy Commissioner.

25299. Has the Divisional Forest Officer, when that is sanctioned and the money allotted, complete power to work it out during the year?—He must apply for sanction for any work which exceeds his own powers.

25300. He can sanction up to Rs. 200 capital expenditure?—If he wants a building which is going to cost Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 2,500 or anything of that kind he has to send in plans and estimates. At the time of the plan of operations he simply puts down a rough estimate that he wants to do such and such a work at such and such a cost; that is approved, and he then proceeds to deal with it in detail.

25301. Does the Rs. 200 limit give him enough discretion?—I think it is rather small. I would raise it to Rs. 500.

25302. Would it be desirable for the Divisional Forest Officer's accounts to go direct to the Comptroller of Forest Accounts?—They do. They go straight to the Comptroller; the produce forms and copies of certain things that go to the Comptroller come to the Conservator, generally a little later.

25303. It has been suggested by a Forest Officer of this Province that the accounts should go straight to the Comptroller; do you know what that means?—I do not, considering that the accounts are sent straight to the Comptroller now every month.

25304. It has been said that since this last settlement money has been much more freely allotted to forests which it is possible to open out; to what does that refer?—It means that Government is giving the Forest Department much more money to spend than they did before.

25305. Have you any idea what the cause of that is?—Government has got more money to spend I fancy.

25306. There is nothing special?—No, administration is improving, and therefore Government is more inclined to be generous.

25307. It is suggested that it might possibly have something to do with the division of the receipts between the Government of India and the Local Government under this last settlement; have you heard of anything of that sort?—I have not.

25308. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You say that since the appointment of a Chief Conservator, Conservators are no longer classed as Heads of Departments; does that mean that the Conservator has been reduced in any way as regards his powers?—No, not as regards his powers, but Conservators are no longer, for instance, in the front portion of the quarterly Civil List as "Heads of Departments"; their powers are still the same.

25309. There are various financial powers that have been granted to Heads of Departments?—They have been generally granted to Conservators too.

25310. Generally speaking, the Chief Conservator has not robbed you of any authority?—No; it was distinctly laid down at the time the Chief Conservator was appointed that the appointment was not to have that effect.

25311. I understand that the Conservator has full power in regard to the posting of rangers?—Absolutely.

25312. The only subordinates you cannot post are Assistant Conservators and Extra-Assistant Conservators?—Yes.

25313. It has been suggested that in provinces like this and Burma, where there is a considerable forest staff, the Local Government should have the power, which the Madras and Bombay Governments possess, of appointing their own Conservators; would you be in favour of that?—No, certainly not. It would be extremely bad for the men they have got; they would not get the same chance of promotion among themselves.

25314. The promotions allowed up to the grade of Conservator are on a time scale?—The time scale would be the same, but I am talking of promotions of the grades of Conservator.

25315. You have a fairly large forest *cadre* here?—Not very many, if you consider.

25316. I think you have more officers here, or almost as many, as in Bombay?—We may have more shown in number, but the Government of India has got four or five of them.

25317. You think you have not enough men to run a *cadre* of your own?—No.

25318. You would object still more to the Local Government appointing the Chief Conservator of Forests?—Yes; I think it is distinctly for the good of the department as a whole that all the Conservators' and Chief Conservator's appointments should be kept under the Government of India. It is distinctly advisable that the men should occasionally get a little experience of work in other provinces, instead of passing the whole of their service in one province; I am speaking of course of Forest Officers.

25319. Is there any difference between the pay of Conservators here and in other provinces?—Absolutely none.

25320. Has the present system led to a certain number of transfers from and to the Central Provinces; you tell us that there have been five Conservators in your own circle since 1900, more than a year apiece; do you regard that as a satisfactory system?—No; but then in two cases (it was an unfortunate year) it was caused by men going sick and having to go; and in one or two other cases it was because the men's time was up and they retired.

25321. As far as you have had the opportunity of studying it, do you think that transfers of Conservators in the Central Provinces have been more numerous than in the Punjab?—I know they have been more numerous than in the Punjab; that is due to the unfortunate fact of men being rather liable to go sick here.

25322. It has also been suggested that the Central Provinces, in regard to these establishments, is rather treated as a dumping ground for men who have nearly completed their service?—That is not so in the case of the Forest Service.

25323. Do you see any necessity for having a uniform Forest Code for all the provinces?—No.

25324. Might it not be advantageous for each province to have its own Forest Code?—It would be quite feasible.

25325. You have said that a great deal of the matter in this Forest Code does not deal with this province at all?—I did not say that; I said that there was no part of the Code, so far as I know, that I was desirous of cutting out.

25326. Are there a whole lot of matters in the Code in which there is uniformity prescribed, in which uniformity is not really needed?—In the accounts question you cannot very well have different systems of accounts in the different provinces. A large portion of this book is accounts, management, and working-plans; those must be the same; then, organisation of the Forest Department; that is the same all over India. I really do not see why you want separate Codes; we have one Code, and then we have separate Forest Manuals which deal with provincial questions. I say it is feasible; I do not say it is advisable.

25327. You prefer the Code as it stands?—I should much prefer the Code as it stands to going to the bother of creating new Codes for each province.

25328. Is it necessary that that uniformity should go right down to the ranger; is it necessary to have absolutely uniform district returns in each province?—We have certain returns here which are unknown in other parts of India; in connection

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for instance with the license and stamp system here; this is the only place where we have this license and stamp system; that entails sets of forms which are unknown in northern India. That is not referred to at all in the Code; the Code refers only to general matter.

25329. Things that you think ought to be uniform?—Certainly, if every province was allowed to have its own forms and returns of output of timber, fuel and so on, it would lead to endless confusion.

25330. You run up to 75 forms?—Yes; many of them are annual.

25331. You think that all those forms are required and ought to be uniform throughout the whole of India; are you prepared to stand by the whole 75?—There may be a certain number that might be cut out, but taking them all round there is nothing much to grumble about in them.

25332. You say you hold that it should be possible for the Local Government to increase the number of appointments in the Provincial Forest Service and make the necessary redistribution amongst the grades of that Service. How high can a Provincial Service Officer go?—At present he can go to Extra-Deputy Conservator in the first grade, about Rs. 600 a month; we have not got anybody here drawing that pay.

25333. At present the Local Government is hampered by the fact that it cannot raise or create an appointment above Rs. 250?—That is so.

25334. If you got the recent power of sanction of the Government of India of creating an appointment up to Rs. 500 and raising the pay to Rs. 750, that would give you all you want?—Yes.

25335. You would not want any special concession with regard to Forest Officers?—No.

25336. (*Mr. Hichens.*) You mention free grants for village communities; are those free grants of forest produce?—Yes. Here it refers to occasions on which villages are burnt; they very often are; then they get a free grant of as much stuff as they require to rebuild; they have their ordinary concessions as regards grass, grazing and their ordinary daily requirements.

25337. Is it the policy here to set aside a certain portion of land for the villagers?—The villages down here are nearly all *malguzari* or zamindari; the *malguzar* always has a quantity of land attached to the village cultivation. That was done at the time of the first settlement. The main idea at the time of the first settlement here was that they would give the people sufficient land with the cultivation for the exercise of their daily requirements, and that then they could take the rest absolutely free of rights as reserved forests for Government. So that there are far more *malguzari* lands and zamindari forests than Government forests.

25338. The amount of Government forests is strictly limited?—Yes.

25339. Have you any experience of those parts of the Central Provinces where Government forests exist as opposed to zamindari?—You have them side by side everywhere.

25340. Is sufficient land set aside for the purpose of the village communities?—If they have not got sufficient of their own, Government always gives them such concessions as they may require in the Government forests.

25341. You have never heard complaints that they have not got sufficient for their own purposes?—They have not sufficient to graze all their cattle; you cannot give them sufficient to support the whole of their cattle. Throughout the whole of the year they can graze in the forests round about the villages; then they move off and graze in Government forest when they want to; as a matter of fact they have got through a lot of the areas that were given to them by expanding cultivation and by cutting down jungle and selling it.

25342. (*Mr. Dutt.*) When they graze in a Government forest do they pay a grazing fee?—Yes.

25343. That is separate from what you charge for thatching grass and so on?—Yes.

25344. You say that the waste lands round villages are not sufficient for grazing all the cattle which the villagers have?—I say that, because I presume that if it was sufficient they would not come to the Government forests, and they do come to the Government forests.

25345. Are petitions for further grazing land common?—There is no such thing as petitions; if they want to graze on Government forest they take out a license; if you gave the people sufficient forest to graze the whole of their cattle, it would mean that you would have nothing left; if you permitted uncontrolled grazing everywhere you would soon have nothing left.

25346. Under each Conservator you have some seven divisions; are these divisions the same as the revenue districts?—Not always. Generally one revenue civil district is a forest division; but sometimes you have one forest division including two revenue charges, or parts of two revenue districts.

25347. You say that many of the reports which the Divisional Forest Officer has to send up are sent up through the Deputy Commissioner?—A certain number of them.

25348. Besides that has the Deputy Commissioner any other kind of control over the Forest Officer, not in technical matters but in matters relating to the people?—In matters relating to the people the Forest Officer is simply the assistant of the Deputy Commissioner.

25349. But you say that the Deputy Commissioner does not pass any orders; he simply passes on the report of the Forest Officer to the higher authority on any matter in which the people ask for privileges or have any complaints to make?—That was in connection with free grants; the Deputy Commissioner does not pass any orders about free grants.

25350. But there are other matters in which the Deputy Commissioner has power to pass orders?—I can only say that, in all matters connected with the people, under the rules the Forest Officer is the assistant of the Deputy Commissioner; I have never served here as a District Forest Officer.

25351. In all these matters the Deputy Commissioner either passes orders or sends them on with his remarks to the superior authorities?—Yes.

25352. I suppose most of the large forests in this province are reserved forests?—They are all reserved forests; there is nothing else.

25253. You have no unclassed forests?—No; we have a certain number of what are called B class forests, which are set aside for cultivation as population increases. They are all reserved under the Forest Act.

25354. And waste lands, the *malguzar* lands as you call them here, are under the administration of the Revenue Officers; the Forest Department has nothing whatever to do with them?—Quite so.

25355. Are complaints very frequent from villagers that they have not got sufficient fuel or thatching grass or anything of that kind?—No, they are not very frequent.

25356. You tell us that the pay of the rangers begins at Rs. 50; how high do they rise?—Rs. 150.

25357. What is the class of officers under the rangers?—Deputy rangers on Rs. 30 and Rs. 40.

25358. What is the lowest class of officers you have?—Forest guards.

25359. According to the circular from which you have quoted, for lower officers there is one right of appeal against any orders of fine or suspension or dismissal, and all officers getting Rs. 50 or more have a second right of appeal to a higher authority?—Yes.

25360. You approve of those rights?—Yes.

25361. Have you any village forests in your circle?—There are no Government forests which are called village forests; all Government forests here are reserved under the Act.

25362. I mean forest areas handed over to the village to be managed by the people themselves?—There are no such areas in this circle.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. C. R. Cleveland was called and examined.

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25363. (*Chairman.*) You the the Inspector-General of Police?—Yes, since 7½ years.

I do not think there is anything wrong with the general system, but the evils of excessive centralization are often manifest owing to the faults of individual officers. Some officers try to do the work of their subordinates and others do the opposite, *i.e.*, they leave too much for their subordinates. The same main faults probably are found from the top to the bottom of the official system, but they are individual. The faults of our system are discoverable by a study of the records and characters of individual officers and not by an examination of the rules by which they are supposed to be empowered, guided, and restrained. I have found all real difficulties due to men and not to systems.

25364. Have you been brought in any way into touch with the Director of Criminal Investigation?—I know him personally very well. Whenever we have met we have discussed official matters.

25365. Does your work overlap with his, or his with yours?—Not very much, he was Secretary to the Police Commission, and I saw a lot of him then, and we have consulted about police matters a great deal, but the relationship was more personal when we had discussions.

25366. Do you find that there is in any way a tendency on his part officially to interfere with the management of the police in this province?—No.

25367. Not in any way at all?—No.

25368. Are you brought into relation with each other officially only on the criminal investigation side of your work?—I had a good deal to do with him in connection with the Police Commission schemes when they were being worked out.

25369. But in the administration of your police here?—No, not since we once settled our schemes.

25370. You have under you a certain number of District Superintendents. Do they correspond direct with you?—Yes, the rule is that on routine matters they correspond direct with me; on important matters, more than routine matters, they write to me through the Deputy Commissioner and occasionally through the Commissioner.

25371. That is in no way touching the discipline or interior economy of the police force?—We try to do it by common sense.

25372. Can you post your District Superintendents?—I have to take the Chief Commissioner's orders, but in very few cases could I say that the responsibility for posting was not on me.

25373. Do you take his orders direct, or through the Chief Secretary?—If there is a difficult case I should probably, if I happened to see the Chief Commissioner, do it direct; for instance, this morning I have been doing posting with the Chief Commissioner direct.

25374. But the requirement is that it should go through the Chief Secretary?—I would talk it over with the Chief Secretary and then send up an unofficial memorandum with my suggestions, which would go to the Chief Commissioner.

25375. They would go back for final sanction?—Yes; there might be a future development, for instance, I have discussed things that are going to happen four or five months ahead, and by the time they get my official memorandum things may have changed altogether.

25376. As regards the relations of the District Superintendent with the District Officer, are they satisfactory on the whole?—We try to keep them satisfactory. It seems to me a great deal depends on personality; there are some Deputy Commissioners who do not get on well with District Superintendents, but on the whole the relations are satisfactory.

25377. I am talking not of individuals, but of the system?—It is very difficult to differentiate.

25378. Do you find that the control or the interference of the District Officer in the working of the police force generally tends in any way to inefficiency?—No, from the point of view of the police we welcome the Deputy Commissioner in every possible way, if he comes in as a helper; as a mere critic we have not room for him.

25379. Does he attempt to criticise?—Occasionally; I said as a mere critic, there are Deputy Commissioners to whom criticism is——

25380. The breath of their nostrils?—Yes, sometimes, and then there is friction; we do not have it often; we do occasionally.

25381. You have no particular recommendation to make to us on that point?—No, the lines are broad enough to work on with individuals.

25382. I see that Mr. Spence, who is your Assistant, says that he does not consider the influence of the Central Provinces system as regards the Police Department to be in the direction of excessive rigidity, but he goes on to say that the Local Government draw up rules to cover every imaginable point; do you find that that is so?—It is customary to work on a Police Manual. Our manual ever since the Police Commission started has been more or less obsolete, and we are now going to have another manual; it rests with us and with the Local Government to see that that manual is not too detailed. The old manual for this and for all other provinces was practically one detailed manual which settled everything. The tendency now is to divide the manual up into volumes, some dealing with things which can be settled once and for all, the others with details (for example as to the number of suits of uniform to be given in a year) which will be left, I hope, as a departmental matter. If you once put them on one big manual, any change requires the sanction of the Local Government, and that is cumbersome.

25383. You think that these new rules will give officers and yourself as Inspector-General somewhat more freedom?—Yes; sometimes one does not introduce a petty change, because after all it is a small matter, and it is not worth going up about.

25384. If a subordinate officer of the police force is punished, what right of appeal has he against the punishment?—He is punished by the District Superintendent, and there is a prescribed right of appeal for reduction, dismissal, and suspension. If he is fined, which is very rare now, or given some smaller punishment, he has no right of appeal, but, of course, every man in the force can apply to me, or he can apply to anybody he likes—to the Chief Commissioner or to the Inspector-General.

25385. Are there two lines of appeal—one through the Deputy Commissioner and one through the District Superintendent?—No, only one.

25386. That is through the District Superintendent?—Yes.

25387. Whether in the case of dismissal or in the case of fining?—There is no right of appeal in the case of fining, it then becomes a matter of application.

25388. Is not that the same thing?—It is a different procedure.

25389. But the result is the same?—No, not always.

25390. The result is that he gets an inquiry into what has happened?—Not always; if it is an application which calls for nothing at all I simply put "File" on it, whereas you never put "File" on an appeal.

25391. (*Mr. Hichens.*) What powers of promotion has the District Superintendent of Police without referring to headquarters?—He appoints his head constables, that is, he may promote any

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constable who has passed his examination, without reference. The next step, from the head constable to a sub-inspector, requires the Inspector-General's sanction. Once a man is a sub-inspector he gets his grade promotion from the District Superintendent of Police without anything further from the Inspector-General. Inspectors are appointed by me, and their promotion is done by me.

25392. Are sub-inspectors usually appointed from head constables?—The two systems are going on side by side. Ultimately the idea is that the great majority of sub-inspectors should be appointed direct from men who come through the Training School, and there will be a small fraction of head constables who obtain promotion. Just at present we are very short of sub-inspectors, and so we are promoting a good number of head constables.

25393. Would it be desirable to give the District Superintendent of Police power to promote to the rank of sub-inspector?—He sends it up in the form of a recommendation roll; it is a very useful formality that it should come through me; I occasionally reject them.

25394. Has he any power of giving small rewards?—Yes. He can give rewards up to Rs. 20.

25395. (*Mr. Dutt.*) When the sub-inspectors' recommendation roll goes up to you does it come with the Deputy Commissioner's remarks?—Yes; always.

25396. In the matter of punishments, when an appeal goes up to you does it come with the Deputy Commissioner's remarks?—If it comes from a head constable or sub-inspector, not if it comes from a constable.

25397. Besides that the Deputy Commissioner has no other power with regard to either promotion or appeals from punishment, except forwarding his remarks to you?—A head constable's dismissal requires the Deputy Commissioner's previous approval under the old system; it will not under the new. A sub-inspector's dismissal requires my approval; the Deputy Commissioner has an opportunity of interfering at any stage if he likes.

25398. Under the old system does not a sub-inspector's grade promotion also require his approval?—That was done by the Inspector-General; the sub-inspectors under the old system were on a provincial list; now they are on a district list.

25399. Generally speaking, is the work of the District Superintendent of Police to some extent under the supervision and control of the Deputy Commissioner?—Certainly.

25400. Where his work relates mainly to the investigation of cases he receives his instructions from the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

25401. But so far as the police force is concerned the District Officer's control is very slight?—It is largely influential.

25402. Considering the responsibilities of the Deputy Commissioner, ought he to have any larger power over the police force?—I think if he is a competent Deputy Commissioner, that he will already have it by influence.

25403. You do not want to give him any more direct power?—I think not.

25404. With regard to the investigation of cases, does the Deputy Commissioner generally receive reports in important cases—dacoity cases and so on?—Yes, reports come through the Deputy Commissioner to me.

25405. Do you get the benefit of the Deputy Commissioner's remarks on those reports in the course of the investigation?—Yes, he has the opportunity; he reads the report of the investigation, and in sending it on to me he occasionally makes notes upon it.

25406. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) As a result of the recent Commission has the District Magistrate, as a fact, lost certain definite powers over the police?—He will have less definite powers in the matter of departmental punishments, but then we have Deputy Inspectors-General, which we had not before.

25407. To a certain extent the Deputy Inspector-General will now occupy the place of the District Magistrate?—I will not go so far as that. If you wish for a detailed answer I would like to refresh my memory.

25408. The appointment of the Commission and the result and orders have led to many changes?—Yes, we are in the transition stage now.

25409. Changes which have been imposed on the Administration by the orders of the Government of India?—Before we were at a standstill for want of funds. What the Administration would have done, if they had had the money, I cannot say.

25410. That is another point, but in regard to the number of police and in regard to their pay?—The changes were partly spontaneous and partly from above; I cannot say that they been imposed upon us.

25411. Have not changes in equipment and pay and so on been embodied in directions emanating from the Government of India?—We have had no rules whatever about equipment except that we give the police more than they had. As regards pay those rates have been settled by the Government of India after consultation with us; we got exactly what we asked for in most cases.

25412. You referred just now to limiting the number of head constables who could be promoted to 15 per cent.; has not that limit been imposed by the Government of India?—That would be a rule from above modified by suggestions of your own, I think.

25413. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Are the constable and head constable grades local to the district?—Yes, so also are the sub-inspectors.

25414. Hitherto appeals from punishment have been controlled by the District Magistrate?—No, if the District Superintendent of Police punishes a constable the next step is that the constable appeals to the Inspector-General. That has always been so.

25415. And head constables?—A head constable would always appeal also to the Inspector-General.

25416. And the sub-inspectors?—They would also appeal to the Inspector-General.

25417. Do sub-inspectors' appeals come through the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

25418. And head constables' appeals?—I am not certain as to that in future.

25419. In all cases the Deputy Commissioner has a right of noting on an appeal?—Yes; in fact, there is rather more than a right of noting; I can bring to mind a case where the Deputy Commissioner has held an inquiry; he has not been satisfied, and he has returned the whole thing.

25420. He can return the case for further inquiry?—He has made the inquiries himself.

25421. That power he will no longer have?—The words are "The records of all serious cases of misconduct and of cases affecting the public should be submitted to the District Magistrate, and he should have power to send them on with his recommendations through the Commissioner to the Deputy Inspector or Inspector-General; he should also have power to call for any papers relating to the case," and so forth. Those are the rules laid down by the Government of India on the report of the Police Commission in the Resolution of March 21st, 1905.

25422. You have not yet got that working?—No.

25423. Are those the latest orders as to appeals that you have received?—Yes; they thought of putting these orders into the Police Act, which I understand, has now been abandoned, and we have just got down the principles of the Police Act.

25424. What do you suppose is the number of appeals which you receive every year?—It is somewhere between 100 and 200 departmental appeals—not more.

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25425. I understand the District Superintendent of Police will have power to practically punish constables and head constables; he will pass his orders without reference to anybody else?—The Government of India laid down principles and said, these principles will be amended in a general Police Act for India. They have given us those principles. For the past three years they have been thinking of the Act, and they have just decided to drop the Act, and we have been asked to work out these principles; so that I could not tell you exactly how it will be.

25426. We were told in Eastern Bengal that the cessation of local appeals to the District Magistrate struck a serious blow at his authority in police matters; you would not agree with that?—No.

25427. Do you see any grave objection to local appeals from the sub-inspector downwards going to the District Magistrate for settlement?—Yes. I think that in a matter of discipline the department is responsible, and should have the power of punishing.

25428. About these reorganisation proposals, were most of your requests accepted?—Most of them were accepted.

25429. You had no particular difficulty about getting anything that you considered necessary?—No, none whatever. As to one or two points of my proposals there were difficulties. I wanted more deputy superintendents at once, and I could not get those for reasons shown. I was very unhappy about the position of our head constables under the future scheme, but I had to accept the decision as the rest of the provinces were in the same position. We started with great local difficulties about the head constables, and we have come down in their pay, while other provinces have gone up.

25430. The head constable in the future is to get no promotion except this 15 per cent.?—Our head constables went up to Rs. 30 *per mensem*; that was the difficulty.

25431. What was the difference of opinion between yourself and the Government of India?—We wanted to pay the head constables more than Rs. 20.

25432. You had done so previously, and in future you will not be able to do so?—No.

25433. You had no difficulties as to numbers?—No.

25434. (*Mr. Meyer.*) As regards these various restrictions to which you refer, is it not the fact that they were recommended by the Police Commission; the Government of India did not evolve these rules out of their own heads?—Do you mean going behind the Resolution and the Commission's report?—What the Police Commission said was Rs. 25 as the pay of head constables, and the Government of India said Rs. 20.

25435. The Police Commission at any rate agreed that there should be a general limitation to the proportion of sub-inspectors who should be promoted head constables?—Yes.

25436. The Police Commission report was sent for suggestions to the various Local Governments?—Yes.

25437. And the upshot was that the orders were in accordance with what the Local Governments suggested?—All the recommendations of the Local Governments were confidential.

25438. Anyhow, the Local Governments had full opportunity of discussion?—Yes.

25439. May I take it that the same was the case in regard to the pay of head constables?—As a matter of fact, I think, the reduction from Rs. 25, which was the Police Commission limit, to Rs. 20 was by the Government of India, not on the Police Commission report.

25440. Then as regards the percentage of sub-inspectors, did the Government of India change the Police Commission's limit there?—I think not.

25441. This uniform pay does not preclude local allowance in special expensive places for head constables?—For constables; I have never seen it put down for head constables.

25442. Under the present system you say that if the District Superintendent of Police reduces a head constable it goes up to the Deputy Commissioner, and if on looking through the record he thinks that there is not sufficient evidence to punish the man on it, he reverses the decision at once?—No. What he as a matter of fact would do would be to talk it over with the District Superintendent; if he convinced him, then the case would be dropped.

25443. So that in reality he is not an appellate authority?—He is not an appellate authority.

25444. Under the new rule can the District Superintendent of Police post men in a district?—He would have to do that with the approval of the Deputy Commissioner.

25445. You think the Superintendent of Police has to get the approval of the Deputy Commissioner with regard to the transfer of an inspector?—I rather think he would have to get the approval of the Deputy Commissioner even as to that, but we are working in a very fluid state.

25446. Take this case; the District Superintendent is quite prepared to keep inspector X where he is, but the Deputy Commissioner has come to the conclusion that X is doing mischief in a certain place, or is not competent to manage it, and wants to remove him; what happens then?—The course would be that the Deputy Commissioner would write to the District Superintendent of Police and say: "I think this man should be removed; if you agree please remove him." The District Superintendent of Police would write back and say: "I do not wish to transfer this man, I think it would be harmful; if you still wish it will you please refer to the Inspector-General." Then the Inspector-General would be brought in or not, according as the difference was settled, or not.

25447. Eventually who would have the deciding word?—If the Deputy Commissioner and I disagreed I should refer it to the Commissioner, if it was an acute disagreement; I have never had a case of that kind.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. S. C. Hill, B.A., B.Sc., was called and examined.

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25448. (*Chairman.*) You are Director of Public Instruction?—Yes.

25449. What is your general scheme of educational control here? There is the Director of Public Instruction; what is there below him?—Then inspectors. The Central Provinces is divided into five Commissionerships; each Commissioner has an inspector of schools; the Commissionerships are divided into districts; each district has a deputy inspector of schools. That is practically the administrative staff. Then the colleges have their principals and professors. There is one difference, however; the inspectors, like the Director, hold an advisory position more than having absolute power. On the other hand the deputy inspector is really an Educational Officer who is lent to the Deputy Commissioner to assist him in the management mainly of vernacular native education.

25450. The primary schools are managed by what authority?—They are managed almost entirely by the Local Boards; that is, the District Councils or District Boards.

25451. By whom are the middle anglo-vernacular schools managed?—Partly by Government, but chiefly by the municipalities. There are very few of these under the District Councils.

25452. And the secondary schools?—The secondary schools consist of the anglo-vernacular schools and the high schools; the high schools are almost all Government schools now, except of course those managed by missionaries and the Muhammadan schools. The Muhammadans do not like to have

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Government control over their schools, because it prevents religious education.

25453. In your opinion is the system of education in the Central Provinces at all what may be described as a centralized system?—No, I think we have here what is practically the maximum of general concurrence; the department limits itself very largely to advising. We have the help of the Deputy Commissioners; in fact, in the Central Provinces without the help of the Deputy Commissioners you might practically close all the primary schools; it is their influence more than anything else which keeps them going.

25454. Are the District Councils apathetic?—The District Councils are in a peculiar position; we have a comparatively large number of aboriginal tribes, and the better classes are not particularly interested in them, and there the missionaries come in very strongly, and the influence of the missionaries and the tahsildars is invaluable.

25455. Do the municipal bodies and committees manage their schools pretty well?—They manage their primary schools not so very well, because there is not sufficient money, and also because they want to use that money for middle anglovernacular schools. All their own sons are likely to grow up to be of influence in the municipalities, and they want them to be educated in their own towns as far as they can, so that they endeavour to get a middle school. There is a constant fight going on to see that they carry out the orders of the Government of India and limit themselves to primary education.

25456. From the point of view of efficiency, ought their powers to be limited to primary schools?—That is Mr. Candy's opinion, but I do not entirely believe in it, because my feeling is, if you want education reduced to an efficient minimum in this province, you should leave it entirely in the hands of the department, but if you wish to employ all the influence available, the influence of the Deputy Commissioners and the influence of the general public, then you ought to leave the powers in the hands of the local bodies. I think for the ultimate development of the general education of the country it is better that we should risk the less of present efficiency.

25457. Do you find that the Director-General interferes at all with your administration?—He does not interfere at all; I have no official cognisance of his existence from one year to the other; he only writes to me demi-officially, and I am not allowed to use his demi-official letters.

25458. He sends you opinions on educational subjects from time to time?—I refer to him a good deal in cases of new departures, as to what is going on in other provinces; I cannot always get that out of other Directors, but I can generally get it from the Director-General.

25459. With regard to the desirability of educating people in self-government, do you insist very strongly upon the curricula of schools being identical all through the Central Provinces?—The curricula of primary schools was drawn up a few years ago by a committee containing Educational Officers, and a certain number of Civil Service Executive Officers, and it was intended to give a practical course of study for primary schools; our object rather is to maintain that standard than to insist on absolue uniformity, and in all backward districts the Deputy Commissioner in consultation with the inspector can alter the curriculum to suit his opinions, simply reporting the matter. The Deputy Commissioner is supposed to know more about the real wants of the people than anybody else.

25460. Do you think there is under the present administration sufficient flexibility?—Absolutely, I think.

25461. Have these instructions by which the inspector plus the Deputy Commissioner can alter the curricula only been a recent change?—When I came here I found my office very much overburdened, and I was ordered to make out a list of the work done and to show how much of it could be done better in other places. The result was that about two years ago a number of the powers formerly exercised by the Director were handed over to inspectors and Deputy Commissioners.

25462. Has that worked well?—I think it is working well, but it is such a short time ago that one can hardly say.

25463. Are there any further powers which you can delegate at present?—I think not. We have delegated practically as much as we can until we know how the present system works.

25464. Mr. Candy says that there are several matters in which powers should be delegated with reference to attendance and so forth?—Those are all petty matters, and are partly delegations to the Director of Public Instruction or to the inspector of schools.

25465. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You served in Bengal a good many years before coming to this province?—Yes, 20 years.

25466. Do you notice any great difference in the educational system between the two provinces?—The chief difference seems to me to be that here the Educational and Civil Services work in very much with each other. There, as an inspector of schools, I was practically independent and hardly ever consulted a Magistrate at all except as a matter of form; here it is the rule with Government that in all questions of policy we shall keep in touch with the District Officers and use their advice as much as possible in guiding ourselves in the general policy.

25467. Is the Central Provinces system the better one?—Decidedly for the Central Provinces.

25468. We were told by several people that it would be desirable to try to give the District Magistrate in Bengal larger control in the matter of secondary education, would you share that view?—I do not think that in Bengal the Magistrate has time to take much share in it.

25469. Assuming he had the time, would it be of advantage to associate him with the management of the zillah schools and so on?—It is so many years since I left Bengal that I do not remember, but in my time he was always the Head of the committee.

25470. Are you satisfied with the position which the District Boards have here with respect to education?—Yes, I think they have quite as much power as they ought to have.

25471. I gather that there is a material difference between the procedure in Berar and the procedure in the Central Provinces proper—in Berar the schools are all managed by the Education Department?—The Education Department is stronger than it has been here; it followed the Bombay lines.

25472. Whereas in the Central Provinces the Boards were supposed to manage their own schools?—Yes, simply with advice from Educational Officers. We have certain rights, the inspector can fine masters in Board schools if he likes, but he cannot always get the municipalities to enforce the fine.

25473. What is the general method by which the Boards here deal with education?—Almost throughout the whole of the Central Provinces the primary schools outside the towns belong to District Councils; in the towns they belong to the municipalities, building any everything else.

25474. Then you have not much in the way of aided schools?—It is almost all missionary education.

25475. Is it aided by the Government or the Boards?—It is generally aided by the provincial Government.

25476. Does the deputy inspector deal with the Board schools direct?—Yes, he practically manages them; in some places you will find the municipalities give him an absolutely free hand, and the District Councils give him a free hand, and as long as he goes on well and there is no great trouble among the people, I think the municipalities and District Councils follow the deputy inspector's advice closely.

25477. Who settles whether there are new schools to be made or an old Board school to be abolished?—The deputy inspector reports on that to the Deputy Commissioner—no school can be closed without my ultimate sanction.

25478. Where does the Board come in?—The deputy inspector reports through the Board, and in that way the Board always has a say in that matter.

25479. Ordinarily the deputy inspector would say that the school ought to be closed?—He would advise the Board so, because he is the inspecting officer.

25480. And if the Board agreed with him it would then come to you for approval?—I would not close it without the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, because we have trouble as to the cost and so on, and it might be possible that the District Council had said, "We do not want to carry on this school, it is only low class people who go there."

25481. Would the ordinary procedure be first for the deputy inspector to move, then for the Board to agree, then for the Deputy Commissioner to concur, and, lastly, for you?—Yes.

25482. Supposing the Board did not agree with the deputy inspector and said "It is good enough for us," what would happen?—Then you can also interfere through the Commissioner. All the finances of the Board are under the Commissioner, and if the Commissioner gives the order, the school would be closed.

25483. The Board's budget for allotments under education comes up to you?—Yes, for comment, with regard only to the portion referring to education.

25484. Do the District Boards give a fixed percentage of their revenue for education?—No.

25485. Speaking generally, who really runs the Board schools in the Central Provinces; do the Boards themselves have much to say about it or is it merely the Education Department and the Deputy Commissioner who spend the Board's funds in the Board's name?—Of course, the real moving spirit is the deputy inspector, but the Boards take a very strong and intelligent interest in the work; I know that by appeals that come up to me.

25486. Do you think they would take more interest if they were allowed to run their own educational sub-committee and so on?—I do not think so—the municipalities have sub-committees.

25487. Mr. Candy states that in the Central Provinces the Boards and municipalities engage their own teachers, but is that generally done for them by the deputy inspector?—Yes.

25488. And that they hold out to them no hopes of pension—have they no provident funds?—None in this province, in Berar they are pensionable.

25489. The Berar system goes the whole way in the matter of Government control?—The District Boards are interfering a great deal more now than they used to.

25490. The upshot of the amalgamation of the provinces will be that education will become more departmentalised in the Central Provinces, but that the District Boards in Berar will get a freer hand?—I think so.

25491. And you look upon that, generally speaking, as a good thing?—Yes.

25492. Have the District Boards here middle schools to any great extent?—Do you mean middle English schools or middle vernacular schools?

25493. Both?—Middle vernacular schools are all Board schools.

25494. You draw the line really at the Anglovernacular or the English school, and the English schools, you think, in this province should be under the provincial Government and the vernacular schools under the Local Board?—Yes.

25495. Are the English schools dealt with by the Deputy Commissioner also?—No, so far as they are municipal schools they are dealt with by him through the municipality, but the teachers are practically all appointed by the department.

25496. And the provincial schools?—Are entirely under the Government, and the Deputy Commissioner has nothing to say as to them except that he is Head of the Committee.

25497. Is that satisfactory?—Quite.

25498. What has the Commissioner to say on the matter of education supported from provincial funds?—He generally limits his interference to criticism on any point that he finds wrong on his tours, and he uses his influence very largely to encourage public interest in schools. For instance, if the people want a new school or a school of higher rank, they generally approach the Commissioner, he approaches all the big people about the place and gets subscriptions, then the matter comes up to Government and Government says "Very well, we will raise your school to such and such a standard if you will provide a building," and that is very often the result—they subscribe towards the building, we aid them, and if it is a high standard we make it a Government school.

25499. Do the Commissioners have much to say with regard to your budget so far as it relates to their division?—No, because they all go up direct to the administration.

25500. Do you not think a Commissioner might profitably see the proposals and have an opportunity of saying that you are spending too little or it may be too much in his division?—I do not think so; I do not think there is any necessity for that. There is so much correspondence and consultation generally as to what schools are wanted, that there is no advantage in his seeing the budget proposals later on. All applications for sanction for big new schools really have had his concurrence before they go up.

25501. Then you think he has sufficient influence as it is?—Absolutely.

25502. Do you think the appointment of Director-General of Education has been a good one?—I do not think it has had any effect at all.

25503. Not one way or the other?—Perhaps that is ungrateful of me, because I am always able to obtain information about other provinces now which I could not before.

25504. Would you give a Local Government an absolutely free hand in educational matters?—I do not think so; I think if you did, education would probably be starved.

25505. Is the Government of India more sympathetic than the Local Government?—I think so, the Government of India want to raise the standard of education to what it is in European countries, and Local Government have so many claims upon them that they might be inclined to starve education.

25506. In connection with what you said as to the inspector of schools and the Deputy Commissioner making alterations in the curriculum, Mr. Candy says that that is only with regard to backward localities—is that so, or would it apply to other localities?—It is only where there are backward classes.

25507. Do you mean by backward classes hill tribes and people of that sort?—We have a large Mahrathi population here which the Brahmans will not have anything to do with, and we find quarters of these people in all the towns.

25508. As regards the cultivating castes, are the schools bound by the provincial Education Code?—That rule really gives the Deputy Commissioner absolute control, and if he chose to say a place was backward no one would question it.

25509. So that if he thought, for instance, that the pupils had better stop the learning of Indian history, and that a little more agriculture or botany should be taught, could he carry out his ideas?—Yes.

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25510. The inspector is an advisory officer mainly?—Yes, mainly.

25511. The Chief Secretary said he was under the impression that that position was being gradually extended, and there was a tendency for the inspector to issue orders more or less to the deputy inspector instead of addressing the Deputy Commissioner—is that the case?—There may have been that tendency, because the relations of inspectors and Deputy Commissioners have never been accurately defined, but recently we have drawn up orders on the subject, and they know now exactly what they are to do.

25512. Are you in favour of keeping them in the position of inspectors merely and not administrators?—They have to administer the Government schools in their circles—the high schools and the Anglo-vernacular schools, when they are Government schools, and they have practically the appointment of all the English teachers in their schools.

25513. That is what I suppose Mr. Candy refers to when he speaks of the transference of teachers?—No, in Berar he tells you that all the masters were under his control and the objection to Mr. Candy's proposal was merely an account objection; if a school had one establishment and transferred one teacher to another, it created a confusion in the accounts—that was all.

25514. There was no question then of exercising such a power as that with reference to a Board school, except in Berar?—In the Central Provinces proper the inspector never transfers a master from one school to another without previous consultation with the Board.

25515. Mr. Candy says that he would lay down generally that the Director of Public Instruction should have wider discretionary power with regard to transferring from one head to another—does he mean from a major head?—I cannot tell you, but as a matter of fact practically all transfers have to be sent up for sanction.

25516. What you administer generally is the fund under the main head of education?—Yes.

25517. I suppose what Mr. Candy meant was the minor heads that come under that?—Yes.

25518. And you have no such power now?—Practically none—all reappropriations have to be sent up for sanction and that very often takes a long time.

25519. Is it advisable that you should have such power?—I think so.

25520. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Has any attempt been made to make the standard of curricula in Berar the same as it is in the Central Provinces since the amalgamation?—When I came to the province, I found a sort of standing order that whatever was done in Berar which differed from the Central Provinces should be altered, but Mr. Candy represented to me the trouble and confusion this would cause, so that the Beraris are now allowed to have their own text-books; their curricula have been slightly modified, and in consultation with the inspectors of the Central Provinces we are trying to draw up curricula which will suit both.

25521. Do you consider that the Berar curricula and text-books are better than those of the Central Provinces?—I do not know, but the general impression is that they were much more popular and the people were more pleased with them, but I do not understand Mahrathi.

25522. One witness has said that in the desire to secure uniformity standards have now been drawn up which have lowered efficiency in Berar, and Mahrathi books have been prepared the style of which is inferior and the grammar at times questionable—what do you say as to that?—I do not think there is much in that. The great difficulty in the Central Provinces is to get anything like a language which will be understood all over the provinces. Some of the Deputy Commissioners say, "There is not a man in my district who understands such words," but they are perfectly good words and are probably used in the next district.

25523. What particular reason is there for trying to modify the Berar standards and curricula if the people are pleased with them?—When I took over charge I tried to stop all that change, but we found that there were faults in our curricula and text-books, that is to say in the Mahrathi portion of the Central Provinces, and as officers are transferred from one part of the province to another their children go with them, and therefore it is advantageous that the boys should be reading as far as possible the same standard in the different places. With that object we are trying to draw up better curricula and better books which will be acceptable to both provinces.

25524. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Some time ago in a training school in Berar there was found to be the grossest indiscipline, and all the Commissioner of the division had to say about it was that he did not consider it was any of his business—would that be the case nowadays?—I believe the Commissioner was hauled over the coals for that.

25525. Do you, as a department, consider that the Commissioner and the District Officers have any responsibility in the matter of secondary education?—I think they are very largely responsible, and the tone of a town is very largely dependent upon the interest taken by the District Officers in educational work.

25526. In the case of higher places of education, high schools and training colleges, have you Boards of Visitors?—I do not think there are any Boards of Visitors for training colleges, and of course the excuse that it was none of his business was more plausible than it would have been in any other case, but high schools have all got committees, and the chairman is invariably the Deputy Commissioner. That has only recently been applied to Berar.

25527. Do you think it would be a good thing to establish in connection with all these places of education, training schools included, Boards of Visitors including the higher officials?—It is very difficult to get Boards of Visitors, and the higher officials are so busy that they cannot afford the time. That is my only objection.

25528. With regard to primary schools, at present the District Boards are nominally responsible? What would you say to going a step lower and in some of the best villages giving the village panchayat, or some representative of the village, power to manage schools?—In all the villages whenever there is a school there is a village committee, and the village committees in the Central Provinces have absolute control of all fees collected; that is sufficient control.

25529. Are they responsible in any way for the housing of the school?—No, the District Council is responsible for the housing, but they are supposed to do a little in the way of keeping up gardens, and distributing prizes.

25530. Would it be possible to make them entirely responsible for the maintenance of the schools by giving them a grant and entrusting them with the spending of it?—That would be a very good policy if grants for instance were given for building, and they were allowed to spend the money themselves. The money that is given for buildings now is very largely wasted.

25531. Who provides the buildings now?—The District Council. They generally engage contractors who do the work very badly.

25532. In the best villages would you advocate giving the villagers the money and leaving them to build the house without any other control?—Except that they should submit their plans to the deputy inspector, they should be allowed to build the house themselves, and I would propose that a percentage of the money should be kept until they had built it satisfactorily.

25533. At any rate, as an experiment, you would be inclined to give village schools into the management of the villagers?—Yes.

25534. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Is the Deputy Inspector always a member of the District Board?—No.

25535. Then he inspects the District Board schools probably in accordance with some Government rule?—He has a manual which tells him what his work is, and in accordance with the rules laid down and the advice issued from time to time by the inspector or Director he makes his inspection.

25536. But, as a matter of fact, he is not a member of the District Board in any of the districts of the Central Provinces?—I think he is in some.

25537. But he inspects in his capacity of deputy inspector, and not as a member of the District Board?—Yes.

25538. Do the *tahsil* Boards or the *taluk* Boards interest themselves at all in the primary schools within their areas?—Local Boards very often interest themselves, but more personally, I think, than officially.

25539. Have you a class of officers called sub-inspectors of schools?—No.

25540. So that the whole of the inspection work is done by the deputy inspector?—Yes.

25541. Is not the work too much for him?—I made a slight mistake in saying that we had a deputy inspector for each district; that was the original arrangement, but when a district becomes too large it is divided into ranges, and a deputy inspector will have from 60 to 80 schools to inspect which he must inspect twice a year.

25542. Are those Board schools, or Board and Government schools put together?—The primary schools are practically all Board schools, but it includes all schools whether private, aided or Board schools.

25543. Besides that, has he to inspect secondary schools—Anglo-vernacular and high schools?—He has the Anglo-vernacular only in Berar, and no secondary education schools in the Central Provinces.

25544. Are deputy inspectors Gazetted Officers?—Their salaries run from Rs. 60 to Rs. 200; they are not what you would ordinarily call Gazetted Officers.

25545. Are not their transfers gazetted like those of Deputy Collectors?—They are gazetted, but we do not call them Gazetted Officers.

25546. Their appointments, transfers and promotions rest with the Government?—They rest entirely with the Director.

25547. You do not have to take any order from the Chief Commissioner to transfer, appoint, or promote them?—No, the Government does not interfere with me except as regards provincial appointments and appointments in the superior Service.

25548. Do none of these deputy inspectors belong to the Provincial Service?—None.

25549. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Apart from reference on financial grounds are there many educational matters that have to be referred to the Government of India?—Very few, except in regard to appointments.

25550. That is a financial matter practically?—Yes, with regard to the salary of the appointment, and of course if you wish to start any new big institution that is a question of finance, but the Government of India also consider the question of policy.

25551. In a matter of that sort would the reference be more than financial?—Yes. For instance we wanted to start a Law College here and the Government of India considered the question and refused action, but they did not refuse it on the financial ground, but because it had not been a success in Madras.

25552. Do you think a matter of that sort should be settled by the provincial Government itself?—Yes.

25553 .Generally speaking, would you say there are few matters except financial matters which should be referred to the Government of India?—I think so.

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25554. Do the Government make a direct contribution to the District Boards for primary education?—Yes.

25555. To cover the whole of it?—Yes, it is supposed to cover the whole of it. The District Councils have a sort of general fund; the Government earmark certain cesses for them and make them a general contribution. There used to be a fixed contribution, but now it is a general contribution, and as long as the Commissioner is satisfied th they spend enough there is no further interferenc

25556. And they and the municipalities do n deal with Anglo-vernacular schools?—They do in certain number of cases, but we are gradual taking them over.

25557. You do think it is sound that Ang vernacular schools should come under Governmen —I think it is advisable at any rate at present. do not think they have sufficient knowledge manage a high school.

25558. We were told that if they had the pow that is just the sort of school they would establis because it is the kind of school their own so would go to?—Yes, they would do so, but wh they had such a school they would not understa how it ought to be run.

25559. Then you are of opinion that they a not sufficiently experienced?—There are not s ficiently educated men on these Boards; that wo not apply to Bengal, but this is a somewhat ba ward province.

25560. But suppose the Deputy Commissio were to look after it?—He would not have time

25561. The fact remains that that is the work in which they would be most interested?—Certainly.

25562. Therefore, it is a pity that they should not do the work in which they are interested, rather than work in which they are not?—Certainly, and if they were capable we should be very glad to make it over to them.

25563. Assuming they were interested in it and not in primary education, would it not be better to hand over to them the work of Anglo-vernacular education and take away the work of primary education?—I should not like to answer that question straight away.

25564. I understood you to say that they were interested to some extent in the one and not in the other?—Yes.

25565. With regard to the Government of India are you anxious they should have a general control, in order that they may see education gets its proper share of attention?—Yes.

25566. Do they to-day make a direct contribution?—Yes, they make direct contributions for many educational objects; for instance, they made a direct contribution for primary education, and since then they have made one for European education and one for secondary education; at present they are ordering us to reconsider the whole question of secondary education, but whether they are going to give us any money or not I do not know.

25567. How are they ordering you to reconsider it?—They have informed us (which we knew of course) that the teachers in secondary schools were extremely badly paid and the quality of the schools was not what it ought to be, and suggested that the maximum salary of Rs. 200 might be raised to Rs. 400, and the question is, where is the money to come from? They warned us at the same time that they were not likely to be able to give us the money.

25568. Is the pay of teachers a matter which concerns the Government of India?—It was a very good thing for them to tell us and lay down some rule, because that is a thing in which education is locally starved; the local people do not understand the importance of education and therefore they are satisfied with schools under masters on Rs. 200

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when one knows that for schools of that class they cannot be run well under men on less than Rs. 400.

25569. We were told elsewhere that if Local Governments were left with a free hand what would happen would be that one Government would raise the pay of a schoolmaster and that would practically force the hands of other Local Governments and make them do the same thing; what do you say as to that?—I do not think it would force their hands; for instance, in Bombay they pay their men very much better than they are paid anywhere else, and no one has felt bound to follow.

25570. Is it not conceivable that the question of the status and salary of schoolmasters would be more fully considered in the long run if each province was allowed to do what it liked, that is to say, if uniformity was not insisted on by the Government of India?—No, I think the Government of India will probably lay down a high and fairly satisfactory standard, and it is advantageous that the Government of India should tell us what it thinks is practically the minimum for which we can get good men.

25571. Are they more likely to know that?—They are more likely to know than the local authorities

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Adjourned.

FORTIETH DAY.

NAGPUR, *Thursday, 6th February*, 1908.

PRESENT:

C. E. H. HOBHOUSE, Esq., M.P., Under Secretary of State for India, *Chairman*

Sir FREDERIC LELY, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Sir STEYNING EDGERLEY, K.C.V.O., C.I.E., I.C.S.
R. C. DUTT, Esq., C.I.E.
W. S. MEYER, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.
W. L. HICHENS, Esq.

The Hon. Mr. G. M. CHITNAVIS, C.I.E., was called and examined.

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25572. (*Chairman.*) Will you tell us your profession?—I am a landholder, residing in Nagpur. I have been Chairman of the municipality for the last ten years, and of the District Council for a similar term.

The financial relations between the Imperial and the provincial Governments are satisfactory enough. The general financial policy must be determined by the Imperial Government, but in matters of detail there should be greater elasticity and greater autonomy in the action of the provincial Governments, especially as regards famine and irrigation. Local needs are likely to be better known to the provincial Government, and greater independence of action should be productive of good. The Imperial Government has often to consider the applications for relief of a number of Local Governments, and the relief is sometimes inadequate in a particular area. Provincial Governments, when reporting on distress, have no means of comparing notes; there is not, consequently much in the reports themselves to enable the Imperial Government to come to a correct decision about the comparative urgency of the cases. The difficulties of the Imperial Government are increased by the fact of the Head of one provincial Government being more anxious than another to have a larger share of the imperial bounty as a sort of insurance against a likely famine. The actual state of things does not appear until the famine is over, and the necessity for expenditure has ceased. It may be that, in the end, one provincial Government has a larger surplus in hand than another, while the distress has been very inadequately relieved in other provinces for shortness of funds. Money might be more economically and more usefully spent by giving greater autonomy to the provincial Governments in the matter of famine relief. The policy and the principles of famine administration being settled by the Imperial Government, the details should be left to be worked out by the provincial Governments in consultation with the representatives of the people. At present, the Government has to depend too much upon the reports of subordinate officers, anxious for *kudos* by preventing expenditure and ignorant of its benevolent intentions. In actual practice, the report of a village accountant or patwari determines the fate of the whole village; and unless there is certain death from starvation the true state of affairs does not come to the knowledge of the Government. But then it is too late and the provincial Government, not having made ample provision in its famine budget for the particular area, finds itself hampered in its operations. The patwari often sides with the cultivators against the *malguzars* and fraudulently reports prevalence of distress in villages where there is none. This not only causes wanton loss to the provincial Government in having to provide for an imaginary famine, but causes still greater loss to the *malguzars* who have to make remission of rent which is easily recoverable, at a time when their resources are severely taxed. It will certainly improve matters, especially in relations between the Government and the people, if the provincial Governments are influenced in their decision by public opinion. And Divisional Advisory Councils, if properly constituted, will be found very helpful, as the tenants will be equally strongly represented on such Councils as the *malguzars*.

In the matter of irrigation the Imperial Government must continue to lay down the guiding principles, but in matters of detail provincial Governments should have greater autonomy. Local Governments and the people are in a better position to judge of the utility, the urgency, and the commercial prospects of a particular scheme.

Larger administrative powers should be given to provincial Governments in matters of light railways, emigration, reduction of revenue assessment, and protection of local industries. Light railways are necessary, especially in my province, and Local Governments should have greater freedom of action in initiating them. Having regard to the scarcity of labour, emigration should be checked and regulated by Local Governments, irrespective of the policy of the Imperial Government. It may likewise be necessary that revenue assessments should

be reduced in a local area for the prosperity of the people. The protection of local industries is more a matter of provincial concern, the Local Governments ought to be able to do something in the matter, without the special sanction of the Imperial Government. Well-conceived industrial schemes worked by provincial Governments will have an educative influence which is valuable in itself, and will further divert the hoarded capital of the country into remunerative channels.

Local Governments may be invested with borrowing powers on a small scale. The chief conditions should be that the loans must be repaid from surpluses within 40 years, that they should not involve additional taxation, and that the money must be employed on remunerative works and in subsidising measures of sanitary and industrial improvement undertaken by small municipalities and District Boards. The loans must also carry an imperial guarantee.

Taxation ought to be imposed with the sanction of the Imperial Government, and the Imperial Government should execise a general oversight over the provincial Administration in the matter of taxation. Taxation has reached almost the breaking point, and over-centralization in administration and red-tapism account for a large portion of it. The introduction of a complex system of administration with multiplicity of departments is at the root of the evil. The destruction of the old village communities and the assumption of larger powers by the District Officer, necessitating increased ministerial work and correspondence and tours, have increased the cost of administration. The rehabilitation of the village institutions and making them living forces with real power will reduce expenditure, and, consequently, taxation.

Official tours should be undertaken only in exceptional cases. Sometimes, besides causing waste of energy and time on the part of high-placed officers, they entail great hardship upon the people. It is impossible for the officers to prevent the exactions of their suite, notwithstanding the most commendable vigilance on their part. These tours entail a heavy responsibility on the *malguzar*, which, in view of the increasing scarcity of labour in the interior, it becomes very difficult for him to discharge. The *begar* system is no longer in vogue, and the *kotwar* has acquired an independent position in the village; and what the *malguzar* could have done easily in former times has now become to him a very irksome and onerous task. The District Officer, the Sub-Divisional Officer, and the tahsildar have at present to do a certain amount of judicial work, and from the necessities of the situation, they have to fix cases for hearing in camp, despite the rules recently made for the regulation of such hearings. Parties have to be in attendance with their witnesses far away in the interior on the off-chance of their cases being heard. The officer concerned often has to adjourn to some other village, probably several miles off the first, where the poor litigant has to follow him. Parties do not get proper legal help in the interior, and, where necessary, they have to pay for it at a ruinous rate. Officers should be directed to fix their camp in large rural centres, where there is no difficulty about quarters, provisions, and labour. And at the time of the revision of revenue these rural centres should be allowed some concession by way of compensation for the trouble undergone in the management of the tours.

A District Officer should not be transferred from his district before five years

The district administration must be simplified, and the details settled in view of local needs and requirements. The administration is dominated too much by considerations of revenue. The central Government wants money, and looks to the provincial Government for supply. Some of the imperial taxes—the income-tax and the cesses, for instance—are assessed and collected by the provincial Governments. The necessities of the Imperial Government create a zeal among the subordinate Governments which is gradually communicated to the District Officer, who tries to raise as much revenue as possible, regardless of the capacity and the wishes of the people. The income-tax administration, for instance, is as unsympathetic and rigorous as possible. There is a tendency to show an increased collection at the end of the year. Assessments by the subordinate officers are generally heavy, and the remedy of appeal is unreal. Collectors and Commissioners seldom choose to interfere. Books of account in many cases cannot be shown to the assessing officer for the simple reason that they disclose facts which affect the solvency and the credit of the party. But the assessor is unconvinced, and that even where the books are produced.

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I would not curtail the right of appeal, whether against administrative and executive orders or against judicial orders connected with revenue. Not that it affords much relief, but it affords consolation to the people, and a curtailment of the right will be a fruitful source of dissatisfaction and discontent.

There is no need for any large increase in the administrative staff. Far from the Services being undermanned, there are too many offices and officials.

Local bodies may with advantage be given the power of allowing pensions and bonuses to their deserving servants, and I would like to see these local bodies devoting some of their attention and resources to the encouragement of small industries.

The former village system with the *malguzar* as the unit of the administration gave him a position among the people which enabled him to keep effective control over them in troublous times. He could therefore easily answer for their loyalty, but now, with loss of power, there has been a loss of responsibility too. He is now only a farmer of revenue, and his other duties have been taken away from him and placed in the hands of the various village officers—*mukaddam*, *gomasta*, patwari *kotwar*, and the police. He has to live under the surveillance of these officers, who are wholly independent of him, and assert their predominance in the village by the promotion of a factious and refractory spirit among the tenantry. There is a division, rather than a co-ordination, of power, and there is a serious conflict of interests in the present system. I would therefore restore to the *malguzar* his former powers and responsibilities. The rural administration will then become at once simple and inexpensive. The old patriarchal relations subsisting between the *malguzar* and the cultivator being restored, the former will become at once the bulwark against oppression upon the people and the exponent to the people of the benevolent intentions of Government.

I would also suggest in this connection the expansion of the system of what is known as Conciliation Boards, both as regards sphere of action and the area. These Boards not only relieve officers of a lot of trouble, but will reduce the cost of litigation, increase popular contentment, and, consequently, the popularity of the administration. The Debt Conciliation Boards have worked satisfactorily in my province, but a resort to these Conciliation Boards should be optional with the people. The system will work automatically towards progress, and the Boards will have the strongest motive to work, in a manner best calculated to inspire confidence among the people.

Small bounties given in time by the Divisional Commissioner to local genius, to men distinguished for their services to their fellow-countrymen, and to local indigenous institutions will go a great way to popularise the administration. Such bounties will remove the charge now so freely levelled against the Imperial Government of being impersonal. In former times Rajas used to mark their appreciation of local merit in a substantial way, and these grants will encourage local merit, as also small industries, and preserve from decay indigenous institutions. Commissioners should be able to do for the smaller Indian institutions what Lord Curzon did for the larger. Commissioners of divisions however impressed with the desirability of such bounties in the present administration hardly care to go up for sanction to the provincial Government.

District Officers have not that touch with the people which is so very essential for proper administration; not that the opportunities are rare,

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but that they have not much spare time for social intercourse with them. Besides, much depends on the temperament of the officer. Some District Officers do freely mix with the people, while others, either from temperament or pre-occupation with more congenial diversions, are more reserved and retired.

District Officers have a fair knowledge of the vernaculars, but they might well improve their knowledge by a freer intercourse with the people.

Improvements in municipalities and District Boards are sometimes forced upon the bodies, irrespective of their capacity and wishes, and necessitate the imposition of additional taxation, creating discontent. They must be left to a large extent to the local bodies, both as regards initiation and execution. In the case of petty municipalities there should be a confederation, and those of one sub-division should act under the guidance and direction of a joint Board. The imposition of taxation should be dependent upon the advice of the Divisional Advisory Council, and in all matters connected with the district administration the people should be carried along with the Government. Official enthusiasm for progress and precision must not always carry everything before it, inasmuch as sometimes, apart from the intrinsic merits of the suggested improvement and the cost involved, the procedure alone is enough to excite popular antipathy and opposition. The Local Government in my province is amenable to popular influence to a degree which is refreshing. The local authority has uniformly been anxious to make allowance for the conservatism and the susceptibilities of the people; but there is a difficulty and a danger ever present before officers recruited in a country where material civilization has made enormous progress. The officers are naturally imbued with large ideas of progress, which, apart from local conservatism, are, as often as not, unsuited to the capacity and the circumstances of the people. Improvements must be made, but they should be gradually introduced with caution, circumspection, and a proper regard to the wishes, feelings, and the capacity of the people.

I am in favour of creating Divisional Advisory Councils. Such Councils should be composed of 12 members each, half of whom should be selected by the Local Government and the other half elected by the various local bodies, the professions, the classes or communities not adequately represented on the local bodies, and the trades. These members should be consulted by the Commissioners by letter on all large schemes of improvement and taxation. On special occasions they may be required to attend meetings at the Commissioner's bungalow.

25573. You tell us that it would be well to have an Advisory Council for the division?—Yes; I would not like to have an Advisory Council for the Deputy Commissioner.

25574. You say the provincial Governments ought to have greater autonomy than they have in the matter of famine and that in actual practice the report of a patwari may determine the fate of a whole village. In this province you have had considerable experience of famine?—Yes. With regard to suspensions and remissions and so on, the *malguzar*, who is interested in the matter, ought to be consulted; I speak more generally of suspensions and remissions when I refer to the patwari.

25575. In the case of famine, have there been actual cases where the failure of one of these patwaris to report has resulted in a particular village not being relieved?—I cannot give specific instances.

25576. You speak of light railways, and that Local Governments should have greater freedom in initiating them. Could a Local Government get the funds locally?—They can borrow to a certain extent. It has to be tried yet; there are some *malguzars* and raiyats who might be able to give some money on loan with a Government guarantee.

25577. Do you mean a guarantee of the Government of India or of the Local Government?—It would be all the same any way; if the Local Government gives the guarantee it is all the same binding upon the Imperial Government.

25578. You say that you regret the destruction of the old village communities, and you speak of the assumption of larger powers by the District Officer; do you suggest that the District Officer has larger powers than he used to have?—Yes. Some time ago, when the province was first formed, there was more personal Government than there now is.

25579. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Are you a *malguzar*?—Yes, of about 200 villages.

25580. Does the village panchayat exist in these days?—It exists among certain castes.

25581. You have caste panchayats for dealing with certain caste domestic questions, but is there any united action on any matter among the villagers?—Whenever there is a question about taxation; sometimes there is.

25582. Is there combined action of any kind?—Yes to a certain extent.

25583. Do you think it would be possible to commit the management of any village affairs to representatives of the villagers?—Instead of giving over the management to representatives of the villagers I would rather have it based upon the system prevailing in Conciliation Boards, where there is a Government officer and some men of the villages to form a panch.

25584. You think that village action is not possible without some connection with Government authority?—I think so to a certain extent.

25585. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You would like the Heads of provincial Governments to lay down the general principles of administration, leaving those general principles to be worked out by the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner?—Yes, in consultation with the leaders of the people.

25586. You say that official tours are not an unmixed blessing, but you admit that official tours must be undertaken. What remedies do you propose to do away with the inconveniences now caused?—You might have big villages chosen where there are shops and provisions to be had, where the officers could go into camp. That would save the people a great deal of trouble; it is not only the money but the scarcity of labour that causes the *malguzar* very much trouble. He has to do much more than can reasonably be expected of him. I think also that there might be some improvement in the matter of the location of Sub-Divisional Magistrates; that would go a long way to minimise the evil. As there is a good deal of experience now, a good deal of uniformity in the working of the administration, and greater facilities of communication, I would rather enlarge the charges of the District Officers and Divisional Commissioners, so that they would have more scope for their powers.

25587. Is not the size of districts already very large in the Central Provinces?—I do not think it will matter if there is still further extension in that direction.

25588. You say that you would not curtail the right of appeal; will you state your reasons?—There is some satisfaction to the people when there is a right of appeal. In the matter of income-tax especially, we find here that the original estimate of a man's income is generally made by an assessor; these assessments are made every year; it is very troublesome to the people, they are very much vexed, and the assumption is that because there has been general growth in a particular year there has been growth in income, in spite of the fact that there may have been actual loss. It is better that the right of appeal should exist.

25589. You apply the same principle to appeals of other kinds?—Yes.

25590. You say that you regret the destruction of the former village system, with the *malguzar* as the unit of administration; at present there is a *mukaddam*?—Yes, and a *gomasta* and a patwari; he is paid by the *malguzar*, but the *malguzar* has no control over him. He is virtually a servant of the police; he is under the police, and he is virtually a servant of Government, but *malguzar* has to pay for him. As to who is the responsible unit, I really do not know whom to say.

25591. You propose that in any sort of village organization the position of the *malguzar* should be recognised?—If his position was recognised, the people would look up to him, and the Government could also hold him responsible for any disturbance in the villages, and the administration would be rather simplified.

25592. When you have recognised the position of the *malguzar*, and made him either the *mukaddam* or the village headman, would you suggest that other villages should form a panchayat to help him in his work?—I think not; if civil powers of a simple character were given to him, there ought to be such a panchayat, but for ordinary work it is not necessary.

25593. Would you suggest that some civil power should be given to the *malguzar* assisted by some respectable villagers in advanced villages?—Yes, but that should be attempted first with the help of Government officers and then, gradually, their assistance should be withdrawn.

25594. In that way a great many of the petty cases which now come up to the Civil Courts might be dealt with locally in the villages?—A great deal of progress might be made in that direction.

25595. Would you make the decisions of the village panchayats final in small matters?—Yes.

25596. Would you vest the panchayat with small criminal powers also?—Not just now.

25597. You have suggested that certain powers now exercised by the Local Governments might be delegated to Commissioners. Will you briefly mention one or two important matters in which such delegation might be made?—As regards the municipality or District Council, there are many matters which have to go up to the Chief Commissioners, and they take up time. In an important matter it will take two or three months to receive a reply; all that red-tapism has to be gone through. Some of those powers might be given over to the Commissioners.

25598. You have a District Board now in every district. Would you suggest that the members of the District Board should be utilized some times by the District Officer in obtaining advice on certain matters?—Yes, they might make a selection from the District Board members; there are others also who are equally intelligent, who do not care to come to the Council, but whose advice would be valuable; these men might be called in and consulted.

25599. Would you like the consultation to be periodical, or when the necessity arose?—When the necessity arose.

25600. (*Mr. Hichens.*) You recommend that the provincial Government should be given further powers in regard to the control of emigration; what is your reason?—On account of plague and on account of other matters, our agricultural labour is becoming very scarce and dear. There will be a time probably when it will be impossible for us to get agricultural labour in the villages; and as land revenue is the principal item of income of Government it might suffer to a certain extent.

25601. Your point of view is that each provincial Government ought to be allowed to control itself the emigration of the members of the community into other provinces?—That is my view. They might see also that there are congested localities, and they might make an attempt at re-distribution where any facilities for the purpose exist.

25602. Would it be a sound thing that the Deputy Commissioner should be Chairman of the District Board more frequently in this province?—Where there are other men who are competent I do not see any necessity for the Deputy Commissioner to preside.

25603. You do not think that he should take part in the work of the Board, and associate himself with it more than he does?—Where there are competent men he should not officially interfere in the working of the Councils.

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25604. He has a wide experience?—Certainly; he should be kept acquainted with all the proceedings, but his presence on the District Councils is not necessary.

25605. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You desire that the Local Government should be given larger discretion in regard to the administration of famine; do you mean that they should have more funds at their disposal, or that they should be able to adopt any system of famine relief that seems good to them?—They should have more funds at their disposal. I cannot answer the question in detail, because it is only those who are in the secrets of Government who can answer it properly.

25606. Are you aware of the recent arrangements by which the Government of India have given the provincial Governments much larger resources for dealing with famine?—Yes, I have heard that about a years or two ago some new arrangements were made, and I hear they are very satisfactory as far as the provincial Governments are concerned.

25607. You say that Local Government can judge better of the prospects of productive works than the Government of India. Is there not always a danger of people who are interested in works taking a sanguine estimate of what they will bring in?—But, all the same, they have to be responsible to the Supreme Government and also to the public, so that instead of being more sanguine they have to be more careful.

25608. Have you never heard of works which were estimated to bring in a profit ending in a loss?—That applies to everything; probably if the Government of India were consulted they might make a mistake.

25609. But a central outside authority is less likely to be carried away by local enthusiasm than a Local Government?—That is more or less applicable to all systems.

25610. What do you mean precisely by "the protection of local industries"?—I mean industries such as the brass industry here and in Bhandara, or the lace industry in Berhampore. Something might be done to keep up those industries, if Commissioners were given some power to help them.

25611. You say that every province ought to be at full liberty to restrict the movement of its population. Some provinces want populatioin, and they must get it from other provinces?—We are concerned primarily of course with our own needs and requirements, and we cannot afford to send our population to other places and at the same time starve ourselves.

25612. This is a province with great possibilities in the matter of mineral industries, for instance?—Yes, and we say that on account of the plague and so on we have lost a great deal of population; most of our coolies have been taken away to Assam and other places.

25613. For your new industries possibly you would want labour from Bengal and Madras; you would not have liked the Governments of Bengal and Madras to say that their labour should not come to you?—If they have surplus labour they would like to help us; if they have no surplus labour, it would be rather bad for us to expect labour which is useful to them.

25614. You are in favour of a reduction of taxation, speaking generally?—Do you think you would get more reduction of taxation from the Local Governments if they had a free hand or from the Government of India, under the present system?—That is a very difficult question to answer.

25615. Do you think the salt tax would have been reduced, as it has been in recent years, if it had been a provincial tax which the Local Governments could have dealt with as they chose?—Our local needs and requirements are better known to the Local Government than to the Government of India, so that in the matter of local taxes at least we have more regard to local needs and requirements.

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25616. You suggest that more power ought to be given to the Local Government in the matter of land revenue assessments. Is light assessment more likely to come from Local Governments which may be in urgent need of funds, or from the Government of India?—With greater autonomy in this matter, the Local Government, unhampered by imperial control, might deal with the necessities of the situation more expeditiously and efficaciously than at present, and forthwith order reductions, remissions, and suspensions of revenue, which it might well hesitate to recommend to the Imperial Government in view of the fact that the revenue assessment is sanctioned by the Government on its recommendation.

25617. You speak of the centralization of administration as an evil; at the same time you object to any decrease in the facility of appeals. Is it not this very matter of appeals that has caused a great number of uniform rules and resolutions?—I do not know whether it is appeals only; it is the system.

25618. So long as there is an appeal against everything a man does, will he not stick to the letter of the law?—But commonsense to a great extent will be the deciding factor.

25619. You would like to give the Commissioner larger powers of control; do you include in that control over the municipalities?—Yes. The Commissioner might do that instead of the Local Government.

25620. You say, "The necessities of the Imperial Government create a zeal among the subordinate Governments which is gradually communicated to the District Officer." Do not subordinate Governments get half the money?—But the Imperial Government gets the other. The income tax is divided between the Imperial and Local Governments.

25621. You think the Local Government does not care about its share, but it is actuated purely by a disinterested zeal that the Imperial Government should get more?—When there is pressure from above, there is that desire.

25622. Are you aware that the Government of India issued a circular, a few years ago, drawing the attention of the Local Governments to the undesirability of their officers being too rigid in the matter of income tax?—I know also that here we have been agitating in vain against assessments of income tax. They are very obnoxious to the people, and we have been agitating for triennial assessments; we think that triennial assessments would give us more relief than the yearly assessments now do.

25623. You say the *malguzar* is now only a farmer of revenue; was it not the other way round; did we not find the *malguzar* a mere farmer of revenue and make him a landlord?—That is so, but I am speaking of his powers. You have divided power among so many men that no actual power rests with the *malguzar* now, either for good or for bad; he is a collector of revenue only. In these executive matters I would make him the unit of administration; and if you give him some small civil jurisdiction, I would associate with him a panchayat, in small matters in the beginning, and under Government control.

25624. The panchayats would be mainly his tenants?—Yes, but they are not always led by him.

25625. You do not think that, if he said a particular thing, they would all say the same?—I think not.

25626. We have been told repeatedly that a Deputy Commissioner or Collector ought not to be a member of the District Board because all the other people will be frightened of him; you do not think that that would apply to the *malguzar*?—No. The general opinion is (and it is confirmed by the reports of Government officers in many instances) that the tenantry here is much too strong for the *malguzars*.

25627. The Conciliation Boards you speak of were initiated by the Government?—Yes.

25628. And they work satisfactorily?—Yes.

25629. You are in favour of allowing the Divisional Commissioner to give bounties. How is he going to determine who deserves a bounty and who does not?—He has the best means of deciding: he knows the district; he knows the people; he knows the work; he has the greatest knowledge; and he will know the amount of good that these small industries are doing to the people.

25630. Bounties are to be given also "to men distinguished for their services to their fellow countrymen"; is the Divisional Commissioner to appreciate those?—Yes. In many matters where a man has done good work in the municipality or District Council it will be some encouragement to him if he receives appreciation from the Commissioner; it would also make the Government more popular.

25631. You have heard the story of a king of France who said that when he bestowed a favour he made one ungrateful friend and nine enemies; would that apply to the Commissioner also?—That could be said with greater force of a Government that show nothing in the way of appreciation of meritorious public service.

25632. With regard to the Advisory Councils, are they to be purely advisory?—For the present I would limit the work of the Councils to advice only.

25633. What is to happen if the Commissioner disagrees with his Council?—For some time, until he finds that his Council works well, I would not fetter his discretion by making the opinion of the Council binding on him.

25634. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Your remedy is to try and develop the village system and local self-government, and you think that a great many powers could be delegated from Commissioners. Will that not have to be a very gradual process?—It will be a gradual process of course.

25635. You will have to alter the laws?—Yes, the laws will have to be altered.

25636. Have you thought about how to do it?—Would you be in favour of a general Act of delegation enabling that to be done gradually, or would you legislate specifically from time to time?—I think there ought to be legislation for certain powers to be given, and those powers might be handed over by the Chief Commissioner. Power might be given in the law to the Chief Commissioner to delegate those powers, when he finds that there is necessity for it.

25637. That would be giving the Chief Commissioner a general power to delegate as the situation developed?—Yes; and then I would further recommend, judging from what is being done in several provinces, that there might be certain powers given by specific legislation also.

25638. Will you explain that?—It depends on the work done by municipalities and District Councils in the several provinces. If there are many municipalities and District Councils which are working well in a province, powers in that province might be at once given by legislation.

25639. You could not have an Act for every municipality?—No.

25640. They would all differ; you want to delegate more power here and less power there, and so on?—Yes.

25641. Should that be done by actual specific legislation, or by a general power to delegate powers as needed?—I should prefer a general power to delegate powers as, and when, needed.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. M. K. PADHYE was called and examined.

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25642. (*Chairman.*) What is your profession?—I am a pleader and a journalist, residing in Nagpur.

Provincial Governments may be, with advantage, given greater power generally over revenues and their expenditure. But in lieu of relaxation of the present control from above, popular control may be substituted. If budgets are allowed to be discussed in detail, and if an item objected to by the ⅔ths of the non-official members be disallowed, or some such powers duly safeguarding the interests of the Executive were given to the provincial Council, or the body before whom the budget would come for discussion, decentralization in this respect would be very advantageous.

Government should advance loans to save estates under the Court of Wards and not only guarantee loans borrowed from others. Government could do so at a rate of interest lower than is available from professional bankers.

No curtailment of the present rights of appeal is desirable.

Officers are not in touch with the subjects over whom they are to rule. The racial difference—social manners—and the natural pride of the members of the ruling race is one of the chief impediments that has made the Administration mechanical and unsympathetic. This is the case with higher and European officials. The lower grade Native officials take their cue from the higher ones and are afraid that their familiarity with the people will be misconstrued. The Executive Officers have opportunities to mix with the people. But for the above obstacles they could make time for personal contact. They possess sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars.

If Native officers are appointed in higher appointments money will be available to increase the staff. The increase is required, if it could be had without making the Administration more costly. For instance, a Sub-Divisional Officer should be located in each sub-division. This would require one officer for each sub-division in addition to some at district headquarters, which is not at present the case.

Not only is care in the selection of officers required, but at present even Assistant Commissioners of two or three years' standing are put in charge of a district. There should be a rule that an Assistant Commissioner should not be made a District Officer unless he has some eight years' service.

Transfers are much too frequent. Districts can be mentioned where within ten years some 12 or 15 District Officers came and went. An officer should not be transferred from a place within three to five years.

The local self-government introduced by Lord Ripon has on the whole worked satisfactorily as the very official reports go to show. If more powers are now given and less interference is made with their affairs, people would be able to take interest in responsible political life. At present educated and ambitious Indians find no interest in these affairs as most of them are much too petty, and in respect of them too, there is often irritating interference. To check corruption and fraud the superior authorities should even more than at present watch the work of these bodies, but beyond that, their interference should be minimised as much as possible.

Administrative Council for District Officers should be formed. The Council should have power of interpellation, and its proceedings should be reduced to writing and votes taken. The members may be chosen with the assistance of village unions and town municipalities and *taluka* Boards, but the election need not be confined to their members only. The District Officer may also nominate some of the members of his Council with the sanction of the superior authorities. The District Administrative Council may consist of—The Deputy Commissioner—*President*: 2 members nominated by Government: 2 members from municipalities or Local Boards. It should be given responsibilities in respect of the following matters:—Regulation of processions and disputes regarding ancient usages and customs, &c.; whether liquor shops should or should not be opened in particular localities: the introduction of sanitary or other measures likely to affect the sentiments and prejudices of the people; the supervision and control of municipalities and village panchayats; the final assessment of income-tax and its realization by way of penalty; the remission and suspension of land revenue; municipal matters, regarding which the District Officer deems it necessary to veto municipal resolutions; other like questions of public importance and not purely administrative.

It would be useful to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over minor municipalities and village unions.

Village communities in an agricultural country like India have been of more than ordinary importance. Their existence is now only traditional. The headman is no longer president of the community. The village accountant or the *kotwar* are no longer the servants of the village communities. The landlord or *malguzar* is a commission agent and a proprietor. The rights of the people in regard to village management have been ignored. The tenants may have some rights over the village, jungle, &c., but landless men, such as artizans have got no status. The laws could be so modified as to revive the village panchayat with the *malguzar* as its president, some respectable tenants and artizans, &c., as members, and the *kotwar*, patwari and *mukaddam* as its executive officers. This panchayat may be more elective than nominated, the Government being authorised to provide minorities. If villages be small, four or five may be grouped together to constitute a panchayat. The village officers such as patwari, *kotwar* and *mukaddam* may be paid partly by the village and partly by the Revenue Department whose servants they also are. Petty civil and criminal cases could be better decided by these panchayats. In this respect they would correspond to the Benches of Honorary Magistrates, with the difference that, being elected by the people, they would command more respect. Civil and criminal cases decided by these Benches should be subject to appeal on a point of law only. In educational matters they may act as committees for securing the attendance of boys in schools, the direction in this respect being in the hands of the Director of Public Instruction or the Board of Education. They may also act as village sanitation committees as at places they at present do. They may be of assistance to the police for the prevention and detection of crime, as they would be for the collection of revenue. Takavi loans would be better made in consultation with them.

25643. Why do you say that the Government should advance loans to save estates under the Court of Wards and not guarantee loans borrowed from other people?—In this province the money-lenders are encouraged to advance money to save encumbered estates; their money should confine itself to more risky enterprises.

25644. Why should the Government advance the loans?—To save the estates. If the members of the late Royal House here are to be spared, their estates will have to be saved. At present some big money-lenders are asked to advance loans, Government giving a guarantee.

25645. Then what is the difference between what you suggest and the present practice?—If those money-lenders had not this inducement, they would have gone to more risky enterprises. Their money should not be locked up in secure concerns requiring no skill; Government, which is not able to look to mercantile concerns, might give their own money for this purpose.

25646. You say that officers possess a sufficient knowledge of the vernacular?—I think so. They speak in a sort of Hindi; they may not be able to give lectures or address the people in regular assemblies, but they understand enough to get on.

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25647. Do you think that the insufficiency of their knowledge is an obstacle between them and the people in the districts?—No, I think not.

25648. You tell us also that the subordinate officers, taking their cue from the higher ones, are rather stand-offish. Is that general?—Yes.

25649. Have you been a member of the municipality or the District Board?—No, but I had to study the working of local self-government at times when I was connected with a journal.

25650. You suggest that a District Officer should have an Administrative Council; do you propose that it should be in substitution of the existing District Council?—That is my idea. The present District Council has quite different duties, and if all these other duties were added they could not be performed by the District Council. I propose a small Council—not a very big Council that would be a debating affair—but a small Council which should be quite different from the District Council.

25651. You say that the village panchayat would have to be revived?—Yes, at present the village panchayats are almost dead; for all effective purposes they are not existing.

25652. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Is the Council you propose to carry things by a majority, or is the Deputy Commissioner to have any power of over-riding its decisions?—I think he should have power of over-riding, upon recording his reasons.

25653. Would he do that on his own responsibility, or would he report to the Commissioner?—He may do that on his own responsibility.

25654. Amongst the things you desire to hand over to the Council is the final assessment of income tax; would it be quite safe to hand over that?—I say the "final" assessment. So far as theory goes, the income tax is levied on the advice of assessors; what happens at present is that after a list is prepared the District Officer goes over it, and if he finds that it does not come up to a particular figure, the figures are raised. If these figures are to be raised, they should be raised in consultation with this Council.

25655. The law contemplates each person being assessed according to his income?—That is true.

25656. You think that that is not carried into effect?—I think not; I could give you an instance. The original list shows, say, Rs. 10,000; it may be raised to Rs. 12,000 or Rs. 15,000 because the collector considers the total for the district below his expectation. When that is to be done it should be done in consultation with the Council.

25657. The Council should first decide what amount of income tax a certain *tahsil* should raise, and then the tahsildar would distribute it; is that what you mean?—No, that is a system of farming, which I do not advocate at all.

25658. In the matter of land revenue you say that the Deputy Commissioner should be able to over-ride the Council. Is it not possible that your two elected members, knowing that the Deputy Commissioner could over-ride them if necessary, might seek popularity by voting for large remissions?—No doubt; that would be so in all popular Governments; some do seek popularity in that way.

25659. Would you give a similar Council to the Commissioner?—I do not think it is necessary in our province, at present at any rate.

25660. If the Deputy Commissioner had such a Council, would you give him larger powers than he has at present?—Yes.

25661. Without the Council, would you give them to him?—No.

25662. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Do you want to have an Advisory, as well as an Administrative, Council?—No, not in addition to the other.

25663. As a matter of fact, your District Council is really an Advisory Council?—Yes, with this difference. The Advisory Council may be a paper affair only; there should be regular meetings and regular proceedings, whether you call it by this name or that.

25664. Mr. Chitnavis is in favour of Councils for Commissioners and not for Deputy Commissioners; you on the other hand are in favour of Councils for Deputy Commissioners and not for Commissioners?—I am speaking of my own province. I find the Commissioner has very little separate duties—duties which come to him not through the Deputy Commissioners or not through the Chief Commissioner; he is more or less an intermediary; therefore I should not give him a Council.

25665. Have increased powers been given to District Boards of recent years?—I think they have not been granted.

25666. We have been told, for example, that they have been given power in regard to veterinary work and vaccination; do you know if that is the case?—I do not know, but I should like to show how it was curtailed. Soon after the passing of Lord Ripon's Act a number of our educated people went in for these things, and in one district (Wardha) a certain local pleader took exceedingly great interest, like a special District Officer, but ultimately he had to go out because the powers were curtailed—curtailed not by law, but by practice. There was a difference between the District Council and the higher officers as to the allotment to be made for educational purposes; the whole Council was in favour of giving larger amounts to educational matters, and the higher authorities did not like it; that resulted in the resignation of this gentleman and the rest of the gentlemen taking less and less interest.

25667. Would you say that possibly their functions have been increased, but their powers of carrying them out have not been increased at all?—That is what I mean; the people may not be in a position at once to take extensive duties, but you might entrust a few small matters to the people, calling them to account if they do anything amiss. I do not want to increase the number of items, but to give a few items with full powers.

25668. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You say that the Sub-Divisional Officer should be located in his sub-division; what are your reasons for that suggestion?—He would be more approachable. At present all the Sub-Divisional Officers are loacated in the district, and it means nothing but a distribution of work, but if the officer were to be in the sub-division he would be more approachable by the people.

25669. You say that at present even Assistant Commissioners of two or three years' standing are put in charge of districts; is that frequent?—I am speaking of my district.

25670. I suppose they were merely temporary appointments?—I do not know; there have been 15 officers in 10 years, or something like that.

25671. Among the matters which you would refer to the Administrative Council of the District Officer, you mention the question whether liquor shops should or should not be opened in particular localities?—Suppose there is a temple, and near the temple you have a liquor shop, the two as it were competing with each other, one demoralizing and the other moralizing; that sort of thing ought not to happen, and if the temple people objected the question should be decided by this Council.

25672. You also include in that list "supervision and control of municipalities and village panchayats." Is it your idea that the District Officer, with the help of the Advisory Council, should keep a general control over all these municipalities and Boards within his district?—Yes, and, just as he at present divides the work between the Sub-Divisional Officers, he might divide the work between several members.

25673. You say also that District Boards should have power of supervision and control over minor municipalities and village unions?—If the Council I proposed was granted, there would be overlapping.

25674. The functions of the District Boards being quite different from those of municipalities, do you think that the District Boards are alogether suitable bodies to supervise the work of municipalities?—I think not.

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25675. You say the *malguzar* should be the president of the village community; is there a *malguzar* in every village?—Some are not resident *malguzars*.

25676. You do not insist that a *malguzar* who has 200 villages should be president in all those villages?—You could not insist on that.

25677. There might be other respectable people better fitted for the post?—Yes.

25678. What do you think should be the relation of such a panchayat with the police?—The police should not have any control over the panchayat.

25679. You say that they would be of some assistance to the police for the prevention and detection of crime; what kind of assistance do you suggest that they should render?—If the police wanted to make enquiries in a particular case the panchayat could say whether the suspected man was of a particular character or not.

25680. At present what is the position of the village *mukaddam*; is he subordinate to the police?—I do not know whether in law he is, but he is the person who is required to make enquiries, and secondly he is the person who is required to give information; in that way he is subordinate.

25681. You would like to do away with that?—Yes, that should not be the duty of the village panchayat.

25682. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You say that European officers are unapproachable; do you speak from your own personal experience?—If one forced one's self upon them of course they would not be unapproachable; I do not mean that a pleader is often evaded, but they are not approachable to the people at large.

25683. Have you called upon the Deputy Commissioner at Nagpur?—Yes.

25684. Have you been received politely?—If instances are wanted I will give you this. I was required to take off my shoes by an Assistant Commissioner. I had to make a protest; I had to make an application afterwards to get it declared that my dress was proper; I do not consider that was courteous treatment to me.

25685. Would you have the village headman chosen by the community?—Yes.

25686. Then if, as you say, the community does not recognise the headman, whose fault is it?—But the communities are in no way recognised by law or practice, and they are dwindling away.

25687. But a village is an institution quite irrespective of recognition by Government?—If Government does not recognise them the panchayats do not come in properly except in caste disputes.

25688. The existence of a village as a corporate body does not depend on itself?—I should think it does, at times.

25689. You go on to say that the village accountant and the *kotwar* are no longer the servants of the village community; does that mean that you think they should be paid by the village communities?—They are paid through the provincial Government, which realises the amount along with the land revenue.

25690. Do you think that they should be paid by the communities?—They were originally so paid, and provided they are their servants they should be paid by them.

25691. Then you also say that landless men, such as artizans, have got no status in the village; had they any status in the old days?—I do not know.

25692. Are you aware that in some parts of India the name by which the artizans go means "outsiders"?—I am not aware of that.

25693. You would entrust the village as a whole with a good deal of authority, but under the inspection and superintendence of Government officers?—Yes. I would not give them any absolutely independent authority.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Rao Bahadur VASUDEO RAMKRISHNA PANDIT, M.A., was called and examined.

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25694. (*Chairman.*) You are a member of the District Council at Nagpur?—Yes. I am a Barrister and have practised in the Judicial Commissioner's Court for the last ten years. I have been a member of the District Council at Nagpur for the last 7 years, and I have worked as its Secretary for several periods and am now its Vice-Chairman since 1906. I have been Secretary to the School Board at Nagpur since its foundation.

The financial relations between the Government of India and the provincial Governments have recently been readjusted. In questions such as famine and irrigation the provincial Governments should, however, have larger financial powers.

The relations between the imperial and provincial finances render the latter insufficient security for any loans that might be incurred or raised by the provincial Governments, and the contract terms would probably prove more onerous than those on which the Imperial Government raises them. There is, however, a likelihood of local capital being available for remunerative works of local importance, such as light feeder railways and irrigation works. Municipalities and District Boards in other provinces are empowered to raise loans, apart from those which are received from the Government, and there is no reason why the provincial Governments should not be able to raise them. The guarantee of the Imperial Government should be offered, and in return a close supervision maintained by it to ensure that the power is neither abused nor permitted to tempt the provincial Governments into extravagance.

In provinces provided with a Council the provincial Governments should have delegated to them the powers recently granted to the Government of India, except in the case of appointments of Europeans, in respect whereof the sanction of the Secretary of State should, as at present, be made compulsory. The Heads of Imperial Departments should have powers similar to those possessed by the provincial Governments.

Commissioners are at present consulted in most matters, but I should like to see them exercise greater influence. They are in touch with the people of their divisions, have experience of district work, and in many cases have worked as Deputy Commissioners in many of the districts in their divisions. They have also a wider outlook and while possessing local knowledge are generally free from local prejudices.

Executive officers are not, it is true, tied down to their headquarters, but the quantity and complexity of their desk work does not leave them sufficiently large opportunities for personal contact with the people in relations other than those of suitors. In consequence of the distance at which they usually are from rural areas within their charge there are fewer opportunities for the people of meeting them, even if they are free with them. Add to these difficulties the obstacles arising from race-distinctions, from imperfect knowledge of social habits and customs, and from want of sympathy.

The Deputy Commissioner, in most districts, is relieved of active participation in the deliberations of Municipal Committees and District Councils. This should be the invariable rule. Such duties as those under the Registration Act and the Stamp Act might also be taken off his shoulders and entrusted to other members of the district staff. Under several statutes the powers possessed by him are delegated to selected Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners, but he still has to forward their reports to the higher authorities, and since such higher authority has independently to satisfy itself regarding the cases, the trouble entailed upon the Deputy Commissioner is unnecessary.

Sub-Divisional Officers should be placed at the headquarters of their sub-divisions, and to compensate them for the loss of social advantages free-quarters and a local allowance of Rs. 100 per mensem should be allowed to them. They will thus

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come into closer touch with the people of their charge, and this will, to a certain extent, remedy the defect of race-aloofness. European society at headquarters, however small, tends to become exclusive. The sympathy of the Civilians of thirty years ago and their intimate knowledge of Indian society are not without reason attributed to the necessity they felt of satisfying the natural craving of man for society by associating with those among whom their lot was cast. Conscientious efforts will, however, still be necessary on the part of the members of the ruling race to subdue race-prejudice, to regard with a more tolerant spirit the social habits and customs of the people and to inspire confidence in them. I am very far from denying to Executive Officers the credit which is justly their due for the conscientious and even zealous discharge of their duties towards the people. Nor are there wanting instances of officers who, in spite of all those difficulties, have earned the good will of the people.

The senior Executive Officers are as a rule sufficiently well acquainted with the languages of the country to understand, though there would not be many who would be able happily to express themselves in any vernacular save Hindustani. The staff is at present not sufficient for efficient administration, especially of Sub-Divisional Officers.

An officer should not be transferred in less than three years from one place to another, and ordinarily he should be kept on at one place for five years. The provincial Government should more freely appoint officers of the Provincial Service (to avoid transfers of Covenanted Civil Service) to fill up a vacancy for six months or thereabouts, caused by the temporary absence on leave or deputation of a member of the Covenanted Civil Service.

The time has come for enlargement of the powers of Municipal Committees, District Councils and Local Boards, though the compulsory authority of Government should always remain in the background. The interferences with the budgets framed by them should be resorted to only in cases of gross abuse. The Deputy Commissioner should make suggestions, but the power of veto should be exercised only by the higher authorities. The election of members on the School Board should not be subject to the veto of the Deputy Commissioner. The real need, however, in connection with District Councils and Local Boards, at any rate, is the enlargement of the funds at their disposal. They have no power or voice in the matter of taxation. The execution of works is not left entirely to them. In many cases such works when entrusted to Local Board members living in or near the localities have been admirably performed.

The formation of village unions or even village panchayats, one for each group of villages constituting a patwari circle, with much larger resources and with greater trust reposed in them, would give reality to local self-government in the eyes of the people, would evoke greater public spirit for the workers, and give better training in the management of communal affairs. The powers of deciding petty criminal and petty civil disputes should be given to village panchayats at first in selected areas and gradually extended to other localities. This would create an interest in local self-government, especially if the franchise to return persons to the village panchayats is not limited to the classes to which it now is.

I would suggest the formation of Administrative Councils with representatives from Municipal and District Boards and nominees of the Government, to whom should be entrusted the responsibility for finally deciding upon such matters as the following:—

(1) Final decision as to assessment of income-tax and the levy of penalties for defaults in the punctual payment thereof.

(2) Matters relating to religious sentiments, social customs, &c., of the people, *e.g.*, plague measures, location of liquor shops, ancient customs, &c.

(3) Remission and suspension of land revenue.

(4) All matters affecting the public wherein the gauging of the minds of the people is necessary.

25695. You tell us that there is a likelihood of local capital being available for local enterprise, such as feeder railways and so forth. Is there actually, in existence, such capital now untapped by loans of the Government of India?—There are a number of people who are not attracted by loans of the Government of India, who would be attracted by local loans; they would be in a position to see that the projects would be fairly remunerative, and perhaps they might get a little more.

25696. They would expect to get a rather higher rate of interest from the provincial Government than they would from the Government of India?—That may be one of the contingencies, but even apart from not getting better rates than those given by the Government of India, some people might be moved to take a greater share in supplying capital for such enterprises. With regard to Government paper, although there is no doubt a great deal of confidence, yet there is a class of people who might be induced to invest their capital which they do not now invest in Government paper, if they knew that it was going to be applied for purposes which they could conceive of in a more concrete form.

25697. Do you propose that the provincial Governments should raise those loans locally, and then the Imperial Government should step in and guarantee the bond-holders?—I am not an expert with regard to these financial matters, but the financial position must ultimately depend on the Government of India, there being only certain percentages of revenue allowed to the provincial Governments at present, and the power of levying certain taxes being controlled.

25698. But would the local lenders only advance money if the guarantee of the Imperial Government was behind the loan?—I do not think it would affect them very much whether it was the guarantee of the provincial Government or the guarantee of the Imperial Government so long as there was a guarantee; but, as I took the conditions of finance to rest ultimately with the Government of India, I suggested an Imperial guarantee.

25699. Have you ever heard it remarked that the sums which the Government of India ask for are asked for in too large bonds?—The minimum loan that can be advanced now is Rs. 100. I have never heard any complaint on that point.

25700. You tell us that these loans might perhaps enable the Local Government to construct irrigation works or something of that sort in districts which otherwise could not get them. All that would depend upon the rate at which the provincial Government could borrow?—It would, but it might encourage capitalists to bring capital.

25701. Who is the Chairman of the Nagpur District Council?—The Honourable Mr. Chitnavis is the Chairman.

25702. In your opinion has the system of non-official Chairman in the Central Provinces worked well?—I think it has worked most creditably and consistently.

25703. And the District Council have done their work well?—Yes; where powers have been allowed to them they have done their best.

25704. Do they work here by sub-committees?—We have sub-committees and meetings of the Council almost every month.

25705. Who prepares the budget?—The budgets are prepared from statements of their requirements sent in by the Local Boards; those are collated in the office, and the Secretary puts up a rough budget for the consideration of the Financial Committee; then at the meeting of the Council the budget is discussed, and the requirements of the various parts of the district are considered; then the necessary alterations are made, and the final budget is put forward and sent on to the Deputy Commissioner.

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25706. Does the Secretary put the budget before the Chairman?—In some cases it is put before the Chairman, otherwise it is brought up before the Finance Committee; they consider it, and then it is brought up before the Council.

25707. Is it circulated to the members of the Council before the meeting of the Council, or do they come into the Council Chamber and find it ready for them?—With regard to outside members it is not circulated to them, but as to members at headquarters the budget is within their reach in the office and they generally go and see it; the Finance Committee, of course sees it before them.

25708. Is the Chairman of the Council the Chairman of the Finance Committee?—Not necessarily.

25709. Who is Chairman of your Finance Committee at Nagpur?—We have not appointed any Chairman yet; a Finance Committee is appointed, but there is no Chairman appointed; at the time we meet the Chairman is appointed.

25710. Supposing Mr. Chitnavis was present at the meeting would he ordinarily take the Chair?—Yes, ordinarily, unless there was any one with greater acquaintance with the matters under discussion who was considered fit.

25711. And if he was present at a meeting of any other sub-committee would he take the Chair at that?—I do not say that as a matter of course he would take the Chair; there is no settled practice on the point.

25712. Are the powers of the District Council sufficient?—I think they are not sufficient.

25713. In what way ought they to be enlarged?—Limited as they are at present, the execution of works and the executive control is entirely with the Public Works Department and the Head of the district under the orders of the Chief Commissioner passed under section 9 of the Act.

25714. Cannot the Chairman of the District Council carry out works which the District Council have approved of?—There is a rule that all roads of Classes I. and II., and all other civil works of the value of Rs. 1,500 and more, must be done through the Public Works Department, unless the sanction of the Government has been obtained for carrying them out departmentally; works of a smaller amount can be carried out through the tahsildar, the tahsildar being the agent of the Deputy Commissioner; the tahsildar is also President of the Local Board, so it may appear as done through him; he gets assistance from the Local Board members, no doubt, but the responsibility lies on the Deputy Commissioner and tahsildar as his agent for the execution of all works.

25715. The President of the District Council does not do them himself?—As I read the orders passed under the Act he cannot do them; it must be done through the aforesaid agencies.

25716. Does the President of the District Council go much about the district?—If he is a gentleman like Mr. Chitnavis he has opportunities of going about, because his own villages are scattered over the district and he visits them; but, of course gentlemen of professional occupations cannot be expected to visit the interior of the districts so frequently; none the less, there are gentlemen who do visit; I have myself gone to several villages and inspected schools and see what I could do.

25717. In what other respect should the powers of District Councils be enlarged?—By allowing them to start schools in more places, or to start pounds; at present this requires the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner and of the inspector in the case of schools. In practice there is no divergence of opinion, but still it necessitates a certain amount of correspondence and it restricts the powers, and there is no necessity for such restriction.

25718. Do the District Boards contribute to the schools?—Yes, all the rural primary schools are now under the District Boards. The provincial Government allots the whole of the Education Cess, which is part of the provincial rates levied from every village, to the District Fund.

25719. Then they contribute out of provincial funds?—No, from provincial rates, *i.e.*, cesses are raised for schools and for roads, and that income is transferred bodily to the District Council; the District Board has no other income of its own besides these cesses, and certain miscellaneous income from pounds, ferries, or roadside trees, fruits, and so on.

25720. Does the District Council not raise its own cess?—No, it has no power to raise cesses at all.

25721. Do the District Councils control the primary schools?—They control the primary schools subject to the control of the Education Department; expert advice is always required, of course.

25722. Is there anything besides the schools that you want to draw our attention to?—Yes, the District Councils have no powers of taxation or of raising money; there should certainly be some powers given to them.

25723. Would they use them?—They would use them. What is required is a network of village unions or village panchayats. At present the areas placed under the different Local Boards are too extensive to enable the members to take such a keen interest as they would otherwise take if they had to concern themselves only with matters of which they had an intimate acquaintance, and which, being nearer home and attracting the attention of their constituents, would make them take greater interest in public affairs.

25724. Would the fact of their being a panchayat and the members taking greater local interest induce the District Board to raise increased taxation?—Yes, there would be more works undertaken in which the various villages and localities are concerned than there are at present. For example, there are not so many schools as there should be; although the tax is raised from every village, there is no school provided except for a group of villages, and perhaps the school is located at some distance from several villages, so that the people there cannot take advantage of the school.

25725. If the villagers were told, "You shall have a school but you will have to have a little more taxation," would they welcome the school?—Yes, I think they would welcome the school; of course the whole maintenance of schools should not depend on the taxes paid by the people directly for that purpose.

25726. If the District Councils imposed taxation do you think that that would make them unpopular?—It would not, if there was popular control.

25727. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Can you carry out any work up to Rs. 1,500 without getting the consent of Government?—I do not think the sanction of Government is required for specific works, once they are provided for in the budget; but the limit has only recently been raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000.

25728. Has the Chairman got the power to make appointments?—The Chairman, as such, has got no powers; the Council has powers to appoint persons on salaries up to Rs. 15 per month; over that they have to get the sanction of Government.

25729. Is that new posts or filling up old posts?—New posts.

25730. Suppose, for example, that somebody retired who was earning a salary of more than Rs. 15, could the Chairman fill up that post without going to Government?—The Council could.

25731. If the Secretary resigns and a new Secretary has to be appointed, can that be done by the Council?—The Council elect the Secretary, but the election has to be confirmed by the Government.

25732. You say that the crying need is for an enlargement of funds. Do you mean that you have not got enough money to carry out the duties which are entrusted to you?—We have not got enough money to lay down a large programme, and that of course means not carrying out works which we ought to be able to carry out.

25733. What is the income of the Nagpur District Board?—The income for 1903-04 was Rs. 1,05,000.

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25734. Out of that had you to pay for roads and schools?—We had to pay for roads and schools and some contributions to veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. We have also to give a contribution to the Civil Surgeon who has a vaccination establishment under him.

25735. All out of this Rs. 1,05,000?—The maintenance of the staff and so on has also to be paid out of it.

25736. Do you have much control over the amount you spend on education, or is that practically decided for you by the Government?—The rule laid down by the Government is that expenditure on education shall not be smaller than the amount of the Education Cess, the school fees, and the amount of the special grant, if any, made by Government for the purpose, but we are at liberty to spend a larger amount if we like; only when we prepare our budget and allot a larger amount for educational purposes, the budget goes up to Government, and, if they think that other objects are being starved or not sufficiently attended to, they cut down the amount that we have put down for education. That has been done, I think. In some districts the complaint has been that a larger amount has been put down for education than should have been put down.

25737. You have two cesses, the Road Cess and the Education Cess?—Yes, and then there is a certain contribution made by Government out of provincial revenue apart from those two cesses.

25738. Is that a fixed sum?—No. In the year of which I am speaking there was about Rs. 17,000 placed by the Government at our disposal, with certain directions to utilize it for certain purposes. One portion was for the renovation, repairs and reconstruction of school buildings; another portion was for wells and so on.

25739. What is the amount of the Road Cess?—About Rs. 35,000.

25740. What is it in percentage of the land revenue?—It is 3 per cent.

25741. The Road Cess is 3 per cent. and the Education Cess is 2 per cent.?—All the cesses taken together are about 5½ per cent.—Road Cess, Education Cess, and what used to be known as the Dak Cess; these three were lumped together at the time of the resettlement and there is one contribution made by the villages; I think it is about 5½ per cent. all taken together.

25742. In practice this 5½ per cent. is collected by the Government each year and handed over to you?—Yes, but out of the Dak Cess a portion is retained and utilised by Government for the district post.

25743. Less a certain amount for collection?—No; they do not take back anything; the whole of it is transferred, except in the case of the Dak Cess.

25744. Do you want to collect your own revenue or would you leave that with Government?—I think the collection might be left with Government. Apart from certain market dues and cattle registration charges and so on, which might be collected by the village unions, any other enlargement of the income of the District Councils should come by means of collections made by Government. For example, out of the Rs. 35,000 collected as Road Cess, a sum of about Rs. 25,000 has to be at once made over to the provincial revenues for roads maintained by the Public Works Department in class 1 and class 2, so that the expenditure on roads through the District Council is only Rs. 9,000 or Rs. 10,000. That is on roads leadiing to villages and so on—annual repairs of roads giving routes through villages. The sum at their disposal is very small, so that the people of the villages cannot be expected to take much interest; there may be cases where only two days' labour is employed on a village track four miles away from a village; that would scarcely be a matter of interest to them.

25745. Would it be true to say that the bulk of your funds are earmarked before you get them at all?—Yes; that is practically so; in fact whatever latitude we get is out of the income derived from cattle-pounds; that is one of the largest sources of income that we have had, and it is an expanding source of income; the expenditure on it is not so large, and therefore it leaves a little more surplus and we are in a position therefore to undertake any further works of improvement.

25746. One witness rather conveyed the impression that there is a tendency to hand over certain powers to the District Boards, not so much with a view of increasing their activity as of securing a contribution from them; and he instanced vaccination and veterinary work; do you think that is true?—If one looks at it from the point of view only of being able to make appointments to those departments or being able to grant leave or anything of that kind, that would be true; as these are specialised departments control from experts is desirable, but it does not prevent the District Councils from making use of these people for the benefit of the public at large.

25747. Do you think the District Board really has more control over the work than it would have if it was still under the Government?—With regard to the veterinary dispensary at headquarters, for example, there used to be a veterinary dispensary under the District Council; it has now been taken over by the Government. In that dispensary the District Council regulated the charges that were to be levied for treatment of non-agricultural cattle. The District Council themselves fixed the rate there, and if it was left to the Government Department they would not have that latitude of fixing the rates so as not to make them weigh upon the people.

25748. Then you think you have got some more control, and that there is some advantage in this work having been transferred?—Yes, I think there is.

25749. Are you in favour of Advisory Councils to both the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner or to one only?—I think Administrative Councils for the Deputy Commissioner would be more useful.

25750. What do you mean by "Advisory Council"?—I mean that there should be a Board of representatives associated with the Deputy Commissioner to enable a correct decision to be arrived at on the questions I have pointed out as appertaining to their sphere.

25751. Are they to be able to say "We decide such and such a policy" which is to be binding on the Collector, or are they simply to advise him?—They ought to be able to decide, leaving a power of veto in important cases; and Government might decide in the case of difference between the Deputy Commissioner and his Council; the Chief Commissioner here might be authorised to decide.

25752. They would have to meet pretty frequently?—Yes.

25753. They would have to accompany the Deputy Commissioner on his tours and go about with him everywhere?—If you get people representing the village communities also, those who have a knowledge of rural areas, I do not think they would need to go through every part along with the Deputy Commissioner; they in their own independent line would be able to have a view which would be based on experience, and not merely *a priori*.

25754. But people living at a distance would not be able to come to headquarters very often?—I do not know that they would find any difficulty in coming once a month; they come to the District Councils.

25755. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You have referred to proposed Public Works which had been delayed; is the cause of the delay simply because the provincial Government has not got borrowing powers, or that the plans themselves require mature consideration?—I do not know what has been the reason, but the need for these railways and the utility of these lines was pointed out as far back as ten years ago. We know that irrigation also is badly needed. These things have not yet been done.

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25756. You recognise that these are questions which really require mature consideration before they are taken in hand, so that they are not necessarily delayed because the Local Government has not got borrowing powers; there may be other reasons?—Yes.

25757. You also recognise the fact that Local Governments might sometimes make the opposite mistake of taking up works without sufficient consideration which might not prove remunerative in the end?—Certainly. As a check for that, if there are provincial Councils they would be able to consider whether it was at all necessary to incur such an expenditure; in our province there is no such check.

25758. Even then, you would not give the provincial Government unfettered discretion in such matters?—No, I would not.

25759. You suggest that the Sub-Divisional Officers should be placed at the headquarters of their own sub-divisions; what is your reason for that?—They will be more accessible to the people of the sub-division, and their intercourse with the people will help to elevate the people also.

25760. A suggestion has been made that the Sub-Divisional Officers might so distribute their cases and so fix their programme that they might take up cases on the spot as they went to different parts; is that always possible?—I do not think so; on the contrary, if they are placed at the headquarters of their sub-division there will be certainty, and there will probably be a number of pleaders at the station, and there will be none of those difficulties.

25761. You have spoken of the Finance Committee under the District Board. What other Sub-Committees are there under the District Board?—There is the School Board and the Finance Committee; those are the two important committees.

25762. Is the School Committee appointed in the same way as the Finance Committee by the members of the District Board?—With regard to the School Board there is a provision that persons other than members of the District Board may also be appointed members, but the election of a particular person to the School Board must be sanctioned by the Deputy Commissioner; he has got the power of veto. There is no necessity for allowing him that power. If a person is entitled to be on the Council, he is certainly entitled to be on a committee of the Council if elected to fill the office.

25763. Has that power of veto ever been exercised?—No.

25764. You say that works of the value of Rs. 1,500 and more have to be executed by the Public Works Department, and works of less value than Rs. 1,500 can be done by the tahsildars. What agency has the tahsildar got for the purpose?—There is an overseer attached to each *tahsil*, and the works are generally done by means of contracts; the tahsildar takes a bond from the contractor to carry out the work, and so on.

25765. The supervision is with the overseers?—Yes, but some works are done through the agency of Local Board members, by their keeping the accounts and engaging labourers and carrying out the work; the overseer supervises it from time to time, and the tahsildar also supervises.

25766. Does the tahsildar undertake this work as Chairman of the Local Board or as agent of the District Board?—I think he acts as the agent of the executive authority, *i.e.*, the Deputy Commissioner.

25767. Is this system of executing Public Works satisfactory, or would you rather have a well-paid engineer for the whole district, and make over to him all works, subject to the sanction of the Government in very important matters?—We have very recently started the system of having a Divisional Engineer; he is to undertake the execution of works appertaining to the municipalities and the different Boards; that has been started only three or four months ago. It has the advantage of our not being at the mercy of the Public Works Department, which we have found has been unable for years together to attend to our work, and consequently we have come in for censure for not carrying out works and for leaving large surpluses unspent.

25768. Do all the District Boards in the division contribute towards the pay of the Divisional Engineer?—Yes; contributions are made by the District Councils and minor municipalities.

25769. Not by the headquarters municipality?—No, because they have a separate engineer of their own.

25770. Has such an officer been appointed?—Yes; a retired Executive Engineer has been appointed. Before his appointment, we have sometimes been allowed to carry out works of the value of Rs. 1,500 and more, and in some cases the works have been executed most admirably through Local Board members, but we had to get permission in each case.

25771. How are primary schools supervised?—They are supervised through the inspectors and deputy inspectors of schools; there are inspectors of schools for the circle, and then there are two deputy inspectors in the district; the latter inspect every school every quarter, or oftener if they can.

25772. Suppose they have to make a recommendation to abolish any existing school, or establish any new school, where do they send it?—Always to the District Council; the District Council decides; and they also send, through their Departmental Heads, their proposals on the question of abolishing schools or even the question of starting new schools; the District Council themselves take the initiative of asking them to find out localities where schools may be usefully opened.

25773. Would your decision be final or have you to get the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner in abolishing a school or starting a new school?—The sanction of the authorities, *i.e.*, the Deputy Commissioner and inspector of schools, is necessary.

25774. You say that the whole of the Road Cess and the Education Cess is collected by the Government, and there is no deduction made; are you quite sure that the Government charge you nothing for collection?—I think they do not. They intimate to us beforehand the amount that is likely to be contributed from the Education Cess and the Road Cess; the amount actually collected is put to the credit of the District Council, and the Comptroller intimates to us the figures which we are to take for the basis of our final accounts as the actuals for the year.

25775. You said that a contribution was made by Government to you over and above the proceeds of these two cesses; was that contribution originally made by the Government of India and handed over to you by the provincial Administration, or was it made by the provincial Administration?—I believe, for education, it was a contribution made by the Government of India out of which the Local Government gave some contribution to us; similarly with regard to village wells; whether that was made as part of any imperial scheme or not I do not know. In the case of plague measures, where we have been carrying on this campaign against rats, we have received some grant from the provincial Government to supplement our funds.

25776. You say you would like the District Board to have power to impose taxation. Suppose you had the power, are you of opinion that the tax should fall on land, or would you have some other form of taxation?—The Road Cess and Education Cess are not levied from every landowner; the tenants are entirely free from the taxation; it is taken from the *malguzars* and from the plot proprietors. I do not know whether in assessing the *malguzar* the idea was that the collection of rents which got into the hands of the *malguzars* was supposed to be indirectly taxing the tenants for this purpose also.

25777. If you had the power, would you impose it on land, or would you adopt some other form

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of taxation?—It should not be restricted to land only, but the whole of the community ought to pay it.

25778. Would not such taxation make the District Board unpopular?—If the objects on which the money collected by taxation is to be spent are situated in the locality, and if it spent through the agency of village panchayats and unions, the people will see that the money is being utilised for their own purposes and under their own control, and the unpopularity will then disappear.

25779. Have you a number of veterinary inspectors under you?—We have no veterinary inspectors under the District Council at all; there are three veterinary assistants.

25780. Have you the power of sending these assistants to different villages where cattle-disease is raging?—There are some assistants placed on peripatetic duty; their reports are circulated to us from time to time and sent on to the Civil Veterinary Department; usually it is the Head of the Civil Veterinary Department, who, if there is anything particular to be done, directs the veterinary assistants to go to the locality where the disease is raging.

25781. Have you any control in the matter?—We have not exercised any control; I do not know whether we have the power.

25782. In the same way, have you power to send vaccinators to any place where vaccination is much needed?—No.

25783. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Would your Advisory Council be elected, or nominated?—I should have both elected and nominated members on it, elected members representing the municipalities and the District Councils, and the nominated members with regard to special inteersts that were unrepresented in the other way.

25784. How many members would you have in an average district?—I should say 7 members, including the Deputy Commissioner, would suffice.

25785. An average Collector who goes about his district would probably talk over public questions with hundreds of people?—Yes.

25786. So that the effect of your Council would be really to narrow the basis of his consultation?—I do not see that it would narrow the basis of his consultation; he would still have all that experience with him, and would be able to assist the Council with that knowledge, and there would be also the extra knowledge of the members of the Council brought in.

25787. Suppose he went about and consulted people in the ordinary way, and the majority of them said one thing and his Council said another thing, which should he follow?—In the case of the majority it would depend on the class of people he met, whether they were in a position to take an intelligent view of the matter and whether they gave out their opinions freely and without any hesitation.

25788. Then it would really resolve itself into a question of discretion as to which represented popular opinion?—Yes; it would be left to the Deputy Commissioner; if he thought that the opinion given to him by the Council was so perverse, or so out of touch with the bulk of the people, he could send it up to the Government for decision.

25789. Is the item of expenditure on village school buildings very large?—Yes; we have been spending every year something like Rs. 8,000 to Rs. 9,000 in building school-houses.

25790. Who builds school-houses?—The work is done through the agency of the district staff when the cost is under Rs. 1,500; if the cost exceeds Rs. 1,500, it is done through the Public Works Department.

25791. Would it be practicable to leave to the village itself the provision of buildings for schools?—It would require greater sacrifice on their part than they would perhaps be prepared to make.

25792. The villagers would provide the building themselves at a very much less cost than that for which you, as a School Board, could do it?—We have tried the experiment, not exactly of demanding from them the materials for the construction of school buildings, but placing the money at their disposal for carrying out these works. At Narkhed, a very large town, there is a vernacular middle school with a training class; we find that the work, which is very substantial work, has been done at a smaller cost than would have been incurred by the Public Works Department.

25793. Was the work entrusted entirely to the people?—It was entrusted to the members of the School Committee, with only the ordinary supervision from the tahsildar and overseer, but not with the restriction that it must conform to particular rules, or anything of that kind.

25794. Whenever a school was established in a village would you be prepared to leave it to the villagers to provide accommodation for it?—It would be better that these schools should be built at a cost to be provided by the District Council, but through their agency; the collection should not be left to depend upon the will of the villagers.

25795. Would it be practicable and reasonable to entrust the execution of all local Public Works to the village?—Yes, if a village union or village panchayat is started it would be quite practicable, with assistance, of course, from the overseer.

25796. You would let the overseer interfere?—Expert assistance should be made available for them—not to interfere in financial matters, but in order to place at their disposal some expert assistance.

25797. Would not the interference of the overseer be fatal to spontaneous village effort?—If the overseer was their servant and not their master, I do not think it would.

25798. Would you propose that they should pay the overseer?—They should ask the District Council for the services of the overseer to some and supervise certain works which they are willing to undertake.

25799. You think that they would not object to that?—I think they would not.

25800. Because the overseer is the servant of the man who pays him?—The overseer should not have the giving of contracts or anything; if he had he would be all-powerful.

25801. He would not have power to give orders?—He would have power to advise, just as in private houses if you have a friend who is an engineer you can ask him, and he will say, "If you do so and so such and such a thing will happen."

25802. You think the overseer is a man who can be trusted to draw a line between advising and directing?—I should imagine so.

25803. In the matter of sanitation would you give the village any powers?—I would give the village panchayat the powers; at present the *mukaddam* is the man who has all these powers.

25804. Would you give them power to levy a rate?—Power to levy a small rate.

25805. Would you give them power to make rules?—Yes, I would give them power to do that also. There might be a power of veto left in the Government whenever there was anything in the rules that might prove oppressive or troublesome to the ordinary class of villages.

25806. Suppose the village said, "We do not want a staff; what we object to is your salaried servants with a badge coming round amongst us; we wish rather to make a rule binding each individual householder to keep the purlieus of his house clean." Would you give them power to enforce a rule like that on each individual householder?—Yes, I should see no harm in it.

25807. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) When the Public Works Department work for you, do they charge a percentage?—Yes, I think it is about 10 per cent., except in the execution of works relating to roads.

25808. Could you get the work done for less than that by other agents?—Yes.

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25809. As to the management of schools the actual administration is done by the deputy inspector?—No; he has to refer appointments, grants of leave and so on to the Council.

25810. It is done by the School Board?—Yes; the recommendations of the deputy inspectors are always attended to, but the School Board generally decides on each individual case after considering all the circumstances.

25811. They must sit very constantly?—Yes; we have to sit at least every month, if not oftener. In the ordinary cases of granting leave, or anything of that kind, the Secretary of the School Board in anticipation of the sanction of the Board passes orders, but in all other matters, such as promotions, adding to the staff and so on, the School Board has to decide at its meetings.

25812. Who is the Secretary; is he a member?—I am the Secretary; I am a member of the School Board and a member of the District Council.

25813. You practically have the administration of the schools in your own hands?—Yes.

25814. And the inspector has to come to you for orders about everything?—Yes.

25815. (*Mr. Meyer.*) What is the constitution of this School Committee, or School Board, as you call it; does it consist entirely of members of the District Board?—Yes.

25816. Is the deputy inspector of schools generally a member of the District Board?—He is not a member, but he is required to be present at the meetings.

25817. How does the Deputy Commissioner come in; does he attend the meetings of the School Committee?—No, he does not.

25818. Has he anything to do with primary education in the district?—Yes. Under the Education Manual the Deputy Commissioner has to be consulted in the starting of new schools or the abolishing of any schools; he as Head of the district has control and supervision over the acts of the deputy inspector, and through that agency he exercises his powers in that direction.

25819. He has to be consulted about the starting of any new school or the abolition of an old school?—Yes.

25820. Also about the raising of establishments?—That goes to him by way of a proposition statement for the enlargement of the items in the budget; he gives his opinion upon that and sends it on to the Commissioner.

25821. So far as it relates to the abolition or establishment of schools the finding of the School Board is not valid until it is confirmed by the Deputy Commissioner?—That is so.

25822. Have their findings to be also confirmed by the District Boards?—The School Board does not deal directly with the Deputy Commissioner; they place their proposals before the Council, and the Council incorporate them in their minutes.

25823. It is merely a committee of the Council?—It is provided by the Education Manual that its decisions should be reported to the District Council, not that they should be subject to the confirmation of the Council in every matter. No doubt if the Council considered any action of the School Board inconsiderate or ill-advised, they would record their opinion, and that opinion would prevail.

25824. You forward your proposals to the District Council and unless the District Council takes exception within a certain time they take effect; is that the procedure?—Yes.

25825. You desire to diminish the control of the Deputy Commissioner in respect of the education work of the Committee?—With regard to that matter about the veto of the Deputy Commissioner to the election of a member on the School Board. It seems anomalous that if a person is considered fit to be a member of the District Board he should not be thought fit to be a member of the Committee of the District Board.

25826. You say that the Deputy Commissioner has control in respect of the starting of new schools or the abolition of existing schools. Do you wish to keep that control, or to do away with it?—I do not think there is any necessity for that control.

25827. There is no necessity for outside control at all?—I think that, once the amount of the fund has been appropriated to certain objects, the District Council should have the power to spend it on those objects in the way it thinks best. Of course if there is objection upon any score the Deputy Commissioner can always advise, but he need not have the right of veto, nor should his confirmation be necessary.

25828. You have a good many backward classes in this province; are they represented on the District Councils?—As a matter of fact they are not, but there is nothing to prevent them getting representation if they chose.

25829. Do you think their wants in the way of schools would be adequately provided for if the District Councils and their Education Committees had an absolutely free hand?—The District Councils are quite willing to provide for the educational needs of these classes.

25830. You have in this province a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary of each Board. Have they all different functions?—The Secretary has certain powers under the District Council's Manual; he has financial custody and all that sort of thing; the issue of cheques by the Secretary up to Rs. 50 is permitted; if he has to spend larger amounts than that he has to get the countersignature of the Chairman, or of a member of the Finance Committee to the expenditure. For these various purposes they have the various powers.

25831. Where does the Vice-Chairman come in; has he any distinctive powers or does he merely represent the Chairman in the Chairman's absence, or when the Chairman delegates his powers?—That is his position; when the Chairman is absent he takes the chair; he is generally on the Finance Committee, and he discharges his duties in that way.

25832. So that the real executive authority is divided between the Secretary and the Chairman, with the Vice-Chairman occasionally representing the Chairman?—Yes, you may say that

25833. You desire that the District Councils should have full powers in respect of the raising of taxation?—My main contention is that the funds at the disposal of the District Council are quite inadequate to make them useful bodies, or to make people take a keen interest in their work. I therefore want a larger amount to be placed at their disposal, so that they may be able to carry out a larger number of works. With regard to taxation, they may raise some small taxes, but the collection of the funds that are to be placed at their disposal must be made by the Government, and the District Council should receive a certain percentage from the provincial revenues, which they might expend on objects such as education and meeting the sanitary needs of the villages and other purposes.

25834. A municipality is allowed to levy a house-tax, or a profession tax, or an octroi, as the case may be, within certain limits; is that what you propose for the District Councils, that they should have power to levy taxes within certain limits, or would you give them an absolutely free hand?—I would not give them an absolutely free hand.

25835. You would have specific legislation laying down the limit beyond which they should not go?—Just so.

25836. Did you not get a special grant from Government about three years ago amounting roughly to a quarter of the amount you received from the cess?—Our income from all cesses is something like Rs. 55,000; from Government we got about Rs. 17,000.

25837. Within the last three years your grants from Government have been considerably increased?—Yes; with regard to plague, for example, we got Rs. 4,000.

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25838. Apart from plague, have you not got a recurring contribution?—Yes.

25839. You mentioned the Dak Cess; that has been abolished as a contribution to Government and the proceeds given to the District Boards?—Yes, that is to say, the surplus after meeting certain expenses on the district post.

25840. Does not Government undertake most of the roads in this province?—There are what are known as district roads, class 1 and class 2; those are placed with the Public Works Department, and we have got to make a contribution to the provincial revenues for those roads. Out of the Rs. 35,000 Road Cess which we got we had to make a payment of Rs. 25,000 or so towards district roads in those two classes.

25841. It has been suggested that the provincial Governments should make over these roads to the District Boards, at the same time increasing their revenues; would you be in favour of that?—I do not think there would be any particular gain by transferring them as suggested.

25842. Is your position, then, that as long as the provincial Government manages the roads you do not see why you should pay?—My position is this, that with regard to these roads for which the contribution is demanded from the Council, they are really roads which are not utilised only by that class from which the Road Cess is raised; there is no reason therefore why a portion of the Road Cess should be utilised for these roads.

25843. You mean that your contribution should stop and that the Government should find the money from general taxation?—That is what I contend.

25844. Is there a Dispensary Committee?—Yes.

25845. That is outside the District Council, but you send representatives to the Committee?—No, we do not send representatives. Wherever municipalities start any hospitals or dispensaries they ask for contribution from the District Councils in order to pay for the treatment of the villagers who go there, with regard to whom the District Council may be considered responsible for the provision of medical treatment. But we have only two dispensaries started under the District Council (and that mainly through private liberality) where we have provided for medical treatment.

25846. In Madras the District Boards run dispensaries and they manage them; in Bengal on the other hand the dispensaries are managed by independent committees, though the District Boards contribute and are represented on the committees. Which system is in vogue here?—Here neither system is in vogue, because here there is only the provision for funds made by the District Council, and the rest of the management of the dispensaries like every other matter under the Medical Department of Government is managed by Government through the Civil Surgeon, not by us at all.

25847. Would it not be desirable to give Local Boards real power, instead of letting the District Council do everything?—Local Boards should certainly have real powers given to them, and as a matter of fact they have real powers; in order to enable us to frame our budget we send for, and get, from the Local Boards accurate information as to their needs, and we then allot to the different Local Boards what we think they should get, and they have power to spend that amount.

25848. But would you go a step further and give the Local Boards a definite part of the cess and let them run, say, schools and village roads within their own jurisdiction; would you delegate power to the Local Boards instead of everything coming up to the District Council?—The difficulty will be that there are some Local Boards in which there is greater need than in others, and the District Council can co-ordinate the demands of all these Local Boards and decide as to what works should be undertaken.

25849. You prefer the existing system?—I think it has several advantages.

25850. Has this system of having a Divisional Engineer been introduced only in this particular Nagpur Division, or throughout the province?—It is in the Nagpur division only for the present. It is an experiment.

25851. Is the sanctioning power of the Deputy Commissioner to the appointment of all School Boards required by law?—It is laid down in the Education Manual, which contains the orders of the Chief Commissioner under the powers conferred by the various enactments.

25852. Have not vaccinators been made a local establishment lately?—So far as I am aware, the vaccinators are not under us; we have to contribute to the Civil Surgeon's establishment, that is all.

25853. Do you have to go up for the sanction of the Commissioner for every re-appropriation you make?—Yes; I think there has been some change made recently in connection with the change made by the Government of India as regards incorporated accounts and things of that kind.

25854. Are you going to get more freedom?—I should suppose so. We have not got the detailed orders.

25855. When the Chairman, or you as Secretary, punish a municipal servant, does the appeal go to the collective Council, or does it go straight to the Commissioner?—It goes straight to the Council.

25856. Does it go on to the Commissioner from the Council?—So far as punishment is concerned, it is not final until it is confirmed by the Council.

25857. Then if it is confirmed by the Council the man appeals to the Commissioner of the division?—Yes, there is no provision specially with regard to that; it is only under the ordinary powers that the Deputy Commissioner has executive control and has revisional jurisdiction; if the Council is behaving improperly and so on, he may step in and supersede the Council.

25858. Are there many such appeals?—No. I am not aware of any such appeals.

Mr. D. N. CHAUDHRI was called and examined.

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25859. (*Chairman.*) You are a pleader and President of the Raipur Municipality?—Yes.

25860. Have you been on the District Council?—No.

Every provincial Government should be vested with larger powers in the matter of spending money on the improvement of its internal administration with special reference to education, Public Works and irrigation. There should be a complete separation between the imperial and provincial finances, either by allotting revenues from some particular heads to the provinces entirely or by fixing permanently the proportions by which the imperial and the provincial Governments may share in the revenues from all heads. Provision has to be made for such emergencies as famine. Each province should have a sort of reserve fund to which the surpluses of prosperous years may be assigned and the present system of lapsing of unspent balances should cease.

With certain reservations I would like to give borrowing powers to Local Governments in cases of emergency, of course subject to the approval and security of the Government of India. The borrowing power of the provincial Governments will have a marked influence on the trade and money market, and much capital which now lies locked up in the outlying districts removed from the civilization of the Presidency Towns will thereby be invested in Government securities and trade. There is a large amount of silver lying idle in the coffers of *malguzars* and substantial tenants in many parts of the Central Provinces, and this capital does not find any outlet into the money market, simply for

want of facilities of investment and ignorance of the ways and means thereof. A provincial loan system with the prospect of ample security will put this locked-up capital into circulation and profitable investment, and will further have the advantage of teaching the people a little of enterprise.

In the matter of creation of new appointments and enhancement of salaries, particularly in the provincial branches, the Local Government should be the sole arbiter.

The present system of the same department being manned by the "Provincial" and "Imperial" men, doing the same duties but drawing different grades of pay, should be altogether abolished. I speak with special reference to the Public Works and Education Departments, where this invidious distinction is most marked. There may be two grades such as "superior" and "subordinate," and the former must be recruited from the latter.

Larger administrative powers should be given to Local Governments in the application of the general lines of policy of the Imperial Government to local conditions. For instance, in the Central Provinces, the Local Government should be given more latitude in the following matters:—Collection of land revenue; imposition and collection of forest revenue; imposition and collection of irrigation dues; imposition and collection of income-tax; and settlements. The restrictions imposed upon Local Governments by the Acts of the Imperial Legislature and by rules having the force of law may be relaxed in regard to the Forest Act, Income-tax Act, Arms Act, Excise Act.

A general Act of delegation like Act V. of 1868 will best serve the purpose.

The influence of the Government of India departments tends towards excessive rigidity. Each department of the Government of India should have at least one Assistant or Under-Secretary representing each province, but he must have local knowledge and experience. Important administrative reforms in the recent years are mostly due to the initiative of the Government of India. The Local Governments should be given a large degree of discretion in the matter of developing their administration, but it should not be left altogether to their choice to adopt a desirable reform brought to their notice from other provinces.

I am in favour of enlarging the administrative powers of the Local Governments, but an appeal should always be allowed to the Government of India. It would be positively harmful to require a certificate as to the fitness of the appeal from the very authority against whose decision the appeal is to be made. The rules regarding the right of appeal are not unnecessarily liberal, and, instead of curtailing the same, I would rather allow a direct appeal to the Government of India instead of through the Local Government, as at present.

Commissioners of divisions should be invested with final powers in the matter of suspension and remission of revenue to any amount. I would abolish the post of Settlement Commissioner and make the Commissioners of divisions the appellate authorities in the questions relating to Settlements. In mutations and nomination of *lambardars* the Commissioner should be the final authority.

In the following matters I would give final authority to Collectors and Deputy Commissioners:—Remission and suspension of revenue to the extent of Rs. 10,000; appointment and dismissal of village officers, such as *mukaddam*, *kotwar*, &c.; assessment of income-tax with the help of respectable assessors. Experienced Sub-Divisional Officers may be empowered to exercise all or some of the extended powers of Collectors and Deputy Commissioners as enumerated above.

The Commissioner should be given extended powers relating to the Court of Wards in taking up or relinquishing an estate under the Court. The Collectors and Deputy Commissioners should be constituted the Court of Wards, as virtually they are responsible for the management.

Divisional allotments are necessary in order to control the expenditure to a greater extent.

The position of the Commissioner is not sufficiently strong, though due weight is given to his opinions, but under the present system the Heads of Departments are quite independent of him and are not bound to agree with his views.

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Officers are so much engrossed in their desk-work that they have hardly time enough to mix with the people. They should be considerably relieved of their office work, and people should be allowed free access to them to represent their grievances personally, and they should be treated with sympathy and consideration.

Many of the European officers do not possess sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars.

The administrative staff in many districts in Central Provinces is quite sufficient,—only a proper adjustment of the duties is all that is needed. No reduction of the district areas is necessary, but in places where the charge is heavy Joint District Officers may be appointed.

Transfers are unnecessarily frequent, and the tone of the whole administration is changed thereby. I think no District Officer should be transferred in less than five years at the lowest, unless there are very good reasons for the same, such as the unpopularity of the officer.

The following powers and concessions may be given to municipalities:—

Sole power of—

(1) Appointment and dismissal of all officers and servants without any interference by Government authorities.

(2) Unfettered power of reduction or retention of establishment or dismissal of unfit persons.

(3) Treating the Government property in the matter of taxation in the same way as private property.

(4) Power of abolition, reduction or exemption of particular taxes with respect to particular persons or properties without the necessity of sanction by the Local Government.

(5) Exemption of municipal process or applications from court-fees.

(6) Crediting to municipal funds the sale proceeds of the hides of unclaimed animals dying within municipal limits.

(7) Abolition of, or considerable reduction in, the rate of interest charged on loans granted by the Government and relaxation of rules regulating such loans.

(8) Relieving the municipalities of the cost of maintaining the high schools, district hospitals and district veterinary hospitals.

(9) The power of the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner to suspend the operation of any resolution or order passed by a Committee should be confined only to those cases where the resolution or order has not been unanimously passed by the Committee and where its execution is likely to lead to a breach of the peace. I would, however, allow official control in all cases in which the resolutions of the Committee are passed by a bare majority.

(10) Removal of interference with municipal budgets except on very strong grounds.

(11) Gradual withdrawal of strict official control over municipal bodies, reposing more confidence in them and allowing a free hand to them as far as possible, subject, of course, to the guidance of Deputy Commissioners and Commissioners.

(12) Candidature of officials as members and office-bearers should be discouraged.

(13) The right of electing representatives to the Legislative Councils and Advisory Boards should be given.

(14) Exemption of the municipalities from the cost of Government audit.

The functions of the municipalities and District Boards may be extended in the following directions:—

(1) Institution of Boards of arbitrators in disputes relating to rights of easements in the towns or villages.

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(2) Institution of boards of arbitrators for settling petty trade disputes.
(3) Prevention of adulteration of articles of food.
(4) Powers regarding removal of public nuisance.
(5) Taking measures of prevention against epidemic diseases.
(6) Spread and encouragement of primary education.

There should be a Divisional Advisory Council for each Commissioner and a District Advisory Board for each Deputy Commissioner. I would constitute the Divisional Council by election from amongst the members of the several municipalities and Boards and also by including a limited number of outsiders representing the different classes and interests. I would constitute the District Advisory Boards by election from amongst the members of the municipalities and the Local Boards in the district and also by including a limited number of outsiders representing the different classes and interests. In respect of the following subjects responsibilities may be given to such Councils: — Education; relations of the officials with the people; public health and sanitation; agriculture; famine administration; and conduct of the people. I do not think the village communities in Central Provinces are sufficiently capable to dispose of petty civil and criminal cases.

25861. You tell us that there is a good deal of money lying idle in the coffers of *malguzars* and substantial tenants and so forth. Have you any reason to believe that loans for local purposes on the guarantee of the Local Government could be obtained?—I think so; the people have no spirit of enterprise at all; they do not know how to invest their money; they know only about investing their money on land, nothing else; that is why I believe local industries do not thrive—because of the want of the spirit of investment.

25862. If the Local Government came forward and said "We want a lakh for the purpose of building this tramway or making this irrigation work," would the local people put their hands into their hoardings?—Yes. I have had occasion to take the opinions of people. They do not know how to invest their money; that is the difficulty. If they find that there is very good security for the money that they invest, I have every reason to believe that they will come forward.

25863. With regard to income-tax, would people get off more lightly if the provincial Government had an absolutely free hand?—My complaint is that the income-tax is now being assessed every year. This tax is a very unpopular tax and it should not be assessed so often as that. If the Local Government were to consult the opinion of the people without being hampered by any rules of the Government of India it would be more conducive to the popular assessment of the tax.

25864. Could you possibly have an income-tax which was assessed for ten years?—Not ten years; the rule before was three years.

25865. No matter whether a man was making or losing money?—You generally find in practice that every year the total amount of assessment increases in every place, whether the people are losing or gaining.

25866. You say you want to see the Settlement Commissioner abolished; for what reason?—All questions connected with the settlement in a district can be more effectively decided by the Commissioner of the division than by the Settlement Officer.

25867. What you want is to give the Commissioner of the division a freer hand?—A free hand, and the right of hearing appeals, in place of the Settlement Commissioner.

25868. You suggest that final authority as to the remission and suspension of revenue should be given to the Commissioner?—Yes. To the Deputy Commissioner to the extent of only Rs. 10,000.

25869. With regard to extending the powers of Commissioners in respect of famine, what is unsatisfactory in the present position?—That the recommendations of the Commissioner may be set at nought by the Local Government.

25870. As a matter of fact, does the present system work unsatisfactorily?—In some cases it has happened that the Commissioners have recommended that famine works should be opened, and their recommendation has not been upheld.

25871. Would you like to see that matter finally in the hands of the Commissioner?—Not exactly finally, but he should be given more power.

25872. It is a matter rather of advice than of power?—In the result it would be more in the nature of advice.

25873. You are the Chairman of the Raipur municipality?—Yes; for about two years I have been Chairman; before that I was a member of the municipality.

25874. As Chairman, have you a pretty free hand in the management of the municipality?—Almost a free hand I should say.

25875. Your budget goes to the Commissioner?—Yes.

25876. Do you find he makes many alterations in it?—Yes, he does, in many particulars; for instance, we have cut down the grant that we used to pay to the high school; we thought that it was not our province to maintain the high school or to give any grant to it; our recommendation was not accepted.

25877. You thought he insisted upon your paying too much for education?—Not too much for education; so far as primary education was concerned we had nothing to say, but we said that the maintenance of the district veterinary hospital and the high school was not within the legitimate province of the municipality.

25878. By whom do you think they ought to be maintained?—By the provincial Government.

25879. Primary education you recognise as your charge, but not secondary education?—Secondary education does not come legitimately within the province of the municipality.

25880. Take the case of the dispensary; the dispensary was for the service of the people in the town?—It was for the service of the people in the town as well of the people in the *mufassal*; in the towns people have also to pay subscriptions over and above what is paid by the municipalities.

25881. They do that of their own free will?—Yes, but the *mufassal* people enjoy more advantages from the hospital than the townspeople; the municipality should be made to pay as little as possible.

25882. You think that the interference of the Commissioner in this particular was interfering with your liberty?—I do not say it was the interference of the Commissioner; that is the rule which has been in vogue for some time past.

25883. You want the municipality to have the right to say whether or not they will keep up the dispensary?—No; it is not for the municipality to keep it up; the municipality only makes a yearly grant of about Rs. 5,000.

25884. That does not represent the whole cost?—No, but that is too much, considering that the hospital exists for the whole district.

25885. You think you pay more than your share, that is what it comes to?—Yes.

25886. Do you do most of your work through sub-committees of your municipality?—Yes.

25887. Are you Chairman of all the sub-committees?—Not all, some of them.

25888. Do you get any grant from Government towards your expenses?—We get Rs. 3,000 for education.

25889. That is spent on the primary schools?—Yes.

25890. Do you get any other grant from Government?—Yes, we have only lately got a grant for the maintenance of the veterinary hospital of Rs. 300 a year.

25891. And loans?—Yes; we have to pay two loans, one was taken for the water-works, another for drainage; we have been paying our instalments regularly.

25892. You get them easily and cheaply?—Yes, but the interest that is charged is rather too much. In the case of loans the existing rules should be somewhat relaxed. We wanted to improve our market, and we wanted to go up to the Government for a loan of Rs. 30,000; Government promised it, but we could not take it up because we were required under the rules to repay it within ten years; we could not possibly repay it within ten years, and so we had to cast aside that improvement.

25893. Do you borrow your loans through the Local Government?—We borrow from the Local Government.

25894. Could you raise within the limits of the municipality a loan on the strength of the municipal revenues?—I think we could.

25895. You would have to pay a greater rate of interest for it?—Probably.

25896. That would not be so satisfactory perhaps as the present system?—No.

25897. You wish that there should be no appeal from any punishment which the municipality may inflict on its servants?—I think the Committee should have the final power. If the President punished any official he has the right of appeal to the Committee; the Committee should be the final Court of Appeal.

25898. With no further appeal beyond that?—Unless the opinion of the Committee is not unanimous; in that case I would give an appeal to the Deputy Commissioner. Beyond him the Act does not give any appeal in many cases.

25899. You think it ought to stop with the Deputy Commissioner?—I think so.

25900. But in the case of Government servants you think that they might go up to the Local Government?—Yes.

25901. Why do you draw a distinction between the two?—Because in the one case it is the Court of the people; if the Municipal Committee decides a case in respect of its own officer, they are the representatives of the people; but in the case of the Government servant it depends only on the judgment of one official.

25902. You object to the judgment of one man dismissing or punishing a man; do you think that if there were two authorities, each of whom agreed with the other, that would be sufficient?—It depends on the rank and position of the officer who is dismissed; if he is a menial officer drawing Rs. 15 or less, then I think an appeal up to the Commissioner ought to be sufficient, but if he is a high officer, drawing Rs. 100, you ought to give him the chance of going up to the Local Government.

25903. Not beyond the Local Government?—I think in the case of a man getting Rs. 100, not a Gazetted Officer, the appeal to the Local Government ought to be sufficient.

25904. What have you to say as regards panchayats?—With regard to panchayats, the people are not sufficiently advanced in education or enlightenment to take up petty civil and criminal cases, and decide them satisfactorily.

25905. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Do the village headmen, the *mukaddams*, elect to the District Councils?—I have no experience of that.

25906. These people, the village communities and others, to whom you refuse powers as being unsatisfactory, are at the same time the electorate to the Local Boards, to whom you desire to give very much larger powers?—Yes. When they sit on the Local Board or the District Board they will come into contact with the people of the whole district; they will be able to get over their local prejudices by coming into contact with the people of other places. To some extent they could not get over the local prejudices unless they were sufficiently well educated.

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25907. You say that each province should have a sort of reserve fund to which the surpluses of prosperous years might be assigned. Is not that precisely what takes place now, that if a province has a surplus it goes to its credit?—If it is so, I have nothing to say.

25908. You desire to give the Local Government more latitude in regard to settlements. For instance, the present accepted principle is that the State share of the land revenue should not exceed 50 per cent. of the cultivators' nett profits. Suppose a Local Government said, "We are hard up, and we should like to take 60 per cent.," would you allow them to do that?—Certainly not; there should not be any hard and fast rule laid down by the Government of India in respect of these matters; local wants and local circumstances must be attended to first.

25909. That is exactly the instance I gave you. The Government of India have laid down the principle that the Local Government shall not take more than 50 per cent. of the cultivators' nett profits, and the Local Government wants to get rid of that principle; would you let them exercise their own discretion?—Of course not in that way.

25910. Only in the way of relaxing taxation, not of increasing taxation?—That is what I mean.

25911. You say that in mutations and the nomination of *lambardars* the Commissioner should be the final authority?—At present the application is made to the tahsildar, he makes inquiries and makes the nomination, the final order is made by the Deputy Commissioner, and there is a right of appeal to the Commissioner; further, there is a right of appeal to the Local Government also. In these petty matters one appeal ought to be sufficient.

25912. Might the Sub-Divisional Officer not appoint a *lambardar*?—The Sub-Divisional Officer is invested with the powers of the Deputy Commissioner in some cases.

25913. In that case the appeal would lie from him to the Commissioner?—Yes.

25914. If the Sub-Divisional Officer appoints the *lambardar* and somebody is dissatisfied with the appointment, might not the appeal go to the Deputy Commissioner as the *immediate superior* of the Sub-Divisional Officer?—But under the Land Revenue Act some powers are exercised by the Sub-Divisional Officer as the Deputy Commissioner.

25915. I am speaking not of the Act, but of common sense. When the Sub-Divisional Officer exercises a power and exception is taken to his action, the appeal, in Madras, for instance, lies to the Collector; do you see any objection to that in this province, apart from the provisions of the law?—I have no objection to it; I should think it would be much better.

25916. You say that Commissioners might have larger powers in regard to Public Works; have you thought out any specific recommendation?—Certain instances have come to my knowledge in which the Commissioners have absolutely no powers.

25917. Would you like to give the Commissioner a Public Works budget and give him powers of sanction within that budget?—No; but the Executive Engineer, in consultation with the Commissioner, might start some important works.

25918. Would you say that no work should be started in the division before the Commissioner has approved of it?—Yes, that is what I mean.

25919. You say also that you would like to give the Commissioner power with regard to "transfers of subordinate officers from one district to another in the division in the interests of the Public Service." What subordinate officers do you mean?—Extra-Assistant Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, not Deputy Commissioners.

25920. Then you say that the Deputy Commissioners might similarly transfer subordinate officers from one *tahsil* or sub-division to another; do you mean tahsildars?—Yes, tahsildars and assistant tahsildars also, not Assistant Commissioners.

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25921. Then with regard to the Extra-Assistant Commissioner the position would be this. Government would post him to a division, the Commissioner would post him to a district, and the Deputy Commissioner would post him within that district?—I mean that, if necessary, instead of going up to the Local Government, the Deputy Commissioner might transfer an officer from one sub-division to another, or the Commissioner might transfer a particular officer from one district to another.

25922. Do your Commissioners, as Court of Wards, deal with encumbered estates when the proprietors are pecuniarily embarrassed?—Yes.

25923. You say that the Commissioners should decide as to taking up or relinquishing an estate under the Court; that relates to estates which are under management by reasons of the minority or the sex of the proprietor?—Yes.

25924. Would you object to the same powers in cases where the estate is taken up because the proprietor is of extravagant habits?—No, I would let the Commissioner decide in all cases whether estates should be taken up or relinquished.

25925. When estates are taken up, the entire management would be with the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

25926. Would he have to get sanction for his budget?—That depends on the question who is to constitute the Court of Wards; if he is to constitute the Court of Wards, then I think he has only to prepare his budget and send it to the Commissioner in the ordinary course.

25927. You desire that the municipality should have complete power to abolish or reduce or exempt from particular taxes without the necessity of sanction by the Local Government. Do you mean it might exempt a whole class of persons from taxation?—Not a whole class. I refer particularly to Section 41 of the Municipal Act. There is a section in the Municipal Act which empowers the Municipal Committee to "recommend" that a particular person or a particular property shall be exempted from payment of a certain tax. With respect to that word, the procedure now is that the Committee passes a resolution at a special meeting, and it has to be forwarded to the Local Government and the Local Government might not choose to accept the recommendation.

25928. But what is the general reason of exemptions?—For instance, in the case of a man who has made a munificent gift to the municipality, it might be thought graceful and advisable that his property should be exempted from taxation.

25929. The man gives you a large present, and you say, "In recognition of your munificence you need not pay any municipal taxes hereafter"; is that what you mean?—Yes, I can quote one instance at Raipur; we got 2 lakhs for our waterworks from the Raja there. He had only a small house; we wanted to exempt him from water-tax in recognition of our enjoying that boon through his munificence; that we have no power to do.

25930. If you carried out that principle very largely you might end by paying dearly for the munificence accorded to you?—That depends on the good sense of the community. There are very rare instances in which the Committee as a body are bound to be grateful to a certain person on account of the benefit that he has conferred on the community.

25931. You want the Government to give you loans more freely than they have done hitherto?—Yes, and at the same time I propose that the Government should relax the rules under which those loans are made.

25932. If the Government give you loans they must have some moral certainty of the re-payment of the loans?—Certainly.

25933. If your municipality has full control over its finances and can exempt persons from taxation, there may be a risk that they will not be able to pay back what they have borrowed from Government?—If the Government have confidence in the Municipal Commissioners there is no harm in their relaxing control in that way; if the Government found the finances of the municipality were wrong, they would refuse to grant a loan.

25934. If the Government is to lend money, at any rate it is entitled to see that you are in a position to repay the money?—Certainly.

25935. You say that in a particular case you wanted a loan for a market and you were required to pay it back within 10 years. Might not the Local Government have extended that period to 20, if it so desired, under the Act?—The Government of India rules are that generally loans for purposes of markets, etc., are to be repaid within 10 years.

25936. Are you not confusing two things, ordinary works, and emergency expenditure for plague and other matters? Under the ordinary Local Loans Act the Local Government has discretion up to 20 years?—Not in all cases; in cases in which loans are required for the improvement of markets and those things, the period is 10 years.

25937. Markets are profitable undertakings; if you are making a profit out of the market, can you not pay back the loan rapidly?—We may, but at the same time we have to see that we get a sufficient time for repayment; it is no use to take a loan for ten years when we think we shall not be able to repay it within that time.

25938. You say that among the functions of the municipalities and District Boards that might be extended are the institution of Boards of Arbitrators in disputes relating to rights of easement in towns or villages. Will you kindly explain that?—There are various questions about easements in the towns, and for the settlement of these questions people have to go to the Civil Court and fight out long and continuous litigation. In such matters there might be a sub-committee of the municipality to which they could be referred, say, under the Arbitration Act, and the Municipal Committee might decide; if their decision was made final it would do away with much litigation.

25939. You mean, made final without any appeal?—Yes; if it is an arbitration there should be no appeal.

25940. Would it be open to the parties to accept arbitration or to go to the Civil Court as they desired?—That is so, of course, in all cases.

25941. The arbitrators should be a Board representing the municipality?—Yes.

25942. How would your Board of Arbitrators for the district be constituted?—Out of the members of the District Council.

25943. Are there a sufficient number of members to go round all the villages and adjust disputes?—Only those members who come from the neighbouring parts of those villages would be expected to do the work.

25944. They are also to deal with the adulteration of food; are they to prosecute or to decide on prosecutions brought by the police?—In these matters certain municipalities, under their Acts, have been given certain powers, but here those powers have not been given.

25945. A municipality is occasionally granted preventive powers in regard to the adulteration of food, but when there is a particular case in question it has to be prosecuted under the general law?—Yes.

25946. Do you propose to eliminate that and let the committee of the Municipal Council decide cases?—I do not mean to take away the jurisdiction of the Courts; but municipalities should be armed with sufficient powers to make rules in respect of all these matters.

25947. Do you propose that these Advisory Councils should be purely advisory; suppose the Deputy Commissioner disagrees with the majority of his Advisory Council, what is to happen?—I should think that in respect of questions which are submitted to them the Deputy Commissioner or the Commissioner, as the case may be, ought to go by the opinion of the majority.

25948. But suppose he finds it impossible for him to accept the opinion of the majority, what is to happen then?—Then their opinion, of course, goes for nothing; but at the same time, in spite of all that, it would be beneficial, and it would make the Administration more popular.

25949. As a lawyer you know the difference between a case tried with assessors and a case tried by a jury; are these people to be assessors or are they to be jurors?—I should like them to be jurors.

25950. In that case, if the Deputy Commissioner disagreed, he must refer it to some superior authority?—Of course there must be a constitution in respect of these Advisory Councils, giving defined powers to the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners and also to the members of the Advisory Council as to what is to be done in the case of difference.

25951. Would you introduce such Councils throughout the province or would you try them as an experiment?—In the first instance I should try them as an experiment in some selected districts and divisions.

25952. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Could the delegation of powers which your recommendations involve best be done from time to time by a general Act of delegation such as Act V. of 1868?—Yes.

25953. Would it be necessary, or desirable, to include in such an Act a provision for prior notification of intention to delegate?—I think so.

25954. Do you think, if that were done, that would be a sufficient safeguard?—I think so.

25955. You think there would be no public complaint as regards an Act of that sort?—I am not prepared to say that, but so far as possible there might be less chance of complaint.

25956. So far as your own judgment goes you think that that would be a satisfactory instrument for the purpose?—Yes.

25957. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You would take away the power of appeal against the dismissal of municipal employees, would that be popular?—Not just at present. It depends on the way in which you have to deal with the people; if they are educated, and if they have confidence in the committee, I do not see why there should be any reason for dissatisfaction.

25958. Would you have all the members of the municipality elected?—Some might be nominated for the different classes and interests.

25959. Would you give Government power to interfere in cases in which the municipality had defaulted?—Yes.

25960. Would you give them power to suspend the whole municipality in case of failure?—In the case of gross neglect.

25961. You suggest that the power of the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner to suspend the operation of any resolution or order passed by a committee should be confined only, say, to cases where the resolution or order has not been unanimously passed, and where its execution is likely to lead to a breach of the peace. If it was unanimously passed, do you think he ought to interfere, even if it was likely to lead to a breach of the peace?—No, I do not say that; if it was likely to lead to a breach of the peace, in spite of its having been passed unanimously, he should have the power.

25962. What would be the exact result of the general Act of delegation which you have recommended?—All I can say is that there will not be the necessity of making so many notifications every time.

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25963. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Suppose certain powers have been conferred on the Central Provinces Administration by law, and a general Act of delegation was passed, the result of that would be that the Chief Commissioner would be able to delegate any of his legal powers to any subordinate officer, either the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner, without any amending Act?—Quite so.

25964. Would you like that, or do you think that specific delegation Acts would be preferable?—I think in respect to the delegation to subordinate officers there might be certain restrictions.

25965. Where it is desirable to delegate a power reserved to the Government by a specific Act, would you allow the Government to delegate that power simply by notification under a general Act, or by an amending Act?—I think by notification.

25966. You say you would abolish the post of the Settlement Officer and make the Commissioner the appellate authority in questions relating to settlement. Is it not desirable to have one Head of the province in settlement matters?—The Commissioners know more about their divisions than one man for the whole province could possibly do.

25967. What advantages do you expect from giving the Commissioner of the division appellate powers with regard to settlement matters?—He will be able to bring so much local knowledge to bear upon the questions that arise.

25968. Where does your Sub-Divisional Officer now live in this province?—At headquarters.

25969. Would you recommend that he should live in his own sub-division?—I like the present arrangement; I think that they should remain at headquarters, but as often as necessary they ought to go out on tour. That is the system now.

25970. Have you any reason to think that the Deputy Commissioner has not sufficient supervision over the police?—I do not know about the powers, but they do not exercise those powers.

25971. Ought they to exercise their powers more frequently?—Yes; and though it might not be called an actual appeal, there may be a sort of reference made in all cases from the authority of the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner. I would again rely upon the local knowledge which the Commissioner is likely to possess.

25972. Would you give the Commissioner power to transfer only officers in the Subordinate Service, or also officers in the Provincial Service?—Both in the Subordinate Service and in the Provincial Service.

25973. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Do you have to set aside a definite portion of your municipal income for schools and a definite portion for hospitals and definite portions for other things?—No.

25974. Can you spend as much or as little as you like on schools?—There is no definite division provided, but we know that the yearly expenditure on schools is so much, and that we have to allot in any case.

25975. But how is the amount arrived at?—We know very well how many schools there are, and what it costs to maintain them from our previous yearly budgets.

25976. You have to pay for all the schools?—All our primary schools.

25977. Plus the salaries and everything else?—Yes.

25978. Do you get a Government grant for general purposes, apart from education?—No.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. N. K. KELKAR was called and examined.

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25979. (*Chairman.*) You are a pleader?—Yes. I reside at Balaghat. I have been a member of the municipality and Honorary Secretary since 1892 and a member of the District Council since 1896.

Municipalities in urban tracts and District Councils and Local Boards in the rural areas are the forms of local self-government obtaining in these provinces. Both have so far more or less failed to bring home to the people the importance of local self-government. The Government perhaps introduced these forms of local self-government in several places all over the province almost indiscriminately, and, having introduced these forms of self-government, they did not pursue a

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liberal policy in the matter of encouraging and fostering them. The time has come for the revision of the whole system both in form and substance from bottom to top. The system of elections has been a hopeless failure. The *mukaddams* primarily constitute the chief body of voters entitled to elect members to the Local Boards. Professional and mercantile men have also a right of election. But both these classes of men have got very little or no personal interest of their own at stake and are not likely to be affected or prejudiced by the mismanagement of a local body's affairs, and therefore one would naturally find both these classes of men taking no interest in elections. The incomes of Local Boards or District Councils are ear-marked and derived from Government direct by means of allotments or assignments of certain kinds of cesses and contributions. The cesses are imposed at settlement by Government officers without any voice or say on the part of people's representatives. Indeed, the District Council or Local Board possess no power of imposing taxes or of deriving income from other sources except contributions from Government. The fund technically called the local fund is only nominally so, since it is money belonging to, or carved out of, provincial revenues, and local officers of Government, acting under the settled policy of the Central Government, are always over-anxious to reserve to themselves exclusive and absolute control over the finances. Local self-government (barring perhaps in a few districts) has been a mere farce. Everybody looks upon it as one of the departments of Government, virtually managed by Government officers.

So far as District Councils and Local Boards are concerned the appointments, transfers, dismissals, &c., of school-masters are under their control. For want of adequate funds they cannot engage their own independent supervising staff and they have therefore in the main to depend and act upon the reports of the deputy inspectors of schools. The local bodies are supposed to make no change in the curriculum laid down by Government educational authorities. They are supposed to abide by the fee rules prescribed by Government. They are not supposed to use in school any books other than those appointed by Government. The scholarships though paid from the so-called local fund are absolutely in the giving of the circle inspector of Government.

As regards works, such as construction of roads, wells, buildings, &c., a district fund overseer is appointed to supervise these works. The Deputy Commissioner is supposed to appoint the overseer with the consent of the District Council. Under the standing orders of the Local Government the district fund overseer is to act under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner or tahsildar. The Deputy Commissioner and under his orders the tahsildar are primarily responsible for the execution of these works for which the District Council is to spend money under the orders of the Deputy Commissioner. Local bodies are not supposed to undertake any new works of, and above, certain values without the previous sanction of the Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner. The post of a Divisional Engineer is newly created with a view to help the local bodies with expert advice. The pay of this officer and of his establishment is wholly contributed by various local bodies in the division, but the appointment, dismissal, &c., of this officer is in the hands of the Commissioner. The ferries are auctioned by the tahsildars, who merely send the auction papers to the District Council for formal sanction. The arboriculture is managed by that officer. The District and Divisional authoritites have solely appropriated to themselves the financial control over the local bodies. The account rules laid down by the Comptroller are supposed to be adopted by the local bodies, who cannot keep accounts on forms other than those prescribed by the Comptroller. The District Council is supposed to purchase stationery from the Government Stationery Department and from nowhere else. A number of departments, such as Vaccination, Veterinary, Dispensaries, are made over to the management of the local bodies, although the local bodies do not possess expert agencies of their own to manage them. The vaccinators were ordered to be transferred to the control of the local bodies with effect from the 1st October, 1907, but with this transfer the Government has not transferred the supervising staff. Up to now the vaccinators though paid from revenue belonging to the local bodies, were provincial servants of Government. Though the payment used to be made by local bodies, the vaccinators were not subject to the control of these bodies, but the Government has recently decided to transfer the vaccinators' services to the local bodies. The Veterinary Department is pretended to have been placed at the disposal of the local bodies, but over this department also the Council's control is nominal.

It is only, say, once a month, or once in two or three months, that the members have the good luck of being called together with a view to attend the show of taking part in the deliberations of the Local Board or District Council.

My remarks about elections for Local Boards apply equally to District Councils, the office-bearers of which are for the most part salaried officers of Government. The first duty is to form electorates. For each patwari circle, or wherever that is not possible, for a group of two or more patwari circles, a panchayat should be formed. All the villagers in each village constituting the patwari circle or circles of a prescribed status or earning a certain amount of minimum income should have a right of vote to elect members to these panchayats. In the case of tenants it may be desirable to make their eligibility depend upon the payment of a certain amount of annual rent. Subject to the aforesaid restrictions, traders and merchants in the villages deriving not less than Rs. 120 annually may be eligible to vote. The voters may not necessarily be literate, but the panchas must be. In order to avoid any possible abuse on the part of villagers in the matters of election or in order to secure the services of the best men available in any locality who, for various reasons, may not like to stand as candidates at elections, either the District Board or the Deputy Commissioner may have a right of nomination. In Indian society instances of people unwilling to stand for election may be found in numbers. It will be long before people forget their differences which deter them from standing as candidates, but the number of nominated panchas should, on no account, exceed the elected. The whole body of panchas may consist of not more than seven in the proportion of five elected to two nominated.

These provinces in which the *malguzari* system prevails, and in which the *malguzar* is still looked upon in many localities as a family counsel or social guide in many walks of rural life, are most suited for the establishment of village panchayats. Under the present system the *malguzar* or other influential men in the villages hesitate to interfere as their position as village arbitrators is losing recognition in any quarter. Another reason which has prompted me to be so keen about the panchayats is the knowledge I have gained from the recent conciliation proceedings so marvellously carried to a successful termination under the guidance of Government officers. Government officers had to meet with difficulties and obstacles in the beginning, but very soon afterwards both the debtors and creditors cheerfully submitted to the Board's decisions and got what they could get in law courts without much trouble and with very little expense.

The panchas should be the primary agents for the direct execution of some of the duties vested in the present District Council or Local Board. In many parts of these provinces people will gladly accept the following duties:—Management of cattle-pounds and of small irrigation tanks or wells; construction and repairs of pounds, sarais, wells and school buildings; season and petty repairs to inter-village roads; village sanitation; management of markets; village and roadside arboriculture for which an agriculturist has some liking; management of village camping grounds; control and supervision of village ferries; and the settlement of petty civil and criminal disputes, including power to punish for offences against sanitation as well as

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against the Local Self-Government Act, or the rules and by-laws made thereunder and also to compound such offences. The last should be the fundamental duty of the village panchas. Indeed, some permissive enactment may be passed making it compulsory for the people to refer in the first instance their disputes to the villages panchas and barring the jurisdiction of the courts unless the plaint or complaint is accompanied by a certificate from the panchas to the effect that owing to some difficult question of law or fact involved in the case, the case, in their opinion, is a fit one to be disposed of by a stipendiary tribunal.

In the execution of these duties the panchas should be subject to the control of no one except the District Council or District Board. On no account should the District or Divisional authorities interfere with the panchas, and the duty of the guiding officer should be to guide and advise and not to interfere. In case the Local Government consider that any panchayat is not working properly, they may call upon the District Board to dissolve the same and have a new panchayat elected.

The panchayats shall have an unqualified right to elect their own office-bearers, and they should act under such by-laws as may from time to time be framed by the District or Provincial Boards. The term of panchayat should be three years ordinarily for the present. From the above list of duties I have purposely omitted schools, as I have gained an impression from the working of the present School Committees that they can do very little practical work in the interest of education as such. They may look after the repairs, etc., but the education as such may be managed by a body of non-official experts.

If the panchayats are well established, there will be no need to have the present Local Boards. In order to make local self-government a success, it is necessary to have a deliberative body consisting only of non-officials for each district very nearly resembling the present District Councils. The village panchas from all parts of the district should have the right to elect members to this Board, but the elections may be supplemented by nominations by Government of non-officials to protect the interest of individuals otherwise qualified who, for reasons already mentioned, are afraid of running the risk of incurring failures at elections. The number of such nominated members may not exceed one-third the total number of members. No officer of Government may be allowed to take part in the deliberations of the District Council as that has so far hindered the progress of free and independent opinion of self-governing bodies. The members of the District Board or Council should have an uncontrollable right of electing their office-bearers. The number of members must vary according to the size and importance of each district.

My remarks with regard to official control apply equally to the municipalities also, but these bodies enjoy larger powers both in the matter of taxation as well as in the execution of some of the duties entrusted to them. Here again the same complaint is heard that municipality is a Government Department where everything is done or ought to be done under Government *hukum*. In the Municipal Committee also there should be no official element, all the office-bearers should be non-officials, and the power of electing office-bearers should be absolute.

The District Council should have the power to allot sums of money to each of the village panchayats for the efficient execution of the various duties entrusted to them. They should have the power of imposing sanitation taxes, levy bazar dues, cattle registration fees, to impose wheel-tax on all carts engaged in mineral and other traffic, not of course of agricultural produce, and also to charge broker's and weighman's fees. In addition to their incomes which the District Councils at present derive from school and road cesses, ferries, cattle-pounds, *nazul* lands, arboriculture and other miscellaneous sources, the District Council should have a right to receive from Government in the shape of tax a certain percentage on all revenues they derive from all sources in a district. The fund so constituted by these various means should be at the absolute disposal of the District Council. They must be at liberty to act without any sanction of the District or Divisional authorities or Heads of any Government Department, but subject to the control of the provincial Board hereinafter mentioned. Municipalities should have the same powers of raising and administering their own funds as the District Councils. The Government may have a right of inspecting accounts, watching the general working of the various local bodies. The Government officers may make suggestions, but because their suggestions are not carried out the Government should not interfere unless a strong case of real injustice or wanton waste is made out or unless it is apparent that a local body is unreasonably obstinate.

The different departments under the management of the local bodies in a district should be supervised by an inspecting staff of their own directly subordinate to them and paid from their funds. There need not be separate inspecting officers for District Boards and municipalities in a district. With a view to the harmonious working of these departments in a division, there may be divisional inspecting officers consisting of experts in the respective branches. These divisional inspecting officers should also be paid from contributions from the several local bodies in the division. The inspecting staff for the district and division would thus consist of—(1) *For a district*—a deputy inspector of schools; an Engineering Upper Subordinate; and a vaccination superintendent. (2) *For a division*—an inspector of schools; a Divisional Engineer; and a Superintendent of the Veterinary and Vaccination Departments. The transfer of these inspecting officers and even of the lower subordinates in different departments from one district or division to another in consultation with the local bodies concerned may be of great use and should be allowed as often as necessary.

The machinery of local self-government in a province, without a provincial body to harmonize the working of the different local bodies, would be incomplete. There should therefore be a provincial Board consisting of a representative for each division in the province elected by the different local bodies in it, having power to sanction the imposition of taxes; sanction by-laws; frame rules and regulations, including account rules for the guidance of the various departments under the control of the different local bodies; to sanction budgets and re-appropriations; to appoint committees of non-official experts to consider questions and make suggestions in connection with educational and other matters requiring professional advice; to transfer, appoint, dismiss and punish servants in the divisional inspecting staff. This Board will have a central office of its own with a paid Secretary and staff paid from contributions from different local bodies, and will decide questions in connection with the above-mentioned matters.

It would not be advisable to place minor municipalities in the district under the control and supervision of either a District Board or Council or even of the municipality at the headquarters. Every municipality, however small it may be, must be an independent body and must be left to manage its own affairs subject to the above remarks about Government help and guidance and control of the provincial Board.

It is not necessary for the District or Divisional Officers to have separate Advisory or Administrative Councils at least so far as local bodies are concerned. The District or Divisional authorities may consult such bodies on any point they like.

25980. You tell us that the income of the Local Boards and District Councils are derived from Government. In what proportion is the income derived from the Government?—The whole income is from Government.

25981. Some of the District Council income is derived from cesses?—But the cesses are realised by Government.

25982. What proportion does the income which is not derived from cesses bear to the income

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derived from cesses?—There is no fixed proportion; it varies with the districts.

25983. Suppose the District Council had the power of imposing taxes, would they raise money by taxation?—They would.

25984. For what particular purpose?—For all purposes generally, for roads, village sanitation, arboriculture, education, cattle-pounds and so on.

25985. We have had suggestions made to us that the resources of the District Boards are too small; you think that they would be made good by increased taxation if the District Councils had the power to do so?—Yes.

25986. Are not the Local Boards presided over as a rule by the tahsildars?—Yes.

25987. It has been suggested to us that the Chairman of the District Council has very little to do with the executive power; by whom is that generally managed?—The Secretary of the District Council has generally the executive power.

25988. Not the Chairman of the Local Board?—For all executive purposes, so far as the execution of works is concerned, all the works are executed through the tahsildar, who happens to be the Chairman of the Local Board.

25989. But he does it under the orders of the District Board?—Nominally under the orders of the District Board; he is supposed to do it under the orders of the District Board, but he does it on his own responsibility. The tahsildars in this province have appropriated to themselves all the functions of the local bodies.

25990. Even those of the District Council, of which they are not members?—In some districts the tahsildars are members of the District Councils, but not in all districts.

25991. You say that he shows a tendency to make his position felt; in what sort of way?—In every way. The members as a rule are supposed to do the work under their own supervision, and the money is given to them; but practically the tahsildar keeps the whole of the money himself, and asks the members to do the work just as if they were contractors.

25992. Do they do that work?—They do it.

25993. Are they glad to do it?—I am doubtful.

25994. How would you like to see the work done?—It should be done under the supervision of the members and through the District Fund overseer.

25995. Then you say that the tahsildar sometimes forces the local bodies to sanction expenditure?—Yes; they incur the expenditure beforehand and send to us a memorandum that they have incurred the expenditure, and we have to sanction it.

25996. But suppose the President of the District Council said "I am not going to pay," what would happen?—It would create friction, and the Deputy Commissioner would say "As you disagree with the tahsildar in this matter no works of yours at all will be executed"; that would be the result.

25997. Has that ever been attempted?—It has not been attempted; we sanction expenditure; that is all.

25998. Do you work through committees on your District Council at all?—Yes; we have sub-committees; we have a Public Works Committee, an Education Committee, an Executive Committee, and a Finance Committee.

25999. Who is the Chairman of these committees?—One of the members of the sub-committee is the Chairman.

26000. Not the Chairman of the District Council?—Not necessarily.

26001. But, generally speaking, is he?—Generally speaking.

26002. You rather suggest that the powers of the Local Boards have been extended at the expense of the District Council?—Yes. Nowadays there is a tendency on the part of the Local Administration to extend the powers of the Local Boards and to curtail those of the District Council.

26003. In what particular direction?—In every respect. They are supposed to be the masters; the funds are allotted to them, and they are no longer responsible for the expenditure of the District Council.

26004. Are the budgets of the Local Boards sent up to the District Councils?—They are.

26005. Have the District Councils any power of supervision over them?—To a very limited extent.

26006. But, notwithstanding that, you would lead us to believe that the Local Board is the master of the District Council?—Yes.

26007. Do you think that that is a good system?—No.

26008. It was suggested to us in another province that it might be well to abolish the District Council altogether, and have nothing but the Local Board. Would you agree with that suggestion?—We must have a deliberative body; I do not agree with that suggestion, especially as I am of opinion that there should be village panchayats or circle panchayats.

26009. It might be possible to very largely increase the powers of the Local Board and get rid of the District Board altogether?—Yes, but not now. It will take some time.

26010. Do you think it would be a good thing to do?—Not in these provinces just now.

26011. What is your opinion with regard to panchayats?—My suggestion is that there should be a panchayat for each group of a patwari circle consisting of about five to seven villages; in some cases it might be possible to have a panchayat for each village.

26012. What would be the population of such a circle of villages?—Generally it is less than 1,000 in a village. It would be about 5,000 to 7,000 people.

26013. You could entrust them with various powers?—Yes. My idea in giving these powers to the village or circle panchayat is that there should be so many Local Boards; I would give them all these powers which are at present exercised by the Local Boards.

26014. But the real duty of the panchayat should be the settlement of small disputes?—Petty, civil and criminal disputes.

26015. Would you make that decision of the panchayat final?—Final, with no appeal.

26016. Have the municipality at the present moment all the functions that they can usefully discharge?—I think they have.

26017. At present the budget has to go to the Commissioner?—In the case of minor municipalities where the population does not exceed 20,000; in other cases it goes to the Chief Commissioner.

26018. Do you wish the control of the Commissioner entirely removed?—Yes.

26019. Would the municipality be prepared to accept entire responsibility in that case?—It should do.

26020. At present the Government would come to the aid of a municipality that got into debt and could not discharge its liabilities?—In that way the Government must come to the assistance of the municipalities every time, but the control, which is at present exercised by the Divisional Commissioner, should be removed.

26021. Is that a logical position?—The question is, how the municipality got into difficulty. If it were necessary to meet public demands the Government must come to the assistance. Suppose, for instance, we want money for sanitation purposes, or for plague, the Government must of necessity come forward and relieve us.

26022. Even although you got into financial difficulties by your own folly?—Not by our own folly. If a municipality had got into difficulties by their own folly, then it would be unreasonable to expect Government to afford pecuniary assistance.

26023. Then what would happen?—Then they must raise the money themselves by taxation.

26024. The Government should step in and take over the powers?—Yes, in some cases.

26025. You prefer that to the present system of control of the budget?—Yes.

26026. If your views were met as to District Boards and municipalities and panchayats, then you think it would not be necessary to have Advisory or Administrative Councils?—That is so.

26027. Otherwise, suppose the present system continues, what do you say?—Even if the present system continues, the District Officer should make use of the District Boards or District Councils as they exist.

26028. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You say that there is a tendency to appoint Government officers to the post of Secretary of the District Board?—Yes.

26029. Who appoints the Secretary?—The Commissioner; he is nominated by the Deputy Commissioner, and his appointment is subject to the sanction of the Commissioner.

26030. And the Government generally appoints officials as Secretaries to the District Councils?—Yes.

26031. Do you think that that practice should be changed?—Yes for this reason; all the executive power is placed in the hands of the Secretary, and therefore it should be in the hands of a non-official. The District Council should have power to appoint their own Secretary.

26032. You say that the members of the District Council when they come to a meeting do not know beforehand what are the subjects for discussion. When a notice is sent round, does it contain a statement of the subjects which are coming up for discussion?—No, never.

26033. Is it desirable that it should?—Yes.

26034. As a rule do most of the members live in town, or do they live in the interior?—In the interior.

26035. Do many *malguzars* live in the villages?—Yes.

26036. What position would you allow to these *malguzars* in the panchayats formed in those villages?—Not any particular position; it would go by personal qualification; because he is a *malguzar* he should not have any particular position or any particular hand in the government of the village.

26037. You have also said that Educational Officers and others should help in the formation of these panchayats. Would you approve of the idea of appointing some special officer to go round and create these panchayats and supervise their working?—I would dislike the idea of appointing a naib-tahsildar to educate these panchayats. I would like an experienced and sympathetic officer having at least ten years' experience, not below the rank of an Extra Assistant Commissioner on Rs. 500.

26038. Should these panchayats exercise their powers subject to the supervision of any officer, or only subject to the supervision of the District Council?—Subject to the supervision of the District Council.

26039. Will the District Council be able to supervise the work of all the panchayats in a large district?—I think it will.

26040. Do you desire that the decisions of the panchayats in petty civil and criminal matters should be final, or should they be subject to appeal?—I have already said that they should be final.

26041. You say that panchayats should have the power of imposing a sanitation tax; in what form should that tax be imposed?—A sanitation tax must be a personal tax.

26042. Would the villagers not grumble at it?—Every tax is disliked by the villagers or by any persons; nobody likes the idea of taxation; but we cannot make any improvements without money.

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26043. Would that not endanger the success of your scheme of panchayats?—I do not think so.

26044. Eventually they will see the benefit of it, and the unpopularity will disappear?—Yes, and therefore we should select at first only the most advanced villages where there will be the least probability of grumbling.

26045. You say that the municipality should have the same powers of raising and administering their own funds. Do not the municipalities raise their own funds now?—They do, but they are subject to the control of the Divisional Officer and Chief Commissioner. We are not supposed to impose any tax except with the previous sanction of the Chief Commissioner.

26046. The municipal law enumerates a number of taxes; you want to invest the Municipal Commissioners with the power of imposing any tax within that list?—Yes.

26047. And you do not think there is any danger in doing that?—No.

26048. Who appoint the Secretaries to the municipalities?—The Commissioners of Divisions.

26049. Are those Secretaries Government servants or non-officials?—Some of them are paid Secretaries; they are paid by the municipalities themselves; some are Honorary Secretaries and some Government servants.

26050. But who appoints those who are paid?—They are appointed by the municipality; it is only the appointment of Honorary Secretaries that is subject to the sanction of the Commissioner. The appointment of a paid Secretary is not so subject.

26051. You have spoken of the poverty of the municipalities and of their inability to undertake large sanitary reforms. Is it within your knowledge that the municipalities have received any contributions from the Government for specific sanitary reforms?—It is not within my knowledge.

26052. When large sanitary works are undertaken may the municipalities reasonably expect some help from Government?—Certainly.

26053. Are you aware that the District Boards have received contributions from the Government?—Not to my knowledge.

26054. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Do you have this organisation of a Chairman and Vice-Chairman and a Secretary for every municipality and District Board in the province?—I have never heard of any such post as that of Vice-Chairman of a District Council. It is only the Nagpur District Council that has that post.

26055. The ordinary District Council has a Chairman and a Secretary?—Yes.

26056. Is the Secretary generally a paid Secretary?—No. He is generally a non-official; he gets no special pay for doing this work.

26057. Suppose he is an Extra-Assistant Commissioner, he gets paid as Extra-Assistant Commissioner, and he gets no allowance for acting as Secretary to the municipality?—No.

26058. And any non-official gentleman of course gets nothing for acting as Secretary?—No.

26059. Then the tahsil Board has also a Chairman and Secretary?—Yes; the tahsildar is generally the Chairman, and the naib-tahsildar is generally the Secretary.

26060. Are not your municipal taxes laid down by a definite Act?—Yes.

26061. Did you say that you have to get the specific sanction of the Commissioner year after year to levying a house and land tax at a certain percentage?—The *haisiyat* tax.

26062. What is that?—I call it a municipal income tax.

26063. It is a sort of tax on occupations?—Yes.

26064. Your chief income is derived from house and land tax, tolls and market dues and so on?—Not necessarily; in the minor municipalities we

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get the larger portion of income from the *haisiyat* tax.

26065. You do not have to go up year after year to levy the house tax?—No.

26066. Once you levy it at a particular rate, it goes on being levied until you find it necessary to alter the rate?—Yes.

26067. As regards your panchayats, you propose to give these panchayats considerable powers. They will be petty judges; they will have to deal with sanitation and markets and the construction of pounds; will not the position be rather sought after?—They will take the place of the present Local Boards. My idea is that the area covered by the present Local Boards is too large.

26068. We have it from other witnesses that the Local Board is merely the agent of the District Council; the District Council agrees that a particular market or school shall be established, and the Local Board is told to see to it; is that the case?—If that is so, it is better to have as many agents as possible.

26069. Are these panchayats in their circles to be bodies having a real power to discriminate, to say, "We will have a market here and not one there; we will dig a well or we will not dig a well"; or are they to be under the control of the District Council?—They would be under the control of the District Council, but once the power is given them they will be the absolute masters.

26070. Take the question whether a well is to be made in the village or not; the panchayat is to decide upon it?—Yes, subject to the funds at their disposal.

26071. Is there not likely to be a good deal of intriguing and wire-pulling in respect of the panchayat elections?—No. In case there should be any wire-pulling I have given power to the District Council to make nominations, to protect the interests of individuals who might suffer by wire-pulling.

26072. There is a certain amount of wire-pulling in municipal elections?—Yes.

26073. You think that that would not be repeated in the panchayat elections?—I have guarded against it.

26074. You propose a franchise; for instance, you say that merchants and traders deriving not less than Rs. 120 annually may be eligible to vote; would that be practicable; who is to find out whether they get Rs. 120 or not?—The District Council would find out.

26075. Would they do that accurately?—I think so; when you have to fix an income, of course it is only approximate; no accurate estimate is ever possible.

26076. Would not the low-caste people be cut out altogether?—I have given the power of voting to all persons in the village, provided they are tenants or professional men.

26077. You say "In the case of tenants it may be desirable to make their eligibility depend upon the payment of a certain amount of annual rent"; will not that cut out most, at any rate, of the low-caste people?—No, I do not think so; generally they are tenants in this part of India.

26078. Suppose that in particular villages they were cut out; would that be satisfactory?—If they were otherwise qualified, then the District Officer or the District Council would come to their relief, and they would be nominated.

26079. You say that the District Council should have pretty large powers of taxation; who is to enforce the taxation?—They would enforce it by their own agency.

26080. These are to be non-official bodies; the Government is not to have anything to do with them?—Just so.

26081. Suppose (it has happened and it might happen again) the people object to paying a sanitation tax or a cattle registration fee; what is to be done?—They must have power to realise the amount.

26082. The Government is to compel the people to pay the taxes that these bodies impose?—Yes, just as in the case of the municipalities.

26083. But, at the same time, it will get all the odium of levying the tax, while it will have no control over the imposition of the tax or the way in which it is to be applied?—The District Council would bear the odium.

26084. If the tax is levied by means of Government servants will not the people still blame the *Sirkar* for the imposition of the tax?—Not necessarily.

26085. You say further that the Government is to contribute to these bodies a percentage of all the revenue derived from all sources in the district. Is that a practical method; would it not lead to grave inequalities? All the *ganja* cultivation in these parts is concentrated in Khandwa; consequently Government derives a large amount of revenue, in that particular district, from *ganja* which is consumed all over the province?—In such cases you may have to make exceptions.

26086. The Deputy Commissioner is to have nothing to do with these Boards?—No.

26087. Who will become the principal power in the district—the Chairman of the District Council?—The Chairman and Secretary of the District Council, so far as the affairs of local bodies are concerned.

26088. The Deputy Commissioner will be a simple collector of revenue, and a policeman to keep the district quiet for the benefit of the Chairman of the District Council?—And otherwise the adviser of the District Council.

26089. Things being as they are now, is that a practical policy?—Yes, I think so.

26090. Have you read anything about local self-government in England?—Not much.

26091. Do you think that in England municipalities and Local Boards are allowed the free hand that you desire to give to these bodies?—I do not know.

26092. Who is to control the Divisional Inspecting Officers?—The provincial Board.

26093. You speak about the provision of a Divisional Engineer; is that being carried out throughout the province?—No, only in the Nagpur Division.

26094. You seem to look upon that rather as a grievance to the District Council?—No; his appointment and everything is under the control of the Commissioner.

26095. May it not be looked at as the initiation of a policy which may eventually lead to each District Council having its own engineer?—Yes, probably.

26096. In that case it would be rather an advantageous policy?—It might.

26097. As regards vaccinators, they have now been made a local service, have they not?—Yes.

26098. They were on a provincial list?—They are on a provincial list.

26099. You say "they were ordered to be transferred to the control of the local bodies with effect from the 1st October, 1907"?—That is to say, they are District Board servants instead of provincial servants from that date.

26100. Is not that, from the point of view of local self-government, a good step?—It may be a good step provided we are able to control it. The vaccination superintendent will be a Government servant, and the vaccinators will be under the control of their superintendent and the Civil Surgeon.

26101. Still, their appointment and dismissal will be transferred to the District Council and its Chairman?—That is no control at all.

26102. At any rate it is the beginning of a possible control?—It may be a beginning, but in other directions it might be a disadvantage; we cannot pay pensions to these men.

26103. Is there anything to prevent you, if you have the means, starting provident funds for your employés?—There is nothing to prevent us, but the practice is that we never pay any pensions to any District Council servants.

26104. As regards the veterinary work, you say you have not enough power there; what would you like to have?—The Hospital Assistant is subject to the control of the divisional inspector and superintendent; he is appointed and transferred and his leave is granted by the superintendent.

26105. Then in this, as in all cases, your general policy is that the Board should have the control of the establishment?—Yes; at present we are merely the payers; we have simply to cash the cheque on the first of the month according as the bills are received.

26106. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) One suggestion you make regarding the grant of power of taxation to District Councils is that that is the first step in producing an interest amongst the electorate as to who are elected to the District Council?—That is one of the steps.

26107. Because then the Council will have power to hurt them; is that the reason?—Yes, I have already stated that that power is generally held by the people.

26108. Could you give us the names of, say, two districts in these provinces where you think your experiment could be tried with a good prospect of success?—You mean about taxation?

26109. About the whole scheme; it would be a slow growth, but which two districts, if you had a free hand, would you begin with?—With regard to the panchayats, my idea is that they should be started in backward districts like Balaghat or Bhandara.

26110. You would begin in the backward districts with the panchayats?—Yes; there the people have to unlearn very little and to learn much; I would therefore try the panchayat system in districts like Balaghat.

26111. Would you begin the District Council system until you got your panchayats in working order?—Yes.

26112. Then what would you do with what you would call the forward districts; would you leave them alone?—No, they must go by themselves; if they see that the panchayats in other districts are doing real good for the people then they must apply to introduce them themselves.

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26113. I suppose you would want a very elastic Act to supply these powers?—No doubt.

26114. Would you do it chiefly by making rules?—I think some enactment is necessary.

26115. But what form should the legislation take; would you have a general Act with rule-making power?—Yes, a permissive enactment.

26116. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Have you ever lived in a village?—I have not actually lived in a village, but I have come into contact with villagers often. I have talked to the villagers about the panchayat, and they seem to approve of the idea.

26117. The panchayat system that you propose is not based on the single village?—That is because in this part of the country it is not possible to have a panchayat for each village, but there may be some villages in which a panchayat might be established.

26118. It is no part of the old village system of the country?—No.

26119. The essence of the old village system is, a number of people living together who are driven by common interests to joint action; but that principle is abandoned when you group separate villages together, each with an interest of its own?—The villages in this part of the country have practically a common interest.

26120. The separate villages have common interests, but they have not the common interests of people living together side by side?—They have in this part of the country; they have to pay the same taxes, the same cesses, the same land revenue.

26121. But they have not the same interest in the common affairs, the common well, the common tank, the common school and so forth?—No; they might in the case of the school; there may be a school for one or two villages.

26122. However, your panchayat is based on altogether novel lines?—Yes.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Rai Sahib MATHURA PRASHAD was called and examined.

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26123. (*Chairman.*) You are a pleader, of Chhindwara?—Yes. I am Honorary Secretary of the District Council, a member of the Municipal Committee, a member of the Dispensary Committee, and Vice-Chairman of the School Committee. I have been such in various capacities for the last 16 or 17 years.

The right of appeal should not be curtailed nor should a certificate from the authority passing the order appealed against be insisted upon. Officers of Government should certainly be allowed to approach to the higher authority with their representation against orders affecting them personally, inasmuch as to most of the officers severe punishment means substantial loss in honour, reputation and prestige. But I would confine the right of appeal to the case of officers of superior Services. The officers of inferior grades should be allowed to appeal to their Departmental Heads only against the orders passed by District or Departmental Officers. In the case of superior officers appeals to the Local Government or Government of India should be made permissible. All Government servants should be divided into classes, and the right of appeals should be regulated according to the classes to which they belong. Thus—

(*a*) Power of suspension, reduction and dismissal of all menial servants in the district be granted to the officer under whom they are serving.	Right of appeal to Deputy Commissioner.
(*b*) Power of appointment, suspension, reduction and dismissal of all clerks drawing salary up to Rs. 50 per mensem be granted to the Deputy Commissioner.	Right of appeal to Commissioner.
(*c*) Power of appointment, suspension and dismissal of all clerks above Rs. 50 be granted to the Commissioner.	Right of appeal to Chief Commissioner.
(*d*) Cases in which the power of appointment, suspension and dismissal is reserved to the Chief Commissioner.	Right of appeal to Government of India.

Orders passed on the first appeal to be treated as conclusive, but to be liable to revision by higher authorities. Executive Officers of Government do get sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people, but they are very seldom seen to make use of such opportunities. This state of things is attributable to the following causes:—The want of inclination among European officers to mix with the people and to learn their manners and customs; want of sufficient time; and want of a thorough knowledge of the language spoken by the people of the country.

The Deputy Commissioner or other Executive Officer, when out on touring duties, should invariably consult the principal residents of the town

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or village about the working of the Forest Laws, Excise Rules and police, &c.; when at headquarters he may see or meet only members of the District Council and Municipal Committees, inasmuch as the latter represent the town and the former represent the entire population of the district. If the Deputy Commissioner is unable to spare time for granting interview to each member of the local bodies separately, let him come and attend the meetings with a view to discuss matters with them and exchange ideas. There are no existing obstacles in the way of Executive Officers coming in personal contact with the people. The whole thing depends upon the personal inclination of the officer. Deputy Commissioners are much overworked, and consequently they cannot spare time to meet the people. Relief should be given in the form of either dividing the district or creating smaller charges or sub-divisions to be put under the control of Sub-Divisional Officers. To give more Assistants to a District Officer and then allowing them to stay at headquarters will not render any relief to him.

Most of the European Executive Officers do not care to study the vernacular language of the district in which they are working. The mere passing of departmental examinations in vernaculars at the very commencement of their official career is not sufficient guarantee of their acquaintance with the language.

Most of the districts may be divided into a larger number of tahsils or sub-divisions, and each tahsil should be put in charge of a responsible officer not below the rank and position of an Assistant Commissioner or Extra-Assistant Commissioner. At present the tahsildar gets a salary varying from Rs. 130 to Rs. 250, and for this pay educated men of good family connection cannot be secured.

If larger powers are granted to Commissioners, Collectors and other local authorities, greater care will certainly be involved in their selection.

District Officers should not be too frequently transferred from one district to another. In the Seoni district, which is quite close to Chhindwara district, in the course of a single year several Deputy Commissioners were posted and transferred. A District Officer should not be removed from the charge of a district for at least three or four years. If his transfer is inevitable, then an Assistant Commissioner, who has worked in that district for some time, should be chosen in his place.

I would propose that the following powers can be safely granted to municipalities:—

(*a*) Power to levy tax.

(*b*) Power of punishing and dismissing the servants should be absolutely granted to the municipality and no appeals should be entertained by the Deputy Commissioner or other higher officer.

(*c*) The present control and supervision by the Deputy Commissioner may be taken away, but the Commissioner's power of supervision should be retained.

(*d*) The Committee be allowed to prepare its own budget and to alter the figures in the budget without any sanction from higher authorities.

(*e*) Office-bearers of each municipality should be, as far as possible, non-official gentlemen.

(*f*) Municipalities should be entirely left to administer their own finances and manage the institutions which they are required to maintain.

(*g*) A municipality may be asked to appoint an Arbitration Board for the disposal of petty civil cases.

I am not in favour of more powers being granted to District Councils and Local Boards than those which are now possessed by them, but these bodies should be freely allowed to manage the institutions for the maintenance of which they have to incur expenditure out of their funds:—

(*a*) The Vaccination Department, though paid for by the District Council, is managed entirely by the Civil Surgeon;

(*b*) The Civil Veterinary Department is also maintained by the District Council, but it is entirely under the control of the Veterinary Superintendent.

The finances of the District Councils are extremely limited, and it is very difficult for them to manage efficiently all the institutions in their charge, or to assume additional responsibilities involving expenditure of money which would amount to neglecting other institutions. The area occupied by a tahsil is generally included within the jurisdiction of a Local Board. This area, comprising many villages, is too large to be properly administered by a Board, and one Local Board should be established for every 150 or 200 villages. The tahsildar or Sub-Divisional Officer for each tahsil will be the *ex-officio* President with a local Vice-President and a Secretary. All these Local Boards will be directly under the subordination of District Council as hitherto, and sums will be set apart annually by the District Council for expenditure by each Board.

I am in favour of the creation of a small Administrative Council to assist District Officers only and not to assist the Divisional Officers. The members of this Council will come in direct touch with District Officers and other higher officers of Government. They will be most useful in removing any misunderstanding which might be created in the minds of the people regarding any measure or action of Government. They will also be in a position to represent to the authorities the real wants and grievances of the people. The following may be the members of the Administrative Council:—Deputy Commissioner; Civil Surgeon; Forest Officer; District Superintendent of Police; one non-official member returned by the district municipalities; if there are more than two minor municipalities one non-official member to be returned by such municipalities; two members to be returned by the District Council; and one member elected by the local Bar. The Deputy Commissioner to act as *ex-officio* President. All members of the Administrative Council should have a right of private interview with the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and all Heads of the different Departments in the Central Provinces. Members should have a right to put questions to the Deputy Commissioner or other departmental superiors through him. Non-official members should be entitled to travelling allowances when attending the meetings of the Council. All administrative matters of the district not being secret State matters of confidential character may be brought for discussion before the Administrative Council, including the supervision over the affairs of municipalities and District Councils and Local Boards.

If my opinion about the creation of Administrative Council is not approved, then I should certainly consider it expedient to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over smaller municipalities. This should take the place of official control over the affairs of minor municipalities. But these municipalities must contribute towards the cost of maintaining an establishment for the supervision of their work.

The idea of giving the village communities certain powers in the disposal of local affairs is a good one and deserves a trial. A number of petty disputes are even now disposed of by caste panchayats and the grant of powers to the village communities will be a step towards the organization of village panchayats on a proper footing. A trial should be made on the following lines in certain parts of the district, and if successful might be extended in other parts of the district:—The Deputy Commissioner may nominate a number of persons not exceeding five or seven from amongst the permanent residents of the villages for every group of villages comprised in a patwari circle. Such persons should be selected with due regard to their position in society, education and landed property. Headman of each caste should be entitled to preference over others. These panches should be responsible for the sanitary condition of the villages within their group and also for the inspection of schools in their circle. The village chaukidars or *kotwars* should be under their charge, and they should help the schoolmasters in securing

proper attendance of boys at school. I would not put any affairs relating to revenue and police in their charge, as the grant of power with regard to these matters might lead to mischievous results. They should have a *Sir Panch* (President) and a *munim* (Secretary), who must be a literate man. Petty criminal cases, such as assaults, wrongful confinement, criminal trespass and the like, may be handed over to them for trial. Petty civil cases in which the amount of claim does not exceed Rs. 15 or Rs. 20 may be also handed over to them for disposal. If the village panchayat is unable to take up and decide any case which they are competent to dispose of, they should give a certificate to this effect to the parties. With the help of such certificates the parties can have their cases decided before Civil or Criminal Courts established by Government, which should, in the absence of such a certificate, be incompetent to entertain any case which ordinarily falls within the jurisdiction of the village panchayat. All these village unions should be put under the supervision of Local Boards except with regard to matters appertaining to the disposal of civil and criminal cases. An Act of the Legislature may be passed enacting these panchayats and giving them necessary powers.

26124. You tell us that the right of appeal should not be curtailed; that is so far as Government servants are concerned. Would you place any restriction on the right of appeal of municipal employés?—There should be no right of appeal against a municipality dismissing a servant of theirs, for the simple reason that there it is not one man who dismisses, but there are so many members bound together in coming to a certain decision; so that properly speaking it is simply a decision by a jury, and there should be no appeal against that decision.

26125. A decision to dismiss by a municipality might be carried by one vote?—It is generally carried by a majority.

26126. A majority which might consist of one vote?—Still there might be a certain number of votes in favour of the dismissal; it might be by one vote.

26127. Suppose, for instance, the Deputy Commissioner desires that a man shall be dismissed; he carries his case to the Commissioner and the Commissioner agrees that the man ought to be dismissed; would that satisfy you?—That would satisfy me; there should be only one appeal.

26128. You tell us that Executive Officers are very apt not to take advantage of their opportunities of mixing with the people of the district. Do you find that that applies not only to Europeans, but to native officials?—With native officials the cases are different; there are certain circumstances in which they are bound to mix, being of the same society.

26129. But do you find that they are inclined to be stand-offish too?—There may be individual cases, both among Indians and among Europeans, of men who prefer to lead a life of solitude, and for these no rules or regulations can be made; but, especially European officers of Government, if they simply attended the Municipal and District Council meetings, that would help them a great deal. In my experience of 16 or 17 years I have not seen a single Deputy Commissioner attending a meeting of the Municipal Council and discuss with the members the various subjects brought before them, or explain to the members the intentions and aims of Government.

26130. Has he any right to attend?—He has the control of all affairs in his hands, why should he not attend? As a controlling officer he has the right to attend.

26131. Would it not be possible for some member of the Municipal Committee to get up and say, "This is a meeting of the Municipal Committee, and no persons who are not members of the Committee have a right to be present"?—Exactly; the Deputy Commissioner has no right of vote. Anyone can attend. He could not take any part in the meeting

26132. Then what would be the object of his attending?—His object would be that he would be in a position to explain certain matters over which the members found difficulty immediately.

26133. If he could take no part in the meeting, how could he explain to the Committee what the intentions of Government were?—We have seen it by personal experience; the present Deputy Commissioner has been to our Municipal Committees and explained matters to them, producing a good deal of effect.

26134. Suppose the Divisional Officer was a member, even Chairman, of the District Council, would that produce a better state of affairs?—No, I do not think so. Already there is one official who is an office-bearer on the District Council.

26135. Who is that?—Either the Deputy Commissioner himself or the Assistant Commissioner.

26136. What as?—As Chairman.

26137. Do not most District Councils elect a non-official Chairman?—No, most of them elect official Chairman.

26138. There is no obligation to elect an official Chairman?—There is no obligation.

26139. In most District Councils do they elect an official or a non-official Chairman?—According to their desires; the Commissioner has simply got the power of conferring.

26140. You told us that there was always an official present at meetings of these Councils; who is that official?—The Assistant Commissioner.

26141. Is he present officially or as an elected member?—As a member nominated by Government.

26142. But he is never the Chairman, or practically never the Chairman?—In some districts he is the Chairman, in others not; in my district he is the Chairman of the District Council.

26143. Has he been so long?—Yes, for the last 16 or 17 years.

26144. Elected by the members of the Council?—Yes.

26145. Is there a desire on the part of the people of the district to meet the Deputy Commissioner in a social and friendly manner?—They are always ready to meet him; that is the desire of the educated class.

26146. Do you think the charges are too large; is the district area or tahsil area too great?—In some cases the district area is too great; and in some cases the tahsil area also is too great.

26147. That may be one of the difficulties in the way of intercourse and knowledge of what is passing among the people?—That is one of the difficulties, no doubt.

26148. With regard to the municipalities, is their power wide enough?—I propose that the municipalities might be given power to levy taxes. According to the present system we are simply given some outlines according to which we have to go, and we have to regulate our expenditure accordingly. In 1909-10 we may want Rs. 10,000, and in the succeeding year we may want only Rs. 5,000; we should have power to raise the Rs. 10,000 in the one year and only Rs. 5,000 in the next year.

26149. You wish the Municipal Committee to prepare its own budget; should all control of the Commissioner be removed?—No, not all control, the Commissioner should be allowed to retain control, but to a limited extent.

26150. What should that limit be?—According to the present state of things he is required to exercise large powers of supervision; he has the power of curtailing expenditure on certain heads and increasing expenditure on other heads, that power should be reserved to the municipality.

26151. Then what should be the power of the Commissioner?—The power of control; that is, to see whether the Municipal Committee is doing its work properly—general power of supervision.

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26152. You say that the budget should go to the Commissioner; if he is not allowed to alter any of the details of the budget, for what purpose should it go to him at all?—For record in his office, giving information that a certain Committee is going to spend its income in the year according to such and such details.

26153. But if he has no power of altering the details, what is the good of telling him whether they are going to spend so much or not?—The general controlling powers might be retained by the Commissioner. If the Commissioner thinks that certain work is required to be done and the Committee have neglected it, the Commissioner should have power to order that work to be done.

26154. Suppose the budget represented an expenditure of Rs. 3,000 on education, and the Commissioner thought they ought to spend Rs. 5,000, would you give the Commissioner power to order the Committee to carry out the work?—Any such power must be reserved by the Committee only, because the budget is prepared after proper consideration by all the members who have local knowledge.

26155. You said a moment ago that the Commissioner was to have power to order the Committee to spend the money if he thought they were not carrying out the work?—To that extent, according to the figures in the budget.

26156. Is that any real control?—I should think so.

26157. At the present time the Commissioner can order the municipality to carry out the work; under your scheme he would not have the power to order them to do it?—He would have power to order them to do it.

26158. Only if it was in the budget?—Exactly.

26159. But suppose it was necessary work, and the municipality for some reason decided not to do it; all it would have to do would be to leave it out of the budget?—All I can say is that, if it is a necessary work, the municipality will not leave it out.

26160. It might be thought very necessary, and yet members of the municipality or the majority of them might leave it out of the budget?—Then you can only say that opinions differ.

26161. Then there would be no real control by the Commissioner over work outside the budget, however necessary it might be?—If we are to be guided by the opinion of the Commissioner in that way he will have no control.

26162. Would you give District Boards any further extension of powers?—The powers at present enjoyed by them are sufficient.

26163. You make a proposal for a small Administrative Council; how many members ought there to be?—Nine.

26164. Do you think it would be easy to get from every district nine members in addition to those who are serving on the District Council?—I put down two members to be returned by the District Council.

26165. You think it would be easy to get them to do their work on the Administrative Council as well as their ordinary present work?—At the same time I say that, if you are going to have the Advisory Council for the whole district, then the question whether there ought to be a District Council for the whole district will have to be considered very seriously; because there is no use in having two bodies, the members of which will be practically the same, sitting in one district; one is quite enough. If you are going to have a District Council, you must give them full powers; if you are going to have an Advisory Council, you must put all the Local Boards under that Council.

26166. With regard to these panchayats, the duties of which you set out, ought they to be experimental?—They should be introduced in certain selected tracts of the district, not in all.

26167. Would you agree with the previous witness that they ought to control a group of villages, rather than one particular village?—If one village itself is large enough, then there might be a panchayat there.

26168. What would you put as the size of the village?—Not less than 5,000 population.

26169. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Ought the District Councils to have more power than they have at present in the management of the schools?—I think they have sufficient powers.

26170. Or more power in regard to the management of roads, repairs of roads, and so forth?—They already have sufficient powers.

26171. And in the management of dispensaries?—They simply grant a contribution from the District Fund.

26172. Ought they to have more hand in the management of dispensaries?—Yes, they might be given more hand in that.

26173. How far would you go?—It is a department which must be managed by expert opinion only, that is to say, the Civil Surgeons; but the District Council might be associated with the Civil Surgeons in the management of these institutions.

26174. In the form of visiting committees?—Yes.

26175. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Practically the whole of the work which the District Officer now does would have to be done by four officials and five other non-official members of your new Council; is that practicable?—What I meant was that excluding certain works of a purely administrative character, for instance, the employment or suspension or punishment of clerks, other work may be entrusted to the Council.

26176. Still, a large proportion of the work which occupies a great deal of the Deputy Commissioner's time now will have to be done by four officials sitting together with five non-officials; would there not be a great waste of time in respect of all those officers, and would they be able to find time to do it?—If in certain districts it was not found practicable, certain work might be taken off and handed over to the Deputy Commissioner to be discharged by him personally; then the question comes in whether the District Council is necessary. It is not practicable to have two bodies of equal standing in a district.

26177. You say that, if such an administrative body is not formed, then you would consider it expedient to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over smaller municipalities. Is it not the fact that the scope of the work which the District Board has to do now is quite different from the scope of the work of the smaller municipalities?—I do not think so; their functions are just about the same; the nature of the work is almost the same. The municipality have to manage cattle-pounds; so has the District Board.

26178. Will not the smaller municipalities raise objection?—I think not, because most of the members will be amongst them.

26179. Do you think that a District Board with the power of raising taxes according to its necessities would be a popular body?—It might be unpopular to some extent.

26180. But in spite of the unpopularity you would invest the District Board with that power?—I have not said that District Boards should have the power of raising taxes; I said that about municipalities.

26181. Do you think that municipalities with the power of raising taxes without the sanction of Government would be popular bodies?—Yes; even now the municipality have to raise taxes; the Government simply prescribes a certain standard above which we cannot go—Re. 1-9-0 per head on such and such an item; we might have the option of making it less than Re. 1-9-0, but we could not go higher.

26182. Would you invest municipalities with power to raise any taxes beyond those mentioned in the Municipal Act?—Not unless there is necessity for large expenditure.

26183. Would you allow them to impose fresh taxation?—There would be no harm in their consulting the Government.

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26184. You think the advice of the Government should be taken?—Yes, there is no harm in that.

26185. There are maximum limits which you have fixed with regard to those taxes. Would you empower the municipality to exceed those limits without the sanction of the Government?—Not in all cases; for instance, in certain cases where a municipality has incurred a heavy debt and wanted to pay it off the Government probably would allow that.

26186. Is it your opinion that when a municipality imposes a new tax not included in the schedule, or wants to exceed the maximum limit, it ought to take the advice of the Government before doing so?—Yes.

26187. (*Mr. Hichens.*) With regard to District Boards you think it is not desirable that they should be asked to contribute where they have not the administrative responsibility, as in the case of the Vaccination Department; would it be practicable to give District Boards complete responsibility in regard to the Vaccination Department, and give them the appointment and dismissal of the officers concerned?—If you give them the powers of appointment, dismissal, and suspension, they will have to be guided more or less by the advice of experts, just as in the case of school management.

26188. Have they not the staff to do that?—No.

26189. That being so, would you like to have the vaccination work taken from the District Boards and put under Government again?—The vaccination work is not done by the District Boards; it is paid for by them, but it is done by the Civil Surgeon.

26190. We were told by a previous witness that the District Board has a certain control over the Vaccination Department?—So far as my knowledge goes, they have no control except the payment of the establishment charges.

26191. Cannot they arrange what the fees shall be?—Their advice is taken and they give opinions from time to time.

26192. Cannot they decide?—Yes, they do decide such matters, as proper fees when the Hospital Assistant deals with cases privately.

26193. Would you like the District Board to pay no contribution and to have nothing to do with the Vaccination Department. No, it is one of the departments, and a necessary one, which they should deal with. It should be paid for by the District Board and their opinion should be taken.

26194. We were told by the last witness, that in practice pensions were not paid to the officials of District Boards; is that your experience?—As far as my knowledge goes, pensions are paid, and also gratuities in certain cases and rewards, but in all such cases the sanction of the Local Government has to be obtained, and without that sanction we cannot pay anything.

26195. Is it in your power to recommend to the Local Government that schoolmasters for instance should get a pension?—Yes.

26196. Do you in practice?—Yes, we do, and in my district certain schoolmasters have got pensions, rewards, and gratuities.

26197. Do most of them get pensions?—Not most of them; it is only recently that we have started it.

26198. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You want every tahsil to be under an Assistant Commissioner or an Extra-Assistant Commissioner? Therefore the tahsildar would disappear as such?—Yes.

26199. And the officer in charge of a tahsil would do the tahsildar's work as well as the work of the Sub-Divisional Officer?—Practically, there would be only one man called the Sub-Divisional Officer.

26200. Would it not give him more work? For instance, the tahsildar takes second and third class magisterial cases; if you had one man, he would have to take all magisterial cases from first to third?—It depends on the Government.

26201. Still, as far as magisterial work is concerned, you would have your number of Magistrates reduced?—Yes, at headquarters.

26202. Would not the number of Magistrates throughout the district be reduced?—No; I do not think so.

26203. You have four tahsils in the district; and, say, three sub-divisions; therefore, you have four tahsildars and three Sub-Divisional Officers, that is seven Magistrates; if you only had four Sub-Divisional Officers you would have less Magistrates?—Yes; truly.

26204. You say that the present control and supervision by the Deputy Commissioner over municipalities should be taken away; what is his controlling supervision?—His present control practically amounts to nothing. We have to submit certain proposals for sanction, and they are simply forwarded to the Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioner has practically no control, and if it is taken away it will not matter much.

26205. At present you require the Commissioner to pass your budget, and the matter goes through the Deputy Commissioner who can forward it with remark or without remark; would you have it go straight to the Commissioner without its passing through the Deputy Commissioner?—There is no harm in its going through the Deputy Commissioner.

26206. Who might make his remarks as before, so that practically it makes no difference?—There should be a rule that the Deputy Commissioner should have no power of interfering with any mode of expenditure or administration.

26207. In the case of an emergency, if a municipality does anything irregular, or is in an insanitary state, should he have the power to move?—He ought to keep that power.

26208. You say that your Local Boards deal with too wide an area at present, and that only one Local Board should be established for every 150 or 200 villages; does the existing tahsil include more than 150 or 200 villages?—Yes; in my district there are three Local Boards, one comprising 900 villages, another 600 villages, and another 500 villages, and you can easily imagine whether a Local Board can exercise control over 900 villages.

26209. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) What sort of villages are they?—Some are big and some are small, and the area is very large.

26210. So that your proposal would materially increase the number of Local Boards?—The number of Local Boards, and, of course, I propose the Sub-Divisional Officer in the place of the tahsildar.

26211. Supposing the majority of the members of the Administrative Council which you suggest differed from the Deputy Commissioner, is he to have the power of over-ruling them?—On certain matters; differences of opinion might be referred to the Commissioner and due weight should be given in certain cases to the opinions of the members.

26212. Would you treat your Administrative Council as assessors or as a jury?—I would have a combination of the two; for instance, in certain matters, in which members are supposed to have knowledge, I would take their opinion. Suppose a case of scarcity from famine, in that respect the opinion of the members must prevail, whilst in other matters the opinion of the Deputy Commissioner might prevail.

26213. Would there be schedules practically showing in what matters the Deputy Commissioners should have authority, and in what matters the opinion of the members of the Board should prevail, unless a particular matter was sent up to Government?—Yes.

26214. Do you think 150 villages is small enough for a Local Board area?—I do not think it is small enough.

26215. We have been told that it should be made a patwari circle of 8 or 10 villages?—That is too small.

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26216. If you had a free hand, what size would you make it?—I would like a group of not more than 150 villages, while in certain cases it might be 100 and in others 50, according to the population.

26217. Would it be a good thing to break up your tahsils?—The tahsils would remain the same.

26218. But would it be a good thing to break up the tahsils to that size for executive purposes?—No.

26219. With regard to panchayats, where could you begin with them?—I think we might begin with a district like Wardha.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Rao Bahadur R. N. MUDHOLKAR was called and examined.

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26220. (*Chairman.*) You are an advocate of the Court of the Judicial Commissioner in Nagpur?—Yes. I was a member of the Berar Municipality for over 18 years, and I was also connected with the Committee appointed for the purpose of framing the rules for the District Boards and municipalities under the District Boards and new Municipal Law, and when they came into force in Berar. There were several occasions when I had to give opinions with regard to administrative matters.

Where there are Governors in Council, the provincial Governments should have, in regard to expenditure from provincial revenues, the same higher powers as have recently been given to the Government of India. To Lieutenant-Governors, who have got Boards of Revenue to advise them, a similar increase of power might be given. But it is questionable whether it would be expedient to do so in the case of the smaller Administrations. The evil of over-centralization can be remedied in the case of the Central Provinces by altering the form of the provincial Government constituting it a Lieutenant-Governorship with the addition, if possible, of Sambalpur and Chota Nagpur, the construction of feeder railway lines, light tramways or provincial irrigation projects. If local bodies like municipalities and District Boards can be empowered to rase loans, and if they do often raise loans, there can be no objection on principle to provincial Governments being given power to borrow, subject to the previous sanction of the Government of India, for in the Madras Presidency the District Boards are by law permitted to borrow money for purposes of a district railway and to impose a cess for repayment of the loan. Loans raised by provincial Governments will have to be guaranteed by the Government of India.

As regards the Central Provinces and Berar, the liberal help which the Victoria Technical Institutes of Nagpur and Amraoti have received and the satisfactory basis on which their constitution has been based, are due to the sympathy and support of the Local Government, the action the Government of India had proposed to take being very unsatisfactory. But speaking generally, in cases concerning the grant of higher rights, privileges and concessions to the people any discretionary power left to the local authorities has oftener been exercised towards curtailing such privileges or minimising the concession than otherwise.

The influence of the departments of both the Government of India and of provincial Governments is in the direction of rigidity and uniformity; they take a too departmental view of things, and they are often too much dominated by considerations of revenue. For instance, in Berar as in the rest of the Deccan the village *patelships* and patwarships belong to *watandar* families whose hereditary claims to them have been very properly recognised by the Government ever since the commencement of British rule. The tendency, however, of the modern Secretariats and even officers of the Revenue Department is to put them on a level with removeable and paid servants, and to interfere with their long existing rights. The regulations framed under the University Act and especially the controversy about 15 or 16 being the minimum age for the Matriculation Examination is another instance. When Berar was joined to the Central Provinces the proposal was made that the standards, text-books and curricula in the schools of Berar should be the same as those in the Central Provinces. It was after some efforts that the Berar standards and curricula, which, especially in the vernacular schools, were higher than the corresponding ones in the Central Provinces, and the Marathi text-books, which were in every respect superior, were allowed to be kept. In the desire to secure uniformity standards have now been drawn up which have lowered efficiency and Marathi books have been prepared, the style of which is inferior and the grammar at times questionable. As to the predominance of the standpoint of revenue the administration of the Forest and Excise Laws affords numerous instances. The contraction of the grazing area in Berar, their disforesting, the abolition of the old district forest system, the increased rigour of the forest administration are greatly felt by the people.

The right of appeal, whether it is in regard to administrative action or orders personally affecting officers of Government, is a most valuable check on ill-considered or hasty measures and decisions based on *ex-parte* statements. Neither in regard to appeals to the Government of India or the Local Governments should there be any curtailment of the existing right.

The officers of the Revenue Department have not sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people. Of course they have far more occasions than officers of the Judicial, the Educational and other Departments have, and in the majority of cases those occasions are fairly availed of, though there are even among Executive Officials men who by temperament and habit find a difficulty in mixing freely with strangers. The present generation of Executive Officers do not move among the people to the same extent that the old type of Anglo-Indian officials did. The main difficulties in the way of greater contact with the people are (*a*) judicial duties, (*b*) heavy correspondence and writing work, (*c*) municipal, District Board and other miscellaneous work, and (*d*) race aloofness. The increasing burden of correspondence and writing work is generally admitted, and the District Officer should cease to be a member of Municipal and Local Boards, his powers of control being exercised from without and not from within.

I do not think that the language difficulty, great though it is, is the real barrier. The thing really wanted is sympathy and an appreciation of the situation which has arisen by the working of the principles of Western civilisation, the influence of Western science and Eastern thought and the progress of education. The influence of racial distinctions, caste considerations and divergencies in social manners, habits and customs in interposing barriers between the European officers and the Indian gentry and commonalty can be more easily pointed out than checked. No suggestions can be made in regard to the religious difficulties. But as they do not prevent free social intercourse between Hindus and Muhammadans there is no reason why they should come in the way of a more frequent mixing of the European and Indian communities. The aloofness of Indians is in the majority of cases due to shyness.

The powers given to District Boards and municipalities in Berar are sufficiently comprehensive to give them a large field of usefulness. The rules, however, framed by the Local Government have considerably curtailed that power, and these bodies do not enjoy the measure of independence which is allowed to them by the laws themselves. A few instances deserve to be quoted for showing how little free scope is often left to local bodies and how much interference there is from provincial departments:—

(1) When the Municipal Law of 1886 came into actual operation in Berar and elective municipalities were formed, each Municipal Committee framed rules of management to suit its peculiar circumstances. The system was working fairly. After a time, however, the Local Government considered that there should be uniformity in the rules of the various municipalities, and accordingly they were all asked to adopt certain rules framed, it would seem, in the Berar Secretariat at Hyderabad.

(2) Under the terms of the law a Municipal Committee would seem to be free to execute its Public Works through such agency as it might consider suitable. Under the rules framed by the Local Government, however, works, the costs of which exceed a certain amount, must be approved by the Public Works Department and works above a certain value have to be carried out by the agency of the Public Works Department. A large commission is charged by that department for the help given by it.

(3) Even in such matters as the maintenance, at a cost of a few hundreds of rupees annually, of a public garden which had been in existence for years, peremptory orders are issued which the Committees are enjoined to obey. They are told to get their printing done through this or that press, and when they point out that they are getting the work done locally in a better style and at cheaper rates, their representations are resented.

(4) The complaint is often made, and with justice, that they are mere disbursers of bills for expenses which they are not allowed to question or control. The large amount which the Amraoti municipality was called upon to pay towards an infructuous "city survey" entrusted to the Public Works Department is a fair sample of such cases.

What is necessary to be done is that the freest scope should be allowed to municipalities and District Boards, that there should be as little direct interference of Government departments and Government officers as possible, that the District Officers should as a rule not be on these Committees and Boards as members, but should exercise their supervision and control from without. It might be that now and then these bodies might commit mistakes. But so long as they work regularly, honestly, and zealously and the funds entrusted to them are really applied to public purposes, they should not be interfered with. If village unions or local sub-committees for special purposes are formed, there is little reason to fear that even in rural areas such works as are usually carried out through District Board funds, such as the construction and repair of ordinary district roads, village schools, *chavadies*, sarais, pounds, &c., will not be as well and as economically done as at present.

The District Boards should be entrusted with the function of the employment and control of the village police, *i.e.*, the *jaglia* force; and both the municipalities and the District Boards should be given control over the disposal of the public sites within the areas of municipal towns and villages. Before these bodies, however, can do substantial good to the areas entrusted to their charge the funds at their disposal will have to be largely increased. As in England and in other European countries, large subventions should be given to local bodies from the imperial and provincial revenues.

Sub-Divisional or Local Boards, like the *taluka* Boards existing in Berar, perform little actual work at present. With *talukas* consisting of 300 or 400 villages interspersed over a wide area much cannot be expected to be done by one non-official body in the way of executive work. The only feasible way of enlisting the effective assistance of the public-spirited amongst the people in the discharge of such work is to have small committees consisting of a half-dozen reliable men selected by the District Boards for an area with a radius of not more than four miles, to whom should be entrusted the execution of Public Works and the maintenance of sanitation within that area.

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The chief thing to which the attention of both the Government and the people should be directed is the revival of the village union. The old class of village unions cannot be revived, but there should be in each village a body selected entirely by the people to whom their local affairs might be entrusted. The experiment should be tried in one or two of the advanced districts, in villages having a population of over one thousand and not forming part of a municipality. All people paying Rs. 20 and above as land revenue or owning a house of the value of Rs. 200 should elect twenty-five people to form a general committee for the village. Their assistance should be taken in the organisation of rural co-operative credit, the distribution and collection of takavi advances, the granting of famine relief, and in times of famine or great scarcity for finding out who are the deserving objects of the suspension or remission of the land revenue. A village tribunal should be created for the trial of all simple money suits of the value of Rs. 50 or under or for the recovery of rent or mesne profits of like amount. The parties living within the jurisdiction of the village union should be under an obligation to bring his cause before this tribunal which should consist of two persons selected by the plaintiff and two persons by the defendant out of the twenty-five members constituting the village representatives or elders. There should be exemption from court-fees and parties and witnesses must be bound to obey the process of the tribunal. Petty criminal cases about slight hurt, assault, abuse, &c., should be triable by them and they should be invested with power of inflicting a sentence of fine not exceeding Rs. 10.

It would be distinctly an advantage both to the Government and to the people to have Advisory Councils to assist both District and Divisional Officers, or at any rate to have District Advisory Councils. A District Advisory Council should consist of twelve members including the District Officer, six of whom should be *ex-officio* and nominated, and six elected thus: two by the non-official members of the District Board, two by the non-official members of the municipalities, one by landowners paying Rs. 200 and above as land revenue in raiyatwari tracts or Rs. 1,000 in zamindari tracts or holding rent-free land yielding an annual income of Rs. 2,000, and one by persons paying income-tax on an income of Rs. 2,000 a year. Every question of importance relating to administrative measures or contemplated legislative action should come before this Council, such as land revenue; surveys and settlements, or revision of the same; organisation of famine relief; suspension or remission of revenue in times of failure of harvests; the general wants of the district; promotion of good feeling and harmony between the different communities and sections in the district, especially in times of excitement; improvement of agriculture, industry and trade; promotion of education, health and sanitation; the protection of life and property and preservation of peace and order. The Council should meet ordinarily once every quarter, and the opinion of the majority should carry weight, though the District Officer may, disagreeing with them, pass orders otherwise.

It would not be expedient to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over the smaller municipalities within their respective districts.

For giving full effect to the policy of the decentralization in regard to financial and administrative matters the present system will have to be materially altered. The process of centralizing all authority in the Governor-General which came into marked prominence from the Government of India Act of 1833 will have to be revised. While reserving to that authority all power in regard to peace and war, the making of treaties, questions affecting the foreign relations, the military and naval defences of the country, the public debt, the relations with the Feudatory Princes, matters of policy and principle, of general application to the whole country, control over such Imperial Departments as Railways, Telegraphs, Post Office, &c., and general power of supervision and the power of direction and control in cases of emergency, the provincial Governments should have a free hand in

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all matters pertaining to the internal administration and domestic concerns of the province, subject to the limitations laid down by 13 George III., c. 63, Ss. 9, 3 and 4 Will. IV., c. 85, S. 39. But before the provincial Governments can be invested with these larger powers they should be raised to the same position as the Governments of the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay in the first quarter of the last century. The whole of India Proper should be divided into five presidencies, at the head of which should be a Governor and Council.

26221. You think that Local Governments could raise loans, but that they would have to be guaranteed by the Government of India. Would that be a sound proposal?—I do not see that there would be any difficulty about it.

26222. What might be the position of the Government of India if they had to guarantee somebody else's loans?—The Government of India would only be delegating a portion of its power, practically, to the Local Government, and the Local Government in that way would be, as it were, a part of the Government of India kept aside for certain administrative purposes.

26223. Is it your view that these local loans could only be raised if they were guaranteed by the Government of India?—There would be difficulty otherwise in securing money on equally favourable terms.

26224. With regard to municipalities or District Councils is there anything you wish to add to the evidence which has been given here to-day?—No; I have nothing to add to what I have already said.

26225. Are you in agreement with the last witness, who said that he thought if an officer, being dismissed, had one clear appeal above the decision of the officer who dismissed him, that would be satisfactory?—No, I am not, because I can give instances where justice has been done by the Local Government where the District Officer and the Commissioner did not give a man the justice which he thought was due to him, and there can be cases quoted where it has been only on the second appeal that justice was obtained.

26226. Or at all events, what was thought to be justice?—Of course the view of the ultimate Court of Appeal must prevail.

26227. Are racial distinctions and caste considerations and manners and customs and so forth an insuperable bar to greater intercourse between officials and the general public?—I think they can be bridged over.

26228. Do you find they are more noticeable when an officer first comes out to this country, or later on?—I can lay down no rule with regard to that, because fortunately it has been my experience to be brought into contact generally with officers who have been very liberal in their sentiments. I have heard of cases where there has been more than a disinclination to mix with Indians, but there have been few cases in the province in which it has been my lot to live, and I have never met with any difficulties.

26229. How do you think that the funds of the District Boards ought to increased, by taxation or by an increased contribution from Government?—So far as increased taxation is concerned, municipalities in Berar have not shown any disinclination to increased taxation whenever it is demanded in the interests of education, sanitaion, or Public Works, but the difficulty is the smallness of the area and the general condition of the people in consequence of certain items of revenue which they have been deprived of and which they had been enjoying for a number of years. They used to get the land revenue, and the proceeds from the sale or lease of sites within their limits, but in 1896 it was decided by Government that all the lands would be taken up by them, and the municipalities were only given a ten years' enjoyment of the rental; from 1906 that also has been discontinued. That was a source of revenue which they formerly enjoyed and which might well be given back to them. Similarly with regard to sites in villages, the District Boards might be permitted to take the revenue from them.

26230. Are you speaking now of Berar?—Yes, I am only speaking of Berar.

26231. Do you think the restoration of those two sources of income would meet your difficulty?—No, for instance the Local Boards in England get a portion of the probate and excise duties, and a proportion of other sources which, in this country, form part either of the imperial or the provincial revenue.

26232. Would the people in this country like the taxes which we pay in England imposed for the purpose of providing local authorities with greater revenues?—I suppose we have many of the taxes already existing in England.

26233. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) You think that if there is to be a considerable delegation of power between the Government of India and the Local Government it would be a matter of some importance what the constitution of the Local Government is. Is your preference for a Council Government?—Yes, my preference is for a Council Government, and next to that a Lieutenant-Governor with a Council.

26234. Would you be more prepared for delegation if that constitution were adopted in your own province?—Yes.

26235. It would be more expensive?—Yes, no reform can be obtained without expense.

26236. With regard to borrowing it has been suggested elsewhere that the same result as you suggest might perhaps be secured by the Local Government guaranteeing interest; for instance with regard to the feeder railways mentioned; could they be financed on that basis by private capital?—Speaking with regard to my own province, the people are not prepared to subscribe to them on their own responsibility.

26237. Would not a Government guarantee be sufficient to get the works through?—No, not locally.

26238. Briefly you think that municipalities and District Boards ought to be given full statutory powers, and District Officers ought to help and aid from outside without being members?—Yes, I think so.

26239. As regards Local Boards, are you inclined to abolish them?—No, I do not think so.

26240. Then what do you mean by saying that for Local Boards you would substitute panchayats?—I mean that Sub-Divisional or Local Boards, as they are called, are according to law the agents of the District Board, and they are supposed to carry out the works and other things sanctioned by the District Board, but the work has to be carried out over an area covering 300 or 400 villages, and practically it is done by the tahsildar, or if it is in regard to Public Works, by the overseer; the members of the Boards themselves take very little part in any of the active work.

26241. What is your remedy?—My remedy is to have sub-committees of the existing Local Board in charge of small areas.

26242. Would you say that attention ought to be given to the revival of village unions, and above them there should be Local Boards?—I would only have village unions for those villages which have a sufficiently large population; then they would practically be the agents of the District Board for those villages; for the villages which have smaller populations I would have sub-committees.

26243. You would not try and spread the unions all over the district?—Not now. Of course the experiment has to be tried and it can only be judged of after 10 or 15 years.

26244. If you could get a scheme of small village unions they would gradually take the place of your sub-committees?—Probably, after 15 years they might.

26245. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You think that the chief thing to which the attention of Government and the people should be directed?—It is one of the chief things.

26246. Do you know the Central Provinces well or only Berar?—I have only seen some portions of the Central Provinces very occasionally.

26247. In Berar does the Sub-Divisional Officer live in his own sub-division?—Not always, but he does in some places.

26248. Which do you think the better system—that he should live entirely in his own sub-division or that he should live at district headquarters?—I should prefer the Sub-Divisional Officer to live in his sub-division.

26249. Would you like the powers of Deputy Commissioners and Sub-Divisional Officers and tahsildars increased in regard to revenue matters?—Their present powers are sufficiently wide.

26250. Are not the Berar land laws rather restrictive; do they not require a number of things to come up to the Commissioner?—They only come up to the Commissioner in regard to appeals, and in regard to appeals I would not have the right curtailed.

26251. You have made several references to Bombay—are you a Bombay man?—My family comes from Bombay, and I received my education in Bombay and am in considerable touch with it.

26252. Has the Deputy Commissioner in Berar as much power as a Collector in Bombay?—Under the Berar Land Revenue Code the powers are almost the same—our Land Revenue Code is taken almost word for word from the Bombay Code.

26253. Does an appeal from a Sub-Divisional Officer go to the Deputy Commissioner or to the Commissioner?—It goes to the Deputy Commissioner.

26254. With regard to borrowing powers, you are aware that the great difficulty in India at present is to get enough money for productive works. If Local Governments start independent borrowing, would not the market of the Government of India be affected, and they be able to raise less money?—There is a portion of the capital of the country which is very chary of venturing into doubtful or experimental undertakings, and that is the savings of Government Officers or even of the professional classes who are not willing to go into commerce or trade but who would be content with obtaining a fair rate of interest for their money; if undertakings were guaranteed they would probably be taken up by many of these persons.

26255. It is open to anybody now to subscribe to the Government of India loans which come out once a year?—It is necessary to give Local Governments this power in order that provincial works may receive that attention which they deserve, and the money for them should as far as possible be raised locally.

26256. Would not that affect the Government of India loans?—I do not think so.

26257. Will it tap fresh capital?—To some extent.

26258. If it did encroach on the Government of India capital, would it not mean that railways and other works were being delayed on account of the construction of local works of a less productive character?—I should think the works I have mentioned would be of a more productive character than the works which have been carried out.

26259. Is there not always an enthusiasm in a locality in favour of a particular work, and a tendency to take rosy views with regard to it?—I cannot know exactly what the official opinion on the matter is.

26260. Generally are you of opinion that on the whole the Government of India is more progressive, and enlightened, shall we say, than Local Governments?—They are more desirous to make concessions.

26261. And in some cases when the Government of India has desired to advance, the Government of Bombay and other Governments have stood in the way?—I have stated the fact.

26262. Coming to your province, you instance Berar and say that there was an attempt to force Central Provinces hand-books in Berar, but is that the case any longer?—It has been done again.

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26263. But, as a Berar man, do you think the effect of administrative amalgamation of Berar and the Central Provinces is to force the Central Provinces standards upon Berar?—I do not say it is so in every respect, but there is that tendency, and it has to be fought against very strongly.

26264. You say that the Collector or Deputy Commissioner should absolutely cease to be a member of municipalities, local bodies and District Boards. Do not those bodies deal with matters which it is most important for him to be acquainted with, such as education, the sanitation of his district, and so on?—That he can learn; he can find out whether they are doing the work properly or not, and there are means by which he can keep them straight from outside.

26265. Would it not be easier and better for him to be inside the Council?—I prefer him to be outside, because it is necessary for the political and general education of the people and for the work also being carried out with greater zest.

26266. You think they would be more zealous if the Deputy Commissioner was away?—I mean to say that otherwise it becomes too officialised.

26267. Might it not be said on the other hand that the Deputy Commissioner would become deofficialised by taking into account the feelings of the people whom he meets?—With regard to that it was intended that these local bodies were to be established for the purpose of political education.

26268. Do you intend that the municipal budgets and Local Boards budgets should come up for approval as at present?—For criticism, and of course if they are going wrong and there is any dereliction of duty and they are doing things they ought not to do, then the Deputy Commissioner could exercise his powers of control.

26269. Are you generally satisfied with the existing powers of control?—The powers of control are sufficiently wide, speaking of Berar.

26270. It is not the law you complain of so much as instances in which the rules have been worked?—And the rules themselves.

26271. In such matters as the raising of taxes or finances generally, do the local bodies require more outside control?—The local bodies were inclined to have a mode of taxation at first which was suitable to them and there has been considerable friction with regard to that. My opinion goes with the local bodies, and that they were prepared to tax themselves in a manner which they considered most suitable for themselves.

26272. You think it is necessary, if you have self-government and lay down a tax, that they should have a fairly free hand in dealing with it? Yes.

26273. You say that provincial Governments should have a free hand in all matters appertaining to the domestic concerns of a province according to section 39 of the Regulating Act of 1773—that is to say they are to obey the orders of the Governor-General?—Yes.

26274. So that it is only a question of degree as to the extent to which the Governor-General in Council should issue instructions which the Local Government must obey?—It was a general power of supervision and control which does not mean going into small details entirely taking away the powers of the provincial Government.

26275. Speaking generally, you would like provincial Governments to have a freer hand in matters of detail, but the general policy should be laid down by the Government of India, as at present?—Yes.

26276. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You refer to the grant of larger legislative powers to the provincial Governments—do you recommend that?—I mean that with regard to questions of general principles and policy, the Government of India and the Government in England lay down the general policy; in regard to matters of detail, in regard to financial

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control, larger power should be given to the provincial Governments, provided that they are raised up to the status which I have suggested.

26277. Until then you would not grant them larger powers than they at present possess?—In my own province it would not be expedient, but it would be different with regard to Madras and Bombay.

26278. Then you say that Local Governments have very often restricted or minimised the legal powers of local bodies; how do you reconcile that with the recommendation for the grant of larger powers?—I refer to larger powers in regard to matters of monopolies on questions of principle and policy.

26279. Has there been a contraction of the grazing area in Berar?—Yes.

26280. What do you ascribe that to?—I rather ascribe it to the zeal of the Forest Department.

26281. Is it not partly due to the extension of cultivation?—First of all the land had to be disafforested, then it was thrown open to cultivation, but the disafforestation had to be done under the orders of the Local Government.

26282. So that practically it is not due to any direct action of the Forest Department, or their including agricultural land in forests?—It was because it ceased to be grazing land and was thrown open to cultivation, and therefore it was taken under cultivation.

26283. And you think it should have been kept as forest land?—Yes.

26284. What kind of question would you refer to the Advisory Councils for their opinion and advice?—Every question of importance relating to administrative measures should come before them, such as land revenue, surveys and settlements.

26285. That is to say only large questions would go to the Advisory Councils and not small details of administration?—Quite so.

26286. Would it be one of the functions of the Advisory Council to settle disputes between different communities and different creeds?—Yes, to exercise their influence.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Dr. H. S. Gour was called and examined.

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26287. (*Chairman.*) You are a barrister-at-law at Raipur?—Yes. I was Secretary of the District Council for 8 years.

On the right of appeal I am of opinion that there should be no curtailment; on the other hand, the present system of appeal is one which might be greatly improved. If pleaders are given audience in appeals submitted by them, they will give greater satisfaction to the appellants, and inspire more confidence in the judgments of the Executive.

As regards the right of officers of Government to appeal against orders affecting them personally, some curtailment is necessary. The present practice appears to be to first appeal as far as an appeal will go, and then to memorialise as far as memorials are permitted. This practice is as subversive of discipline as it tends to increase the work of Government. Inquiry into the conduct of Government servants should be made carefully in the first instance giving the officer affected the right of defending himself by pleader, the procedure being otherwise made as far as conformable to judicial procedure. Then there should be only one appeal to the higher officer—the Local Government, the Government of India being, of course, given the right of revision and pardon.

The appointment of an officer to the responsible post of a Commissioner should never be made on the ground of seniority. It should be an invariable reward for merit. It will greatly improve the rank and file and add a fresh incentive to good work. Assuming then that Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners are in future appointed by selection and not promotion by mere seniority, there is everything to be gained by granting them extended powers.

If a Financial Commissioner is appointed, I should be in favour of transferring to him all the revenue powers at present possessed by the Chief Commissioner. I am not in favour of transferring the power of final decision to Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners except in matters of detail. All the important powers must remain with the Chief Commissioner, or the Finance Commissioner. As a matter of fact, in matters relating to revenue, I think the powers are now equitably apportioned between the several officers. Sub-Divisional Officers might, however, be given some additional powers; for instance, to sanction sales of excise and ganja monopolies and assess and remit income-tax. The Deputy Commissioners in these provinces possess powers, some of which are defined while others are undefinable, and they wield powers the extension of which would not be desirable. But as regards the Commissioners, their responsibility and duties might be advantageously defined. There are no Commissioners in the Madras Presidency, but I do not suppose Madras is a more benighted province than the Central Provinces. They should be entrusted with considerable powers which they should be left to exercise with the assistance of their Administrative Councils. But without such Councils, it will be a mistake to enlarge their powers.

The formation of Administrative Councils is a *sine qua non* of efficient administration. But they should be formed in a generous spirit of giving the educated representatives of the people a living voice in their deliberations. Such Councils might consist of five elected representatives of the division, the electorate consisting of all literate persons above the age of majority. I am not in favour of class representation, for it leads to mutual jealousy, and is otherwise opposed to the spirit of modern India. Their powers would be to sanction and allocate (1) expenditure on local works within the limits of the division; (2) to sanction the suspension and remission of revenue; (3) to control the police; (4) to regulate expenditure on Public Works, irrigation, sanitation, and other departments of Governments; (5) to supervise the work of District Councils and municipalities; (6) to visit jails and hospitals and to see to their proper administration. If Administrative Councils are constituted on these lines and *if provision is made only for the election of educated representatives* by only a literate electorate, there should be a change in the administration of the country which will immediaately give a *quietus* to clamorous discontent. The Commissioner in Council may then be safely given powers of general administration which will lead to the smooth working of Government and effectually carry out the policy of decentralization.

In matters relating to the Court of Wards the powers which the Deputy Commissioners possessed under the old Act have since the passing of the new Act been bodily transferred to the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner as such has ceased to possess any power at all. The Deputy Commissioner is really the man on the spot, and he should not be a mere reporting and recording machine. As it is, the Deputy Commissioner is really the power behind the Commissioner. The former proposes and the latter sanctions as a matter of course. The Deputy Commissioners should be entrusted with all the powers they at present possess by delegation. They may be further empowered to appoint guardians, pass orders as to the custody, education and residence of Government wards, to let a ward's property up to a certain extent, while the Commissioner in Council might be empowered to mortgage, sell or exchange the property of his ward, sanction adoption and decide on questions of succession. The Commissioner in Council may be empowered to incur an expenditure up to Rs. 5,000, the Deputy Commissioner being empowered to incur an expenditure up to say Rs. 2,000. He may also be permitted to take a loan up to a like amount.

Executive Officers do not possess sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people. They regard themselves rulers of the people and of the ruling race, and consider it beneath their dignity to associate with the people or even know them *outside their official duties.* The difference in their habits and manner of living and their mode of thought also contributes to the gulf that exists between the European Executive Officers and the people. And this aloofness has grown rather than decreased in recent times. The case of Indian Executive Officers and the people is different, for they live and move amongst the people who trust and look up to them.

The *invidious distinctions that the Government* itself makes between a European and an Indian encourages its subalterns to think that there is somehow an irradicable difference between the two races. I have myself seen a European cooly-catcher placed on a *dais* with the Chief Commissioner in an official darbar, while that honour was refused to an Indian Executive Engineer in charge of a division and a Barrister who had been presented to the King. If the officials break the ice, they will meet with encouraging response from the people. Their leaders might, for instance, be at times invited over to "At Homes" or other informal meetings. Visits might be exchanged with them and they might be invited to join the station gymkhana and the club. While camping out, officials might convene informal meetings of the leading residents and thus take them into their confidence. European officials might also be enjoined to make themselves more conversant with the language of the people. I do not think that officials, as a rule, possess sufficient knowledge of the colloquial vernacular.

Assuming that a right man has been found for a right place there is no reason why he should be transferred, unless, of course, his transfer becomes for other weightier reasons a matter of absolute necessity. I would lay down no hard-and-fast rule, but leave the matter to the discretion of the Administrative Council whose members might confidentially advise the Government on the subject.

I was for eight years Secretary of the Raipur District Council, and I know what it is to organise, work on, and control a local body. These bodies are at present mere automata moved by a few wire-pullers who manage to get nominated or elected to them. The rules of election are such that few educated men care to compete for membership, and men are elected, who by their education, experience and temperament are unfit to discharge the civil duties to which they are elected. If therefore municipalities and District Councils are to obtain extended powers, they must be reorganised and *reconstituted on a different basis.* The eligibility of the electorate based on the property test is, in a country like India, unsound. I would therefore make education the sole test.

District Councils possess at present practically very little power. Their duty is confined to recording proceedings, and passing bills which they cannot refuse. Most of the important roads in their charge have been transferred to the Public Works Department. Dâk bungalows, rest houses and important ferries have also been exempted from their jurisdiction by an order of the Chief Commissioner. I would suggest that all Public Works, roads and buildings, water-works and reservoirs, agricultural schools and farms be placed under their management. They should also possess power to revise income-tax, recommend the suspension and remission of Government revenue, and be in short *subordinate to the Divisional Administrative Councils* to whom they should be responsible and whose functions so far as regards matters affecting the district they must in part discharge. The municipal bodies should be similarly strengthened and the municipalities of large towns should possess power to borrow money for works of public utility. They should be empowered to construct railways and tramways, and their powers should, as far as possible, conform to the powers possessed by the English municipalities and County Councils.

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26288. You say that some curtailment of the right of appeal is necessary, and you would give a man one appeal after the original decision of a higher officer. Do you think that would meet the justice of the case?—I think that is quite ample, leaving of course the superior authority to exercise the power of revision.

26289. With regard to the Administrative Council which you suggest you also think that the responsibilities and duties of Commissioners might be advantageously defined; but would there be anything left either for the local bodies or for the Commissioners to do supposing the Administrative Councils you propose were brought into existence?—I *think so*; the Administrative Councils would be the supervising bodies; they would not be the Executive Heads of the districts; the District Boards would be the executive bodies to carry out the orders of the Administrative Council and the Commissioner.

26290. Would they be merely advisory to the Commissioner?—Yes.

26291. Could the Commissioner if he thought fit overrule them?—He could overrule them and report the matter to the Chief Commissioner or the Local Government, and it would be for the Local Government either to confirm his order or to pass any order they thought fit.

26292. You lay some stress on the chasm which separates officials from the people; is that due to a disinclination on either side to be good friends?—In recent years there has grown up a disinclination on both sides.

26293. Are the difficulties removable?—I think they are.

26294. Are some of them due to ignorance of native etiquette and customs on the part of newly-arrived officers?—It may be so in the case of certain officers, but I do not think that is the sole reason.

26295. What do you think is the reason?—Racial prejudice.

26296. On both sides?—No; I do not think it is due to racial prejudice on the side of the natives; they would rather meet Europeans and associate with them if they could.

26297. Would you confirm the evidence that very often native officers are just as difficult to get at as European officers?—That is true in certain cases, and the reasons are that native officials seem to copy the example of their European brethren; they are afraid if they mix a little too freely with the natives that their superior European officers might suspect them.

26298. Is there any ground for that?—No, there is no ground for it.

26299. Having been Secretary to the Raipur District Council for some time, and having heard the evidence, do you wish to add to it?—No.

26300. How long do you think a District Officer ought to stay in his district or division as the case may be?—That depends on who the officer is. Other things being equal, about 5 years, not less.

26301. And probably not much longer?—I do not think so, because he will then probably imbibe local prejudices.

26302. (*Mr. Hichens.*) You say the Central Provinces are one of the few Non-Regulation Governments remaining; where in particular do you think the shoe pinches in regard to the lack of powers?—Everywhere. In the first place, being a Non-Regulation Government, the people have no voice in the administration which they would have if they had a Regulation Government, and consequently a Legislative Council.

26303. Is that the most important point?—I will not call it the most important, but it is important. Then I regard the administration of justice as very important. We are far behind the Regulation provinces in that respect, because we have no High Court. Then of course with regard to the publication of budgets, we know nothing at all as to what the Chief Commissioner does; not only are we not consulted, but we know absolutely nothing as to how the revenue is spent.

26304. But the budget is published?—Yes, long after the thing is done.

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26305. Is there no explanation with regard to it?—No.

26306. Therefore you think it is very difficult for people to take an intelligent interest in what is going on?—Yes, and they really do not know in fact if, and when, the budget is published; when it is published, it is only as a piece of historical information.

26307. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You say that District Boards possess practically very little power; I suppose you have heard other witnesses say that Public Works amounting to over Rs. 1,500 have to be executed by the Public Works Department, and works under Rs. 1,500 have to be executed by the tahsildars. Do you suggest any method for the District Board doing their own Public Works themselves?—I would place all Public Works in charge of the District Council, and if the District Council is a paying concern, I would appoint a District Council Engineer to look after the work, but if that would be too costly I would make a Divisional Engineer to look after groups of District Councils.

26308. It has been stated that such a scheme is about to be brought into practice; have you heard of that?—I should welcome it.

26309. Is primary education paid for by the District Council?—Yes.

26310. Is it managed or supervised by the District Council?—No, not to any appreciable extent. There is really double control. We have in the first place the deputy inspector of schools who looks after the District Council schools, and we have also a deputy inspector who is not under the District Council at all, but who is directly responsible to the inspector of schools; consequently the District Council have a voice in regard to primary schools, but at the same time the inspector and deputy inspector of schools exercise their powers. I would place the deputy inspector of schools directly under the District Councils.

26311. Would one deputy inspector be able to supervise all the primary schools in a district?—No; there are two or three at present; we have three deputy inspectors of schools now.

26312. Would you allow the Education Department to have some sort of supervision over your primary schools?—Yes; I would allow the Education Department to lay down the policy, and leave the District Councils to carry it out.

26313. Have most District Councils Secretaries?—Yes. They are elected by the District Councils and appointed by the Divisional Commissioners.

26314. Do you approve of that system?—No; I would like the District Councils to appoint their own Secretaries.

26315. Would you extend the same rule to municipalities?—Certainly; I should say municipalities ought to be trusted to appoint their own Secretaries.

26316. At present do they appoint their own Secretaries as a rule?—They do appoint them, but they appoint more or less nominees of the officials.

26317. At any rate they have the power to appoint?—If the Secretary is an honorary Secretary I believe they appoint him.

26318. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) With regard to the possibility of decentralization to the Head of a province, what form of Government would you prefer for a provincial Government?—I should prefer a Lieutenant-Governorship with a Chief Court.

26319. Do you think the powers of the Court of Wards ought to go back to the Deputy Commissioner?—More or less they should be apportioned between the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner.

26320. Would some Deputy Commissioners have fuller powers than others?—By delegation.

26321. Have you thought how delegation should be carried out?—That depends upon what powers are delegated; some powers may be delegated without recall; others may be delegated subject to control; while a third class of powers may be delegated and withdrawn from time to time as the case may be.

26322. Would you like a general Act which would enable you to give powers and to recall them on notice and so on?—Yes.

26323. (*Mr. Meyer.*) In that general Act, would you specify the powers in respect of which the Act was framed, or would you give entire power to the Government of India or the Local Government, as the case might be, to make any delegation as it thought fit?—I would give general powers to Local Governments to frame bye-laws under a general Act.

26324. Do you mean that if an Act has said that in certain cases the sanction of the Local Government is necessary, but the Local Government now thinks that the sanction of the Commissioner is sufficient, it should be able to say "In this section, for Local Government read Commissioner"?—No, I should say where the Local Government said a thing should be done by the Chief Commissioner, the Chief Commissioner should have no power to delegate his powers to the Commissioner, but where the Government of India said it should be done by the Chief Commissioner or some one empowered on his behalf, in that case the power of delegation should be exercised.

26325. That is already provided for?—No doubt, but my objection is that at present the Commissioner is all in all in regard to Court of Wards matters. Now the Commissioner is not the man on the spot; the Deputy Commissioner is the man who is directly responsible for the administration of the Court of Wards, therefore he should have some immediate controlling power on his own responsibility, and not by delegation from the Commissioner.

26326. Supposing there are important measures of decentralization desirable, you are tied up very often by the fact that certain laws prescribe the previous approval of the Governor-General in Council and others require the approval of the Chief Commissioner, and my question is, if you desire to relax these laws would you do it by a mere general Act, saying that wherever the approval of the Governor-General in Council was required it might be dispensed with?—No, I would amend all the Acts specifically.

26327. You say it is the deliberate wish of the people that this province should be raised to the status of a Lieutenant-Governorship—what advantage do you anticipate from that?—First, the establishment of a Legislative Council.

26328. Would you recommend a Board of Revenue?—A Board of Revenue or a Financial Commissioner, and the elevation of the local Courts to a Chief Court, if not a High Court.

26329. You say, as regards appeals from officers of Government, that there should be only one appeal, and that the Government of India should only come in in respect of revision—there are officers, however, whom the Local Government punishes in the first instance?—Yes.

26330. In that case would you leave an appeal to the Government of India?—Yes, certainly; I would give one appeal in any case—I mean that there should be no second appeal to the Government of India.

26331. You say Sub-Divisional Officers should be empowered to sanction sales of excise shops and so on, but do they not do that already?—No, not that I am aware of.

26332. It has been stated that in many cases when a Sub-Divisional Officer has passed an order, the appeal lies not to the Deputy Commissioner but to the Commissioner?—I think the appeal to the Deputy Commissioner ought to be the thing; he is the responsible Head of the district.

26333. In many cases under the present system there are appeals to the Chief Commissioner on really quite trivial matters, which you would like to get rid of?—Yes.

26334. As regards the powers you propose for Commissioners, would you include the posting of officers such as Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners within their divisions?—No, I would not.

26335. Would you empower a Commissioner to transfer tahsildars and naib-tahsildars?—I think not.

26336. Would you give him powers of appointing them?—I would not.

26337. Would you give him powers, subject to conditions of fitness laid down by the Local Government, and in consultation with the District Judge, to confer magisterial powers on officers?—Yes.

26338. And such special powers as the Criminal Procedure Code gives of taking down evidence in English and so forth?—Yes.

26339. Speaking of the Court of Wards, you say that Deputy Commissioners should be entrusted with all the powers they at present possess by delegation; do you mean the powers they practically possess, but do not formally possess?—Yes.

26340. You consider that District Councils are moved by wire-pullers. Are Local Boards also?—I have no experience of Local Boards.

26341. It was suggested by one witness that there should be a system of village panchayat circles all over the country; that there should be seven or eight villages in a circle with a panchayat, elected by the tenants and persons possessed of some means, and having considerable powers in the matter of deciding small civil and criminal cases and carrying out sanitation works. Would there be wire-pulling over those elections?—There might be.

26342. Would you be in favour of such a system?—I would be in favour of the system as a tentative measure.

26343. Within a single village or a group of villages?—I would first of all experiment with a few villages and see how the thing worked.

26344. Would you make one village a single entity or would you group four or five together?—I would group four or five together.

26345. You say that Commissioners have to approve the appointment of Secretaries to District Councils and municipalities; is it merely an approval of the appointment or do they appoint in the first instance?—They generally throw out a suggestion that they would approve of such and such men being appointed Secretaries, and that might influence the members.

26346. There are two ways of appointing a man; a Council might say, "We elect X to be our Secretary," but the appointment is not valid without the Commissioner's consent; or the Commissioner may take the initiative and say "Whether you like it or not, X is your Secretary"; which is the procedure here?—The procedure here is, "I should like to approve of the election of X if you elect him," and the members always say "The Commissioner wants X to be appointed as Secretary, and we must strain a point in his favour."

26347. Supposing the Council are misguided enough to prefer Y, what would happen?—The Commissioner might disapprove of his election; he might say that Y is either too old or too young or give half a dozen reasons or none at all.

26348. But ordinarily he would have to confirm the selection of the Council unless he had some objection to the nominee?—Unfortunately there is nothing in the Act which lays down that the Commissioner is bound to give reasons; he can simply say, "I disapprove of that selection."

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Adjourned.

Dr. H. S. Gour.

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FORTY-FIRST DAY.

NAGPUR, *Friday, 7th February*, 1908.

PRESENT:

C. E. H. HOBHOUSE, Esq., M.P., Under Secretary of State for India, *Chairman.*

SIR FREDERIC LELY, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
SIR STEYNING EDGERLEY, K.C.V.O., C.I.E., I.C.S.
R. C. DUTT, Esq., C.I.E.
W. S. MEYER, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.
W. L. HICHENS, Esq.

Rao Bahadur RAMKRISHNA RAOJI PANDIT was called and examined.

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26349. (*Chairman.*) You are Extra-Assistant Commissioner at Nagpur?—Yes.

I do not think that the present right of appeal to the Government of India requires any revision.

Sub-Divisional Officers are stationed at the headquarters of every district. Each Sub-Divisional Officer should have his headquarters in his subdivision with free quarters and sub-divisional allowances as in Bengal. There should be one separate assistant for the treasury and headquarters criminal work and one other assistant to assist the Deputy Commissioner in his office work.

Executive Officers possess sufficient knowledge of Hindi which is generally understood all over this province.

Frequent transfers of officers are not general, but there should be a limit of five years before which an officer should not be transferred without special reasons.

An Administrative Council would be of assistance to the Deputy Commissioner. It should be constituted by electing two members from the District Council, two from the district municipality, and two nominated by Government, the seventh being the Deputy Commissioner himself. This Council should take up subjects in connection with public affairs, such as famine operations, suspensions of revenue and assessment of income-tax, matters relating to old customs and usages, education, sanitation, the location of liquor shops and the like.

It is expedient to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over the smaller municipalities within their respective districts. By doing so the Deputy Commissioner will be relieved of some work and the municipalities will benefit pecuniarily. The villages managed under the *Mukaddam* Rules in these provinces and under the Villages Sanitation Act should likewise be made

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over to the District Boards for purposes of supervision and control.

26350. You say that some amount of delegation of powers to suspend land revenue might be given to the Deputy Commissioner—do you apply that to wet and to dry revenue—Up to a certain limit, power might be given both in the case of wet and dry crops. We have wet crops here. I think the orders of the Government of India were that either the Collector or the Commissioner might grant suspensions, but in this province the Commissioner only has been empowered, so that if the power is given to the Deputy Commissioner he will be able to redress the grievances of the people here.

26351. Can you suggest any limit beyond which the power of remission should not go?—When there is a failure of crop in a small tract, and such remissions would not exceed Rs. 20,000, the Deputy Commissioner should have power. At present we have villages divided into three classes, and according to the instructions laid down by the Chief Commissioner there are different ways of giving remissions in different classes. If power were given to the Deputy Commissioner it would facilitate work and satisfy the people, although of course he should report his action immediately to the Commissioner.

26352. You say that Sub-Divisional Officers have no administrative power; what do you mean?—They cannot transfer any official, they cannot grant any leave, they cannot fine anybody, and they cannot appoint any substitute.

26353. Ought they to have power to do so?—Yes, the tahsildars have some power; they can fine a patwari up to one or two rupees, and the Assistant Commissioner cannot.

26354. You say that Sub-Divisional Officers ought to live in their divisions; what would be the result of that change?—It would be very much appreciated by the people; at present they have to come from long distances to the headquarters of the district to transact theiir business, and they would be able to go to the headquarters of the *tahsil* which should be the headquarters of the sub-division, where the work would be more rapidly done, and it would save them a lot of trouble and expense.

26355. What is the present practice?—There are sub-divisions in this district, but all officers are stationed at Nagpur, and only go to the sub-divisions when touring.

26356. What is the size of a sub-division?—About 871 square miles in the Nagpur Division.

26357. How far is the centre of your sub-division from Nagpur?—Nagpur is the centre, but there are three other sub-divisions which are quite distinct. One of the centres is about 24 miles, the other 29 miles, and the third about 36 miles away.

26358. With regard to the Municipal Act, you suggest that the Committee should have the power of transferring land?—Yes; if even a very small piece of municipal land is to be sold, we have to get the sanction of the Local Government.

26359. When you say transfer, do you mean sale?—Yes, and sometimes lease or gift; the rules do not provide for any gift with regard to municipalities.

26360. You think the Commissioner should have more power of examining the municipal budget in detail?—It occasionally happens that certain works are provided for, but for some reason or other they cannot be undertaken in that particular year unless the Commissioner's sanction is obtained; that entails great delay and the result sometimes is that the works are definitely dropped that year, and there is a large saving on the municipal budget; if there is provided in a lump sum a certain amount for the repair of roads and other things, an estimate could be prepared, and the budget allotment at once spent.

26361. Is your suggestion that there should be re-appropriation from year to year?—Yes. When we have a certain work provided for in the District Council's budget, after the estimate is prepared it goes to the Engineer, then to the Commissioner, and then to the Chief Commissioner, and certain objections are raised, and by that time most of the year is over and we are unable to proceed with the work. There should be an estimate prepared, signed and countersigned by the Engineer, and then the work should be provided for in the budget.

26362. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Do you think that the doctors at the dispensaries are all that can be desired?—They are very insufficiently paid at present.

26363. Are they sufficiently controlled?—They are wholly under the control of the Civil Surgeon.

26364. Supposing people are dissatisfied with their doctor, have they any means of changing him?—Sometimes they send a petition to the Deputy Commissioner or the Civil Surgeon, but there are other means.

26365. What power has the Deputy Commissioner?—He sends the petition on to the Civil Surgeon and asks for a report, and if the Civil Surgeon reports that the complaints are frivolous, the petition is only filed.

26366. Are you aware of cases of doctors not being satisfactory?—Yes, as they are insufficiently paid we do not get competent men for Hospital Assistants.

26367. Have you any defects to point out in the management of primary schools?—We have at present two deputy inspectors in the Nagpur district who submit their reports, and there is an inspector who occasionally visits. With regard to the appointment of masters, the District Board has power which is sufficient, but to open a school or close a school we have to get the sanction of the inspector of schools and the Deputy Commissioner, which is unnecessary; the District Board alone should have the power.

26368. Have the people themselves enough say in the management of their schools?—For every school we have a committee of local men residing in the town; they meet every month, and whenever an officer visits they meet him and matters are discussed, so that they have a say.

26369. Might more power be given to the School Committee?—Yes, they might be told to report.

26370. Might they be entrusted with the maintenance of the school buildings, for instance?—Certainly.

26371. And power to give holidays and regulate the fees?—Not in a general way. They might regulate the fees, but subject to the control of the District Board; there is no objection to their making recommendations.

26372. In the general management of the school course would you give them uncontrolled power?—Where it is possible that they can do any good, powers might be given to the School Committee, subject to the control of the District Board.

26373. Has the District Board entire power to maintain roads?—No, most of the roads are in charge of the Public Works Department.

26374. Would it be a good thing to give some of the villages full power to maintain their own roads, giving them a small grant for the purpose?—Yes.

26375. And leaving them entirely uncontrolled?—They would be under the control of the Local Board. An official on the committee, or a member of the Local Board residing in the vicinity, would be able to supervise the work if put in charge, and then he would be supervised by the President of the Local Board, the Local Board overseer advising him as to the work.

26376. Would you give the overseer power to interfere?—I would give him power to supervise and report if anything went wrong.

26377. But would not the interference of the overseer rather spoil the whole thing in the eyes of the villagers?—No, I think not.

26378. They would not resent the interference of a subordinate like the overseer?—No, the overseer does not interfere to any great extent.

26379. You would not give over the money to leading villagers and tell them to make the best of it themselves and take the whole responsibility?—No.

26380. As a class, are tahsildars the men who come face to face with the people most frequently on behalf of Government?—Yes.

26381. Are they efficient as a class?—Of late there has been a great improvement, and we have now several efficient tahsildars.

26382. Are they generally honest?—Yes.

26383. They are Second Class Magistrates?—Yes.

26384. Are they sufficiently paid?—Yes, now they are; their scale of salary has been increased.

26385. Does the modern tahsildar make it his duty to investigate any false rumours that get abroad, and show the people that they are false?—Yes, I think so.

26386. If Government brings forward a measure, or issues an order which is misunderstood by the people, does the modern tahsildar make it his duty to explain things to the people?—Yes, at present they do.

26387. Are the patwaris efficient and honest?—They are very insufficiently paid. We do not get good men, and their salaries should be increased.

26388. With regard to the sale of public land in municipalities, there is very little spare land in modern towns; in the case of a space at a street corner adjoining the house of an influential resident who is anxious to get it, is there not great danger of that man using his influence with the municipality and getting them to sell it to him?—But those lands are sold under certain rules.

26389. You propose that a municipality should have power to sell such lands without any control?—Only small pieces; my experience is that it has always been put up to auction.

26390. I am supposing it ought to be reserved for the public use. Should a municipality have power to alienate a piece of public land like that?—But it is generally considered by the Municipal Committee, and they are particular nowadays about not selling land if it is, or is likely to be, required for public purposes.

26391. Even remembering that a sale like that is practically irrevocable?—In regard to a small area, I think it would be quite safe.

26392. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Is every primary school managed by a Committee?—Yes, every school.

26393. Have you a fairly large number of such primary schools in your sub-division?—In my sub-division there are about 48. There are 550 villages.

26394. Has your Local Board sufficient resources to increase the number of primary schools to the extent desirable?—No. They ought to be assisted by Government grant. At present we spend a lot of money on schools, and if we are assisted by the Government in the way of increased grants, we should be able to open more schools; in fact in the whole of the Nagpur district we have about 105 primary schools, which a very small number.

26395. Are the proceeds of the Education Cess spent on schools?—Yes, but it is not adequate. We get a grant also from Government, but it is very small. Our School Cess income is Rs. 22,000, whereas we spend over Rs. 50,000.

26396. When you get a report from the deputy inspector that a school is not doing well, what procedure do you follow?—We first of all enquire into it; on the receipt of the deputy inspector's report, we ask the tahsildar to report, and when his report comes it is put before the Council for discussion, and we decide and make a report to the Deputy Commissioner if the school is to be closed.

26397. And is the final order passed by the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes, in consultation with the inspector of schools.

26398. We understood from a witness yesterday that there is a scheme for appointing Divisional Engineers for District Boards?—Yes, it has only been tried in the Nagpur Division, where a Divisional Engineer has been appointed. I think it is a good plan.

26399. As regards smaller works costing under Rs. 1,500, do you think the present system good or do you suggest any change?—No, I do not think any change is needed.

26400. You say that your District Board has not the power to open new pounds?—No. The Deputy Commissioner's sanction is required by law Powers might be given to the District Board.

26401. Are the servants of the District Board entitled to any sort of pension?—Not under the present rules. The Local Government is considering the matter of a provident fund, but nothing has been decided.

26402. If a provident fund was created, the Service would be made a little more attractive?—Yes.

26403. At present the whole income of the District Board consists of the Education Cess, he Road Cess, and the contribution from Government and certain fees from pounds and ferries?—Yes.

26404. You do not get the proceeds of any other tax, and you want power to impose a new tax?—Yes.

26405. Would that make the District Board popular?—It would not be unpopular. It would not bring in a very large income, but still it would bring in something.

26406. Is the *mukaddam* appointed by Government?—Yes.

26407. Are the villagers consulted in his appointment?—The *malguzar* is consulted; the villagers are not.

26408. Is anything done in the way of settling petty disputes by the *mukaddam*?—Yes, in every village there is a *mukaddam*, and a few of the respectable villagers settle disputed matters with him, and the people occasionally abide by their decisions.

26409. Would it be possible in advanced villages to constitute a panchayat to help the *mukaddam* in settling these matters?—Yes, it would be possible in certain villages.

26410. In that case would you empower the panchayat and the *mukaddam* to dispose of petty civil cases arising in a village?—In course of time.

26411. And also to dispose of petty criminal cases, giving them a small power to fine?—Yes.

26412. You propose the constitution of a small Administrative Council to assist the Deputy Commissioner; do you confine yourself to the matters mentioned, or are there other matters in which such a Council might be of use?—There might be other matters.

26413. As regards education, would members of such a Council give advice of value to the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

26414. In cases of plague or famine, might they be of use?—Yes.

26415. Do you also include the location of liquor shops as a matter in which they might be consulted?—Yes.

26416. Should the members be nominated or elected, or partly nominated and partly elected?—Two should be elected by the District Council, and two by the municipality, and two should be nominated by the Local Government, with the Deputy Commissioner himself.

26417. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Under whose orders is the Divisional Engineer who has been recently appointed?—Under the orders of the Commissioner.

26418. So that if any District Board wants his services they have to apply to the Commissioner?—Yes, and we are also directly in communication with him and he manages his tour; he has five districts to take up.

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26419. It was suggested that it might be desirable to hand over to the District Boards the maintenance of all the roads; would that be a good thing?—Now that they have a Divisional Engineer they can manage the district roads, but they should have additional funds to carry out these works.

26420. On what principle should that addition be given?—According to the roads in the district.

26421. You would not give them a percentage on their income?—It would be better to consider the circumstances of each district.

26422. Is it not better that they should have a grant of a definite amount each year, so that they could know what they can count upon?—Each year's grant could be settled, but it should be in accordance with the requirements of the district varying from year to year.

26423. What are the powers of Municipal Boards to-day?—A municipality or District Council can appoint a man on Rs. 15 a month and create a new appointment up to that amount, but above that they have to get sanction.

26424. Do you mean if an appointment falls vacant carrying a salary of over Rs. 15 a month they have to get the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner?—To create an appointment of over Rs. 15 sanction is required. To fill a vacancy, I think the sum is larger—up to Rs. 50.

26425. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Would you give Local Boards the same powers as District Councils for the local areas they administer?—Subject to the control and supervision of the District Council.

26426. You would not give them any separate source of income?—The budget of the income of a Local Board should be prepared; for instance, there are four Local Boards in this district, and they should have the income from their area and a budget should be prepared.

26427. But they only have such funds as the District Council chooses to give them?—Yes.

26428. In Madras, on the other hand, the land cess is divided, half and half, between District and Local Boards, and the Local Boards also have some other independent sources of revenue—would you be in favour of a scheme like that, so that the Local Boards would have something they could count on definitely?—Yes, there is no objection to that course.

26429. Is your work as a Sub-Divisional Officer mainly revenue or magisterial?—Both.

26430. Do you take appeals from subordinate Magistrates?—I do.

26431. Is that the usual practice in this province?—All Sub-Divisional Magistrates have appellate powers and they take appeals at times; the Deputy Commissioner selects a certain number to take himself, and some he sends to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate.

26432. Ordinarily do all the appeals from Second and Third Class Magistrates as in a sub-division go to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, or does the District Magistrate deal with them?—The District Magistrate deals with them.

26433. Are your Sub-Divisional Officers vested with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner in revenue matters?—Yes, except as to certain sections of the Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts.

26434. But where they are vested with the powers and there is an appeal, it goes to the Commissioner?—Yes.

26435. Would you be in favour of giving the appeal to the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes, there is no objection.

26436. As a Sub-Divisional Officer, do you deal with the sale of liquor shops?—No; there is a separate department, and it is managed through it.

26437. But who sells the shops?—The Deputy Commissioner himself presides.

26438. Is there any reason why the Sub-Divisional Officer should not sell them if assisted by an excise expert?—No.

26439. Do you take income-tax work?—Yes, on incomes above Rs. 2,000 the assessment is made by the Sub-Divisional Officer, and on incomes below that by the tahsildar, but it is submitted by the tahsildar to the Sub-Divisional Officer.

26440. Above Rs. 2,000 do you assess?—I can assess up to any limit, but we have to submit the list to the Deputy Commissioner for approval and revision.

26441. Is that necessary; if a man is dissatisfied would he not appeal to the Deputy Commissioner?—No; that power does not exist. First of all the assessment is made by the tahsildar and Sub-Divisional Officer, and submitted to the Deputy Commissioner for sanction. Then the objection is filed to the Sub-Divisional Officer; he disposes of the objection, and then it goes to the Commissioner on appeal.

26442. Supposing the Deputy Commissioner did not sanction the assessment, might he not take the Commissioner's place as an appellate authority?—Yes.

26443. In every case of land acquisition, the sanction of the Government is required under the Act?—The first notification is issued under the sanction of the Government.

26444. In small cases might not the Commissioner sanction instead of the Local Government, if the law permitted it?—Yes.

26445. You say that when it appears that a female or a minor's guardian is recklessly squandering property, the Court of Wards should be empowered to take it over, but cannot the Court of Wards take over any estate of which the owner is a minor?—I want the Commissioner to be able to deal with it in anticipation of sanction.

26446. You say there have been failures to obtain loans for estates from bankers at a reasonable rate of interest—it has been suggested that the Local Government might incur loans, and it was said that this would not interfere with the borrowing of the Government of India, because there was a certain amount of local capital which would come forward for provincial loans. Now, having regard to the fact that bankers will not lend money to estates, is it likely that they would lend to the Local Government?—There is more security, and they might lend to the Local Government.

26447. Do you think there would be a special market for Local Government loans?—Not in the province.

26448. You say that the Commissioner has no power to sanction expenditure up to Rs. 1,000?—It has now been increased to Rs. 2,500. The Deputy Commissioner has no power.

26449. Do you desire that the Deputy Commissioner should have power to sanction expenditure on buildings?—Yes. I would propose power up to Rs. 2,500.

26450. You have said that the Deputy Commissioner should have an assistant at headquarters; how many has he now?—For the Nagpur district he has six assistants of whom two are for general work.

26451. Is that the general number at present?—Yes.

26452. In other districts have they those two general assistants?—No, they have Sub-Divisional Officers.

26453. Is there no Treasury Officer?—No; there is no separate Treasury Officer.

26454. Would you allow municipalities to have simple rules of their own, regulating leave, pension, etc.?—Yes.

26455. You say that District Councils have power to sanction estimates only up to Rs. 500; above that amount have they to go to the Commissioner?—Between Rs. 500 and Rs. 2,000 they go to the Deputy Commissioner; between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 5,000 to the Commissioner, and above Rs. 5,000 to the Chief Commissioner.

26456. Is it the same with regard to municipalities?—Yes.

26457. Supposing in the case of an Advisory Council, a Deputy Commissioner disagreed with a majority of the members, what would happen?—He should report the matter to the Commissioner.

26458. Should the Commissioner also report to a higher authority?—I think not.

26459. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Have not Sub-Divisional Officers sufficient power with regard to inspection?—No; in one case I inspected a police station-house, and I was told that I had no authority to do it.

26460. Have the Magistrates nothing to do with the police?—Nothing except with regard to the disposal of cases.

26461. Cannot they go into a station-house and look at the crime register?—No. An Assistant Commissioner can in this province, but not the Extra-Assistant Commissioner.

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26462. Where an Extra-Assistant Commissioner is in charge of a division, has he absolutely no magisterial control over the working of the police?—No.

26463. Has that always been the case?—Yes.

26464. You said that patwaris were very badly paid; how are they paid?—At present they have a fixed salary from Government. They are all paid Rs. 12, and none of them are paid more than Rs. 15.

26465. Have they a great deal of work?—Yes, and important work.

26466. Have they any time to cultivate?—Under the rules, they are not allowed to cultivate within their circles, as it would interfere with their duties.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. F. G. Sly was called and examined.

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26467. (*Chairman.*) You are Director of Agriculture?—Yes. I have also been Under-Secretary to the Government of India, and Inspector-General of Agriculture to the Government of India.

The Director is entrusted with the administration of the provincial Department of Agriculture. The superior officers of that department are seven in number, 5 Europeans and 2 Indians, viz., 2 Deputy Directors and 1 Assistant Director (Agricultural experts), Principal of the Agricultural College, Agricultural Chemist, Botanist, and Superintendent of the Civil Veterinary Department. Its main object is the improvement of Indian agriculture, and its operations include the management of experiment stations; a college for technical agricultural education; the distribution of improved seeds and implements; the introduction of improved methods by demonstrative farms, issue of publications, co-operative tests, work of district agricultural associations, and the like; veterinary dispensaries, cattle-breeding farms and measures for the suppression of cattle diseases; the management of Government and district gardens; technical advice to Government in cases where agricultural interests are concerned; some branches of technical education and the improvement of industries.

The most important measure of decentralization that I would recommend is the establishment of a provincial Legislative Council, which is justified by the importance of the interests with which the provincial Administration is now concerned. It would lead to legislation more in consonance with local needs, and would satisfy some of the legitimate aspirations of the people for a greater share in the government of their country. With this object, Berar should be declared to be British India, so far as the making of laws is concerned.

The district should be the essential unit, and the District Officer should be given larger powers of initiation and final disposal, both in matters relating to revenue and general administration. This should involve a more rigid system of selection for that post than has hitherto been enforced, and I would give the Commissioner the right to withhold certain powers in exceptional cases, where an inexperienced officer is appointed to the post of Deputy Commissioner. I would lessen the burden that this would throw upon District Officers, by increasing the powers of the Sub-Divisional Officers.

The introduction of the sub-divisional system has improved the administration and been welcomed by the people. I would extend it by making senior assistants permanently reside at the headquarters, which are not too isolated, and in every case I would provide a permanent residence in which the Sub-Divisional Officer should reside from November to June, during the intervals of his tours. The Deputy Commissioner would get some relief from the heavy burden of office work (1) by being entrusted with larger powers of final disposal, (2) by delegation of more powers of final disposal to the Sub-Divisional Officers.

The position of Commissioner is one of the greatest importance in the well-being of the country, but instead of giving him, as at present, a considerable share in the actual administration of each district, I would like to see his functions altered more to those of direction and control over District Officers, which would largely be exercised rather by inspection than by constant official references. To give a specific instance, the Commissioner should control all revenue collections of a district by examining the figures of his inspections rather than by receiving monthly statements showing the progress of collections. And in his turn, the Commissioner should be given some of the powers of final disposal at present exercised by the Chief Commissioner, more particularly in such matters as the Court of Wards, revenue appeals, and the like.

As a particular instance, I would mention the system of appeals under the Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts. The general rule is that each case is decided by the Deputy Commissioner (or an assistant invested with Deputy Commissioner's powers), a first appeal lying to the Commissioner and a second appeal to the Chief Commissioner, even in such petty matters as the appointment of a village watchman. In such cases of small importance, the Sub-Divisional Officer should have powers of disposal, a first appeal lying to the Deputy Commissioner; a second appeal to the Commissioner should not be allowed unless the decision is reversed on first appeal. In important cases, the decision should be made by the Deputy Commissioner, with first appeal to the Commissioner, and a second appeal to the Chief Revenue authority only when the first decision is reversed. Each party would thus be given one right of appeal.

The constant touring (more particularly of subordinates of several departments) is considered a hardship by many villages. The necessity for touring has been pressed, in the interests of efficiency, somewhat in advance of the real requirements of the people. At the same time, it is necessary for superior officers, such as the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Sub-Divisional Officer to come into close personal contact with the villagers. In order to lessen the abuses at present inseparable from touring, I would recommend a change from the present system, in which an officer usually marches to a fresh camping ground each day, to a system under which a standing camp would be kept for a substantial period at the most important village of the tract, where supplies are available in the open market, the officer making daily tours from this centre to villages within a convenient radius.

As the integral unit of the Government, the District Officer should be in close touch with all branches of the administration in his district. This is at present the case in regard to most branches, such as police, forests, excise, education and the like, but the Public Works Department is a glaring exception. The administration of this

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department stands the lowest in general reputation for efficiency, and on more than one occasion respectable native gentlemen have told me that they would not permit their sons to enter this service. The evils are largely due to insufficient administrative control, and I recommend that the Public Works Department should be placed in the same relation to the District Officer as other Government Departments.

Larger powers should be given to Municipal Committees and District Councils, so that they may take a real part in the self-government of their district. At present they are treated more on the lines of a Government Department than as an independent, self-governing body. Their financial powers should be increased, more particularly in regard to establishments, Public Works, reappropriations and the like. The chief difficulty is that as a rule their funds are not sufficient to employ an efficient staff, so that the execution of most schemes has to be handed over to a Government Department.

Some large municipalities are quite competent to manage their own affairs, but this is not the case with most municipalities and local bodies. In the latter cases, I would revert to the old practice, under which the Deputy Commissioner was the President. It is in accordance with Indian opinion that the affairs of the district should be managed jointly by the District Officer and the leaders of the people. Moreover, it has excellent results in bringing the District Officer into close touch with such leaders. Far from being a retrograde step, I believe that it would result in a more rapid advance towards local self-government.

The District Council is capable of being as good a District Advisory Council as any that could be created; I do not see any good in forming a separate advisory body, but would utilise the District Council for this purpose. I doubt very much whether the village communities can be relied upon for much assistance in disposing of local affairs, but a trial might be made in suitably selected villages of entrusting the village panchayat with some control over local affairs, and with the power to settle the civil disputes (up to a fixed small value) of parties who both consent to abide by their decision. If successful, the scheme might be expanded to include small criminal powers.

As Inspector-General of Agriculture for India, my relations with provincial departments of agriculture were solely advisory, and I consider that this is correct in principle and worked well in practice.

26468. Are you brought much into contact with the Inspector-General of Agriculture?—Yes, whenever we write and ask for advice in regard to matters he gives such advice as he can, and he comes round on tour occasionally in order to inspect us.

26469. Do you have any official correspondence with him direct?—Yes, generally upon technical matters in which one desires advice in regard to specific pieces of scientific work.

26470. Is that conducted through the Local Government?—No. It is the duty of the Director to keep the Local Government informed on points of importance on which correspondence is occurring, and he also has to report all matters of importance which may have occurred during the year.

20471. Is there any tendency on the part of the Inspector-General to interfere directly with your work?—No.

26472. Supposing he came and found one of your experimental farms was not being satisfactorily conducted, what steps would he be likely to take?—He would give to the Local Director his advice as to points where he thought things were wrong, and then it would be for the Director to deal with it.

26473. He would not advise the Local Government?—I do not think he ordinarily corresponds with the Local Government. I think his usual procedure is to come round and write an inspection note, which he sends to the Local Director, upon which the Local Director takes such action as he thinks necessary.

26474. Supposing he took no action, what could happen?—Then I do not think anything else would happen. I think the matter ends there, unless it was taken up specially by the Inspector-General to the Government of India. The Inspector-General generally asks us what action we have taken on his notes and we report.

26475. You do that as an act of grace and not as an obligation?—Yes.

26476. On the whole, you think the appointment of Inspector-General of Agriculture has been a good appointment?—I think quite a good one.

26477. You have a certain staff under you managing experimental stations?—Yes.

26478. Have they any powers of their own, or must they come to you in regard to all their expenditure for experiments?—I have delegated certain powers, and with regard to the stations, they manage them entirely themselves, and only have to report to me any specific individual proposals which they think of sufficient importance to require my sanction.

26479. Has the officer in charge of the farm here a free hand to do what he likes?—Yes. If he wants to alter the programme of work it is reported, and the proposal is discussed by the whole of the staff generally.

26480. Do you prepare a budget?—Yes.

26481. Can you put on as many labourers as you like within the budget entirely at your own discretion?—Yes; the officer in charge of the farm would do so, without reference to me. On a farm the labour must vary from day to day according to the requirements, and it would be impossible to have a fixed scale. He has a free hand in regard to variable labour.

26482. You have also been a Commissioner of Settlements?—Yes.

26483. We were told by a witness that the appointment of a Commissioner of Settlements was hardly necessary, and that the work should be left to Divisional Commissioners; have you anything to say in regard to that?—Do you mean that the appointment should be abolished and taken over by the Divisional Commissioner? I think that would be an extremely unwise proposal. The Settlement Officers as a rule appointed in this province are young officers who, at the start, have very little experience of settlement work, and who therefore require considerable supervision particularly in the earlier stages of their work. I do not believe that such supervision could be given by Divisional Commissioners, partly on the ground that they have other duties to perform, and partly on the ground that the Divisional Commissioners themselves may not have experience in the technical branch of the work.

26484. Is your decision upon settlement questions and appeals from settlement questions final?—No, appeals go to the Chief Commissioner direct.

26485. Another suggestion made was that every young officer on first coming out should, after a period of probation at headquarters, be put under the charge of a Settlement Officer in order that he might acquire a thorough knowledge of the language and mix with the people of the province; have you any remark to make as to that?—At present every Civilian goes through a course of training under a Settlement Officer.

26486. Would it not do a man much good to go under a Settlement Officer at the beginning of his service?—Yes, I think he should go out, but not on specific settlement training, but more in the way of acquiring a general knowledge of the language and the people.

26487. You suggest that the Sub-Divisional Officer should live in his sub-division; what is your reason?—In these provinces, with the exception of two or three sub-divisions, the Sub-Divisional Officer lives at the district headquarters, but in some other provinces he lives entirely at the sub-division. The advantages of both methods vary according to the different parts of the country. In some cases

you get terrible isolation for a European, which affects his nerves and general system greatly, while in others you get the officer not sufficiently in touch with his sub-division. As far as these provinces are concerned, I think the best system would be to insist that the Sub-Divisional Officer should be out in his sub-division for the seven open months of the year, and let him remain at headquarters for the other five.

26488. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Does much correspondence grow up on the inspection memos you receive?—Not much.

26489. It is not usual to send them to the Local Government?—It is left to the discretion of the Director.

26490. And when it has been dealt with, it is not sent up for information so that the Local Government may know what is being done?—That duty is also left to the discretion of the local Director.

26491. But do you send it to the Local Government with your remarks?—As a rule, yes.

26492. Is there any order that you should?—I do not think so. The communications from the Inspector-General may be on some purely technical matters in which the Local Government is not intensely interested, or they may deal with an important proposal.

26493. Is there any tendency for the correspondence to grow between yourself and the Inspector-General?—No; in fact I think we should prefer to see more of the Inspector-General than we do.

26494. Do you endeavour to co-ordinate your experimental work with what is done at Pusa and elsewhere?—Yes. It is done very efficiently by the meetings of the Board of Agriculture at which our annual programme is discussed, and where we often receive most valuable suggestions. We submit our programme of work for the year to the Board, and the Board, as a body, pass such remarks on it as they think fit.

26495. What is the exact organisation of the Civil Veterinary Department here?—At the present time, there is a Superintendent of the Civil Veterinary Department who is a member of the Imperial Service, and who is under the control of the Director of Agriculture, and at the same time there is a staff of six inspectors in charge of divisions who are paid from provincial revenues; then there is a larger staff, at the present time I think about 60 veterinary assistants, who are in charge of dispensaries or peripatetic work in the districts, who are paid by the local bodies.

26496. What is the control over the Local Board establishment; is that vested in the Local Boards?—It is shared between the superintendent and the local bodies; for instance the power of appointment rests largely with the superintendent; he finds the men and places them under the local bodies, and the local bodies pay for their services and are supposed to supervise their work.

26497. Where are these men trained?—At the veterinary colleges throughout India.

26498. Can the Local Boards control their work very much?—At present the system has not been found efficient; it is a divided responsibility which has not worked well, and proposals have now been submitted by the Local Government to the Government of India for the provincialisation of the whole staff.

26499. Are the inspectors in the Provincial Service entirely?—Yes.

26500. Is the superintendent entirely under your orders?—Yes; he is on the imperial establishment and paid from imperial revenues; but he is entirely under the control of the Local Director; transfers, leave, and such like arrangements are made by the Inspector-General.

26501. He is practically supplied to the province by the Imperial Government?—Yes.

26502. Is your agricultural staff engaged principally on scientific work, or are they much in touch with the District Officers?—Some are engaged more on scientific work than others, but the majority are doing practical work in touch with District Officers.

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26503. In regard to what sort of work?—The scientific work of the experimental stations is done entirely by the expert staff as such, but the whole of the other branches of the work of the department in regard to demonstration farms in the district, in regard to the district Agricultural Associations, and in regard to all practical work that is being done in the district, is being done as far as possible closely in touch both with the District Officer and the people; in fact, the department could not get along without the District Officer.

26504. Do you tour much?—Yes.

26505. As regards a suggestion of a different system of touring which you make, is there anything to stop an officer who prefers that system adopting it?—I think not.

26506. A halt for three or four days and then a move on would be a cheaper form of travelling than travelling day by day?—It might possibly be so.

26507. Do you have many complaints in the district with regard to the insufficiency of travelling allowances?—There are complaints that it does not cover the officers' actual expenditure.

26508. Is that in any way due to the system of touring they follow?—I do not know; every officer as far as I know who goes on tour always takes the whole of his equipment and transport, and employs them straight through for the number of months that he is going to travel.

26509. Are they all on daily allowance?—Yes; the number of cases in which they travel more than 20 miles a day is extremely few.

26510. Are the allowances adequate?—I think so.

26511. (*Mr. Meyer.*) In this province do your officers tour during the cold weather months?—That is the ordinary rule. They also tour in the hot weather, or at the beginning of the hot weather at any rate.

26512. Do they divide the year more or less into two portions, during one of which they are constantly moving about, while in the other they are at headquarters?—Yes.

26513. Has not the placing of a Sub-Divisional Officer in separate headquarters the advantage of making a man more self-reliant?—Yes, I think so.

26514. Is that not rather a valuable element in a young officer's training?—Yes, but on the other hand you will find some cases where the Sub-Divisional Officer is isolated in an extremely jungly place which would be very detrimental to his efficiency.

26515. He could always go into the district headquarters periodically to attend District Council meetings and so forth?—Yes.

26516. From the point of view of the people it would be an advantage that they should have an officer near at hand?—Yes, I think so.

26517. As regards settlements, is the Settlement Officer in a district in any way subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner?—No.

26518. Does he submit his settlement reports through the Deputy Commissioner?—Not when I was a Settlement Commissioner.

26519. Do you mean to say that the Deputy Commissioner has no say in such an important matter as the re-settlement of his district?—I think not. The Commissioner has every say.

26520. At what stage does the matter go to the Commissioner?—Every report goes through the Commissioner.

26521. That is to say the Settlement Officer sends his report through the Divisional Commissioner, and the Divisional Commissioner forwards it, with his remarks, to the Settlement Commissioner?—Yes.

26522. Then does the Settlement Commissioner send it on to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes.

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26523. Do you not think that the Deputy Commissioner might be taken in too?—Yes, I think the Deputy Commissioner might be brought more closely into touch.

26524. In Madras the Settlement Officer is an assistant to the Collector for settlement purposes, and is supposed to consult the Collector; would that be a good plan here?—In the Central Provinces Settlement is a technical line of work in which the Deputy Commissioner could give very useful advice on broad questions of principle, but in regard to the detailed working I doubt whether he would be more than a drag on it.

26525. I am speaking from the point of view of matters which affect the people such as the character of the assessments; would it be advantageous to adopt the Madras system?—I doubt it; I think the disadvantages would be greater than the advantages.

26526. Still you think that the Deputy Commissioner should be consulted?—Yes, and as a matter of fact the Settlement Officer does consult him, if not officially, at least unofficially.

26527. Is there not a vast amount of control over your settlements by the Supreme Government?—Yes.

26528. A reference has been made to the Government of India for relaxing that control; does that meet with your approval?—Entirely.

26529. Is it sufficient for the Government of India to lay down principles and to leave the details to the local administration?—I think so.

26530. In Northern India they have to send up inception reports; are those necessary?—I think they are useful. The inception report and the final report are the two most useful things which the Government of India get.

26531. Do you mean from the point of view of information, or what?—The inception report lays down the general lines upon which a settlement is to be conducted; it contains an estimate of the enhancement which it is considered advisable to put on, and it seems to me the most useful report there could be.

26532. But the general principles have been already laid down by the Government of India themselves in a variety of resolutions?—I meant the application of the principles to a particular district.

26533. And you think that the Government of India ought to be in a position to see whether the general principles are being properly applied to particular districts?—Yes; if the Government of India are to have any control over settlements at all, the best time at which to do it is on the preliminary proposals.

26534. You know of course that Madras and Bombay are under no such restrictions?—Yes.

26535. (*Chairman.*) Do you think any evil has resulted from that?—Not that I am aware of.

26536. Would inception reports come to you while you were in the Revenue and Agricultural Department of the Government of India?—They passed through me as Under-Secretary.

26537. (*Mr. Meyer.*) We have been told that in some provinces the Revenue and Agricultural Department have been unnecessarily interfering with Local Governments in matters of land revenue, and that in Bengal they have endeavoured to force the Punjab methods; what is your opinion?—I think the control of the Revenue and Agricultural Department has perhaps been more detailed than some other departments of the Government of India.

26538. Would you say unnecessarily detailed?—Yes, I think so.

26539. All Local Governments outside Madras and Bombay have to get sanction for settlement appointments beyond six months; is that necessary?—I do not think so.

26540. You have a general scale regulating the emoluments of Settlement Officers?—Yes.

26541. When a settlement has been sanctioned, might a Local Government have power to sanction appointments of its own officers within that scale?—Yes.

26542. Has no one any power of remission below the Chief Commissioner?—I am not very well acquainted with the latest rule, but that used to be the rule; I think the rules have been relaxed to a certain extent lately, and that there are more recent rules giving certain powers to the Commissioner.

26543. At any rate you know that the Government of India laid down certain rules as to remissions in times of calamity and so on?—Yes.

26544. With regard to agricultural loans, is there any necessity for extending the powers of local officers?—Not that I know of. I think the present system works fairly smoothly.

26545. We have been told that there are revenue inspectors in districts, but that they are under the Director of Land Records; might they not be regarded as part of the regular district establishment—it is part of the normal work of a District Officer to deal with land records?—Yes, the Deputy Commissioner at the present time has substantial powers over the revenue inspector's staff.

26546. Can he reduce or promote or dismiss them?—I do not know that he can reduce them, but he has power of punishment over them.

26547. Can he transfer them within a district?—No. The Director of Land Records does that.

26548. Who appoints them?—The Director of Land Records.

26549. Might not they be regarded as a regular portion of the district staff subject of course to inspection by the Director of Land Records?—The difficulty which would arise is that the number of inspectors is so small that, in order to keep up any general level of efficiency throughout a province, it would be necessary to have a general power of transfers from district to district, rather than making them district units.

26550. How many would you have in an ordinary district?—About 10 or 12.

26551. And that is not enough to enable the Divisional Commissioner to deal with them?—I do not know; the ordinary procedure is that the Director or his Assistant visits districts inspecting the land records, and if he finds in a particular district that the inspectors are weak he would immediately draft into it some of the best revenue inspectors about the provinces in order to strengthen it; or he would find that a particular man was not getting on particularly well in a circle, and then he would be transferred.

26552. Do you not think the present system leads to the Deputy Commissioner getting disassociated from land work?—I think it does; I do not know that it would be advisable to hand the staff wholly over to the Deputy Commissioner, but his powers and responsibilities might be increased.

26553. The agricultural staff, both imperial and provincial, has been very much increased of late years?—Yes.

26554. It has been said that the imperial staff, especially, is inclined to concentrate too much on mere research, and to leave matters of practical agriculture alone—is there any basis for that?—There may be a slight danger in that way, but on the other hand the intention is that the Imperial Department should very largely concern itself with abstract research, abstract research being the essential necessity for the solution of actual problems that arise. It is not right to say that there is a distinction between abstract research and actual agriculture.

26555. Would your idea be that the provincial staff should deal with practical work and the imperial staff with research work?—Yes, to some extent; it is impossible for the provincial staff to take up large fundamental problems.

26556. Then you do not think the imperial staff has been unduly centralized?—No.

26557. You have annual conferences for India, have you not?—Yes, under the presidency of the Inspector-General of Agriculture.

26558. Have those been of any practical use?—I think so, of great practical use.

26559. Was it not the original intention that the District Boards should deal with the Civil Veterinary Department?—Yes.

26560. And was not the idea to popularise veterinary work among the people, and that the District Boards were a good agency for doing it?—Yes.

26561. The tendency has been rather the other way, to take power away from District Boards and to provincialise—do you think that a good thing?—The other system has been tried and has been found absolutely to fail; the District Boards will not control a technical department doing technical work which they are not intimately concerned with.

26562. Is it really a matter which the Government must take up?—I think so.

26563. Through the District Officer?—Yes.

26564. Under the present scheme who will pay?—Under the new scheme it is proposed to follow the analogy more or less of the Medical Department in which the salaries and allowances of the inspectors are entirely paid from provincial revenues, and the actual expenses of the dispensaries, such as the subordinate staff, medicines, &c., will be paid by the local bodies.

26565. But at the same time the local bodies will have no say in the management?—Not a very large say.

26566. Is that a good system?—It has worked well in the Medical Department.

26567. If this work is too technical for the District Boards, would it not be better to take the pecuniary liability away from them and let the provincial Government undertake it direct?—Yes, I think it would.

26568. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You said that the inception report which is sent up to the Government of India contains something like an estimate of the enhancement which may be expected from the revision of a district; on what materials is that estimate prepared?—It is based on a general survey of the district, the increase of cultivation that has occurred, the rise in prices, the general state of prosperity or the reverse in a district, and all the ordinary considerations on which either an increase or decrease of land revenue is based. It is a general survey without any detailed investigation.

26569. Generally does the result correspond with the estimate which is formed at first?—Yes, I think so, fairly closely.

26570. Is there a re-classification of soils at each settlement?—Yes. The re-classification simply consists in a check of the previous classification with a rectification of any errors that come to light in it.

26571. Are those errors found to be frequent?—I think not.

26572. Would the fact of cotton having come into cultivation more extensively necessitate a great re-classification of soils?—Certainly.

26573. Is that re-classification done on the soil-unit system?—Yes.

26574. What is the class of officers entrusted with re-classification in villages?—It is entrusted to a staff of revenue inspectors who have been specially trained under the close supervision of an Assistant Settlement Officer and checked by the Settlement Officer. They are men receiving from about Rs. 30 to Rs. 50, and they are specially trained in soil classification before taking the work up.

26575. Do you say that the Settlement Officer's report might be sent through the Deputy Commissioner to the Commissioner?—I am inclined to think that that would cause unnecessary delay.

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26576. You would not find any corresponding advantages if it was sent to the Deputy Commissioner and he was given a chance of making any remarks he might wish to make?—I doubt it, because the reports are such masses of detail.

26577. You do not think the Deputy Commissioner would like to make some remarks about the rent-rates?—Yes, upon the general principles; but when you come to separate village rent-rates fixed for each district, I doubt whether any advantage would accrue.

26578. Then you suggest that a report which contains the general result might be sent to the Deputy Commissioner, but not detailed reports?—Yes.

26579. When the rent-rates are fixed, is it generally made known to the people before they are sent up for sanction?—The actual rent-rate of each particular village is not make known to the people, but the general proposals for each tahsil are made known to the people and discussed at a meeting at which the Deputy Commissioner is present.

26580. Would that enable the cultivator to know exactly whether he has to pay any increased rental or not?—Not actually. He would be told what was the estimate for his *tahsil* and the increase or decrease that was likely to occur in rents or revenue generally in the *tahsil*, and he would also learn from the report which particular parts of the tahsil were likely to be above the average and which below the average.

26581. After the report has been submitted and sanctioned, if any particular cultivator has any objection to bring forward, what opportunity has he of doing so?—The Settlement Officer visits every village, and he has the opportunity of discussing with him the classification of the soil of his holding and the terms of his tenure and rights. He has that opportunity of seeing the Settlement Officer, and he also has the opportunity of criticising the assessment of his land at the time of the announcement of the rent.

26582. The announcement is made after it has been sanctioned by the Government?—Yes, by the provincial Government, I think.

26583. Then if he finds he is liable to some enhancement and he wishes to contest it, what does he do?—The Settlement Officer at the time of the enhancement is empowered of his own motion to make any small changes he wishes.

26584. After the sanction?—Yes, but that is a power seldom exercised. After the settlement has been announced, the tenant has a right of appeal to the Settlement Commissioner and a second right of appeal to the Chief Commissioner.

26585. Apart from Settlement Officers would you allow an appeal to the Deputy Commissioner?—I think two appeals are sufficient.

26586. As one set of authorities has made the assessment, would you approve of an appeal lying to another set of officers, not Settlement Officers, but the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner?—I do not think the Deputy Commissioner would always be a good appellate officer, but I think the Commissioner would be quite good.

26587. You do not object to an appeal lying to the Commissioner?—No.

26588. Are there irrigated lands in the Central Provinces?—Yes.

26589. Is the irrigation rate consolidated with the land revenue or it is separately assessed?—It has only been during the past few years that there have been any Government irrigation works, and at the present time the assessments are entirely separate from the land revenue.

26590. Is it fixed, or does it vary with the nature of the crops grown?—At the present time it is purely tentative, and it has only been going on for the last few years, so that they have been groping round for the best system of levying the rate, and no fixed system has been introduced.

26591. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) With reference to your proposal as to the residence of Sub-Divisional Officers, would it not be better still in isolated

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headquarters if a small house were provided for an officer with simple furniture, and if he were expected to go out and pay visits there even during the five months of the monsoon?—I think so. I think with regard to these extremely isolated subdivisions, it is very detrimental to the work and the health of the officer to keep him out there isolated for the whole of the twelve months. Occasional visits during the rains and permanent residence during the open season are necessary.

26592. (*Chairman.*) You say that you think the control of the Revenue and Agriculture Department is too detailed—or what particularly are you thinking?—I was inclined to think that during the past few years they had issued more instructions in regard to revenue matters than had been the practice perhaps in the past, and that there undoubtedly was a general impression throughout the provinces that were visited by me that the Revenue and Agriculture Department had done more in the shape of trying to insist on proposals to Local Governments than had been done in other departments.

26593. Can you give any particular instances of that?—It is a question of men more than principle, and the idea generally was that the Revenue and Agriculture Department had for some few years past been manned largely from the Punjab, and that Punjab proposals had been sent round by the Government of India for adoption in other provinces to which they did not particularly apply.

26594. Did the Government of India insist that their suggestions should be acted upon?—I think not.

26595. It was merely a suggestion that it might be a good method to adopt?—Yes, not generally further than that.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. K. S. JATAR was called and examined.

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26596. (*Chairman.*) You are Deputy Commissioner at Akola?—Yes.

Deputy Commissioners may be given the following powers:—

(*a*) To acquire lands for public purposes under the Land Acquisition Act I think without reference to higher officers, and (*b*) to reduce rents for lands acquired for public purposes and to pay compensation in cases where the amount of compensation to be awarded exceeds even ten times the rental. The powers of Collectors or Deputy Commissioners under the Land Acquisition Act appear to have been unnecessarily limited. Except in cases where the land can be acquired by private negotiation, and the amount of compensation awarded is less than ten times the assessment, a reference has always to be made to the Local Government. The land under cultivation, at least in Berar, is getting dearer and dearer. The assessment is not high and in a large majority of cases private negotiation is not found practicable, and the amount of compensation to be paid is ordinarily very high. The villages are growing in size, and population is increasing, and with it the general needs of villages, and it is found that while assigning lands for public purposes at the time of revenue survey and while granting waste lands for cultivation afterwards, due consideration has not been paid to the future increasing wants of land for public purposes. The result is that cases of acquisition have frequently to be opened. These cases are very often delayed owing to the references which have to be made to the Local Government. Sections 4 and 6 of the Land Acquisition Act require that notifications should be published in the Gazette before proceedings are taken up to acquire land. The other day land was urgently wanted at Akola by the Great Indian Peninsula Railway for a siding required for a mill which is being constructed and also for opening new crossing stations. Nothing could be done for nearly two months in spite of repeated reminders from the Railway Engineer. The Deputy Commissioner has power to acquire land, and he may be trusted to determine in what cases recourse should be had to the provisions of the Act for compulsory acquisition. One of the objects why the notification in the Local Gazette is necessary is probably to give publicity, but the Deputy Commissioner has several means at his disposal to make his proposals widely known. Rule 21 framed by the Local Government requires that the sanction of the Commissioner should be obtained for reducing the rent of the land acquired. This appears to be quite unnecessary. The work would be much simplified if the Deputy Commissioner is authorised (1) to determine what the proper public purposes are for acquiring land, (2) to pay compensation at the rate prevailing in the market, and (3) to reduce the rental.

Section 39 of the Land Revenue Code requires that the Commissioner's sanction should be obtained to appropriate land set aside for one special purpose to another. The general experience is that the proposals of the Deputy Commissioner are accepted, and hence the reference to the Commissioner appears to be unnecessary.

The Deputy Commissioner should be able to advance loans under the Agriculturalist Loans and Land Improvement Acts to the extent of Rs. 5,000 at least in each case, and to extend the period of recovery to 30 years without reference. At present a Deputy Commissioner can give loan to the extent of Rs. 500 only, and he must recover the amount within 20 years. This comes in the way of granting loans to big cultivators and the matter is delayed. Applications for loans for large amounts are few, but that does not show that the necessity does not exist. The restrictions give rise to a belief that large loans are not encouraged by Government.

Under the Berar Patels and Patwaris Law also the powers of Deputy Commissioners have been unnecessarily curtailed. The Deputy Commissioner is the officer on the spot who could easily determine whether the rights of different *watan*-holders or their families are so evenly balanced as to justify the introduction of rotation among the office-holders, and the references to Commissioner under the section quoted in the heading are quite unnecessary particularly because appeals are often preferred in important cases. Some of the villages in Berar are very small, and the small emoluments of the village officials are not sufficient to attract qualified candidates. In such cases the Deputy Commissioner should be given the discretion to exempt *patels* and patwaris from the prescribed educational qualifications.

The Deputy Commissioner has to obtain sanction in cases where he has to appoint clerks getting Rs. 25 and above and has no power to transfer higher officers like tahsildars and naib-tahsildars even within the district. Selection for promotion among clerks should be carefully done, and the Deputy Commissioner has the opportunity of knowing the qualifications of every one of his subordinates. The necessity of entering into a long explanation for supersession of incompetent subordinates naturally prevents some District Officers from making suitable selection. So long as there is a right to appeal no restrictions are wanted. At present if a naib-tahsildar has to be transferred, because he does not agree with his tahsildar or for similar reasons, the Deputy Commissioner has to make out a case and send it up to higher officers. The appointments of tahsildars and naib-tahsildars should rest entirely in the hands of the Commissioner. The Commissioner knows the right sort of people in the province and can very well make his selections. A Deputy Commissioner should also have greater powers about appointments and transfers of subordinates in the Police, Forest, Medical and Educational Departments.

The Deputy Commissioner is not authorised to appropriate savings from the provincial district budget under one major head to meet the excess expenditure under another major head, *i.e.*, transfer of grants from land revenue to law and justice. He cannot also transfer allotments under contract

contingencies from one class to another, *i.e.*, land revenue to excise or excise to stamps, &c. The power to transfer such allotments may be delegated to the Deputy Commissioner.

Any change, temporary or permanent, proposed in an office requires the sanction of the Local Government. The power of sanctioning permanent appointments, the pay of which does not exceed Rs. 50 per mensem, may be vested in the Commissioner, and the Deputy Commissioner may be empowered to sanction temporary appointments which do not involve additional expenditure of Rs. 500 per annum for a period of two years, a special fund being placed at his disposal for this purpose if necessary.

I am not in favour of curtailing the right of appeal in any cases.

It is not the tendency of the Central Provinces Government to regard matters too much from a purely departmental standpoint, nor is it too impersonal and too much dominated by considerations of revenue. But the old Berar Government was too much influenced by considerations of revenue, and the defects in the administration caused by the policy of the old Government have not yet been removed. For instance, in the matter of settling the emoluments of village officials too much consideration was given to the revenue coming from the particular villages for which the *patels* and patwaris were appointed. The same scale was made applicable to rich and poor villages without regard either to the dignity or the responsibility of the officer. In villages yielding small revenue the *patel* often gets a trifle though he has to look after a large population. His emoluments are in some cases less than the remuneration of his subordinates, the *jaglias* and *mahars*. So also in the case of giving out plots for habitation from building reserves in municipalities and particularly in the matter of giving permission to build houses in land outside large towns too much attention is paid to revenue. The question of sanitation does not receive the consideration it deserves. The result is that large towns are over-crowded and get very insanitary. The third instance is about forest revenue. The principle that lands yielding sufficient amount of grass for the plough-cattle should be assigned for free grazing is admitted, but it will be found that only such rocky lands where cultivation is impossible have been generally left for these purposes.

The Commissioner has hardly sufficient opportunities to express his views in important matters with the Departments other than Land Revenue, and his views do not receive sufficient consideration. The Heads of Departments correspond direct with the Secretariat and the District Officers correspond direct with the Heads of Departments, and the Commissioner is often in the dark as regards important pending questions and it is left to the pleasure of the Heads of Departments whether to consult the Commissioner or otherwise. No important case should be submitted for orders without consulting the wishes of the Commissioner.

Executive Officers have not sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people. The principal obstacles are under (1) excessive writing work and (2) want of social intercourse. If private gentlemen come to call, officers have no time to enter into free conversation, and at the time interviews are granted officers are often thinking of their files and cases and time. People begin to think that their calls are a burden on officers and the result is not satisfactory. The idea of many officers is that granting interviews to the people is a piece of strict official business. Executive Officers as a rule possess sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars.

I do not think any general increase in the administrative staff is required, though a few officers are overburdened with work. A general reduction in the areas of the Berar districts is urgently called for. The districts have become unwieldy and a District Officer is not able to have that local knowledge of the conditions and people of all parts of the district which is essential for efficient administration.

The frequent transfers of officers are a great obstacle to any improvement in the administration. Within the last 20 years there were no less than 30 transfers of Deputy Commissioners at Akola. The transfers of Assistants are even more frequent. Since July, 1904, I held charge of two of the three sub-divisions in Berar twice and of the third once, and of two districts. The number of transfers could be minimised by fixing the pay of each post. Owing to the salary of officers being personal they can be sent to any station at any time. If the pay of a certain post is fixed, only officers of one grade will be sent to the station. There should be a rule that an officer who has not served at a station for at least three years should not be transferred.

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Generally municipalities have sufficient powers of control though occasionally it is found that there is too much interference from District Officers. In the present condition of the Committees the powers of supervision granted to District Officers cannot be curtailed, and it must be left to the District Officer to use discretion in interfering. The present complaint in Berar is that members of local bodies do not take sufficient interest, and the reason usually assigned is that the members have no powers. I should recommend the granting of the following powers and functions by way of experiment to selected municipalities:—

(1) To recover municipal dues by distress and sale of moveable property of the persons instead of sending requisitions to Magistrates;
(2) To grant sites in municipal area and to recover all income of these sites;
(3) To impose fines in municipal cases;
(4) To sanction and execute works up to Rs. 5,000 without obtaining sanction from local officers; and
(5) To appropriate funds from one major head to another so long as the budget grant is not exceeded.

District and Local Boards have got ample powers, but except the office-bearers, *i.e.*, Secretary and Vice-Chairman and Chairman, the members take very little interest. If the duties are properly divided and responsibility fixed on each member more interest will perhaps be taken. These bodies also may be permitted to sanction and execute works to the extent of Rs. 5,000 without sanction. At present the surplus cattle-pound receipts and the bazar revenues are credited to the District Board, but the District Board have no control over the management of bazars and pounds. The powers of appointment and dismissal of pound-keepers may be transferred to the Board and the management of bazars may also be entrusted to that body.

I think the time when Advisory or Administrative Councils would be formed has not yet arrived. It is at present impossible to secure the services of gentlemen who will have both the ability and the will to give the necessary assistance. Our District Boards as at present constituted are, in fact, Administrative Councils, and if their powers are slightly extended and if by the growth of education they come to understand their own responsibilities, they will be able to assist the District Officer in much of the local work, and no further steps need be taken at present in the direction of creating Administrative Councils. District Officers do, as a matter of fact, try and seek advice from *influential native gentlemen* of the district in important matters, but the kind of advice which is wanted is very difficult to secure, because most of the respectable people possessing stable interests are either not well informed or do not possess the necessary public spirit. If it is made compulsory for a District Officer to consult a certain body of people formally there is a chance of increasing the delay in business. I would not therefore suggest the formation of a formal body of advisers. The Deputy Commissioner knows the good men of his district who are capable of giving him advice. At present a record is not always carefully maintained of the names of men capable of giving assistance and advice, and though in the handing over memoranda some officers keep some notes, it is often difficult for District Officers to get such help when they are new in a district. All that is at present necessary is to keep carefully prepared lists of influential men able to give help in the shape of

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sound advice in important matters, which may be revised every three months by personal inquiries. If these lists are carefully prepared and revised from time to time, and if District Officers keep free relations with the gentlemen whose names have been included in them and of others of their position and standing, no further action would be necessary.

To place District Boards under Municipal Committees or *vice versa* would give rise to considerable difficulties. To place the powers of control of establishments in the hands of Deputy Commissioners as hitherto is not desirable, because the local bodies are apt to forget their own responsibilities. I would therefore propose a small body being formed in a district for which influential and experienced members may be nominated by all District and Local Boards and Municipal Committees, and the control of all establishments of local bodies may be placed in the hands of this body.

In every village a panchayat (committee) should be formed experimentally, consisting of 5 to 10 members, according to the size of the village. The committee should be fairly representative, care being taken to include members of different castes and religions. These committees may be given control over schools and entrusted with powers to settle civil disputes up to the value of Rs. 25, and petty cases of assault, and cases of nuisance and theft of crops to the value of Rs. 10 from fields. They may further be entrusted with the work of village sanitation and empowered to raise funds sufficient to defray the expenses of sanitation. These panchayats should be placed directly under the control of the District Boards. At present panchayats are held among members of some castes and they are sometimes found to promptly dispose of intricate questions which, if referred to the Courts, would generally remain long pending.

26597. You say that power might be given to Deputy Commissioners to acquire land for public purposes, without reference to higher officers; have you any powers at all in that respect at the present moment?—Yes. If it can be acquired by private negotiation, and if the amount to be paid is less than ten times the land revenue, I can acquire without reference to any higher authority.

26598. No matter how much the tract of land is, can you spend the necessary sum, if it is to be acquired privately?—Of course the budget will have to be sanctioned and the amount obtained.

26599. Had you ever had occasion to desire more power?—No, I personally have had no occasion, but Deputy Commissioners have, for railway purposes.

26600. Are you President of a Local Board?—I am President of the District Board at Akola.

26601. Do you carry out, as President of the Board, any works on behalf of the District Council, or is that the duty of the tahsildar?—It is done by the District Board agency. We have a local fund supervisor, and overseers under him, and the work is executed by the local body.

26602. Supposing the District Board wants to carry out a work costing over Rs. 500, who does it?—The Executive Engineer. We send it to the Executive Engineer, and he gets it done by the District Engineer or the supervisor under him.

26603. Is it not done by the tahsildar?—No, unless it is a work costing less than Rs. 200. The tahsildar does the work up to Rs. 200 and between Rs. 200 and Rs. 500 the local supervisor does it under the direction of the District Board.

26604. Are you speaking only of Berar?—Yes.

26605. Does the practice in Berar differ from the practice in the Central Provinces?—Yes.

26606. Do you find the system which obtains in Berar works well?—Yes.

26607. You want some further power to grant loans under the Land Improvement Act, up to Rs. 5,000. What is the largest application for a loan which has ever been made to you as a Deputy Commissioner?—A thousand rupees.

26608. And you sent that to the Commissioner? Yes.

26609. How long did it take to get the Commissioner's sanction?—About two months. The loan was for an embankment.

26610. Did it make much difference whether the money was paid down at once or whether there was delay in getting it?—No; but it might on some occasions postpone the work.

26611. What is about the general size of loan which is applied for under these Acts?—The average is about Rs. 300 for land improvement loans, and about Rs. 150 for agricultural relief loans.

26612. Generally speaking your powers are sufficient, but every now and then you get demands which are beyond your powers?—Yes.

26613. With regard to the appointments and transfers of subordinate officers, what are your present powers?—I have power to appoint subordinates up to Rs. 25, and above that I have to obtain the sanction of the Commissioner.

26614. With regard to transferring or posting naib-tahsildars, what powers have you?—None; I have to refer to the Commissioner always.

26615. Would it be convenient for you to have power?—I think so, within my own district.

26616. Does the Commissioner generally accept your recommendations?—Ordinarily he does; he sometimes objects. Generally in 75 per cent. of the cases he accepts the recommendation.

26617. Are you Chairman of the District Board at Akola by virtue of your office or are you elected?—I am Chairman by virtue of my office.

26618. How do your work your District Board—by committees?—No, we have no committees except what is called a School Board.

26619. Do you prepare the budget?—The Vice-Chairman prepares it and brings it to me for approval. It is then formally passed at a meeting.

26620. When do you show it to them first?—On the same day that they come in to discuss it. In fact the whole thing is formally done before it is placed before them.

26621. Do you practically do the whole work of the District Board?—No, the Vice-Chairman does it. I do only the Public Works portion of it.

26622. Is the Vice-Chairman an official or a non-official?—He is a non-official.

26623. How long does the work take him?—From one to two hours each day.

26624. Do you travel about much over your district?—Yes; for three or four months in the year.

26625. Does that enable you to see the district fairly well?—My district is very large, and I cannot go to as many parts of it as I would wish. It consists of six *taluks*, about 4,000 square miles, and a population of 754,000.

26626. Supposing there was a non-official Chairman in your place, would it be possible for him to get over the district in the same way as you do?—I do not think so; and a non-official would ordinarily have no occasion to go out, while I have to go out to do my work.

26627. What language is spoken in Berar?—Mahrathi.

26628. Are you a Berar man yourself?—Yes.

26629. When a District Board employee has to be dismissed, can you dismiss him, or do you refer the matter to the Board?—I refer it to the Board.

26630. Has he any right of appeal?—He can appeal to the Commissioner.

26631. Is there any appeal afterwards from the Commissioner?—I do not know.

26632. Supposing there was a further right of appeal beyond the Commissioner, would you curtail that right and give the Commissioner full power to confirm or reverse the dismissal, or is it necessary to go beyond the Commissioner?—I do not think it is necessary in the case of District Board officials.

26633. Do you look after the schools in your district?—Yes, I do. For the primary schools the District Board pays two-thirds, and the provincial revenues contribute one-third. In municipalities the municipalities pay two-thirds.

26634. Have you anything to do with the municipality?—Yes; I am the Chairman of the headquarter municipality at Akola.

26635. Have you any secondary schools?—Yes, they are Government schools.

26636. Could you hand the primary schools over to something like a panchayat?—We have School Committees, which look after things, but the Board has to pay.

26637. If you started panchayats would you confine them to a single village or a group of villages?—In the big villages I would confine them to the village, but with regard to smaller villages I would have a group of from three to five.

26638. What would each village contain in population?—An average of 500.

26639. Then would you have a School Committee and give to the panchayat of such a group of villages supervision over the school?—Yes.

26640. Would you give them the management of the roads within the group of villages?—That would have to be settled by the District Board, but supervision might be given.

26641. Would you hand over sanitation matters to them?—Yes.

26642. And small petty civil and criminal cases?—Yes.

26643. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Are the Local Boards in Berar partly elected and partly nominated?—Yes. About one-sixth of the members are nominated. The rest are elected.

26644. Are there any District Boards in Berar of which the Chairmen are non-official?—No.

26645. Have you ever had experience of any Board where the Chairman has been a non-official?—No.

26646. How would it work in Berar if the Chairman were a non-official?—I do not think we should be able to get the men, and there would be other difficulties. The official has generally greater control over the executive staff.

26647. How much money in round figures in the year do you spend on roads?—Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 17,000.

26648. That is for a district of 4,000 square miles?—Yes.

26649. Is that not very inadequate?—Yes.

26650. What proportion of the roads do the Public Works Department undertake?—All the important roads are dealt with by the Public Works Department. We look after the smaller village roads, and construct a few roads between important villages.

26651. Is the number of smaller roads pretty substantial?—Yes.

26652. You are aware that in this division there has been appointed a Divisional Engineer, whose business it is to look after the District Board work. Do you think that will work well?—Yes.

26653. In that case might all the roads be put under the District Board, Government roads as well as District Board roads?—I would not give them charge of all the roads because it would be too much for one official; he would not be able to attend to it efficiently.

26654. Even assuming that he wanted an assistant, would it not possibly be more economical to have one staff to look after all the roads than two?—If he is provided with a sufficient number of assistants, that might be possible.

26655. The assumption would be that the same total staff would be provided as is provided to-day, and if that were done, might not the roads be taken over by the District Board?—Yes, I think so. Government would have to provide a substantial contribution.

26656. Ought Government to provide additional funds not merely for roads which it would hand over, but extra funds for the general work of the District Board?—Yes.

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26657. Is veterinary work under your District Board?—Yes. Our dispensaries are very new and the work has not been fairly started.

26658. Do the members of the Board exercise any supervision or control over it?—No, they do not understand it much.

26659. Would you favour that work being taken away from the District Boards and given back to the Government?—No, I would not. In the course of time they will be able to do it.

26660. Have the Board any inspectors of their own for dealing with veterinary work?—They are under Government.

26661. If the inspectors were placed under the Board and reported to them and they were able to send inspectors where they wanted to, would they take more interest?—Eventually they may take interest.

26662. Is it worth while keeping the work under the District Board on the chance of encouraging them later on to take more interest in it?—Yes.

26663. Would you say the same thing with regard to vaccination work?—Yes.

26664. You are not in favour of Advisory Councils?—For District Councils I am not.

26665. What is your reason for objecting to them?—Because there would sometimes be delay.

26666. In your district, are there a large number of questions of general policy which you could submit to them?—Not a very large number. I can now consult any one informally, and I do consult people at present, whereas if I had a Council I should be bound down to consult a particular set of people who might not be able to attend meetings when required.

26667. And possibly with some officers it might have the effect of confining their consultations instead of widening them?—Yes.

26668. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Are the tahsildars of Berar generally men of high character and satisfactory on the whole?—Yes, latterly; especially those who have been appointed during the last three or four years.

26669. Tahsildars are now appointed by the Government?—They are appointed by the Chief Commissioner. I suggest that tahsildars and naib-tahsildars should be appointed by the Commissioner instead of the Chief Commissioner. As a matter of fact the Chief Commissioner now only appoints on the nomination of the Commissioner, so that the work would be simplified.

26670. Is it on the whole better for the Service that the men should be appointed by the Chief Commissioner on the nomination of the Commissioner, or that they should be appointed directly by the Commissioner?—I do not think there would be any difference.

26671. Would not the people themselves prefer them to be appointed by Government than by the Commissioner of a division?—I do not think the tahsildars would mind at all.

26672. You say that at present the power of transferring these officers rests with the Commissioner, and you want to give the power to the Deputy Commissioner?—Within his own district.

26673. Keeping at the same time the power of transferring them from one district to another in the hands of the Commissioner. So there would be two officers empowered to transfer them, the Commissioner in his own division and the Deputy Commissioner within his own district?—The Commissioner of course would have to consult the Deputy Commissioner as to transferring a man from one district to another; in one case he would do it himself, and in the other case the Deputy Commissioner would do it with the sanction of the Commissioner. If a Deputy Commissioner did not want a tahsildar to remain in his district, he would write to the Commissioner and ask for his removal.

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26674. If power was given to the Deputy Commissioner, transfers of tahsildars might be a little too frequent?—No, I do not think so.

26675. You say when you recently wanted to transfer a naib-tahsildar you had to write an "unnecessary" report to convince the Commissioner of the necessity of a transfer, but might there not have been some necessity for writing that report in the interests of the Public Service?—I simply wanted to change him to another station, and there was no necessity for troubling the Commissioner about the matter; I could easily have sent him from one place to another in my own district without any correspondence.

26676. You speak of subordinates in the Police, Forest, Educational and Medical Departments; those officers are not directly subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner?—No; they belong to the several departments.

26677. Do you suggest that the power of transferring them should also be vested in the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

26678. Would there not be some incongruity in your transferring men of other departments?—Within my own district, no; they are under me; police inspectors and masters of schools are under me, so that I do not see that there could be any objection.

26679. Would not the heads of those departments object to your transferring officers, belonging to those departments, without consulting them?—They need not object.

26680. Has your District Board power to open schools without obtaining your sanction?—No, I do not think so.

26681. As Chairman would you be present at a meeting where a proposal for opening a new school was sanctioned?—Yes.

26682. Does that again have to come to you as Deputy Commissioner for your sanction?—Yes.

26683. Although you are Chairman of the District Board at which the resolution was passed, it has to come to you again for your sanction; is that necessary?—But I might not be present at some meetings.

26684. Might the District Board be empowered to pass final orders with regard to the opening or closing of a school?—I see no objection to that.

26685. Supposing primary schools were made over to villages, or village panchayats, or some village bodies, would it be possible for a District Board to make a grant-in-aid, and ask the villagers to support the institutions; would the villagers agree to that?—No, they would not.

26686. Are there any villages in which that system might be tried?—There are a few where I would like to try the experiment.

26687. If that system was generally followed might the number of schools be largely increased?—I do not think it would largely increase the number of schools.

26688. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You know what is meant by the sub-divisional system?—Is that now established in Berar?—Yes.

26689. What are your rules for touring?—I have to be out for four months, as Deputy Commissioner.

26690. What time has the Assistant Commissioner to be out?—Not less than two months; but an Assistant Commissioner who is in charge of a sub-division is expected to be out throughout the camping season, that is, from the 1st November to the 31st May.

26691. Then you are expected to tour more than an Assistant Commissioner?—Yes, because my Assistant Commissioner will tour only through two *taluks*; I have to tour through six *taluks*.

26692. How do you travel?—On horseback; the kit is carried by camels.

26693. If all the roads were taken over by the District Board, would the Government Executive Engineer have enough to do?—No, he would not. He would only have buildings to attend to.

26694. Would you approve of an arrangement by which the small amount of Government work remaining might be done by a Divisional Board Engineer on receipt of a commission?—No, I would not hand over any Government buildings to the Board.

26695. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) Does the District Board make a contribution towards the upkeep of the roads which the provincial Engineers look after?—No, not for Government roads.

26696. What is the size of your tahsils in Berar?—About 275 villages. That would be about 800 square miles.

26697. Is the charge too heavy?—Yes; in four of the *taluks* the charge is too heavy.

26698. How many tahsildars do you think you ought to have in your district?—I think six are sufficient, but they might be relieved by the naib-tahsildars having more powers.

26699. Would you prefer that to breaking up the *taluks*?—Yes, I should not break up the *taluks*.

26700. You say that certain administrative reforms have been introduced into the Police Department which may tend to uniformity, but you doubt whether they will suit local conditions; to what do you refer?—They have stopped the forwarding of copies of police diaries. Police sub-inspectors used to submit copies of diaries in every case; now the idea is that they need not render copies of these diaries to the District Superintendent of Police. It is changing the way in which the official work is done, and they are changing the *Modi* character in which the correspondence is at present conducted in favour of the *Balbodh* character.

26701. You have so far done it in the *Modi* character and they are introducing Hindi?—Yes. The reason is that they say it can be more easily written and more easily read.

26702. Is that being done by the Inspector-General of Police?—Yes.

26703. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Is the Deputy Commissioner always Chairman of the District Board in Berar, and is that under the provisions of the law?—The law permits a non-official Chairman, but we cannot get anyone who will do it.

26704. As a matter of fact, the Deputy Commissioner is always Chairman?—Yes.

26705. You say the members are elected; how are they elected?—We have a list of electors comprising the people who pay so much in taxes who are eligible to vote.

26706. You have not the system they have in the Central Provinces proper of the village headman electing one portion and the commercial classes another and so on?—No.

26707. Have you Local Boards?—Yes, we have *taluk* Boards.

26708. Are they elected too?—Yes.

26709. In the same way as the District Boards?—The *taluk* Boards elect members of the District Board.

26710. Then the direct election is to the *taluk* Board and the *taluk* Board elects the non-official members of the District Board?—Yes.

26711. Is there a Chairman for each *taluk* Board?—Yes.

26712. Is there a Vice-Chairman?—Yes, generally a non-official.

26713. What sort of work do the *taluk* Boards do?—They look after the schools and bazars and buildings.

26714. It is the same sort of work as that of the District Board?—Yes.

26715. Have they special funds of their own or do they get simply what the District Board chooses to allot them?—They only get what the District Board allots them.

26716. Have they any discretion in applying the funds, or does the District Board say, "We want such and such schools kept up" and so on?—They have their discretion. In fact allotments are made in proportion to their requirements.

26717. Have you in Berar a regular cess of one anna in the rupee which goes to the District Board?—Yes.

26718. Would you be in favour of giving the *taluk* Boards any share of that?—I should be in favour of paying the whole to the District Board and allotting to the *taluk* Board what is necessary.

26719. Who manages the dispensaries?—We have appointed Dispensary Committees which work under the guidance of the Civil Surgeon.

26720. The District Board merely contributes, and has nothing to say to the management?—Nothing.

26721. In regard to sanitation, what happens?—The *taluk* Board looks after sanitation.

26722. Have you special sanitary officers for the purpose?—No.

26723. In the Central Provinces proper there is a sort of sanitation fund in the larger villages, and they are allowed to levy a small tax for sanitary purposes; is there anything like that in Berar?—We have sanitary funds in a few villages in Berar, but they only raise sufficient money locally for the cleaning of latrines, nothing else.

26724. Does that system work well?—It depends on the tahsildar; if he is a good official he looks to it and gives the necessary supervision. It works well, but the people in the villages do not like raising money for these purposes.

26725. Who does the committee consist of?—Generally cultivators, and a few money-lenders; they elect themselves.

26726. Is the committee generally satisfactory?—In two or three instances they are very satisfactory.

26727. Is the headman the president?—Yes.

26728. Are there many of these villages?—Very few.

26729. Outside those villages does the District Board or the Local Board exercise any supervision over sanitary matters?—Practically they simply carry out the suggestions of the Deputy Commissioner, tahsildars, and Civil Surgeon.

26730. In the Central Provinces there is a system, when a village wants a tank for instance, that the Board finds half the money and the villages the other half?—That is so sometimes.

26731. Does that work satisfactorily?—Yes, it does.

26732. What is the present limit of the powers of District Boards and municipalities with regard to sanctioning works?—Rs. 500; anything above that goes to the Commissioner or Deputy Commissioner.

26733. The Commissioner passes the budget and deals with the administration report?—Yes.

26734. Does he appoint the nominated members?—Yes.

26735. Would you give the Commissioner the general power of outside control which it is necessary for the Government to keep?—Yes.

26736. Except the actual constitution or abolition of a local body?—Yes.

26737. Are all your districts in Berar divided into sub-divisions?—Yes, now; since the amalgamation.

26738. Where do your Sub-Divisional Officers live?—In three instances they live outside the headquarters; in all others they live at the headquarters.

26739. Do you think that is a good system?—I should like to have one or two more Sub-Divisional Officers living outside.

26740. How many Sub-Divisional Officers have you in the average district?—Three.

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26741. Would a Deputy Commissioner find it too much to control three Sub-Divisional Officers?—It is not only the controlling, but the general administration work is heavy.

26742. Do your Sub-Divisional Officers hear magisterial appeals?—Yes, the three officers who live outside; in other cases the appeals go to the District Magistrate.

26743. Cannot all Sub-Divisional Officers hear appeals?—They might.

26744. Do you see the calendar of cases dealt with by your subordinate Magistrates?—Yes.

26745. Does the Sub-Divisional Officer also?—The three officers outside do.

26746. What do you see in the shape of a calendar; do you see the judgments?—I see the sentence and the nature of the case, and if I find a case of sufficient importance I inquire further into it.

26747. Does the Sub-Divisional Magistrate send you a copy of his judgment?—Not unless I send for it.

26748. Do you think it might be advisable if you saw the judgments?—I can do that by looking at the calendar.

26749. But the calendar merely gives you the nature of the offence and the punishment?—It gives the nature of the offence and the facts in brief; that is sufficient.

26750. Would you be in favour of a Commissioner posting Assistant Commissioners and Extra-Assistant Commissioners within his division?—Yes.

26751. In regard to revenue matters, have your Sub-Divisional Officers generally the powers of a Collector under your local Act?—Yes.

26752. Where there is an appeal against their order, to whom does it go?—To me.

26753. Has the union of Berar with the Central Provinces in your opinion decreased the general powers of the Commissioner there?—I think so, materially.

26754. You mention that previously he controlled all the departments within Berar?—Yes; all the Heads of Departments used to write to him.

26755. As regards his powers of sanction and appeal and so forth, has any material alteration been made?—No.

26756. You speak of the District Officer consulting with persons whose opinions he may think it advisable to take in various matters; do you keep what is known in Bengal as a darbar list?—Yes.

26757. On those lists do you write your notes as to the character of a man, and his fitness for consultation on public matters?—No, those lists are made only with a view to men being presented to the Chief Commissioner when he comes.

26758. Have you no regular system of receiving from your predecessor a record of the principal non-officials of the district and of matters in which they might usefully advise?—There is no formal system, but we keep notes.

26759. You think that the Deputy Commissioner should be able to take up land without reference to Government? Does not the question of compulsory acquisition sometimes raise a good deal of protest?—Yes, it does.

26760. Is it not possible sometimes, for instance, that land is taken up in which religious communities are interested?—Yes, but they may appeal in that case.

26761. You say that the Commissioner's sanction has to be obtained with regard to the appropriation of land from one special purpose to another—what sort of special purpose do you mean?—If a certain field has been reserved for grazing and general purposes and I wanted a portion of it for a village site, I have to obtain the sanction of the Commissioner.

26762. You speak of the introduction of rotation between *patels* and others—are those hereditary officers?—Yes.

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26763. And they take turns in discharging the duties of a village headman or otherwise?—In a few cases.

26764. How long are their turns for?—Not less than ten years.

26765. That is to say if you have two or three rival families you compromise between them by saying that one family shall have the post for ten years and another family for the next ten years?—Yes.

26766. Who selects?—The Deputy Commissioner.

26767. Are you bound by strict primogeniture?—Yes.

26768. You are bound to select the eldest male, although he might have a younger brother more competent?—But there is an educational standard of fitness prescribed.

26769. But still two people may have passed the standard, and one may be better than the other?—We generally give it to the elder brother unless he is unfit.

26770. Does the law oblige you to do that?—Yes.

26771. Would it be desirable that you should have a freer hand to pick out the best qualified member of the family?—If a man has passed the required standard, the fourth standard, it is sufficient for our purpose.

26772. You are content with the present system, except in regard to the matters you have mentioned?—Yes.

26773. Do appeals as to hereditary right go up to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes.

26774. Is it necessary that the Chief Commissioner should have to decide those things?—I think there should be no change made.

26775. You say you can only appoint clerks up to Rs. 25?—Yes.

26776. What is the highest appointment in your office?—Rs. 200; the head clerk and the clerk of the court and others might be appointed by the Commissioner.

26777. How far would you wish your own power of appointment to go?—Up to Rs. 100.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

MR. A. B. NAPIER was called and examined.

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26778. (*Chairman.*) You are Deputy Commissioner of Nagpur?—Yes.

In matters of revenue I do not, as a Deputy Commissioner, desire any greater powers. The collection of land revenue is in normal times a mere matter of rule, and in abnormal times the Deputy Commissioner can always act on an emergency. As in the estimation of the degree of distress the personal element comes in very strongly, the second opinion of some co-ordinating authority to discount this personal element is most necessary.

In case of income-tax I should welcome centralization; the matter of assessment is now becoming too complex, and Deputy Commissioners and their Assistants have no time to assess business firms successfully. There should be trained inspectors to assess, but the appeals could go to the Deputy Commissioner as now.

The present chief defect is the way in which appeals from Assistants, with the revenue powers of a Deputy Commissioner, go outside the district. I have under the Land Revenue Act unlimited powers of revision over the work of my Assistants, but I do not hear the appeals. The defect is that I am not in touch with all their work, and often these revenue cases tell one a great deal about what is going on in the district.

Another matter has come much to the fore lately, viz., the grant of prospecting licenses for minerals. The Government of India is not averse to the delegation of powers in this matter, but hitherto powers have not been delegated in the Central Provinces and a great deal of delay has resulted.

I do not think that Sub-Divisional Officers are anxious for many more powers. A Deputy Commissioner in self-defence gives them all the power he can, and practical delegation is done in the way in which a Deputy Commissioner passes the work of a trusted officer. Actual power of delegation of any duties might be given to a Deputy Commissioner with reservation of the power of appeal.

The present rules for contingent expenditure are such that no business firm could tolerate for an instant. The only satisfactory solution of the question would be to make all contingencies contract contingencies. The Deputy Commissioner should get a lump sum down and spend it as required, but if he ran short before the end of the year he should be made personally responsible, unless he made out a good case for an increased grant. To avoid wasteful expenditure at the end of the year savings might be added to the next year's grant.

In most districts the powers of appeal in administrative matters are not abused. In fact appeals have been very few to my recollection and very unsuccessful. If officers only take the trouble to write an intelligible order it has not been my experience to find Commissioners desirous of rejecting the view of the man on the spot. If appeals were not allowed, the parties would proceed by miscellaneous petitions which give just as much trouble, or more, as they are usually couched in extravagant language in order to attract attention.

I think the Education Department is somewhat too uniformly managed to meet the varying requirements of different localities.

I have at times considered that the Secretariat has been run on somewhat academic lines, but not of late. Latterly it has been a custom to recruit the Secretaries from among District Officers, who actually know how things work out in practice. The real trouble is in the Secretariat with its crowd of well-paid clerks thinking that processes which seem simple there are equally simple to the less competent men we get in district and *tahsil* offices. I have never found the Central Provinces Secretariat too much dominated by questions of revenue; the idea seems always to have been to progress and to trust to progress to bring its increase in revenue.

On the whole, departmental officers have shown themselves most ready to consider representations from District Officers, and presumably even more weight is given to the views of Commissioners.

Until I reached Nagpur I always found plenty of opportunities for personal contact with the people, but since I have been here the routine duties have been so heavy that such opportunities have been largely diminished. The Deputy Commissioner, Nagpur, sees a great deal of a certain class—the residents of Nagpur of respectability. A day does not pass hardly without my seeing three or four of them, but the difficulties of getting out into camp are enormous. In Raipur, besides finding time for holding open cutcherry to all petitioners, small and great, after 4 or 4.30 about four days a week, I was out in camp for the greater part of the six months possible. In Nagpur about two months spent in actual camp seems the greatest amount possible. The Assistants here have not been in camp as much as I consider desirable. My time is largely taken up with duties which could as well be done by someone else. There are several branches of work of this kind—treasury, mining cases, inspection of Magistrate's daily calendars, stationery indents, inspection of headquarter factories, arms and explosives licenses, presence on certain committees, etc. It would be no good to give these to an Assistant, whose work has then to pass through my hands. What I want is a man who could sign for himself and be responsible for his own work. In Nagpur there should be a Joint-Magistrate to do such work; at the same time he could have Section 30 criminal powers and could hear appeals. He should be a European British subject, so as to be able to try such persons. He should have a special allowance if not graded as a Deputy Commissioner. In the case of Assistants the deficiency of touring is partly the result of system, but mainly owing to the extra complexity of case work owing to the increase in the number of pleaders.

On the whole Executive Officers have sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars. There is perhaps a tendency nowadays, when all the clerks know English, to less conversational power, but this can only be remedied by giving Assistants a full dose of camping. We probably are not as good as many of our predecessors.

The provision of Assistant and Sub-Divisional Officers is not sufficient. I strongly hold that the area here thought sufficient for a tahsildar is sufficient for a Sub-Divisional Officer, and I deprecate the system of giving two *tahsils* to an Assistant to look after.

The areas of the *tahsils* in Raipur are 1,000, 1,500, 1,900, 3,000 square miles approximately, or the last may be more. If there is to be progress there must be more officers constantly among the people pressing education, forcing on improvements. It is no good talking merely; an officer should have time to wait and see things carried through.

Transfers are not now on the whole too frequent. Nagpur has suffered somewhat in this respect of late, though the transfers could not well have been avoided.

The trouble in the Central Provinces is to get men who will realise that a seat on a Committee or Board means that he is to do work and not merely secure the honour of a chair when he visits an officer. The other day I asked a quite intelligent-looking Local Board member what he did as such. He replied, "Whatever the *hazur* tells me to do I will do." He could not tell me anything that he actually did except attend the meetings. Many do not even do that.

The Nagpur municipality is an honourable exceptiion, and Raipur is beginning to take an intelligent interest in local concerns. No doubt this is the case in many headquarters municipalities, but those in minor towns and the District Councils and Local Boards seem at present rather hopeless. The great trouble is to get them, even when they see the necessity, to pass any measure which may be unpopular, and most of all to levy any taxes. They are not strong enough to bear criticism in anything unpopular. Increase in powers may awaken greater interest and a greater sense of responsibility, but to begin with they must have larger resources. There is a tendency to get most of the money into the hands of the Government, and to grant doles to local bodies as grants-in-aid. There must be local rates; they will be extremely unpopular, but no country can get on without them. They exist at present, but to a very slight degree. In the larger towns they are supplanted by octroi; in the smaller towns we get the *haisiyat* tax, which is a rate proper, and for the District Council we have a nominal Road, Education and Post Cess. The difficulty of the rate is shown in the *haisiyat* tax, which no minor municipality will pitch at the proper figure. The fact that the people can pay rates was shown by the additional rates and Patwari Cess, which were paid without any difficulty. It would be easier to get District Councils to levy rates than municipalities, as their constituencies are wider and the opposition will not be so much concentrated when local bodies get more money; they can get a decent staff and they can do more work.

The submission to the Commissioner of a budget of monthly accounts and of a copy of their proceedings would be sufficient check. Re-appropriations from one budget head to another might be sanctioned by the Deputy Commissioner just to secure that the budget should be a real thing. Incidentally I would get rid of a peculiarly annoying duty of the Deputy Commissioner, viz., countersigning District Council bills for works.

District and Local Boards could have all roads except provincial communications put under them if they had a qualified Engineer with prospects of an increase in pay. They could also be allowed to build light railways.

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The time for Administrative Councils has clearly not come yet in this province. Even as regards advisory Councils, I cannot imagine what subjects could be referred to them which are not referred to the local bodies at present constituted or to special Committees called *ad hoc*. I had a native gentleman talking with me the other day on this subject. He seemed in favour of such a Council and would possibly be a member if one were created, and I asked him if he could name any subject which had come up recently which might have been so referred and which had not been discussed by some committee or other, and he could not do so. A District Officer's duties are mainly composed of details, and it would be hopeless to put them before a Council.

I do not think the supervision of the minor municipalities by the District Board would be useful, and it would cause a lot of friction.

I do not recommend the extension of powers to villages not sufficient in size to be even notified areas under the Municipal Act. For sanitation we have already powers under the Sanitation and Land Revenue Acts, and these are sufficient. The devolution of civil powers to village munsiffs in the north of India has clearly not proved a success. The increase of Honorary Magistrates is to be deplored where the actual work does not prove its necessity. Times and again I have seen petty quarrels magnified into bitter feuds because a Magistrate was too close. If he had not been there everything would have been settled amicably. Touring officers have a great opportunity, and the village panchayats, with sometimes a little assistance, manage these affairs in such a way as to leave no sting behind. Once give the panchayats legal powers and at once they will lose their character as peace-makers and become *hakims*.

26779. What is the size of the Nagpur district?—It is about 4,000 square miles.

26780. In that particular district you have a good deal to do with manganese?—Yes, and it is making a good deal of extra work.

26781. Have you under some new rules power to grant exploring and prospecting licenses?—The Deputy Commissioner may grant exploring licences, but the prospecting licences are not granted by him; power has just lately been delegated to Commissioners to grant them in uncontested cases; contested cases still go up to the Chief Commissioner.

26782. Has that been a considerable relief to you in your work?—It has been a considerable relief to the mining proprietors—I have been getting the sanctions back at once.

26783. And it has saved you to the extent that you have not had to deal with letters and make further appeals to the Commissioner?—I do not find very much relief; I have 500 pending cases at present.

26784. But will you be able to get through them quicker?—I do not know; I am trying my best to get a little system into it, but I have only just come to the district.

26785. With regard to income-tax, you say that the matter of assessment is becoming too complex and that you would like to see a trained inspector; does that only refer to a district where there is a large town?—I am referring more to outside mercantile concerns such as manganese or cotton ginning factories I experienced very considerable difficulty last year in trying to make head or tail of the accounts sent to me. For instance, one party wrote off his expenses the interest on the share capital, but there were other things, which were put in ambiguous terms, and I had not any books and no time to examine into all these cases—they might put down anything they liked.

26786. At all events you think there ought to be a transference of that work from you to a trained inspector?—The actual assessment of income-tax is done by my Sub-Divisional Officers, but for the main part those that come into the office straight are generally sent up to me; one of the Assistants looks at them and sometimes suggests "I cannot make head or tail of them, can you?"

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26787. A suggestion has been made to the effect that Sub-Divisional Officers, instead of residing at the headquarters of a district, should reside a greater part of the year at all events in their sub-divisions; have you anything to say with regard to that?—I am of opinion that the headquarters system is the best, because when a Sub-Divisional Officer gets away into a remote sub-division, he is very likely to get rusty because he has no educated society, and he cannot rub up against the other Sub-Divisional Officers. There were in the past in this province two sub-divisions where the Sub-Divisional Officers resided, and they were often the graves of their reputations.

26788. How many sub-divisions have you in the Nagpur district?—I have only three Sub-Divisional Officers for four *tahsils*, but I should like to have four.

26789. How far are the sub-divisions from Nagpur itself?—Between 20 and 30 miles.

26790. Can an officer who lives 30 miles from his territorial charge do his work well?—I think so, because in the camping season he ought to be in his charge.

26791. Can the people who live in that charge get at him?—Yes, when he is on tour there; they will run in even to Nagpur to see the Deputy Commissioner.

26792. Would they come in 30 miles?—They are always coming into headquarters and travel the distance with comfort. If they have any complaint they come in freely.

26793. Is that no hardship on them?—I do not think it is; that drawback is not nearly so great as many other drawbacks which would occur by a Sub-Divisional Officer living in his *tahsil*.

26794. What is your chain of subordinates in a district?—Practically the Deputy Commissioner, the Sub-Divisional Officer, the tahsildar, and the naib-tahsildar.

26795. Have you any power of posting or transferring any of these officers?—I can transfer Sub-Divisional Officers from one sub-division to another, but I cannot transfer tahsildars, because the Sub-Divisional Officer is really at headquarters, and I can give one man one sub-division and another another; I generally inform the Commissioner of what I do.

26796. In other words the transfer of Sub-Divisional Officers under the present system is a book transfer?—Yes.

26797. Is that a good system?—One tries to keep a man as long as possible, but necessities occur; for instance, I had one of my Assistants taken away and no one else sent in place of him, so that I had to put two *tahsils* under one Sub-Divisional Officer.

26798. Is it desirable that you should have power to transfer a tahsildar?—No. For the reason that if I wanted a tahsildar transferred, I am quite sure the Commissioner would consider it, and do what he could for me. I have never wanted to transfer a tahsildar up to date, except out of my district. Of course I have had some people who I thought ought to go, and then I would have them out of the district, but to transfer them from one *tahsil* to another—would be useless.

26799. Do you as a matter of fact transfer them from *tahsil* to *tahsil*?—Practically never. Sometimes in the course of making necessary changes it might be done, as, for instance, a tahsildar wanting to have his children better educated and wishing to come up to headquarters; it might be arranged in the course of transfers to get him there, but I have never transferred a man because I wanted him out of one *tahsil* into another.

26800. Would you look upon any delegation to yourself with regard to posting or transferring your subordinates as an unnecessary grant of power?—Yes, I do not think I should ever want to use it.

26801. Do you tour a good deal in your district? In my late district I toured a great deal; I used to get out early in November, and, coming back from time to time, I used to stay out till the beginning of May.

26802. Did you manage to see the people in the district?—A very considerable number of them; it was a very large district and it was impossible to see the whole of them in one year.

26803. Did you find any reluctance on the part of the people to come and see you?—No.

26804. It has been suggested that either the duties of the Deputy Commissioner, or his own desire to keep aloof, keep the people away from him?—I always have the same routine, and as I go into a village I sit down and get the villagers round me and talk over village affairs. I go on from village to village throughout my tour like that, and when I reach the camp the people are always informed that at 4 o'clock I want them there, and then I either go round the village with them or sit and listen to what they have to say. I have never see the smallest reluctance on the part of the people to come and see me.

26805. How many languages were spoken in your late district?—In Raipur it was practically all Hindi; in Nagpur it is mixed Hindi and Mahrathi.

26806. Have you in Raipur both wet and dry cultivation?—Yes.

26807. Had you power to make remissions on wet crops?—It is practically all *malguzari*, so that there is no distinction as regards remissions in wet or dry assessements.

26808. The last witness stated that he desired to have power to grant agricultural loans, as Deputy Commissioner, up to Rs. 5,000; do you think that is too large a sum to leave to the discretion of a Deputy Commissioner?—I do not think it matters very much, but it is very unusual to get large demands. At present I have one application for a loan of Rs. 7,000 for a tank, and if I can get the preliminaries satisfactorily settled the Commissioner will sanction it, and I do not think it will take two months to get through as was suggested.

26809. Then, practically, applications for loans over Rs. 500 are so few that it is hardly worth while bothering about?—I think so, and some new rules are coming up under which a Deputy Commissioner will be able to give sanction up to Rs. 1,000.

26810. Have you all the powers you desire with regard to the Court of Wards?—No, the financial control is extremely inconvenient. I had lately to get the Commissioner's sanction to an expenditure of one rupee per month to pay for the sweeping of a bazaar, and in another case lately I had to apply for sanction because I wanted an extra farm servant, because those are instances of recurring expenditure.

26811. Ought you to have greater power to sanction works in respect to Court of Wards estates?—There is not very much trouble from that point of view. If I want any big work done, I do not find the necessity of getting the Commissioner's sanction specially inconvenient.

26812. Is there any necessity why you should write to him, and he to you, with regard to an expenditure, say, of Rs. 100?—That does not occur; I can incur expenditure up to budget sanction.

26813. But I am speaking of outside the budget?—For unforeseen expenditure and other things I should like that.

26814. Why not for small works?—Because they are nearly always contained in the budget; a sum is put down of Rs. 500 or Rs. 1,000, and within that I can do any work I like.

26815. Have you any special grant put at your disposal for expenditure in villages?—No; I have had special grants in the time of Mr. Miller, who was Chief Commissioner. When he went to a district he generally used to give us a sum before he went away for some purpose or other. He gave grants in Raipur for the Museum and for the Victoria Park.

26816. Have the Commissioners now any sum allotted to them for those sort of purposes?—I do not think so. That was the only case of outside grants I have ever received.

26817. Are your relations with the forest officer all that you could wish?—I think so generally. I have been extremely fortunate, and have nearly always found the greatest assistance in every way, but I had in one case a little friction.

26818. Does the forest officer have to conduct all his correspondence through you?—The majority of it; technical subjects do not always go through me.

26819. We have been told by the Inspector-General of Forests that there is an A and B schedule of correspondence—the A being through the Deputy Commissioner and the B direct; do you know anything of such schedules?—I know that a large number of letters come through me and I believe that a number do not.

26820. As to those letters which do go through you, is it necessary that you should see them and conduct the correspondence?—It is very useful; very often I merely write "forwarded," but it keeps me informed.

26821. Is it necessary that you should be informed of the matters which come through you?—I believe in the Deputy Commissioner knowing what is being done, and I do not think there is delay, because it is not noted on in the office, and ordinarily it is marked "Forwarded."

26822. But it may take three or four days in getting to you?—Yes, it may mean a few days' delay, but that is not so important a drawback as that I should not know what is going on.

26823. There seems to have been a good deal of complaint as to the relative position of the Public Works Officer and the Deputy Commissioner; have you anything particular to say on that head?—I do not think the Public Works Department is quite so helpful as some other departments. If you say to the Public Works Department that you want a road, they will make you a very good road, but they will not care twopence whether by running a little bit out of the way they would touch a big village, and in some cases they will align their road in such a way as to break up tanks unnecessarily unless they are stopped.

26824. Have you power to stop them or divert a road in the cases you mention?—Sometimes one does not happen to know it, but I have given special orders that a Revenue Officer is to ride down the road in every case.

26825. Does neither the Commissioner nor the Deputy Commissioner see the scheme for a road before it is made?—We have copies of it. It could not show the alignment, so far as individual little difficulties of crossing through a tank, for instance, are concerned; the maps would have to be so very elaborate.

26826. Have you no survey which would show you?—No.

26827. What is your remedy for the difficulties you have mentioned?—To send a Revenue Officer to ride over the line and object.

26828. Or would you have previous consultation with the Public Works Department?—If I know that a road is going to be made in a district I know well, I should suggest to the Public Works Department that the alignment should be in such and such a way, but of this district I have not any very great local knowledge.

26829. Does the Executive Engineer or the Superintending Engineer not consult you?—Not about the alignment of a road. I have two objections at the present time here which I am trying to settle with regard to the alignments of roads.

26830. Supposing the Government wished to make a road, can they go through anybody's land?—It has to be acquired.

26831. When the land is being acquired, have you nothing to say?—Yes, then I come in, but I am told it is too late, or that it would be extremely inconvenient, or that the survey is over, and so on.

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26832. (*Mr. Meyer.*) As regards the road programme, we were told that the Commissioner sees it, but that the Public Works Department take road A or road B in any order they like; when once the thing has got into the road programme, is it absolutely left to their discretion to say when a road shall be undertaken?—I believe that is so. I have not had very much trouble about roads, because in my district in Raipur the only trouble was to get any roads, and I put in for all which were wanted.

26833. Then is all you want that the Public Works Department should take you into their confidence?—Yes.

26834. You do not desire, as some officers do, that the Public Works Officers should be your assistants with regard to the non-technical work in a district?—I do not quite know how it would work out and whether there would be more friction that way or less; I have no strong opinion about it.

26835. You have no powers as to remission of revenue at present?—No, none of remission; I have some emergency powers of suspension. I can suspend first and get sanction later.

26836. Do you think you should have powers of remission and suspension within certain limits?—I think it is unnecessary; the Commissioner is better capable of dealing with it, and the emergency orders I can pass are sufficient.

26837. You mention that the Commissioner's sanction is needed for the transfer of a patwari; is it also needed for such matters as the appointment or dismissal of a *mukaddam*?—No; the only point is that at one time Deputy Commissioners transferred their patwaris too much as punishments, thus losing their local knowledge, so that the power was put into the hands of the Commissioner, but it might be returned to us now.

26838. As regards the ordinary village officers, who appoints the *mukaddam*?—The tahsildar; the *lambardar malguzar* is *ex-officio mukaddam* unless disqualified.

26839. Has not the tahsildar to go to the Sub-Divisional Officer?—No, it is one of the powers which has been just delegated.

26840. Have Sub-Divisional Officers generally all the powers that they require?—Yes.

26841. Can they sell liquor shops, for instance?—No, liquor shops must all be sold together; they could not be sold piecemeal.

26842. But there are separate shops?—Yes, but they are all called up together.

26843. Is there any reason why particular shops in a *tahsil* should not be sold by the Sub-Divisional Officer?—The revenue would suffer. In some *tahsils* it is done in that way, and then generally the Extra-Assistant Commissioner—the Sub-Divisional Officer—does hold the sales for the Deputy Commissioner, but the Deputy Commissioner sanctions finally.

26844. The object of the present excise system is to get the shops into the hands of the local men; would you not be more likely to get local men to purchase if the sales are held locally than if they have to come to the headquarters of a district?—I did not see any reluctance on their part to come the other day when the opium sales were going on, when there were some 500 or 600 people clamouring round my tent.

26845. The Sub-Divisional Officer, as a Magistrate, does not take appeals from his subordinate Magistrates in sub-divisions?—He does in my district, and he did in Raipur. There are Sub-Divisional Magistrates as well as Sub-Divisional Officers, and any Sub-Divisional Magistrate may be empowered to hear appeals by the Local Government.

26846. As a rule, is a Sub-Divisional Officer empowered to hear appeals?—I cannot say. I was astonished when I came here to find that they were not, and one of the first things I did was to get the powers.

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26899. Some people think that they are the only way of getting a satisfactory electorate for the District Boards; how would you meet that suggestion?—Knowing how difficult it is to get anybody to take any interest in an election at all, I think that the *mukaddams* whom we have as the electorate at present would be just as good as the village panchayat.

26900. The village *mukaddam* is nominated by Government?—He is not nominated by the Government: the *malguzari* body has a *lambardar*, who is appointed by the tahsildar as far as possible in accordance with the wishes of the shareholders, and that man is *ex-officio mukaddam*; below him there is the *gomashta*, if he is not a resident, and in the choice of the *gomashta* there is a certain amount of control by the tahsildar to see that he is a proper person.

26901. Does the District Council work well under the non-official Chairman?—The main part of the work is done by the official Secretary.

26902. Who is the official Secretary?—Mr. Ramkrishna Rao, the father of Mr. Pandit, who is the Vice-Chairman; he and his son do most of the work.

26903. Do you think that the body works badly as it is constituted?—I have seen rather little of the work up to date of the Council here; it does its work in a way.

26904. Do you find that you yourself have not sufficient information about what is going on in the district, owing to your not being on the Council?—No; I do not think the District Council would add to my knowledge of the district; they seldom talk about anything except the agenda.

26905. Would it be a great advantage to you to be present at those discussions?—No. In certain cases when there is anything important a Deputy Commissioner very often signifies his intention of being present, and his presence is generally welcomed; perhaps it could not be otherwise.

26906. Are the *tahsils* too large?—In some places; in Raipur certainly.

26907. If you had a free hand, what would you consider was the proper size for a *tahsil*, on a rough average?—I think somewhere about 800 square miles; it depends of course on the amount of work in any particular place. In Raipur they might do a little more in some places; there is one there well over 2,000 square miles.

26908. We have been told that there is a good deal of interference with Local Boards from above, and we have been told further that that leads to want of interest in the work, and that that leads to resignation by members and inability to get the best men to come on to the Boards; do you agree with that?—I have never heard of a member of a District Council resigning, or of not being able to get the best men on. I think people value seats on the District Council from entirely other points of view, not in order to do work, but to gain in importance.

26909. You are ready to give the District Councils powers of taxation? As to that it has been suggested to us that, if they could tax the people, the people would take a much keener interest in their proceedings, and as to how they spent the money, and as to whom they elected on the Councils, and so forth; what do you think of that?—They would take a keener interest in the elections, certainly; but I doubt their taking much interest in what they did; because the ordinary village here looks on the Local Boards or the District Council merely as a modified form of the *Sirkar*, and I do not think they realise any difference between what the District Council is doing and what Government is doing.

26910. You have told us that you did not see much harm in powers remaining with higher authorities. We have been told elsewhere that the correct principle on which to base a distribution of powers is to put the power in the hands of the officer as low down in the scale as is safe. What do you think of that as a principle?—I agree with that, but there is the question of safety. The control of higher authority is very useful in many cases for some elimination of the personal element. Sometimes a Deputy Commissioner finds it very hard to appreciate the proper proportions of a case, whereas an outside man would be able to do so.

26911. As a general principle, is that a working principle?—As a general principle it is as far as it is safe; it is a question of safety.

26912. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You were rather an exceptionally long time at Raipur as Deputy Commissioner?—I was there from 1903 to the middle of 1907—four and a half years—of which I was away eight months on leave.

26913. Was there any special reason for your remaining there longer than usual?—On one occasion I was asked whether I wished for my name to be considered with reference to another and more favourite district, Jubbulpore, and I said I was quite happy in Raipur.

26914. Does every Sub-Divisional Officer exercise the same powers?—They are not given to him *quâ* Sub-Divisional Officer; they are given him according to his experience; but ordinarily they are given full powers by the Chief Commissioner as soon as possible.

26915. Would it be advisable to enable the Collector to delegate to his officers such of his own powers as he thought fit?—I cannot think of any power which one could delegate which is not practically delegated at present.

26916. Is it not rather cumbrous to have to go up to the Chief Commissioner for the delegation of powers?—The Sub-Divisional Officer is given certain powers under the Land Revenue Act; he becomes a Collector under one section, and a Deputy Commissioner under another section.

26917. Are those powers given as a matter of course to every Sub-Divisional Officer?—Yes; first of all he gets one set of powers usually, then shortly afterwards he gets the full powers of a Deputy Commissioner under the Act.

26918. Then there is a certain amount of differentiation between the various Sub-Divisional Officers?—Between the various Extra-Assistant Commissioners; sometimes one will have a rather junior man sent to one, who is put in charge of a sub-division; he would not have the full powers, but he would get them after a short time.

26919. After that, practically all Sub-Divisional Officers are on the same level?—Yes.

26920. Would it be advisable to give the Deputy Commissioner power to give powers to one man and more powers to another, according to their seniority and according to their general competence?—I do not see that they could get more powers than they get at present.

26921. It has been suggested that junior Civilians during their first year of training should be sent for a couple of months or so to a Settlement Officer to learn their work, instead of their training being deferred until afterwards; what do you say to that?—I think they ought to learn the language first.

26922. As a matter of fact it would save a certain amount of inconvenience?—A great deal, and it might teach them the language more quickly; but it would be very hard for them to follow the work until they had learned more of the language than they probably would have done in a year. My knowledge of the language after six months was not sufficient to enable me to take a very intelligent interest in a village inquiry.

26923. Then on the whole, notwithstanding the inconvenience it would save, you are not prepared to recommend it?—I think it would be better for him to go when he was better able to take advantage of the instruction.

26924. How long is a Deputy Commissioner expected to be on tour in the year?—I cannot tell you offhand.

26925. Nor as to Sub-Divisional Officers?—I have always made it the rule that everybody should be out on tour as long as I could keep him

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out. I am afraid I have not noticed very particularly the minimum which has been set, because I have always been working for a maximum.

26926. Is not the camping of an officer considered a burden on the village?—Yes.

26927. Notwithstanding that, you think it would be better for Sub-Divisional Officers to spend as much of their time as possible touring?—Yes One does one's best to make it as little burdensome as possible; the balance is for good.

26928. Do you advocate a man making rapid camps?—No, a Deputy Commissioner must travel fairly fast, but a Sub-Divisional Officer ought to travel as slowly as possible. A Deputy Commissioner has to get round a fairly large area, and it is very hard for him to stay very long.

26929. Speaking not so much of Raipur, but from your experience of Nagpur, would you say that the fault as regards the alleged inaccessibility of Europeans was all on one side, on the side of the Europeans, as so many witnesses have told us?—All I know is that at the present time every morning I have three or four gentlemen coming to see me. I am very pleased to see them; they occupy a very large portion of my time; I do not find that they seem to look upon me as inaccessible.

26930. Are you aware of any large section of the community who do not wish for intercourse?—I think the section of the community which has been described as extremist does not come to visit me very much; the other section of the community and the people who take no part in politics come daily to me.

26931. Could you give us an idea roughly what proportion of the Deputy Commissioner's office work consists of papers that merely have to be initialled or papers the signing of which is merely formal?—There is a large amount of that; it is rather hard to say how much, because it depends on how many of these formal papers one does read; sometimes I do read them, sometimes I do not; there is a good deal of it.

26932. As a District Officer do you consider that the tahsildars as a class are equal to their situation?—They are improving in some ways; I do not know whether they are quite as good as some of the old men; they are getting more legal, and they do not push through their work quite so fast.

26933. Is their intercourse with the people more or less reserved than it used to be?—I think it is about the same, but the tendency which I object to in them now is doing all their work sitting in their cutcherry; a tahsildar's court is his saddle.

26934. That means more intercourse with the people?—In the towns they mix with the people quite freely and talk to them.

26935. Do they know what is going on as well as they ever did?—Perhaps not in some places, from that fact of sitting in their cutcherry and doing their work there.

26936. Are the tahsildars as a rule men who deal with false rumours and help to disperse them?—I have had a great deal of that kind of thing just lately here, and one tahsildar was transferred to another district because he did not do anything; but other tahsildars have done their best.

26937. Then again, there is often much misunderstanding of the orders and opinions of Government; do the tahsildars as a rule take much trouble to diffuse proper views on matters of that kind?—At present the tahsildars are a little bit afraid of arguing and talking about these subjects, in case it might be said that they were taking part in political discussions. They may do it in private conversations, but they do not like to address a number of people for fear it might be said that they took part in political discussions.

26938. Are the doctors in charge of rural dispensaries all that are required?—A great many of them are fairly good, and a few of them are quite bad.

26939. Is the supervision over them sufficient?—The Civil Surgeon has very little time to supervise them. The Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Divisional Officers inspect dispensaries and write remarks in their books and so on. We have no control over their professional side. I have often thought that when the number of dispensaries is large it would be a very good thing to have two Civil Surgeons to the district, one a peripatetic Surgeon and one for headquarters.

26940. You think that the supervision is insufficient at present?—It could be improved, but otherwise with regard to sanitation and vaccination and other things they are nominally under the Civil Surgeon, but the Civil Surgeons have very little time to exercise control.

26941. Would it be good to give the District Board more immediate control of the subordinate medical men?—I do not think that would help at all

26942. In the Raipur district there are some forests managed by the villagers?—I think you refer to the fuel and fodder reserves which were bought from *malguzars*, various waste pieces of land, to be re-afforested; they were handed over to the District Council for management.

26943. Have they been a success?—They have been fairly useful as regards fodder, but no very strong attempts have been made until rather lately to improve them as fuel reserves, that is to re-afforest them, and many of them are almost impossible for re-afforestation, because they are such very poor soil.

26944. Has the management been in the hands of the District Board or of the neighbouring villages?—The District Board, under the Deputy Commissioner; it was a special department like the Public Works of the District Council, and the Deputy Commissioner had orders to look after it. The village, as such, had nothing to do with it.

26945. (*Mr. Dutt.*) What do you think of the idea of the Sub-Divisional Officer pitching his tent in large central villages and visiting the villages all round, instead of going with his tent to small villages?—He practically does not go to every village except in the case of absolute necessity; sometimes in order to get from one place to another you have to camp at quite a small village, but ordinarily you go to the biggest village in your line.

26946. And from that as a centre you visit the villages all round?—An Officer generally moves on; he will stay for a day or two and very likely go out to see one or two villages, but he is generally on the move, because he has a thousand miles or so that he has to go over and he wants to see it all fairly constantly, so he zig-zags about rather than stays at one place for a certain number of days.

26947. If he encamped in large villages where there are bazaars, his tour would be less trouble to the people than it otherwise would be?—I do not think it is actually the things that can be got from a bazaar which are troublesome—certainly not in this district. Nearly always a *baniya* can be got to supply it; it is the other matters—the difficulty of getting tents there; the tents come in at an inconvenient time; they have to be put up and things have to be collected and so forth; the chaprassis and private servants order about here and there, "Bring this wood here; get some water here"—all that kind of thing is trouble.

26948. Can that be avoided or minimised in any way?—It can be minimised by the care of the officer, but it cannot be entirely avoided.

26949. Tahsildars are now appointed by the Chief Commissioner. A suggestion has been made to us that they might be appointed by the Commissioner; would you approve of that?—I certainly think it is much better that they should be appointed by the Chief Commissioner.

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26950. We have had it in evidence from a witness that in his sub-division there are about 500 villages and only about 40 primary schools, so that if you have a primary school even for two or three villages you would have to quadruple the number, and if you wanted taxes to the same amount you would have to quadruple the Education Cess. It is possible to quadruple the Education Cess without a great deal of hardship?—I want to have these extra schools run on very much cheaper lines; the present staff for a school runs to not less than Rs. 20 a month; you could run a rural school on about Rs. 5, by assisting the people to run their own school.

26951. So that with your present income you could have almost four times the number of schools that you have now?—I would not like to run down the present schools. The curriculum is extremely good; the only thing is, it is too expensive for the extension of education to the bulk of the people. I would not suggest reducing the present schools to a lower grade, but I would like to add, over and above that, a large number of other much more elementary schools.

26952. In those cases would you entrust the school to the village altogether, the village to have the management of the school, with a grant of Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 a month as a sort of aid or stipend?—Yes, subject to a certain amount of check of examination. The grant would be continued as long as there was a certain number on the roll and so long as a certain number passed a certain examination.

26953. In those schools you would simplify the curriculum?—I would merely have the three R's, because I want to include the children of agricultural labourers and so on, and to get them through their course as quickly as possible and send them back to the fields. The great complaint of the people is that they want their boys back to the fields for their trades; if boys are kept in the schools for three or four or five years the result is that the parents will not send their boys, because they want them to herd cattle and so on.

26954. In the last three or four years you have received from the Government of India some contributions to education by the District Board?—I do not know where they came from, but we have been receiving some large grants-in-aid for primary education.

26955. Has that money been mainly devoted to educational purposes?—For building schools, increasing the number of teachers, increasing the pay of teachers, and getting better men—certificated teachers.

26956. Not in forming new schools on the plan you have suggested?—Not on that plan, but we have at the same time been able to increase our schools to a certain extent.

26957. Is there a forest officer in every district?—It is hard to say in every district; it is very nearly so, but Nagpur and Wardha, for instance, are in one charge; there are some districts that are joined up.

26958. So far as the public are concerned, is the forest officer to some extent under the direction and control of the Deputy Commissioner?—He is declared in the rules to be an assistant of the Deputy Commissioner in forest matters, and he is not supposed to write officially to the Deputy Commissioner; the Deputy Commissioner and he correspond by memoranda, which shows the position; their position is more intimate than that of two departments corresponding officially.

26959. So far as the needs and requirements of the people are concerned, do you find that the forest officer generally agrees to the suggestions and requisitions of the Deputy Commissioner?—Very largely so.

26960. So that you have no reasons to complain of the relations now existing between the forest officer and the Deputy Commissioner?—Not in the great majority of cases; there are exceptions of course.

26961. Would you say the same with regard to the police?—Yes. In the case of the police and the Deputy Commissioner the relation is rather more intimate; in case of necessity the Deputy Commissioner will pass a definite order to the Superintendent of Police; it is generally not done, but the final responsibility lies with the Deputy Commissioner. It very seldom happens that one does more than have a conversation in which mutual suggestions are given and received.

26962. In regard to promotion and transfer of subordinate officers in the police, has the Deputy Commissioner as much authority as he requires for the purposes of good administration?—Certainly, provided he chooses to take it up. I have never known a District Superintendent of Police demur to a suggestion that some police officer would be more useful in a different thana.

26963. Is it done by suggestion, or has he power to pass an order?—I think he has power to pass an order; if the District Superintendent of Police disagrees with him he can appeal to the Inspector-General of Police and it might go up higher, but practically I have never known a case where such an appeal has been necessary.

26964. (*Mr. Hichens.*) When the District Council have passed their education budget, have they got anything more to do with education for the year?—Yes, all the questions of transfer and promotion and punishment of schoolmasters is in their hands.

26965. These matters do not go to the Local Boards?—No; they occasionally may go to the Local Board, and then from there to the District Council, but mainly all questions of transfer or punishment are in the hands of the District Council.

26966. We were told to-day that there was a Local Committee for each school?—Yes, a School Committee.

26967. Are they not consulted in a matter of that sort at all?—The School Committee runs the domestic part of the schools, spends the fees on local needs, and can give the schoolmaster a certain amount of leave; occasionally the School Committee write up and say the schoolmaster is not doing his work properly, and recommend that he should be punished.

26968. Do questions of transfer come before the Board, or are they settled by the Secretary?—They would go before the District Council in most cases, but in urgent cases the Secretary very often passes the order in anticipation of the sanction of the Council.

26969. In regard to hospitals and vaccination work and so forth the District Council do very little but pass the budget?—With regard to dispensaries the District Council practically only gives grants to separate Dispensary Committees, which work generally under the Civil Surgeon; the District Council has very little interference with the actual working of any dispensary; it gives a grant.

26970. They have no inspecting agency?—We would like the members occasionally to take an interest in these local things, but they do not as a rule take a great interest.

26971. Then does the District Council carry out any Public Works through its own agency?—Now that we have got a Local Fund Engineer. In Raipur the District Council built the schools and built pounds and did some arboricultural work, and it used to have two small lengths of road also under its overseers.

26972. Is not a certain quantity of work done by the tahsildar?—All the works are done by the Council or by the tahsildar *quâ* its Executive Officer.

26973. Has the District Council very much Executive work to do?—It has to vote these buildings, and very often the members will watch the execution of the buildings and will pay the bills; very often the coolies and so on are paid in front of the members.

26974. Do they spend a good deal of time allocating whatever money there may be as between one Local Board and another?—They do not spend much time; they have a meeting when they settle how much each Local Board shall get; the Local Board sends up its needs; it frames a sort of budget.

26975. But it gets a purely arbitrary allotment? It would be in accordance with its needs to a certain extent, as far as they could be met.

26976. How would it work supposing the Local Board got the whole of the share of the cess which is collected within its borders and the District Council were abolished?—In many cases that might rather work with difficulty, because sometimes the poorer parts of a district might require more money than its cess would provide, and some of the richer parts might be able to spare some money.

26977. Would the richer parts share that point of view?—It is, I think, the rule of all Government.

26978. Of the things that you have enumerated there is not very much that cannot be done as efficiently by the Local Board?—No, except that we get a better set of men on the District Council as a rule. You get a certain number of people at headquarters, nominated members, and so on, who cannot well serve on the Local Boards; it is rather difficult to nominate good men because they do not live there.

26979. Your objections are, in the first instance, that some of the Local Board areas would be so poor, and that you think is a strong objection?—Not very.

26980. The next is that you would not get quite such an efficient body on the Local Boards?—Yes.

26981. On the other hand, would they identify themselves more closely with the interests of their locality?—I have not yet found a Local Board member who interests himself in the affairs of his locality.

26982. Is that not because they have nothing to do?—I have asked them to do things, but they will not do them.

26983. Is it not possible to develop in that way?—I hope it will be developed, but it will take time. I do not think abolishing the District Council would develop local interest.

26984. Do you advocate the appointment of a Divisional Engineer for all the different divisions in the province?—It is absolutely necessary that we should get a proper engineering staff for District Councils, but there are so many things to do first. We must get more money; we must have a graded Service; we must have some provident fund in order that District Councils can compete with Government. At present we get the riff-raff, and in the end the Public Works Department must take all the best men. We cannot offer a salary which would invite anybody worth having to come.

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26985. Would it be a good thing to make over all the road work to the District Council, assuming the financial difficulty could be solved?—I think a number of the main roads ought to be kept and run by the Government Engineers. Experience in England, for instance, has shown that road work is much better done by District Councils than by parishes.

26986. You have suggested that they should have increased powers of taxation. Will that meet the difficulty, or will they have to have substantial increased provincial grants as well?—I would much rather see it done by taxation than by grants; I do not like this principle of doles. The point is that their resources should be fixed, and understood, and not dependent on the chances of the moment, because if that is so no budget can be framed and no responsibility can be encouraged.

26987. It might be laid down as a principle that they shall get a grant from the Government of a percentage on their collections; that would give them a fixed income?—Yes, only anything they got should be a fixed income which they could be empowered to deal with, and not merely "The District is getting into debt, give them Rs. 20,000; that one is flourishing, take something from them"; that is what I object to.

26988. Then in regard to municipalities, do some of them have an assessment rate as well as the *haisiyat* tax?—They do not have an assessment; they have octroi; they either have octroi or a *haisiyat* tax.

26989. Is their financial position as miserable as that of the District Council?—The minor municipalities are badly off.

26990. They get doles for education and sanitation from time to time?—Yes, and for killing rats.

26991. They get nothing they can count upon as a permanent source of income?—They have grants for general purposes from time to time, but those can be raised or lowered; they are not certain.

26992. Should the same principle be applied in their case?—I should like all grants to be more or less fixed, if they could be fixed liberally enough.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. B. Robertson, C.I.E., I.C.S., was called and examined.

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26993. You are Commissioner of the Berar Division?—Yes.

The rules under the Berar Land Revenue Code, which were issued in their present form a year or two ago, have done much towards properly regulating the work of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners and their Assistants. Assistants who have passed the Departmental Examination by the Higher Standard can be invested with many of the powers of a Deputy Commissioner. Against their decisions an appeal lies to the Deputy Commissioner. If the Assistant's decision is confirmed, there is no further appeal. If the decision is modified or reversed, an appeal lies to the Commissioner, whose order is final. The references required to be made to the Commissioner by the Act and the Rules are not very numerous, and there are only a few of them in which I would dispense with the Commissioner's sanction.

In connection with revenue work there are general complaints that the tahsildar is overworked, and at present he undoubtedly is. But not enough has been done to relieve him. He is often the only Magistrate in his *taluk* for the trial of 2nd and 3rd class magisterial cases. He has a naib-tahsildar as his assistant, but the latter possesses no powers either as a Revenue Officer or as a Magistrate. In one case I found objection taken to the naib-tahsildar passing *ad interim* routine orders in revenue cases, in the absence of the tahsildar, such as calling for a report from the *patel* or patwari. There is a great tendency in Berar to regard everything written on paper as a "case," whether it comes under a regular head of revenue business or not. The tahsildar is expected to pass orders on all cases, including matters which are not cases at all, in his own hand. In a busy *taluk* his time is taken up with a mass of often irrelevant detail, which gives him no chance of attending to matters of real importance. I propose authorizing naib-tahsildars to deal with certain classes of minor revenue work, and suggesting that they should be invested with 3rd class magisterial powers. Benches of Magistrates might be established in several places where there is a well-to-do community. The tahsildar would thus be relieved of his less important work, and if he is at the same time not tied down to recording in his own hand evidence and orders in minor revenue cases so much as he is at present, he should be able to exercise a much more effective control over the general administration of his *taluk*.

With regard to general administration much has been done in recent years to give enlarged powers to Commissioners.

In Berar Section 35 of the Land Revenue Act gives the Deputy Commissioner power to pass final

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orders for fining, reducing or dismissing a subordinate on a salary not exceeding Rs. 35. The Commissioner has power to fine or reduce a subordinate on Rs. 99 and no appeal lies. But in case of dismissal one appeal lies, if the salary is over Rs. 35. In the case of officers not subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner, there is a right of appeal in the case of every punishment, and a right of second appeal, when the subordinate draws from Rs. 25 to Rs. 50 a month, to an authority subordinate to the Local Administration. If over Rs. 50, a second appeal lies to the Local Administration. A further appeal lies to the Government of India when the pay is over Rs. 100. I should like to see the Berar Revenue Law brought more into conformity with the general practice. I would allow a right of appeal against an order of dismissal, which the law does not at present give when the pay is under Rs. 35. As regards the general practice I should allow no appeal against fines not exceeding one month's pay or reduction for one month. I should curtail the limit of second appeal by substituting Rs. 35 to Rs. 75 for Rs. 25 to Rs. 50. And I should make the Local Administration's order final in the case of all officers drawing less than Rs. 250 a month.

I am in favour of the more ready removal of officers who are absolutely unfit and inefficient. Government is far too lenient with its bad bargains, and I should view with favour a tightening up of the bonds of discipline in this respect. In Berar there are one or two officers holding the post of naib-tahsildar, who are a burden to the District Officer and of no use to the people; they had previously been in ministerial service, but have for years been hanging on as *taluk* officers. It is no doubt difficult to remove a man who has many years of service, but in notorious cases we should stiffen our backs and shake ourselves free of such encumbrances. No private employer would ever run his business with men who are quite incapable, and in Government administration there should be less of the idea "Once a Government servant always a Government servant."

The Head of the Administration passes a considerable portion of the year on tour, and is to a great extent in personal touch with Commissioners and District Officers, and so far as my experience went the views of the latter were always freely sought for by the Chief Commissioners under whom I served, and due consideration given to local opinion. In Berar the Commissioner held a semi-independent position prior to the amalgamation with the Central Provinces, and he still retains the requisite influence outside his purely land revenue duties.

In Berar the Executive Officers have sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people, and lack of knowledge of the people cannot be laid to the charge of the Berar officer. To enable this to be kept up, he must not be swamped with office routine and should not be tied too much to his desk. The Commissioner should endeavour to see each of his Deputy Commissioners personally as often as he can, to discuss pending matters and thus avoid formal correspondence. There are generally numerous matters which can be disposed of in this way, even at the cost of a month or two's delay, much more satisfactorily than by letter-writing.

The system under which grazing land in villages is managed by the Forest Department is unsatisfactory, and the Chief Commissioner has recently asked me to go into the matter. It is not an easy question to settle, but I hope that some way of meeting the difficulty will be found.

As to knowledge of the vernaculars young officers should be made to pass much stiffer language examinations than they do at present. I would as far as possible keep an officer who is posted on first appointment to, say, a Mahrathi-knowing district in such a district for at least three years, to make certain that he really gets to know the language. To pass in a second language he should have two years after being posted to a district where it is spoken.

The frequent transfers of officers is a great bar to good administration, but in the Central Provinces we are not given to offending in this respect. The matter received constant attention from the Chief Commissioners under whom I served as Chief Secretary. I have a grievance in Berar regarding the frequent transfers of officers posted to the three important sub-divisions of Basim, Ellichpur and Khamgaon, to which an extra allowance of Rs. 100 a month is attached. In Ellichpur there have been ten changes in just over two years. I would make it a rule not to give these sub-divisions to men who may at any time go off to officiate as a Deputy Commissioner. Their seniors cannot grumble at losing the allowance, if they have the chance of acting in a district instead.

Municipalities and District Boards are at present kept in leading strings to a quite unnecessary extent. In the Commissioner's office a great mass of correspondence takes place, and much of his time is taken up with details of petty control. The system of local audit has a fine field in connection with the financial sanctions which the rules lay down, and I am continually receiving objection statements regarding amounts which have not been passed for want of the Commissioner's sanction or for some defect in the procedure actually adopted. When it comes to dealing with an objection by the Auditor against the purchase of four pairs of boots a couple of years before for coolies who had to enter plague-infected houses, the nature of the control which it is attempted to exercise can be imagined. This was a case recently sent up by a municipality, and there have been others scarcely less ridiculous.

I am not much in favour of Administrative or Advisory Councils to assist District Officers. Their appointment would certainly mean delay, and I believe that the District Officer who is really in touch with his district does not need such assistance or advice. If some plan of limiting their sphere of influence could be devised, I should have no objection to their being tried. I would limit the number of the Council to five. The Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the headquarters municipality and of the District Board might be *ex-officio* members and the three remaining members should be nominated by the Administration. The Advisory Council should be referred to only on questions of general policy or administration, at any rate to begin with. It would probably not be difficult to devise a scheme of such references. I should also have no objection to their seeing the ordinary yearly Administration Reports and letting them give their opinions on any of the matters they contain. But this would admittedly mean further delay in publication of the reports, which are often belated enough as it is at present.

The Berar *patel* has at present certain authority under the Revenue Law. I should like to see selected *patels* given something in the shape of the police powers which *patels* can exercise in Bombay. In Berar I do not think you could have the village community electing a panchayat for the disposal of petty matters. The *patel* would dispute the authority of the panchayat, which would usurp his proper functions. And having the *patel* the best thing to do is to make use of him and his authority, which, with certain safeguards, could be done.

26994. Is there any difference between the conditions which obtain in the Berar Division from those which obtain in other divisions of the Central Provinces—The whole of the land revenue system is different; Berar is raiyatwari; the people pay their land revenue direct to the Government; in the Central Provinces there is the zamindari system; that is the great difference. Then, there are different laws in many respects applying to Berar and different arrangements also in many details of administration.

26995. When it is desired to apply to Berar a Regulation which is applied to the Central Provinces, is there any particular mode of procedure?—Yes. Berar is foreign territory still, and the Governor-General has to apply it by an order in Council.

26996. Does that occasion much delay as a rule?—It creates a good deal of delay. For instance, there is a case at present in the town of Amraoti; they have asked to apply the Hackney Carriage Act there; that is a very small matter, but it means that it has to go to the Chief Commissioner who has to go to the Government of India and eventually the Act will be applied; it takes a few months to get through these channels.

26997. The delay exists, but it is forced on the Government of India and on the Local Government by the relation of the two territories?—Yes.

26998. What is the area of Berar?—17,709 square miles, with a population of two and three-quarter millions.

26999. Is the distribution of work in Berar as between the Commissioner and the District Officers the same as exists in the Central Provinces?—Very much the same.

27000. You have had some experience in other provinces as well as in the Central Provinces?—I served for about 4 years, when I first came out to India, in Bombay as an Assistant Collector.

27001. Speaking generally is there a greater restriction upon the subordinate officers, the Sub-Divisional Officers and District Officers in this province than in Bombay?—It is very many years ago since I served in Bombay, but I should say that in these provinces the Sub-Divisional Officer is more kept in leading strings than he was in Bombay. The Sub-Divisional system in Bombay had developed much more in those days than it has here even at the present time; in fact sub-divisions in these provinces are comparatively of recent creation.

27002. Therefore, in your judgment, there remains a good deal of delegation which could be given to subordinate officers still?—It is scarcely correct to use the word delegation; the Sub-Divisonal Officer in Bombay had undoubtedly more independence; he moved about in his sub-division and did things more off his own bat than he has yet begun to do in these provinces.

27003. The officers here are no longer so junior as a Service, as they were some few years ago?—A few years ago the province was very badly off for senior men and officers were specially junior; now they are well up to the average.

27004. That is a reason in inself why some greater discretion should be given to them?—Certainly, and we have also to take into account the Provincial Service. Undoubtedly the Provincial Service has greatly improved in recent years; a better class of men has been got in, very trustworthy and capable men; of course there are exceptions, but having known this province for some time, there has been an undoubted improvement.

27005. Notwithstanding the growing seniority of the less highly placed officers, and the excellence of the Provincial Service, they are still kept in stricter leading-strings than they were in Bombay 20 years ago?—It is difficult to say that exactly. The sub-division is a new thing. Formerly the Extra-Assistant Commissioner did the work that was given to him, practically from day to day, you might say, by the Deputy Commissioner. By cutting him off and giving him a sub-division of his own and letting him run his own show, you give him a better chance of knowing his independence and feeling his responsibility. The actual powers have not perhaps changed much, but the Sub-Divisional Officer has still a want of confidence about doing things on his own; he refers more to the Deputy Commissioner than he would in Bombay; and what you want to encourage is to make a man absolutely run his own sub-division. For example, I have had diaries of an Assistant Commissioner sent to me in the last month; when he went to inspect and found things were wrong, he seemed to think it quite sufficient for him to report on them to the Deputy Commissioner. All of these things really he could have done himself, and he would have done himself if the custom were that he should do them. That has got to grow, the men have to be made to understand that they are responsible for running the whole of their sub-division. It will come in time. On one particular diary, I wrote back and said "These are all things that the Assistant Commissioner should himself have seen put right."

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27006. Was that a civilian?—Yes. It was inexperience rather than anything else. Most of these things were matters which he himself had power to do, but he seemed to be diffident about it and thought the correct thing to do was to report to the Deputy Commissioner.

27007. There are, I gather, certain powers still outstanding which might be given to Sub-Divisional Officers?—To approved Sub-Divisional Officers.

27008. Take the question of revenue, for instance?—In Berar the rules have been revised, and I think the powers which the Sub-Divisional Officer has now got in Berar are practically complete

27009. Can he remit wet revenue?—There is no such thing as wet revenue; there is nothing there practically but cotton; it is dry.

27010. Can he remit any dry revenue?—He cannot.

27011. Can he suspend it?—No, the Deputy Commissioner suspends.

27012. Could he advantageously exercise either of those powers?—I should prefer to keep them to the Deputy Commissioner. In Berar fortunately the question rarely arises. This year we had questions of suspensions and remissions, and this very point arose; we found men who at first said that we should have to suspend very large amounts; in one district; Buldana, it was going to run into a very large figure. The result of enquiries and a certain amount of control by the Deputy Commissioner was that the recommendation sent up was to suspend only Rs. 1,500, so that it was ridiculous having started it at all. I think the present recommendation to suspend Rs. 1,500 is sufficient; at any rate it is quite a sufficient index of what the scarcity has been there. Possibly had the matter been left in the hands of a comparatively inexperienced Sub-Divisional Officer, he might have made mistakes. It is very difficult in a case like the present to keep men from losing their heads, sometimes, in matters of suspensions and remissions.

27013. What are the limits of the powers in these matters of the Deputy Commissioner?—He has unlimited powers of suspension, not of remission.

27014. Should he have any powers of remission?—I would give him power to remit up to small amounts. In Berar the question luckily hardly arises, but I think the Deputy Commissioner might have powers up to Rs. 10,000.

27015. You do not mean an Officiating Deputy Commissioner?—A permanent Deputy Commissioner; there is no reason why he should not have power to remit. The question arises in Berar very rarely, and being a rare occurrence, the men do not quite know what to do.

27016. With regard to agricultural loans would you increase the powers of the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes. I am prepared to see Deputy Commissioners given much fuller powers than they have now, say, up to Rs. 5,000.

27017. It does not occur often?—Rarely.

27018. Do you get as a Commissioner any discretionary grant?—I get a discretionary grant for minor works, for small buildings, construction and repairs—Rs. 10,000.

27019. You spend that as you like?—I spend it as I please.

27020. Do you spend it yourself or through your Deputy Commissioner?—I generally give a small amount to Deputy Commissioners, say, Rs. 1,000 to each of the four districts, and let them spend it as they please on small things; the other Rs. 6,000 I spend on larger things.

27021. You have no other grant except in connection with Public Works?—That is all.

27022. Do you get many cases occurring in which such a grant could be usefully put at your disposal?—I do not know that there would be very much in Berar on which you could usefully dispose

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of such a grant. Grants are given which are practically at the disposal of the Commissioner; for instance, grants for dispensaries; the budget passes through him, and he has got his say in passing the budgets as to how he wishes the money spent.

27023. With regard to travelling allowances and small pensions and so on, have you got as great freedom as you think necessary?—I should prefer to see the Commissioner able to deal with some of these comparatively small matters in the Civil Service Regulations; most of them are very simple.

27024. Do you get many of those?—A very large number.

27025. And they take up a certain amount of time?—Certainly; you have to see that the thing is correct before you sign it and send it up.

27026. Do they generally come up in good order?—They do not, the pension cases are sometimes very tangled.

27027. Still they are of a nature that the Commissioner ought to be able to dispose of entirely?—I think so.

27028. Do you get many appeals through your hands?—The principal appeals, practically the sole appeals I should say, are revenue appeals, and there are not many of them.

27029. Do they involve as a rule sums of a large nature?—They do not involve sums so much as questions of title to lands, and some of them, of course, are of very great importance.

27030. Do most of them require to go on?—No; the Commissioner deals with them finally. His position is different from that of other Commissioners; there is no appeal beyond him except in very rare cases. In most revenue cases the Sub-Divisional Officer passes his orders; an appeal lies to the Deputy Commissioner; if the Deputy Commissioner agrees with the Sub-Divisional Officer, the order is final; no appeal goes to the Commissioner. If he disagrees, an appeal lies, and the Commissioner's order is then final. The Berari likes of course still to go to the Commissioner, in the former instance, with an application for revision, but that is a different thing from an appeal.

27031. Do you find that that contents the people?—They are quite satisfied. They have got accustomed to it. Of course there is a sign in these revision applications that they would like to have another shot at it on the off chance.

27032. Is it advisable that the Commissioner should have a budget for Public Works?—I think so. I should like to see him given greater control of the Public Works in his division than he has at present, in order to let him thoroughly know what is actually going on. At the present time in Berar we do not quite know what new roads or new projects the Public Works Department are going to take up next. We have sent up projects, but money is limited, and we do not know which they will prefer. It is not altogether the fault of the Public Works Department; I think it is partly also due to the fact that the current orders are to some extent overlooked. I should like to have much more direct dealings with the Public Works Department in order to know exactly what they are going to do, and, if they are going to make any change in the programme, what the change is going to be.

27033. Have you got the right now to call on the Executive Engineer to tell you what he is going to do?—I have the right.

27034. Do you exercise it?—I do certainly; but occasionally things get overlooked, and it creates a difficulty.

27035. What you want is to take away the the choice of selection from the Superintending Engineer and take that power yourself?—Yes. It can in present circumstances be done, but mistakes arise, which I should like absolutely to prevent by saying, "If a thing is going to be done you must tell me first."

27036. Can you post or transfer your subordinates in Berar?—I can transfer tahsildars and naib-tahsildars who belong to the Subordinate Civil Service.

27037. Can you post the Sub-Divisional Officers?—No, that is done by the Chief Commissioner.

27038. Can you transfer them?—No.

27039. Would it be useful if you could have that power?—It would be useful to allow me to transfer them; it means saving a letter; if I asked to transfer a man from A to B it would naturally be done, but it would mean a letter. It would be useful if I had power to transfer a man within my division.

27040. With regard to your relations with the provincial Government above you, have you any particular suggestions to make?—No. I have practically no suggestions to make in that respect, except in regard to matters which have been already covered, such as the relaxation of petty rules of control under the Civil Service Regulations as to pensions and so on. The relations are otherwise perfectly satisfactory.

27041. Do you find that, as a rule, you, as a Commissioner, get a full hearing from the Local Government?—I have been a Commissioner only three months, but I think that certainly one does get that.

27042. You were Chief Secretary for some time; you can speak from that point of view?—Personally I think in the Central Provinces a full hearing is always obtainable by a Commissioner from the Chief Commissioner.

27043. (*Mr. Dutt.*) The appointment of tahsildars now rests with the Chief Commissioner. Would you make any alteration in the matter of appointments?—I certainly think it is necessary that the Chief Commissioner should exercise some control; you will find that perhaps a Commissioner has got somebody to put on. Of course his advice is probably taken. But it is a useful thing before you put on a man to such an important post as that of tahsildar that there should be somebody else just to see that the man is the right sort.

27044. We had evidence before us just now that the Service of tahsildars is considerably improving; do you agree in that opinion?—I would certainly say so as regards the Central Provinces, and I think it is the same in Berar. More care has been taken in the selection of tahsildars recently than was formerly the case.

27045. Do you generally require any educational qualifications in the men you appoint as tahsildars?—I certainly always insist upon it; I am very strong on that.

27046. That the man should be a graduate?—Yes.

27047. So that generally the new appointments in Berar are graduates?—They are certainly going to be now; I do not know that they have been in the past; it is an unfortunate thing that they sometimes have not been so.

27048. You tell us that the work of the tahsildar is very heavy, and you suggest an increase in the number of tahsildars and naib-tahsildars. What would you say about increasing the number of tahsils in some districts or in some sub-divisions?—The matter has just recently been settled in Berar; we have cut down the number of districts from six to four; I did not, therefore, as I had newly come to Berar, care to say much about it. But, having been round Berar for the last few months, I think the time has already come when we could reconsider the question of the reduction of the districts. As to one district certainly, Ellichpur, a case could be made out to-morrow for doing it. As to the *taluks* in Berar, there are some *taluks* where quite a fair case could be made out for, say, splitting up two into three; it must come sooner or later, I am certain.

27049. Is the number of *taluks* in Berar about the same as the number of sub-divisions?—There are generally two or three *taluks* in each sub-division.

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27050. Still, in some cases, the number of *taluks* will have to be increased in course of time?—The number of *taluks* will have to be increased, because the existing *taluk* in some cases gives the tahsildar so much work that he positively cannot get through it efficiently; he has to rush through it, and he does not see enough of the people and the actual working of his charge.

27051. You say that in some cases the Government has made very bad bargains, and it is very difficult to get rid of such men; what would be your opinion about the proposal to compel some of these men to retire on proportionate pensions?—I should favour it. Many of the men to whom I take special objection are men who are getting on towards the end of their service; they may at one time have been good enough for what was required of them in those days, but they are perfectly hopeless now; whether it is that they have got into their dotage prematurely or not, I do not know.

27052. In those cases something might be done?—I think something should be done. It is not fair to the country that these people should be still kept on under the idea that they are doing work which they are not doing.

27053. You say you are not generally in favour of Administrative or Advisory Councils, but you would not strongly oppose them if some working plan could be devised. When you form an Advisory Council, suppose there was some question on which the Deputy Commissioner wanted advice. would you favour the idea of his sending for other men also to be present at the meeting?—If you had your Advisory Council you should stick to your guns, and have the Advisory Council. As a matter of fact, the Deputy Commissioner would, as he now does, consult outside people generally, but if you have an Advisory Council I should certainly stick to it; I would not make official references beyond the Council.

27054. Do you think you could utilise the Council in any other way; are there minor duties which the District Officer could make over to them, or minor inquiries that he might call upon them to make?—You might possibly do that.

27055. You could utilise them in small administrative work of that nature?—I would have no objection to trying, if you gave me a satisfactory Council which suited me.

27056. Do you think that if they could do some work of that kind it would relieve the District Officer of a good deal of detail work?—I very much doubt if that would work. I think you would still have to see what happened and go into matters. I should not be sanguine of much relief, if any, coming in that way.

27057. In any case you would leave the District Officer to pass the final order on his own authority?—I should certainly do that.

27058. You do not think that the village panchayats in Berar would be likely to succeed at present?—Of course I speak with considerable hesitation, as I am quite new to Berar, but in Berar you have an excellent system of *patels*. The Mahratha *patel* is an excellent man as a rule, if he is properly looked after and well led and instructed. My view, at first sight, would be that you would probably have difficulties between the man in the strong position now and the up-start new panchayats; it would, I think, probably begin by leading to considerable friction in working, and it would probably not come to much in the end.

27059. Is the Berar system much the same as the Bombay system?—Very much the same.

27060. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Do you say that if an Advisory Council were appointed to a District Officer it would certainly not mean that he consulted more people, but it might mean that he consulted fewer?—I should say that he would make a reference *ex-officio* to his Advisory Council, if he had one; that would not debar him from asking anybody else he pleased; but I would not send official references outside the Advisory Council if you had one; I would confine such as far as possible to your Advisory Council.

27061. Is the provincial budget made up to-day on the basis of divisions, so that you can see exactly what is spent on each division?—No, there are no divisional figures given; of course they are all there somewhere, but it is published as a provincial budget; the division does not exist in it.

27062. Would you favour having a divisional budget?—No, I do not think there is much object in it, provided that you gave a separate allotment for Public Works; that is the main point; I do not see that it is of very great importance to have a divisional budget in other matters.

27063. Not if you had power to transfer from one head to another, for example?—I do not know that I should want it very much. I personally think it would not lead to very much convenience.

27064. We have been told in some provinces that mining regulations are somewhat restrictive; have you found that at all?—I have had a great deal to do with mining regulations from the point of view of the restrictive agency, having been Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, and also having officiated as Secretary in the Department of Commerce and Industry. I think that in regard to mining you must have some restrictive powers; you must have some man who knows a good deal about the subject to guide people who know nothing about mining questions. If you do not have some general rules, at any rate to begin with, which are fairly restrictive, you will find people making mistakes, purely through want of knowledge. There was a case in the Bombay Government the other day. When I was in Simla they were fixing for thirty years a rate of royalty for manganese, which was about one-third of what we had been taking in the Central Provinces, the difficulty arising from the fact that manganese was quite a new business in Bombay. They had probably done what they had heard was done in other provinces, and had not understood the lines on which we were working here. When an absolutely new line of business arises it is very hard indeed for men who have had no experience in the matter to say straight off the reel what should be done. In mining cases, undoubtedly to begin with, I would have a great deal of control, until you have hammered out a policy. After you have done that, and people have begun to understand it, give as much freedom as you possibly can.

27065. Are there any powers in regard to mining that could be delegated to Commissioners?—In the Central Provinces you might certainly give extended powers with regard to prospecting licenses; I think the Chief Commissioner either intends to do so, or has already done so; but I have not dealt with mining cases for the last two or three months. Now that we know what the whole thing means, it will be quite right to give extended powers. I believe the intention is in the Central Provinces to give extended powers, now that we know where we are; but to begin with you must go cautiously.

27066. A man has to have a certificate of suitability?—Yes.

27067. That has to go to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes.

27068. Do you think that that power might be given to the Commissioner?—I think so on the whole. At present, under the mining rules which have been sanctioned by the Government of India, the latter would have to be first asked whether such delegation would be permitted. The Government of India have laid down these mining rules rather rigidly in order to save trouble arising. I quite agree that you ought to have rigidity to begin with. That is the view I take as being one who has sat at the top and seen the mistakes that have been made, unconsciously, by men who did not know better.

27069. (*Mr. Meyer.*) As regards the mining rules, the Government of India rules give a free hand to the Local Government in the matter of exploring and prospecting licenses?—Yes.

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27070. Therefore, so far you could delegate any powers you liked to your Commissioners?—I imagine that that is so. There is, however, that question about giving certificates of fitness; power there might be given to the Commissioner if the rules were modified.

27071. The actual grant of a prospecting license (subject to the proviso that the applicant must have a certificate from the Local Government) might be made by the Deputy Commissioner, if the Local Government thought fit to allow him to do so?—Yes.

27072. We have had suggestions from some quarters that Local Governments might be allowed to guarantee interest on light railways and other industrial undertakings financed from private capital; what would you say to that suggestion?—I should be prepared to see that done with regard to small railways of absolutely local importance.

27073. Are you aware of any action that has been taken in that way?—Not of any action; I have of course seen and heard of proposals. The matter is under discussion.

27074. You mentioned that in Berar the Commissioner held a semi-independent position. Now that Berar has been administratively joined to the Central Provinces is it likely that your position, or your successors' position, in time will become that of an ordinary Commissioner of the Central Provinces?—It is a very difficult question about which to prophesy, but I think that Berar will remain Berar for many years to come; at least I hope it will. The whole of the administration is so different from that of the Central Provinces; the raiyatwari system and the *patelki* system are so different that it must be separate, and Berar must remain Berar. I think the Commissioner there will probably nearly always have a freer hand than a Commissioner elsewhere.

27075. You think that is desirable?—I think it is desirable.

27076. To take a larger analogy, would you like the Commissioner of Berar to stand to the Government here in the same relation as the Commissioner in Sind stands to the Government of Bombay?—I do not think it is necessary to go so far as that.

27077. A witness mentioned one point in which things had changed already; he said that in the old days the Commissioner of Berar had all the other departments under his hand; has that been done away with?—Yes, as to excise and a few other matters. As to police, so far as my experience has yet gone, I have found that I have quite sufficient say in matters of police; but in matters of excise, and perhaps forest policy also, the Commissioner ought perhaps to have more say than he has at present. I say so, not so much on the ground that Berar is Berar, but generally.

27078. We have also been told that, in education, when the provinces were united there was at once a tendency to force the Berar schools to coincide with the schools of the Central Provinces in the matter of text-books; is that your experience?—I have not looked into the text-books question; but there is a certain amount of discussion going on still in Berar with regard to bringing it more into line with the Central Provinces. I have not yet had time to go into the question.

27079. In Berar have you got the Sub-Divisional Officer system really well developed?—No; it is developed thoroughly only in three separate subdivisions. There you have got Sub-Divisional Officers who are full Sub-Divisional Magistrates as well as Sub-Divisional Revenue Officers; elsewhere the Sub-Divisional Officer is merely a Revenue Officer put in charge of one or more *taluks*; he has not got complete Sub-Divisional Magistrate's powers. There is not the same feeling that it is *his* sub-division, and that he is responsible for the work of that sub-division, as there should be. In the Ellichpur sub-division the Magistrate, if he was left long enough, would have developed it in time, but he has never been left for more than three months or so; he is hardly to blame.

27080. The Sub-Divisional Officer in the three sub-divisions that you speak of is a miniature Collector?—Yes.

27081. And you think he ought to be in other places?—Yes; I think we might go a bit further.

27082. If he were that, would it be necessary to split up the districts?—You mean, to split them up and have another district with an additional Deputy Commissioner; I think you might perhaps get on with the present four.

27083. Before you started splitting up the districts, would it not be desirable to try the delegation of powers?—Yes, I have no objection to trying it.

27084. In revenue matters the Sub-Divisional Officer was, in Berar, invested with the delegated powers of a Collector, and then appeals went on to the District Collector?—Yes.

27085. Whereas in the Central Provinces they skipped the District Collector and went straight to the Commissioner?—Yes.

27086. Speaking as a Central Provinces officer, would you like the Berar system extended to the Central Provinces?—Certainly; it has worked very well in Berar so far as I have seen.

27087. In the Central Provinces the sub-divisional system, such as it is, has only been introduced about three or four years?—That is so.

27088. Before that the only real administrative unit within the district was the *tahsil*?—Yes.

27089. And the Collector's assistants were all working at headquarters, doing such work as might be given to them?—Yes, practically almost from day to day.

27090. These three real sub-divisions in Berar were given out-post allowances; what was that on account of?—The extra importance of the charge; it was done on the Punjab model.

27091. Has it been converted into a seniority allowance?—That has been the tendency.

27092. There have been constant transfers because they have put the senior Assistant Commissioner in, in order that he might draw the allowance?—I do not know that it is that he might draw the allowance, but according to the importance of the post the senior man has come in.

27093. We have heard about the desirability of the Local Government being able to have a free hand in regard to local allowances. Is there not always this risk, that the local allowance will come to be looked on as part of the officer's emoluments?—I cannot say that; but undoubtedly there has been the tendency to put in the senior man. In Ellichpur the senior man has been put in, not on account of the local allowance, but because of the importance of the post.

27094. Do you think that if there had been no local allowances there would have been all these postings and transfers?—I should not like to say that I am sure of that, but the fact remains that there have been; that is the objection.

27095. Might they not be diminished by abolishing the local allowances?—I should give the man at Ellichpur a local allowance; I should like to see something done to differentiate it.

27096. You are dissatisfied with the question of appeals by public servants. That is rather complicated?—It is very complicated.

27097. It is based on the Bombay law?—I find fault with the law about the Rs. 35 rule, that no appeal lies; I think it is rather unfair.

27098. As it is worked in Bombay, the Commissioner cannot interfere in the matter of a subordinate under Rs. 35, but the Local Government does it straight away, in exercise of their powers of revision; do you have the same sort of thing in Berar?—I have not known a case arise. I have had an appeal of a man dismissed by the Deputy Commissioner somewhat summarily, but I did not interfere on revision, as he was a new man, and probably the best thing was to get rid of him straight away; had he been an old hand I should have said that the dismissal was undoubtedly far too summary.

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27099. You are in favour of a simple rule—one appeal on all points, and in certain cases a second appeal?—Yes.

27100. Your idea is to take the basis of pay; it has been suggested to us by other people that you should take as your basis the severity of the punishment; that a man who is dismissed, in view of the serious issues at stake, might have a second appeal whatever his rate of pay, but that a man who has been punished otherwise should have only one appeal?—Yes, I should be prepared to agree to that.

27101. As regards the District Officers it has been suggested that they should not all get additional powers as a class, but that additional powers should be given only to those who are thought fit to exercise them; what is your opinion as to that?—It is rather a difficult question; it would be a good thing to make a differentiation between a duffer and a good man.

27102. It would be rather invidious?—It would be rather invidious, but it may be necessary; it depends a good deal on the extent of the powers you give.

27103. Might it not be argued that the man to whom you have refused the larger powers that you give to his confrère is not fit to be a Collector at all?—You might argue in that way, undoubtedly.

27104. You have spoken of more stringent dealings by Government with unsatisfactory employees; would you apply that to the Indian Civil Service also?—I would; I have seen cases where it was very necessary to do so.

27105. There are certain men who have become Deputy Commissioners who are really not fit for the post?—That is so.

27106. You would not have allowed such men to be Deputy Commissioners?—I strongly hold that.

27107. If you had a man who was fit at the time you appointed him, but later on went to pieces from any cause, would you remove him?—Yes, undoubtedly.

27108. If you thought he was not likely to be of any use in a subordinate capacity would you get rid of him on a proportionate pension?—Yes.

27109. Up to the present the selection has been by seniority tempered by occasional rejection?—That is the way it has been put.

27110. Would you make a selection, taking the best man among the senior class, rather than the man who stands next for promotion and is not thought unfit?—I would go in very strongly for selection.

27111. As regards suspensions and remissions, the Government of India have issued a general rule laying down the proportionate remission which may be given in connection with the proportionate crop that has perished?—Yes.

27112. That being so, is it necessary to distrust the Deputy Commissioners?—If you could get a man who could give you a decent estimate of what the crop is, that would be all very well; it is a very difficult matter; in Berar, in the present year, had we trusted to the Land Records Staff and taken their estimate of the crop in November, we should have been distinctly led astray. You want somebody with a head on his shoulders to see when these people are exaggerating grossly about the out-turn of the crop and when they are not.

27113. The difficulty is a reliable estimate of the crop?—Exactly, that is the thing you want to get hold of.

27114. You say you would not object to Deputy Commissioners remitting up to Rs. 10,000; that is, within their district; you are not speaking of a general calamity?—No, I think there you have larger considerations coming in.

27115. And there the suspension rules cover everything that is needful?—That is so.

27116. It is laid down that after a certain time the revenue that has been suspended and cannot be recovered is automatically remitted?—Yes, it falls in for remission.

27117. When you have the automatic remission coming in, might not the Deputy Commissioner be entrusted with the power?—I think so.

27118. We have been told that at present all remissions in this province have to go up to the Chief Commissioner himself?—Yes.

27119. That is surely unnecessary?—It would be under the automatic revision system.

27120. You are in favour of giving the Deputy Commissioner power to remit up to Rs. 10,000—what power would you give the Commissioner?—I should say up to Rs. 50,000, or something like that.

27121. So that practically the Commissioner ought to be free from the details of this part of his work?—Certainly.

27122. In all cases where the Land Acquisition Act has to be applied notification by Government is necessary; would you be in favour of allowing the Commissioner to deal with acquisitions under a certain value?—I distinctly think so. I have not gone into the matter carefully yet; every reference of every kind and description, even cases of reducing the rent of a field by Re. 1-0-0, have to come up to the Commissioner. I should allow the actual acquisition of land and the payment up to a certain price to be dealt with by the Commissioner, and the remission of rents, which is purely automatic, to be dealt with by the Deputy Commissioner. Big acquisitions, involving large amounts of money, should go to the provincial Government.

27123. You may be allowed under this proposal to notify the taking up of a piece of land; it turns out to be, or is alleged to be, a piece of land to which some sect of Hindus attaches some particular sanctity; those matters might reasonably go up?—Yes, that would be a matter where you might allow the Local Government to come in.

27124. Could you not solve it in this way, that the Commissioner should issue the preliminary notification, and that if there was a serious objection the matter should go to the Local Government for determination?—I should agree to that.

27125. What is the position of naib-tahsildars in the Central Provinces proper?—The naib-tahsildar in the Central Provinces proper is an assistant to the tahsildar; he carries out the duties of the tahsildar with practically the same powers; he can hold an inquiry and submit a report, and generally he does the work that the tahsildar does. I want in Berar to give the naib-tahsildar the same powers as the tahsildar, with the exception of one or two matters which we had better keep in the hands of the tahsildar for the present. I want to see the naib-tahsildar a man who can pass an order and write a report. At present he examines witnesses, and sends up a bundle of papers to the tahsildar, who writes an order on those statements; if they are lengthy the tahsildar may not study them properly, and very often pass a wrong order; I want the naib-tahsildar to pass his own orders.

27126. With a right of appeal?—With a right of appeal to the Sub-Divisional Officer; the Sub-Divisional Officer hears all appeals from the tahsildar's orders.

27127. Therefore you would make the naib-tahsildar, so far as he deals with these cases, a joint tahsildar?—Yes.

27128. As regards hereditary village claims, do you have to send up many things to the Local Government?—Not to the Local Government; the Commissioner has pretty complete powers with regard to hereditary village claims in Berar.

27129. Is it the same in the Central Provinces proper?—There are none practically in the Central Provinces proper.

27130. Have there been many transfers between the Central Provinces proper and Berar since the junction?—There has been one transfer of an officer from Berar to the Central Provinces, and there have been some transfers of junior Civilians to Berar from the Central Provinces, and of course there has been some interchange of Provincial Service officers.

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27131. Do you think there will be a constant flux and reflux as between Berar and other divisions of the province?—I do not think that the flux and the reflux will be a very great factor. Until you get a race of Central Provinces men who are trained up in Berar, so to speak, I should prefer to see the Berar officers left alone.

27132. When you speak of Commissioners having to countersign bills, I suppose you mean those of the Deputy Commissioner?—The Deputy Commissioner under a recent order has to pass the bills of all tahsildars and officers subordinate to tahsildars, and only the bills of the Deputy Commissioner and the officers immediately subordinate to him—the Sub-Divisional Officers—come to the Commissioner.

27133. Why is it necessary that they should go to the Commissioner at all?—Personally I should be in favour of going further and letting the Deputy Commissioner countersign. The reason apparently of the present regulation is that the clerks in the Deputy Commissioner's office might prepare bills, and the Deputy Commissioner might sign them without looking at them; I do not see why that sort of thing could not be detected in the Deputy Commissioner's office.

27134. We have been told that in Bengal the District Superintendent of Police has to send his travelling allowance bills to the Deputy Commissioner; is that done here?—I do not know whether it is done now; it used to be done in the Central Provinces.

27135. You speak of the accounts objections to petty expenses of municipalities and District Boards, and you mention a case where the Auditor objected to the purchase of four pair of boots for coolies who had to enter plague infected houses. Has the Government of India ever issued an order that this sort of thing should be done?—Not at all; these are all orders which have been embodied in the codes. Possibly these orders might have come from the Government of India in the Foreign Department originally, as they apply to Berar, but the account restrictions in the Berar District Board and Municipalities Manuals are quite out of date.

27136. And could be swept away entirely by the Local Government?—Exactly.

27137. We have been told that there are similar restrictions in the Central Provinces proper?—I do not think they can be as bad as they are in Berar; the rules simply want revision. It may be that it was necessary to have stricter control over the District Bodies in those days than is required now; as we move on we must revise our rules; it is purely a local matter.

27138. Your Local Bodies are tied down at present?—They are, they have very little independence.

27139. It has been suggested that most of the roads that are now provincial should be handed over to the District Boards?—That matter has just been taken up by the Chief Commissioner with reference to the appointment of an Engineer. Unless you can get a good engineering staff it would not be possible, but given a good engineering staff there is no reason why the Local Bodies should not have a free hand.

27140. And given resources?—They have very large resources; it is merely a question of working out a scheme which will be properly workable.

27141. This scheme will be applied not merely to Berar, but to the Central Provinces?—I do not know about the Central Provinces; the Central Provinces Boards are so poor, I understand, that they could not afford to have a separate Public Works staff.

27142. What does Berar do now with the resources that you say are available?—I cannot remember the exact balances, but probably the balance of the Amraoti Board is between 2 and 3 lakhs, as it has not been spending up to its resources; the annual budget I suppose is about 3 lakhs.

27143. Take matters like veterinary work and dispensaries; from what we have heard, it seems that all the District Boards are concerned with is the privilege of paying—that the management is entirely foreign to them; is that a sound position?—Veterinary dispensaries are under the Agricultural Department; the District Boards have nothing to say to appointments or dismissals or anything else; it is rather a difficult question to hand over any measure of control to the District Board; it is a pity you should not do so, but as a matter of practice it is difficult to hand the control of the veterinary hospitals over to them.

27144. If, as a matter of policy, you decide that they should not be handed over, is it not rather hard to make the Board pay for them?—It is hard, undoubtedly.

27145. In the same way as regards dispensaries?—Yes. The dispensaries are managed by local committees, and frequently one of the chief men of the local committee will be a District Board member, so that in that case you might treat the Dispensary Committee as practically part and parcel, or to some extent part and parcel, of the Board.

27146. You might perhaps do what is done in the case of English bodies at home; you might have a Committee consisting partly of the Board members and partly of co-opted members—outside people?—Yes. That would practically come to the same thing as is done at present.

27147. Do Local Boards in Berar do much?—I have as yet been unable to see that they do anything at all.

27148. Would you be in favour either of abolishing them or of giving them some real status?—I should be in favour of giving them some real status and seeing what they could do; I should not care now to abolish them, but certainly they want something more than they have at present; the work given to them is generally beneath contempt; you could not expect men to do the trivial things that are sent to them to do.

27149. So far as "the stimulating action of local self-government," about which so much has been written, would apply, it would apply more to a small area than to a big one?—Undoubtedly.

27150. Might it be possible to adopt something like the Madras system, under which the Local Board gets half the cess and other local receipts, and has its own financial responsibilities?—You would have I think to recast your Boards to some extent; you might begin in a small way at first, and give them a certain definite amount, fixing upon them the responsibility for what you gave them. I should not like to give the *taluk* Boards in Berar for some years to come half the local receipts. I do not blame the Boards; they have never had a chance.

27151. In the Central Provinces proper we have been told that the *taluk* Boards are really merely doing the work of the District Council; is that so?—Yes.

27152. Would you give the Boards greater powers?—Yes; if we are going on with this business at all we ought to make an effort in that direction; I have held that opinion for a long time.

27153. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) You said, chiefly as regards mining, but also as regards other things, that when a thing is new you must keep it pretty much in your own hands. That would occasionally touch the sphere of legislation also?—Yes.

27154. Have you thought at all as to the best legislative procedure?—I have not thought over the matter. I think a good system of legislation is the one that has been recently adopted in the matter of the Civil Procedure Code, to lay down general principles and allow the Local Administrations to more or less shape their own course, once the main general principles are inaugurated.

27155. There are the two courses of a general Act of delegation and a special Act for special purposes; have you any opinion about that?—No, I am afraid I have not considered it.

27156. Would you be in favour of a general Act subject to notification?—Yes.

27157. As regards the question of proportionate pensions; standing alone, do you think that that might affect recruitment, as affecting the prospects of officers in the Service?—I do not think it would necessarily affect recruitment; the number of candidates who crave for Government service at present shows no sign of falling off.

27158. But you have not got the proportionate pensions now?—Even if you had, I do not think it would affect recruitment.

27159. Any effect of that sort could be counterbalanced by improving the pensions of men who succeed?—Yes, that would quite counterbalance it.

27160. The Berar Revenue Act is the Bombay Act practically, is it not?—Practically.

27161. Do you know Section 11 of the Act which provides power to enable the Collector to delegate all or any of his powers to his Assistant, subject to revision or appeal. Suppose he delegates the powers of punishment of a clerk up to Rs. 35 to his Assistant; the result is that the man is punished by one officer and gets one appeal; is not that all that is necessary?—That had never been done in Berar. The Collector in Bombay delegates his power to the Assistant to punish a clerk, and then there is an appeal to the Collector; at present, in Berar, the Deputy Commissioner only exercises that power.

27162. You think that an Assistant Collector is competent to punish a clerk?—Yes.

27163. And that one appeal is sufficient?—Yes.

27164. So that the provisions of the Act might apply in that way?—Yes; that has not occurred to people in Berar.

27165. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) With reference to the reduction of the districts in Berar from 6 to 4, is that an instance of an order of the Supreme Government imposed on the province in opposition to all local opinion?—The matter came down from the Supreme Government, and a Committee was appointed to carry out this reduction; the Central Provinces Government, who had just taken over Berar, had no local opinion of their own on the matter; the local opinion of Berar was very much against the reduction.

27166. Are you aware whether that was ever represented to the Government of India?—I do not think it was represented to the Government of India, unless possibly a telegram may have been sent up by somebody; there was no real representation.

27167. So far as you are aware the order was given without any local enquiry at all?—I think so; an officer came down from the Government of India and submitted a preliminary report; he came down and looked round to see what could be done, and on his report, after the settlement was come to with His Highness the Nizam, the matter was passed.

27168. You think that that was a mistake that will have to be rectified?—Subject to what I have said—that you might go on and try the effect of further sub-divisions and a greater number of them—you might get on with your four districts, but certainly, with the sub-divisional system that we have at present, it is extremely hard work for the Deputy Commissioner in the two larger districts of Amraoti and Akola.

27169. As to a Public Works Department budget in the hands of the Commissioner, do you not think that one effect of that would be that he would consult with the Heads of Departments?—Certainly.

27170. And that would be useful in promoting an understanding and co-ordinating matters?—Yes.

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27171. Is it admitted that it is of great importance to preserve the peculiar institutions and customs of Berar?—I think so undoubtedly.

27172. Are you satisfied with the arrangements that have been made for securing that?—Yes, a Berar officer has been appointed Secretary. He deals with the revenue matters which are peculiar to Berar. Other matters, although they may be peculiar to Berar, are dealt with in other departments.

27173. You do not think there is any objection to that?—I think not; in some matters, such as the Municipal Boards and District Boards and matters of that kind, I should prefer to see one Municipal Act and one District Boards Act; they are practically the same in every detail, and I would rather have one set of rules.

27174. That would be doing no violence to the peculiar constitution of Berar?—Not at all; it has been suggested that some violence would be done, but it was merely sentimental; I think no violence would be done in that respect.

27175. Section 11 of your Land Revenue Code in the Central Provinces provides that the Chief Commissioner may invest an Assistant Commissioner attached to a district with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner; is there any corresponding section to that in the Berar Law?—There is a corresponding section; the Commissioner there invests: the Deputy Commissioner may invest, but as a matter of fact it is done with the approval of the Commissioner; I think that is how the rules put it.

27176. Are you satisfied with that?—It is quite sufficient. The Deputy Commissioner as a matter of fact might do it off his own bat in most cases.

27177. Would there be no objection to that?—There would be no objection to allowing that. The Deputy Commissioner knows really more about the officers than the Commissioner does; he gives these powers under the Land Revenue Code; the section reads that the Deputy Commissioner "may" invest, but he does it with the approval of the Commissioner.

27178. Would there be any objection to his differentiating between his Assistants according to their seniority and capacity?—It is necessary. In some cases you get a man who is newly appointed or newly promoted; you give him certain powers to begin with, and, as he gains experience and shows that he is worthy of them, you entrust him with further powers.

27179. Some people think it is invidious?—I do not think it need be.

27180. Is there not a very distinct village constitution in Berar which you do not find in the Central Provinces?—Yes; you have the *patel* with the *patelki* families, and you have the cultivating classes and then the *mahars* and the outcastes.

27181. You have mentioned the *patelki* families: do they not constitute a sort of aristocracy in the village out of which the panchayat would be chosen?—Yes, you might have a panchayat out of the *patelki* families if there is a sufficient number of them; in some places you have only a one-man family you may say. In Berar the *patelki* has been practically recognised in the direct succession; the *patels* are lineal headmen.

27182. But the collaterals would assist?—Yes

27183. The panchayat could be formed from these people?—That is the only way you could tack it on to the *patelki* institution.

27184. Would you agree that if we are to get any popular help in the work of Government the basis should be the village panchayat?—I think so undoubtedly.

27185. Have you any system for promoting Co-operative Credit Societies in Berar?—There has been something done in one district; I have not yet seen it.

27186. Have you got a Registrar of Co-operative Credit Societies?—No, there is the Central Provinces Registrar who does both the Central Provinces and Berar.

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27187. Suppose you have a Registrar, what would you say to giving him cognizance of the village panchayats as well, and as he goes about the country expecting him to encourage the panchayat movement?—I see no objection whatever to that.

27188. One of the witnesses to-day from Berar told us that the rules for touring lay down four months for the Deputy Commissioner and two months for the Assistant Commissioner, is that so?—I have not seen the rules yet. It may be the rule, but I have not seen it. It is not followed. The Assistant Commissioner stays out practically the whole four months—the whole of the cold weather.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Adjourned.

FORTY-SECOND DAY.

NAGPUR. *Saturday, 8th February,* 1908.

PRESENT:

C. E. H. HOBHOUSE, Esq., M.P., Under-Secretary of State for India, *Chairman.*

Sir FREDERIC LELY, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Sir STEYNING EDGERLEY, K.C.V.O., C.I.E., I.C.S.
R. C. DUTT, Esq., C.I.E.
W. S. MEYER, Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S.
W. L. HICHENS, Esq.

Mr. J. WALKER, I.C.S., was called and examined.

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27189. (*Chairman.*) You are officiating as Commissioner at Nagpur?—Yes.

I would not give provincial Governments independent borrowing powers. Such powers would be inconsistent with the absolute nature of the imperial authority and of its responsibility for all public services, which makes an imperial guarantee inevitable. Even if the imperial guarantee could be avoided, the loss owing to the difference in the market price on issue, and in the rate of interest carried, of imperial and provincial bonds would be much greater than any facility of issue would be worth.

There is some scope for the relaxation of the restrictions as to details imposed upon Local Governments by law and by rules having the force of law, *e.g.*, the power to disforest reserved forest under Section 26 of the Forest Act, which the Local Government can, at present, exercise only with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council. Each set of relaxations under particular Acts should be considered by the Legislature, after consulting Local Governments on its merits, and should be dealt with by specific amending legislation and not by a general Act of delegation.

The influence of the departments of the Government of India is not in the direction of excessive rigidity. There is perhaps some risk in the direction of uniformity if the department happens to be manned too exclusively by officers whose previous training has been in a single province. It should not be possible for the views of a Local Government to be overruled by a department, as distinguished from the Governor-General in Council.

The work of imperial inspecting officers is of use in collating the degree of success attained by different administrative methods in different provinces after examination of these methods in actual working and in advising Local Governments as to the comparative standard of success obtained and as to possible variations of method. Their function should be purely advisory with no direct authority.

I do not consider that the existing right of appeal requires curtailment.

A genuine effort has been made to keep down the demand for returns and other reports from Local Governments. If the attempt has not been altogether successful, this is merely due to the development of the country and to the necessarily increased complexity of the administration.

There is much scope for the extension of revenue powers of Commissioners of divisions. In some minor points, such as the remission of irrecoverable land revenue and *takavi*, they might be given larger powers. As regards the grant of mining leases and licenses, when experience has crystallised into fuller rules there will be a considerable devolution of authority both to Commissioners and to Deputy Commissioners.

Any decentralization measures should have in view the retention of all possible authority within the limits of a district rather than that of a division. The more the principle that the district is the unit of administration is acted on in practice the better. It is desirable that a good District Officer should have a free hand as far as possible and that this should be apparent to his charge. Commissioners can keep in sufficient touch with their District Officers to control the general executive policy followed by them. Our existing system of administration is generally in accordance with this principle. The cases in which the Deputy Commissioner requires the previous sanction of the Commissioner are mostly of a class in which such reference is not inappropriate. But the following matters seem to me to be susceptible of improvement. The District Officers should, as far as possible, be the first appellate authority for revenue decisions of his subordinates. The investiture with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner of the majority of Sub-Divisional Officers has eliminated the Deputy Commissioner from the disposal of many classes of cases which ought to be settled up to first appeal or even second appeal within the district, *e.g.*, *kotwar* and *lambardar* cases. The Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts should be altered so as to empower Deputy Commissioners to deal with appeals from all officers subordinate to them under Section 6 (2) of the Land Revenue Act. This may involve some devolution of authority from the Deputy Commissioner to his Assistants and from Assistants to tahsildars, and in the large districts probably some strengthening of staff, but the principle is worth it.

The powers of Commissioners and of Deputy Commissioners and their subordinates regarding matters of general administration are on the whole adequate. It would be well to restore the Deputy Commissioner to the position of technical "Court of Wards" of his district. This would increase his influence in Court of Wards matters generally. He might be given increased financial powers to

sanction petty unusual expenditure and to make budget re-appropriations.

The present power of control over expenditure in divisions and districts exercised by Commissioners and Collectors is, on the whole, adequate.

The provincial Secretariat is not given to adopt a too purely departmental point of view. Such a tendency is not likely to be exhibited when each Secretary deals with several distinct departments of the administration. This, however, is not the case with the Public Works Department, which is unique in having a separate Secretariat of its own. Such an arrangement makes for a spirit of departmentalism, and I am not at all sure that it is the only possible course.

I do not think that there is anything to complain of regarding the sufficiency of the Commissioner's influence in matters appertaining to Departments other than Land Revenue. But the administration of the Public Works Department should be brought into line with that of other departments, and worked on the basis of the district being the unit of administration. It has been found possible to make the equally technical Medical and Forest Departments integral parts of the district administration under the general control of the District Officer, and such control would be equally salutary in engineering matters and could be exercised with no more interference in technical subjects than in these departments. When the Executive Engineer's charge extends to more than one district, the matter can be arranged as in similar instances in the Forest Department.

Executive Officers have as a rule sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people. The amount of time that can be spared for the purpose of interviews is somewhat limited by the pressure of regular official duties, and in the larger places it is often difficult to receive Indian gentlemen except at a good deal of inconvenience as to hours of working. Opportunities for contact are also afforded on tour. It is not the amount of opportunities for contact, but the quality of the contact possible that is defective. Owing to the difference of manners and social customs between East and West, social intercourse between officials and the leading gentlemen of the country is limited, and the opportunities for the candid interchange of ideas which such intercourse affords are largely lost. This obstacle is most difficult of removal, and can only be gradually removed by change of manners, more especially in respect of the education and liberty of women.

Executive Officers generally possess sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars.

The executive staff has been repeatedly increased, but, as work tends to become more complicated and contentious, the increases can never quite keep abreast of the needs. It may be said generally in the Central Provinces that the areas of tahsildars' charges are somewhat too large. This point is recognised. District charges vary very much in area and in general burden of work. As the Chanda district develops it will undoubtedly require to be divided. Probably some division of Nagpur may be advisable. When the district headquarters is a large centre, and particularly when it is the capital of a province, it is desirable that the *mufassal* portion of the District Officer's charge should not be very large or important.

A very strict application of the principle of selection to the appointment of officers to the charge of districts would tend to diminish the attractiveness of the Indian Civil Service as a whole. In any case it would not be possible to arrange that the charge of the districts should be always held by officers whose experience, judgment and temperament are such that a closer and more local supervision of their administration of their charges than can be exercised by the Local Government is not essential. Such supervision is to be exercised by Commissioners, and their authority and power of control in all matters of administration should be of the fullest, but should take the shape, as far as it is not exercised executively, of appellate or revisional power rather than of original orders.

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Of late years, at any rate, all possible care has been taken to avoid the unnecessary transfers of officers. I do not see how transfers can be reduced, but as the Indian element in the *personnel* of the staff increases, transfers will be less frequently necessary, as these officers require less leave than European officers.

The existing powers of municipalities, District Councils, and Local Boards are on the whole sufficient. There has been less a lack of statutory power than a lack of reality of its exercise by the non-official members of these bodies. This defect has its root in a first cause which, while it exists, must entirely prevent any reality of local self-government, *viz.*, the want of any electorate interested in such government. Members of local or municipal bodies must be subject to the control either of their constituents or to that of Government, and so long as the constituencies (or rather the small portion of them that interests itself in the subject) cannot be regarded as in any sense voicing the feelings of the bulk of the ratepayers, the preponderating control must be that of Government. It is easy enough to stimulate the interest of members by giving them larger powers; the real difficulty is to stimulate the interest of the electors so that they, rather than Government, should control the conduct of their representatives. If this stage were reached, it would be well worth the cost of a certain amount of mismanagement to give elected bodies the fullest powers even though the bulk of Indian ratepayers may regard the easing of direct taxation as cheaply bought at the cost of increased dirt and disease. But this stage has not been approached even in municipalities.

I would not extend the functions of local bodies at present.

I am not in favour of formally appointing unofficial gentlemen as advisers or councillors to District or Divisional Officers. I do not think that the fact of formal appointment would induce the gentlemen best qualified to advise to give more assistance than they do at present. It would be impossible and unwieldy to appoint everyone worth consulting, and the distinction between those who have to be formally consulted and those who could be only informally consulted at discretion would be invidious. The matter is best left to the discretion of Divisional and District Officers at least until electoral control of local bodies is more real.

It would be most inexpedient and retrograde to invest District Boards with powers of supervision and control over any municipalities. It would be a mistake to subject more truly representative bodies to the control of less representative ones, though the latter may happen to have charge of larger affairs.

If truly elective panchayats could be obtained for small groups of villages, they would form a good basis for a system of local self-government. The main difficulty would be in stimulating sufficient interest on the part of the body of electors in the constitution and doings of such panches without assigning to these panches functions for which they are hardly suitable. For example, if panches are given petty civil and criminal powers, we get a system whereby judges hold their office by election, and it is the foreign idea of electoral Government that has to be taught. Also when a community has acquired the congenial habit of taking their petty disputes into regular Courts, the denial of this form of relief would be felt to be a hardship, however wholesome it was in reality. Still, on the whole some such system is worth elaborating and trying in a selected locality.

27190. Are you in agreement with the previous witness, who told us that he thought some greater latitude had been given with regard to mining leases and licenses?—Yes; I have now authority to grant prospecting licenses up to one square mile, provided there is no question of principle involved. A Mining Manual is under preparation, and when it comes out probably a good deal more power will be given to the Deputy Commissioner.

27191. What is the area of your division?—About 24,000 square miles. It includes five districts.

27192. Are you of opinion that Sub-Divisional Officers should reside at their sub-divisional headquarters?—Where the headquarters include any

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town of importance they ought to reside there, but I would not make it the invariable rule, because there are some parts where their health would not stand it, and sometimes a district is not well placed or constituted for having a Sub-Divisional Officer living there. One has found it of advantage to live throughout the year in two districts in this province, and we have had them living in the sub-divisions for a long time.

27193. As a rule do Deputy Commissioners do their work well?—Yes; the average is quite satisfactory, and you very seldom find a man who is not quite fit.

27194. If it were necessary at any time to make a practice of retiring or selecting officers for promotion, at what period of their service would you commence the work of selection?—After about ten years' service; some men qualify or ripen more slowly than others.

27195. But after ten years' service you would begin to reject?—Yes; some rejection would be necessary and it would be easier if recognised, but dismissal is a very serious thing. There is nothing between dismissal and retirement on pension.

27196. Would it improve the service if selection were insisted upon?—I would rather have rejection rising to the grade of District Officer, and strict selection for that of Commissioner.

27197. Do you, as a Commissioner, ever hold conferences with your District Officers?—Yes, practically one has most of them in conference, but there is no fixed conference. There is no formal practice of the sort.

27198. Would it be a good thing to do?—Yes; there might be a regulation or rule, but there is an irregular practice which we have during what we call the Commission week, when certainly the great bulk of the officials do come in.

27199. Do they all meet together, or do you take each man in turn separately?—Not together; but we had a meeting of all the Deputy Commissioners and the Commissioners in Nagpur during the last Commission week, at which the Chief Commissioner was present. I take them separately sometimes.

27200. You get annual Administration Reports from the Deputy Commissioners. Are those separate reports on each subject, or a different report for each district?—Separate reports on each subject.

27201. Would it not be better to consolidate those subjects in one report?—That would not be practicable. For general purposes, what we call the Revenue Report serves the purpose.

27202. Would it not be better to have a short paragraph on each subject embodied in one report, instead of a separate report on each subject?—It would tend to simplify the amount of writing in each special department, but the periods would have to be synchronised—for instance, the Forest Report begins on the 1st July.

27203. Would it be very difficult to get them all running concurrently?—No.

27204. Do you post your subordinates?—I post and transfer tahsildars and naib-tahsildars.

27205. Would it be well that you should have the power of both posting and transferring your Assistant Commissioners?—Yes, when once they are assigned to a division by the Chief Commissioner—having got them, a Commissioner might transfer them.

27206. Generally speaking could the powers of municipalities, District Councils, and Local Boards be increased?—There is not much scope for increasing their powers which are very full, especially to municipalities; the control is very complete over them, but they have the power.

27207. Is the control too close?—I do not think so.

27208. Does the system of non-official Chairmen work well?—Very well indeed where we have it, such as in Nagpur for instance.

27209. Does the practice work well with regard to District Councils?—Yes.

27210. Is it practically universal over the Central Provinces?—Yes; the Chairman is generally a non-official, and if it is not the Chairman it is the Secretary.

27211. You are not in favour of Advisory or Administrative Councils?—No, not formally constituted.

27212. Things would be better left to informal consultation?—That is my opinion.

27213. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Do you think, other things being equal, a Sub-Divisional Officer should live in his sub-division?—In a good many cases he might live there permanently.

27214. In cases where there are reasons against it, would you approve of providing him with a house in his sub-division, simply furnished, and expect him to make occasional visits there?—It would be an excellent thing to let him have a house where he could live for a part of the year, and the mere fact of his being resident in that way would bring him into closer touch with the people who would know where to find him, while as it is he moves about in tents.

27215. Is it the custom in the Central Provinces, when the Deputy Commissioner goes away for three months, to put in a man on the spot, if possible, irrespective of seniority?—Yes.

27216. Would you extend the period from three months to, say, six months in order to prevent change?—Yes, but you would have to consider qualifications a little more strictly.

27217. But if a man was fairly equal to the position, although he was junior, you would put him in for six months?—Yes, I think so.

27218. Supposing a Deputy Commissionership fell vacant this month, and it was well known that the next man on the list intended taking furlough in a short time, would you approve of passing him over?—Yes, after giving him an opportunity of foregoing his furlough.

27219. Or, to put it in another way, would you approve, when a man is put in as Head of a district, of getting from him an undertaking to remain there for, say, three years?—Yes.

27220. That would not be an unreasonable condition to make?—No, not as a general rule; it would depend of course on what the officer had been employed on before.

27221. Have you any suggestion to make for reducing the number of transfers?—No; barring what you have mentioned, we do what we can to prevent that. I know in arranging tahsildars' leave and that kind of thing one keeps it well in mind.

27222. What is your opinion of tahsildars as a body?—They are a very useful body of men, and their tone is distinctly improving.

27223. On the whole are tahsildars equal to their position?—Yes; on the whole; their position is a difficult one.

27224. Are they generally efficient and honest?—Yes, I should say nowadays they are.

27225. In the case of false rumours spreading in the country have they sufficient intelligence and loyalty to combat such rumours as far as they can?—There are some men, of course, whom one is not quite sure about, but the generality of our tahsildars do act properly in that respect.

27226. Do they recognise that as one of their duties?—Yes.

27227. Do they recognise that their duties are not merely to sit at a table and try cases, but to explain to the people the motives and intentions of Government?—Yes, I think they do as a whole, and we impress it upon them.

27228. Are patwaris, as a class, fairly efficient?—In this division they are fairly efficient.

27229. Are they sufficiently paid?—No, and there is difficulty now in recruiting them.

27230. That, of course, has its effect?—Yes, it is beginning to tell very much.

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27231. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Does general appeal work give you much trouble?—It takes up a fair amount of time, but it is not at all pressing; it is not the burden of the work, it is the principle of the thing.

27232. Should the present right of appeal be curtailed?—No, not the right of appeal.

27233. You say the Public Works Department should be brought more into line with the other departments such as the Medical Department and the Forest Department. To some extent the Forest Officer and the Medical Officer are subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes, that is quite understood.

27234. Do you recommend that the Public Works Officer should occupy the same position with regard to the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

27235. When repairs of roads are taken in hand from year to year, does the Deputy Commissioner always know which particular works are going to be taken up?—He is not informed as to how much money exactly is going to be spent, or whether it is to be transferred from one road to another. He ought to be informed of any changes, but first of all, of course, of what is going to be spent.

27236. Supposing he disapproved of the change, would you allow the Public Works Officer to go on with it, or would you have him modify his programme?—I should require him either to do the latter or to refer it to a higher authority, but practically it hardly ever arises, if the matter was talked over on the understanding that the Collector was the Head of the district and the other man was in a subordinate position.

27237. The Deputy Commissioner would be expected to know more of the requirements of traffic than the Public Works Officer, and for that reason his view ought to be consulted as to the works which should be taken in hand?—Yes.

27238. Is the number of *tahsils* now in your district sufficiently large?—There might be scope for perhaps one or two more. I have sanction for one more in Nagpur, and there might be another in Balaghat. Then there is Chanda with one tahsil of about 3,500 square miles.

27239. In Berar there are two or three tahsils in one sub-division, whereas in the Central Provinces the *tahsils* are about the same area as the sub-divisions?—In the Central Provinces *tahsils* have been formally declared sub-divisions, but the Berar *taluk* is a much smaller area.

27240. Is the lack of interest taken by the members of District Boards partly due to the fact that their resources are very limited?—Yes, that is undoubtedly one reason.

27241. And that a good part of their income is made over to different departments for carrying on their work?—Yes.

27242. Do you approve of the scheme of a Divisional Engineer to do the District Board work in all the districts in a division?—Yes, as an alternative to having one for each district.

27243. Would that be an improvement on the present system of having the big works done by the Public Works Department?—Yes. We have had a man actually in my division for two months, and he has given a lot of useful advice.

27244. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Would you be in favour of increasing the powers of the Local Boards?—Yes, as far as possible.

27245. Would you give them, for instance, independent financial resources?—I would let the District Council make them allotments; in fact, that is now being done.

27246. But you would not give them a definite share of the cess?—No. That was considered by the Select Committee, which reported against it. I think their reason was that the amounts would be so small.

27247. But supposing the funds of a district generally were substantially increased, might it be a good thing to give them more financial responsibility?—Certainly; you might make them independent; the Act allows us to do it, but we have never done so.

27248. Would you regard a District Board then in the same light as now?—It would become what it was at one time intended to be, an Advisory Council.

27249. Would local interests be better served if the Local Boards were considered independent and looked after their own affairs?—They would if we could make our Local Board more fully representative.

27250. Could you get enough good men in each *tahsil* to deal with local affairs?—In most *tahsils*, but certainly not in all.

27251. On the whole, would you be in favour of abolishing District Boards except as advisory bodies?—Yes, I should like to give as much power as low down as possible.

27252. In that case, should not the Local Board have the whole of the cess without its having to be allocated by the District Board?—Undoubtedly; it would come to that.

27253. Are you of opinion that transfers are undesirably frequent?—They are unfortunately frequent.

27254. How long do you think it would be desirable to keep an officer of the rank of a Deputy Commissioner in one district?—Five years.

27255. Would that be the limit?—Yes; after five years he may move on.

27256. Is that on the ground that you think he would be stale after five years?—Yes, he would get parochial in one district.

27257. Would it be possible to establish the principle that a man's training should be as wide as possible until he reached the stage of Deputy Commissioner, and then as he has got breadth of view and experience he should settle down, say, for 10 years, if possible, in one place?—Yes.

27258. If that were the principle, would it be desirable in his junior years that he should obtain experience of several provinces?—After a certain amount of experience in one province it might be useful, but it would tend to confuse him at first.

27259. Supposing he went for two years to another province to see how the work was being done there, would that be a good thing?—It would be of advantage in that way.

27260. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Suppose a District Council became an advisory body purely, what would its functions be?—To advise on general questions of administration; if it did not have the allotment of the funds, it would certainly be of very little practical good. I do not think there would be very much left.

27261. Would it be worth while having a District Council with no administrative powers and no financial powers, but simply to express views and opinions to Local Boards?—But still one desires to link the different Local Boards together in some way.

27262. In Madras Local Boards have powers and resources, but the District Boards have larger powers and resources; would you be prepared to carry that out here?—I do not quite remember the details of the Madras system, but if it was possible still to leave the District Board something really to justify its existence one would be glad.

27263. In that case it would have to get some income, either by contribution from the Local Boards, or independently?—Yes. There is the Government contribution.

27264. It has been suggested that the roads which are now mainly provincial, might be made over to the District Councils, their funds being increased for the purpose; would you be in favour of that?—I have never thought that over, and on the whole I would be in favour of it, as helping them with their engineering staff.

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27265. Would you be in favour of giving the Commissioner a budget of his own for Public Works purposes?—Yes.

27266. Would you allow Commissioners, within budget allotments, to make small permanent or temporary appointments?—They might do so.

27267. Would you allow them to appoint tahsildars and naib-tahsildars?—No; that is much better kept as a provincial matter, but in practice the Commissioners do settle it now in conference with the Chief Commissioner. We draw up a list of candidates and settle their order, and the Chief Commissioner decides it.

27268. Then what is the objection to giving each Commissioner his own appointments to make?—That makes promotion unequal in different divisions.

27269. You cannot appoint naib-tahsildars at present?—No, not permanently.

27270. Would you give Commissioners power, *subject to conditions of fitness laid down by the* Local Government and in consultation with the Judges, to invest their officers with magisterial powers?—Yes; the Commissioner might very well have that power.

27271. You say that the local bodies have sufficient powers, but is it not the fact that for every re-appropriation of the budget they have to come up to you?—Yes.

27272. Is that necessary?—No; that is very much all detail.

27273. It is all these details that make up the amount of work?—Yes.

27274. Is it necessary that they should come up to you for every re-appropriation of their budget?—I do not think it hampers them very seriously; one likes to keep control of the budget.

27275. At present they have to send up re-appropriations, not merely from one major head to another, but from sub-heads. What is to be gained by that?—I think as to sub-heads it is not necessary.

27276. At present every work that costs over Rs. 500 has to come up to you for sanction; is there much gained by that?—I think it is Rs. 500 as to the Deputy Commissioner and Rs. 1,000 as to the Commissioner in the case of municipalities and Local Boards.

27277. Might these limits be raised?—Certainly. I would suggest Rs. 5,000.

27278. Are some of your municipalities quite *small bodies?—Yes, with incomes of Rs. 6,000 or* Rs. 7,000.

27279. Is it desirable to keep them as formal municipalities, or might they not be put under the District Boards?—But there is more reality of local self-government in a municipality than there is in a Local Board, and they do take an interest in the administration.

27280. It has been stated that the District Boards will hereafter practically have no control over the veterinary work although they will have to pay, and it has been suggested that it would be better to let the provincial Government take it over altogether; do you agree with that?—Yes; in fact, I recommended that it should be done on the same lines as the medical dispensaries.

27281. Do they contribute to the medical dispensaries?—Yes, but Government finds the staff.

27282. Have District Councils anything to say in the management of dispensaries; are they not practically managed by the Civil Surgeon?—Yes; they do not pay very much, perhaps Rs. 200 a year.

27283. Is it a sound principle of local self-government that a District Council should pay for matters which it has no control over?—Not entirely, but I do not think the giving of a small amount of Rs. 150 or Rs. 200 towards an institution which is managed by a local committee, like a dispensary, is improper.

27284. Are these grants compulsory?—No; when a new dispensary is proposed, the Council is consulted, and asked for a grant; if they refused it would fall through.

27285. Supposing a municipality were asked to contribute and they said they had no funds and refused?—If they said "We cannot afford to pay this extra Rs. 200 and there is no need for a dispensary there," it would be considered.

27286. Does most of the appeal work go to the District Magistrate as a rule and not to the Sub-Divisional Magistrate?—Except in large districts.

27287. Might not the Sub-Divisional Officer take appeals from 2nd and 3rd Class Magistrates?—Yes, he might; I have recommended that in the Nagpur district, and it has been approved.

27288. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) You think that relaxation under particular Acts should be dealt with by separate legislation and not by an Act of delegation; is that your final opinion on the point?—No; on thinking it over, I think a general Act of delegation would be quite unobjectionable, provided there is some provision as to notification for objections and a period allowed.

27289. Your present belief is that a district should be the unit of administration; does not that involve, as well as delegation to the Deputy Commissioner, a full staff below him and placing the power so far below him as is safe?—Yes.

27290. With an appellate and revisionary power in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes.

27291. It involves rather a fuller staff of assistants than you really have?—Yes, a little, but it is not such a serious thing as it sounds.

27292. Would you hold the same principle as regards the Commissioner and that he should have every power that could possibly be given him without disadvantage to the administration?—Yes.

27293. And you would relieve the Chief Commissioner in that way?—Yes.

27294. You think there should be some system of proportionate pensions for officers who do not succeed, and you hinted that that might possibly diminish the attractiveness of the Service; could you not counterbalance that by improving the prospects of those who succeed?—I meant if selection to charge of districts were as strict as selection to charge of divisions.

27295. Would a scheme of proportionate pensions *pro tanto* decrease the attractiveness of the Service?—If it were the rule and not the exception.

27296. Could you not counterbalance that by improving the prospects, at the end, of those who succeed?—Yes.

27297. With regard to Local Boards, is what is chiefly required an interest on the part of the electorate?—Yes.

27298. If a Board had power of taxation, would that be secured in any degree?—Yes, it would tend to vivify the interest of the electors.

27299. Is not that one of the main differences between a municipality and a District Board?—Yes, but our Local Boards do not profess to be a popular representative body; they are elected by the *mukaddams* or village headmen, which does not make it a popular body.

27300. Would it be a good change to make it popular?—I think we ought to try.

27301. If that were done, would you give them powers of taxation?—After the elective principle is established, I would.

27302. Suppose effect was given to your suggestion that Local Boards should be independent, would it be possible, as a next step, to make the District Council a general Local Self-Government Council in the district exercising all the needful control over Local Boards and municipalities?—Yes, we might work up to that.

27303. That would furnish a sufficient amount of work, would it not?—Yes, an interesting work.

27304. Were you on the preliminary committee prior to the Police Commission?—Yes.

27305. With regard to the results of the Police Commission had you not to put up with considerable restriction in the matter of head constables and railway police?—Yes.

27306. The views that were enforced were not in those respects at all what you thought the requirements of the province demanded?—There were restrictions of what we asked for; some concessions were made, and we got a working basis.

27307. You finally came to a compromise?—Yes.

27308. At present is there a charge made for the use of the Government Engineer if he does Local Government work?—There is a percentage for establishment, tools and plant on works done by the Public Works Department unless the Chief Commissioner remits it.

27309. Would not a general remission of that charge be a very suitable grant to Local Boards?—Yes, but it would vary of course; it is remitted wholesale in some districts.

27310. If those services were given free, an alternative to the Divisional Engineer would be to have a Government Engineer or an Assistant Engineer in each district who would be practically at the disposal of the Local Board?—He would be under the Collector.

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27311. Would that be more efficient?—I think it would be very advantageous.

27312. Would it be popular?—Quite.

27313. And it would save the duplication of establishments?—Yes.

27314. You say you think that the powers of the Local Government in the Central Provinces should be the same as in Bombay?—Yes; I am not very well aware of the exact conditions of the powers.

27315. The constitution is very different?—Yes, but what struck me was that equally advanced parts of the country ought to have the same system.

27316. Do you think you ought to alter the constitution of the Chief Commissionership?—I think he ought at least to be able to have a Legislative Council.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Colonel P. A. Weir, I.M.S., was called and examined.

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27317. (*Chairman.*) You are Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals?—Yes; I have charge as Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals of the medical arrangements, and I am Sanitary Commissioner,—I am both just now.

The Head of the Medical Department might have somewhat greater powers than he at present has in regard to certain points; the delegation would save much time and correspondence both to the Secretariat and to the office of the Inspector-General.

The Executive Officers of the Medical Department have sufficient opportunities for personal contact with the people and as a rule they possess a sufficient knowledge of the vernaculars, except in the case of Mahrathi, with which some of them are not well acquainted.

I consider an increase in the administrative staff necessary, this being effected by the appointment of a whole-time Sanitary Commissioner, as it is impossible for one man to carry out, as they should be, the double duties of Inspector-General of Hospitals and of Sanitary Commissioner in a province of the size and population of the Central Provinces and Berar; those before the amalgamation of the provinces were two whole-time appointments. The executive work in Berar further demands at least one more Civil Surgeon; but this would depend on that division being broken up into 5 instead of the present 4 districts.

The gazetted staff of the Medical Department in the Central Provinces includes 16 Commissioned Officers, 1 Uncovenanted Medical Officer, 10 Military Assistant Surgeons and 15 Civil Assistant Surgeons. The 16 Indian Medical Service Officers include the Inspector-General and 15 Civil Surgeons; the Uncovenanted Medical Officer is a Civil Surgeon; the 10 Military Assistant Surgeons include 2 Assistants to Civil Surgeons, 2 Sub-divisional Medical Officers, and 6 Civil Surgeons. Of the 15 Assistant Surgeons, one is a Civil Surgeon. The others are in more or less independent charge of main or branch Dispensaries. The duties of the department include the medical and sanitary charge of the districts and the sub-divisions, the registration of vital statistics, and the carrying out of vaccination; also the management of the two lunatic and one leper asylum, and the superintendence of several meteorological observatories.

In his present appointment the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals exercises administrative control over the medical, sanitary and vaccination work of the province; he visits and inspects as many of the medical institutions as practicable, all the lunatic asylums, the leper asylum, the jails, and as many of the municipalities in the provinces as he can each year, and records minutes in all cases. He also presides over the meeting of the Sanitary Board in each district. He recommends to the Local Government the posting of Civil Surgeons and the appointment of Assistant Surgeons, and also deals in the first instance with applications from them for leave. He posts Assistant Surgeons and transfers them; appoints, promotes and deals generally with the Hospital Assistant staff. He takes every opportunity of inspecting vaccination work.

27318. Is there such a thing as a Sanitary Board in this province?—There is supposed to be a Sanitary Board. When I go out on tour I see the Commissioner and hold meetings of a so-called Sanitary Board, but it is not really a Board.

27319. There is no Sanitary Board for the whole province?—No, not such as there is in the United Provinces and Madras.

27320. How is the sanitary control of the district managed; is there a committee to help you?—There is no committee to help me.

27321. If a sanitary scheme come up from a municipality, how does it reach you?—Sanitary schemes as a rule do not come up from the municipalities to me.

27322. Do they come up from the District Councils?—They do not.

27323. You have a sanitary scheme for Nagpur; did that come under your consideration as Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals?—It did not.

27324. Did it go to anybody in the province for examination?—So far as I know, it did not.

27325. Is there any use then in having a Sanitary Department in the province or having a Sanitary Commissioner?—Yes, I think there may be at headquarters.

27326. What use is he if he does not examine any sanitary schemes?—On tour he inspects the sanitary state of the villages and towns, and makes any recommendations that he thinks proper, and sends them in to the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner for any action that they may choose to take; he has no power to enforce his opinions in regard to the carrying out of any schemes he may suggest.

27327. Are not the sanitary schemes for either a municipality or a District Board sent to the Sanitary Commissioner for his recommendations?—Not as a matter of course.

27328. Are they as a matter of fact?—Sometimes.

27329. You still think that there is great use in the Sanitary Commissioner for the Central Provinces?—I think there would be.

27330. Do you see anything of the Director-General of the Indian Medical Service?—I have seen him once since I came here.

27331. Are you brought much into official contact with him?—Not very much

27332. Does he interfere in your administrative work at all?—No.

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27333. Does he give you any help at all?—I very rarely have to refer to him.

27334. How long have you been Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals here?—Since October, 1905.

27335. You have to send all applications for leave to the Director-General?—Yes. He disposes of them; says whether he can send a man in place of the man going on leave; if he can, we let our man go; if not, we have to make other arrangements.

27336. Has he ever refused to assent to an officer's leave?—No, he has said that, so far as he is concerned, the officer may have leave provided we made local arrangements.

27337. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) When you go to a district, you convene a Sanitary Committee of some sort?—Yes.

27338. Of whom does it consist?—There is the Deputy Commissioner, the Civil Surgeon, the Chairman of the District Council, and the President of any Municipal Committee that the Deputy Commissioner may choose to ask to come.

27339. What are the subjects that you ordinarily discuss?—The first thing that is brought up is what sanitary works have been carried out since the last meeting. These sanitary works invariably have to deal with only water-supply.

27340. Is it part of your duty to call together that committee in every district you visit?—Yes, if possible.

27341. You speak of the difficulty of inspection; do you mean inspection of dispensaries and hospitals?—I cannot go round to all dispensaries in the province and see them all, as I should.

27342. Is the Inspector-General of Prisons a Medical Officer?—Yes.

27343. Could he not help you in that sort of inspection?—He could only inspect at headquarters.

27344. Could you not lighten the inspection work in that way?—I doubt that very much, because he only goes to headquarters; he has to inspect jails, and I, as Sanitary Commissioner, have to inspect medical institutions; he does not go across country, so to speak.

27345. Have you any medical schools in the province?—No.

27346. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You desire to have the first appointment of Assistant Surgeons; have they not to be taken from certain medical institutions?—No. Other things being equal, we should take men who have been educated at the expense of the Central Provinces.

27347. Your Local Government appoints at present?—Yes.

27348. Are there no restrictions; surely they must have some sort of medical training?—Of course the man has to be qualified; we take a man who has the degree of L.M.S. of one of the Indian Universities; I do not think there is any other qualification necessary.

27349. The Local Government has full discretion within that limit?—So far as I know.

27350. You also desire to have full power of posting and transferring Civil Surgeons?—Yes.

27351. The amenities and the lucrative possibilities of civil stations differ very materially, and it might be rather a serious responsibility, occasionally, to post a man?—Yes.

27352. Should the Chief Commissioner have no say in that?—Ultimately he would have the say entirely, but I think probably less weight is given to my recommendations than might be desirable.

27353. At present you submit your proposals and the Chief Commissioner deals with them?—Yes.

27354. You desire to do the thing straight away, and that the Chief Commissioner should only learn of your postings from the Gazette?—I should probably, as a matter of practice, let the Chief Commissioner know what I intended to do.

27355. And if he disapproved?—We should probably talk it over.

27356. You want to be co-ordinate with the Chief Commissioner in the matter of these postings?—I have discussed the posting of an officer, a certain post has been practically agreed upon, and when it came to be gazetted exactly the reverse has been carried out.

27357. Would larger sanitary schemes of drainage or water-works come to you for consideration?—I think they would.

27358. But not the small schemes—expenditure on latrines and that sort of thing?—No.

27359. Do you see the budgets of the local bodies as regards their provision for sanitary expenditure?—No. The medical and vaccination portions come before me not the sanitary.

27360. As regards medical relief, is the position that the dispensaries are worked by the Civil Surgeon?—The dispensaries are supervised by the Civil Surgeon.

27361. And the others are run by a local committee?—By a local committee under the supervision of the Civil Surgeon.

27362. The District Council has nothing to say to them?—The District Council pays for them.

27363. Is that altogether a satisfactory position?—I think so.

27364. You would not be in favour of giving the District Council more power to manage the dispensaries themselves, as they do in other provinces occasionally?—I do not exactly see what powers they would want.

27365. They would have to have Medical Officers, but these would be under the Chairman of the District Council, which might entertain its own Hospital Assistants and Assistant Surgeons, provided that they took qualified men; would you be in favour of that?—I have no views on the subject. I cannot say whether it would be a good thing or a bad thing.

27366. It has been suggested to us that the Indian Medical Service reserve should be broken up and distributed to the provinces; have you any views on that point?—That might be good, because you would have more men available to relieve men going on leave. The other day, men had to go on leave for medical reasons, but I had no way of replacing them except by Civil Assistant Surgeons, men without much training or experience; if I had had men available, I should have posted them.

27367. On the other hand it would prevent you drawing in excess of your normal scale. At present, if you have famine or plague here, the Director-General of the Indian Medical Service can supply you with Medical Officers; if you had your own reserve he would say "I cannot help you, because the rest of my reserve has gone to Bengal or Madras or elsewhere"?—Then I should have to recall some my men from leave, or to recruit locally.

27368. Taking the two considerations together, would you prefer to have the reserve distributed?—Certainly.

27369. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Are the dispensaries in the interior maintained by the District Boards, or only aided by the District Boards?—They are paid for entirely by the District Boards; the only thing Government pays for is the pay of the Hospital Assistant.

27370. Have you Dispensary Committees to manage them?—Yes.

27371. Do these committees consist of some members of the District Council?—I should not like to say what the composition of the committee is. They have local committees; very often the tahsildar is the President, and very often the Hospital Assistant is the Secretary; then there are as members native gentlemen of standing.

27372. The District Council has no sort of control over the management of these dispensaries?—Not that I am aware of.

27373. Are dispensaries within municipalities maintained by the municipalities, or aided by them?—To all intents and purposes they are maintained by the municipalities.

27374. Are they also managed by committees?—Yes.

27375. And there may be members of the municipality who are also members of the committees?—That is very often the case.

27376. Beyond that the municipalities have no other control over those institutions?—No.

27377. Is the Civil Surgeon generally both the Medical Officer and the Sanitary Officer of the district?—He is both.

27378. Excepting in professional duties he is to some extent subordinate to the Deputy Commissioner?—Yes; they work in concert.

27379. Does it give you very much work to send up recommendations to the Chief Commissioner for the appointment of Assistant Surgeons?—No, but it does give work, and the appointments are practically a matter of course; it would save time in my office and in the Secretariat if I had the power,—not much work, but it aggregates in the end.

27380. What is the pay of an Assistant Surgeon?—An Assistant Surgeon starts at Rs. 100; after seven years, if he passes the examination, he gets Rs. 150; after another seven years, if he passes another examination, he gets Rs. 200; then he may be selected to be a Senior Assistant on Rs. 300.

27381. What is their qualification?—Either L.M.S., or M.B.

27382. Is their work generally satisfactory?—Yes.

27383. They have a certain status and position?—Undoubtedly.

27384. Would it not somewhat take away from their prestige and position in the eyes of the people if they were appointed by the Inspector-General instead of by the Central Provinces Administration?—I do not think it would have any effect at all.

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27385. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Have you much practical knowledge of the Hospital Assistants in charge of rural dispensaries?—I have never had charge of a civil station in India in British territory; I have had charge of large numbers of officers in Native territories.

27386. As Inspector-General you have not much opportunity of seeing their work?—Not very much, and especially here, where there is such a very large area to go over.

27387. So far as you know, is their work satisfactory?—The work is mostly satisfactory; of course there are some good men and some indifferent men, and indifferent men do indifferent work; but as a rule the work is well done.

27388. Is there sufficient control over them? If a man is not equal to his post and is not a good man, does it come to light?—I think it comes to light if he is not good professionally. The Civil Surgeon has to inspect every dispensary once in three months.

27389. If the people are dissatisfied with a man, have they any means of making their views known?—Yes; petitions are sent in, which, as a rule, would be sent down to the District Officer to consider and report upon.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. G. M. Harriott, M.I.C.E., C.I.E., was called and examined.

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27390. (*Chairman.*) You are the Superintending Engineer and Secretary to Government in the Irrigation Branch?—Yes. As such, I am in charge of the whole province in irrigation matters.

Larger financial powers should be given to this Administration with regard to irrigation works. This province has suffered considerably, and its progress has been seriously retarded for want of such works and powers; while other provinces have benefited owing to the available funds being diverted to them. The sum annually available for irrigation works may be apportioned to the Local Government, and the Chief Commissioner be given a free hand to utilise it to what he considers to be the best advantage. The Local Government is, of necessity, the best judge of the relative importance of these works.

Irrigation Works may be divided into three classes:—(i.) Minor irrigation works; (ii.) protective irrigation works; (iii.) productive irrigation works.

For minor irrigation works an allotment of 4 lakhs a year has been made to this province by the Government of India. This allotment has been made provincially, and the Chief Commissioner has been given a free hand in dealing with it. Provincial funds may, if necessary and available, be used to supplement it in order to push through works which are urgently needed. I would recommend the increase of the allotment for this class of works from 4 to 5 lakhs a year. Taking into consideration the strong recommendations of the Irrigation Commission, and the fact that no funds were given to this province prior to 1902-03 for the construction of irrigation works, though an urgent appeal was made by the Chief Commissioner in the early seventies, I consider it a very modest demand.

I recommend that the same procedure, described above as to minor works, be followed with regard to protective irrigation works. An expenditure of 300 lakhs in 20 years in this province has been recommended by the Irrigation Commission, or an average of 15 lakhs a year. This is the average annual allotment which this Administration has asked for and it has been promised, with some reservation, by the Government of India. For the reasons given above I consider this also a modest demand. It was recommended as fair and necessary by the Irrigation Commission after a consideration of the requirements of the whole of India. This sum should be placed annually at the disposal of the Administration, and the Chief Commissioner be given a free hand to frame his own irrigation policy, and utilise it to what he considers to be the best advantage. The Local Government should be at liberty to supplement it, temporarily or permanently, from provincial funds when necessary, in order to push on and complete relatively important works. In the case of temporary supplements, recoupment may be made by the curtailment of expenditure in subsequent years. In the case of unavoidable permanent supplements, a share of the net profits, as soon as the works become remunerative, should be allowed to the Local Administration. Till that time funds for maintenance might be provided as at present from budget head "42. Major Works—Working expenses," and the whole of the revenue credited as now to the Government of India, under budget head "29. Major Works—Direct Receipts." Effective control will be assured by the fact that the Local Government will be sharing the responsibility and must work within its means.

Productive works are constructed primarily from borrowed money. No works are likely to be passed as such for this province, till irrigation has been firmly established, and such water-rates actually secured as will place their productivity beyond a doubt. This will take a few years yet, but as soon as it may be possible the Local Administration should be empowered to sanction the construction of such works within the limits of such financial powers, and powers of sanction, as may be given to it. Till then it must rest with the Government of India to accept the proposed works as productive, as well as to sanction and provide funds for them.

Local Administration should be given borrowing powers, on the same lines as such powers are given and controlled in the case of Government of India, though on a limited scale proportionate to their finances.

The first appointments of Upper Subordinates to permanent posts are at present made by the Government of India. There seems no reason why

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they should not be made by the Local Administration. In fact the Local Government can make these appointments after places have been found for such passed students from Roorkee, or non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the Royal Engineers, as may be available. There seems no reason why lists of passed students and available Sappers should not be communicated to the Local Administration, who might then make all the appointments.

The powers of the Local Administration to sanction estimates for the construction of imperial works should be increased. Sufficiently effective control will be provided by the fact that their power to do so must be limited by the grants made by the Government of India. A Local Administration may sanction estimates annually for ordinary imperial works, estimated to cost up to Rs. 20,000 for works, and Rs. 25,000 including establishment, tools and plant. It can sanction no protective irrigation work at all, and the classification of any work as protective rests with the Government of India. I see no necessity for this restriction, especially in a province like this one, where all the large works must be protective until they can be proved to be productive.

A Local Administration can sanction estimates for provincial works up to a limit of 10 lakhs for works only, and 12½ lakhs including establishment, tools and plant. It seems to me that if a Local Administration can deal successfully with its provincial works to this limit, there can be no reason why it should not deal equally well with imperial works of all classes to the same extent. The financial limit appears to be the only one necessary, and that is in the hands of the Government of India which makes the allotments. The Governments of Madras and Bombay are empowered to sanction estimates for ordinary imperial projects up to 2 lakhs for works only, and 2½ lakhs with the inclusion of establishment, tools and plant. I see no reason for this distinction, and recommend that these limits be extended to all Local Governments and Administrations, and be made to include protective irrigation works.

The powers of Local Administration to accept contracts should be increased; it is at present limited to its power of sanctioning estimates, so that while it can accept contracts for provincial works estimated to cost 10 lakhs, exclusive of establishment, tools and plant, its limit for imperial ordinary works is Rs. 20,000, and for protective irrigation works it has no power at all. This entails continual correspondence with the Government of India, in the making or altering of contracts exceeding the above limits. I see no necessity for these restrictions. Once the estimates have ben sanctioned, the Local Administration might surely be allowed to deal with contracts. After all the Government of India almost invariably accepts the recommendation of the Local Administration, which must be in a more favourable position to judge of the best course to follow in each case. The Local Administrations should be able to deal with contracts for imperial works up to a limit of 10 lakhs as for provincial works. I recommend that, once a work is sanctioned, Local Governments and Administrations be empowered to deal with the contracts without limit.

Local Governments can only fix the classification of minor works which are estimated to cost less than Rs. 50,000, including establishment, tools and plant. In the case of works estimated to cost more than this sum, the sanction of the Government of India to the classification has to be obtained, unless both capital and revenue accounts are kept. Local Governments seem to me to be the best judges as to the importance of a minor work justifying both capital and revenue accounts, only revenue accounts, or neither being kept for it. After all the action of the Government of India is invariably taken on the recommendation of the Local Governments, who should be empowered to fix the classification up to their limit of sanction.

After the Government of India have decided on the particular policy which is applicable to a province, and has indicated the general lines on which it is to be applied, Local Governments and Administrations should be given a free hand to suit it to local conditions, and to apply it in the most favourable way possible. Under present conditions this is not always done. For example, the Indian Irrigation Commission was appointed to inquire into the necessity for extending irrigation in India to afford protection, and to report where it was most necessary, and how it could be best provided. After detailed inquiry they indicated the necessity for protection in the Central Provinces, and the lines on which it could be best applied. The Administration started to work and framed a protective policy on these lines, but at the end of six years it still finds itself in its original position of trying to prove that protection by irrigation is absolutely necessary for parts of the province, and that the policy it is working on is sound. Had it been given an annual grant for expenditure on irrigation works and been allowed to frame and pursue its own policy, much more might have been done by this time.

So far as irrigation works are concerned, the Imperial Secretariat is certainly dominated by considerations of direct revenue. Progress with these works has been retarded, because owing to State irrigation being recently started it has been impossible to show for certain that Rs. 2 per acre will be paid for it. It has been shown by the Local Administration that the indirect advantages are very large, that irrigation will improve the country enormously, that it will put large sums into the pockets of the cultivators, and save them from being pauperised by famine; yet the stumbling-block is the net direct revenue which the Local Administration knows is trifling in comparison with the indirect return which Government must secure.

Directors and Inspectors-General under the Government of India should merely act as technical advisers to Local Governments and Administrations, in dealing with departments, which are primarily administered by the latter. They should not interfere in any way with the policies adopted by Local Governments and Administrations.

So far as irrigation is concerned, the initiative came from the Local Administration. This Administration appealed for irrigation in the early seventies; a response was made by some schemes being investigated, and then the question was dropped by the Government of India. After the famine of 1896-97 another appeal was made, and investigations were again begun. This response continued till the Irrigation Commission came, and by their decision got construction started.

It is desirable to allow provincial Governments to develop their Administrations on their own lines, and leave them to adopt or not suggestions of reform brought to their notice from other provinces. It is desirable that provincial Governments should be kept informed of successful reforms in other provinces, and if this is done no provincial Government is likely to reject them without a trial, if they are applicable to their province. On the other hand, if ordered to introduce a reform, they have to do so whether it is applicable or not.

A Local Government should be empowered to refuse to transmit any appeal made in general terms, and including references to matters not connected directly with the order appealed against.

Executive Officers have ample opportunities for personal contact with the people with whom they have to deal, but there is not the intercourse now between departments that there used to be formerly. For example, I have always known most of the Extra-Assistant Commissioners, tahsildars, and native officials in the stations I have been in. They came to see me occasionally, and I got to know them. But I seldom see any of the officials now. It is not because I do not see them if they call on me, or discourage their visits in any way. On the contrary I make it a point to see them. This is partly due to the higher pressure under which every one has to work now, and to the more reserved nature of the official of the present day. I think something might be done to bring officers more in contact with the people, by officers of one department encouraging their subordinates to go and see officers of other departments when they get an opportunity of doing so.

I know that this leads to officers coming in contact with non-officials also.

Executive charges are too large as they stand in some cases. To get work done properly there should be at least an Assistant Engineer to each district apart from those on special works. I consider that every important sub-division should be in charge of an Assistant Engineer instead of under subordinates as they are at present.

Transfers are over-frequent occasionally. For example, the Chanda and Bhandara districts have had quite a series of Deputy Commissioners in the last few years. I cannot suggest a remedy because transfers are often forced by so many causes. The only course for the Local Administration to follow is to determine not to make a transfer if it can possibly be avoided, unless the officer has been in the district for a long time.

Superintending Engineers should be given practically the same powers as Chief Engineers have. They should be the Engineers-in-Chief for their circles, and should arrange for all the public works in it with the Commissioners of divisions. All the technical work should be done by the Superintending Engineer under the direction and advice of the Chief Engineer. The latter will then act as chief technical adviser to the Superintending Engineers and help these officers with advice when they have any difficulties in construction. Relieved of technical work in this way, the Chief Engineer will be able to give more time to direction and organisation.

The time has not come yet to extend the powers of municipalities and Local Boards. It is as much as they can do to make full use of the power they have at present.

I do not think Advisory or Administrative Councils will be of any use. Most, if not all, District Officers and Commissioners invariably consult the people who would be on such Councils, and discuss important questions with them. It has been my experience that such people when consulted singly give their opinions and advice freely, which they will not always do in a Council, for fear of offending some one else who is present and who holds different views from themselves. In my opinion such Councils will do no good, will waste time, and, last but not least, will have an adverse effect on work by making officers feel that they have been relieved of responsibility. The members of the Councils would not appreciate the honorary work, because it would only give them trouble, without power and authority.

The smaller municipalities would resent the control of the District Board. It will be better to let them work out their own salvation. It might answer in individual cases to allow such control.

27391. Who is responsible, in the case of irrigation, for the actual distribution of the water from field to field?—The officers of the Irrigation Branch. The arrangement we have is that for each tank a panchayat of the villagers is formed; they settle when water is required, and ask for it to be supplied; there are certain petitions sent in; those are sent on to our officers, who then start the running water, and the panchayat arrange the distribution among the villages; we simply open the sluice and let the water down to the extent that is required.

27392. They arrange the actual distribution themselves?—Yes.

27393. You have no canal irrigation, it is all tanks?—Tanks and distributaries; we cannot have canal irrigation here very well; we depend on the rainfall simply; we do not depend on the yield from snow.

27394. You tell us that for one reason and another progress has been retarded in the matter of irrigation in this province for want of works and powers. Are the works to which you make reference productive works?—Not at present, but if these works had been constructed some years ago they would by this time have been productive.

27395. Were they large works?—Yes; there were three or four large works surveyed and some smaller ones, as far back as the early seventies.

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27396. You would agree, that if the Government of India, having only limited resources to fall back upon, have to choose between works that are profitable and works that are not, they are justified in selecting works that are profitable?—That is done already. The funds are provided from borrowed money, and the Government of India decide whether the money can be borrowed; but so far as protective works are concerned, each province should get a fair share. At present we can only deal with protective works; though we can get strong evidence; we cannot exactly show which works will be certainly profitable.

27397. You want the works to be done from funds available for protective works, that is to say, from revenue?—Funds for protective works come from the Famine Insurance Grant.

27398. Is the allotment of 4 lakhs a year of which you speak from revenue or from the Famine Insurance Grant?—That comes from revenue.

27399. You say that the Chief Commissioner should be given a free hand to frame his own irrigation policy; has he not a free hand now?—Not at present; he has just now applied for it.

27400. Have most Heads of Provinces a free hand?—I think in the Punjab and in the United Provinces they have got to that stage when they can well frame their own policy.

27401. That is the distinction between those provinces and this?—Yes; we are rather held by the bridle more than the other provinces are.

27402. You tell us that the Local Government can make appointments of Upper Subordinates; do they as a matter of fact make them?—No, we have to apply to the Government of India.

27403. Although under the Government of India's own rules you can make them?—Yes; because certain appointments have to be kept for Sibpur and Roorkee men.

27404. Otherwise you have no more places than can be filled by Roorkee men?—We do get some sometimes. If men are not available we are allowed to appoint them, but the correspondence in sending up the appointments might be avoided.

27405. You tell us that with regard to protective irrigation works the Local Government has no power at all to conclude contracts?—No; all such contracts have to go up to the Government of India.

27406. Have you power to conclude contracts for productive works?—We have done no productive works at present, but I conclude that we should, in the case of productive works, be able to do so.

27407. Can you sanction estimates for protective works in the case of sanctioned schemes?—No; we can sanction no protective works without reference to the Government of India.

27408. Not the contracts, but the estimates?—No; all estimates for protective works have to go up to the Government of India.

27409. Then is the position that the Local Government has to send up to the Imperial Government and get sanction, not merely for the scheme itself as a scheme, but also for the estimates of every protective work?—Yes.

27410. And of every productive work?—For every productive work we have to go up, too.

27411. But in the case of provincial works, while you can sanction estimates you cannot sanction contracts?—No; provincial works contracts can be sanctioned up to the sanctioning amount.

27412. For imperial works can you sanction estimates?—That is, minor works; there is a certain grant given for "43.—Minor works and Navigation"; the Government of India have given us 4 lakhs, and that 4 lakhs is made provincial, so that the Local Administration can deal with that itself.

27413. There are major works and there are minor works?—Yes; the major works are protective and productive works; at present in this province we are dealing solely with protective works; we have no productive works.

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27414. Then with regard to protective works can you sanction estimates or not?—We cannot sanction them.

27415. Can you sanction contracts for protective works?—No.

27416. Then for minor works?—We can sanction the estimate and contract.

27417. (*Mr. Hichens.*) What is your relationship with the other branch of the Public Works Department here?—I am Superintending Engineer under the Chief Engineer.

27418. Have you got a separate staff?—Only the ordinary staff of a Superintending Engineer.

27419. Are the works that are carried out in the district carried out by a joint staff?—No; the men are more or less specially trained. We have some men who have been transferred to us from "Roads and Buildings," but when they get our special training we have to keep them.

27420. Are they entirely under your control?—No, the establishment is under the control of the Chief Engineer.

27421. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You say that the water from these irrigation tanks is generally let out by the Engineer in consultation with the panchayats. Does it sometimes happen that the Irrigation Engineer is unable to act on the suggestion of the panchayat?—We have had no such cases.

27422. Has the Deputy Commissioner any voice with regard to the letting out of the irrigation water from the tanks?—He has not any direct voice at the time, but the arrangement has been to work with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner, and if any complaint was made to the Deputy Commissioner he would take action; all he would have to do would be to send instructions which would be carried out at once, and a copy sent to me.

27423. So far as you are aware there has been no friction?—Absolutely none.

27424. When you let out this irrigation water, you impose a certain irrigation rate; what is the rate in this province?—The rate was settled after consultation with the Deputy Commissioners and the Commissioner, and sent up to the Government of India for approval; it is for the first watering Re. 1-4-0, for the second watering Re. 1, for the third watering 12 annas, and 8 annas for every subsequent watering. These rates are only provisional and full latitude has been given to the Commissioner and Superintending Engineer to vary the rates experimentally. At present we are working on very low rates; we are giving water to the people in order to let them get educated to it, because their land rents have been so small that the water rates appear heavy; we are trying to work them gradually up to the full rates.

27425. The rates you have mentioned are really standard rates to which you are working up; you have not arrived at those rates yet?—No.

27426. Do you water the whole village from field to field at the request of the cultivators?—In this province we are dealing mainly with rice irrigation; when water is wanted they generally come up in blocks; it is not always a whole village, but we give water to whatever area requires it; so far we have given it to the smallest areas.

27427. Generally you let out water for a whole block; it would not be convenient for you to let out water, say, for half an acre or so?—It is not quite convenient at present, but we are working to that eventually, when we get all the little field channels completed; I do not think, however, that that will ever be necessary, because, wherever a single acre of rice wants water a whole block will want water.

27428. Is the irrigation rate levied by the Engineer or by the Revenue Officers?—It is decided with the Deputy Commissioners and the Commissioner, chiefly with the Commissioner. In Raipur last year the people had been holding back; I went round and interviewed the *malguzars*; I eventually gathered from them that if we started on certain rates they would take water; having decided that with the Deputy Commissioner on the spot, I sent up the recommendation to the Commissioner, who approved of it, and it was sent on to the Chief Commissioner. The Commissioner settles the matter with me.

27429. But who actually realises the rate?—A *jamabandi* is made out and given to the village panchayat, who collects the rate and pays it in to the Deputy Commissioner, getting a percentage for the collection.

27430. So far there has been no difficulty in realising these rates?—None whatever.

27431. Are higher Engineers all recruited in England?—There are some recruited from Roorkee.

27432. What is the designation of those who are recruited from Roorkee—how do they begin?—They began before as Apprentice Engineers, but I believe that now that is altered. I am an old Roorkee Engineer myself; I was an Apprentice Engineer for six months, then I was made a 3rd Grade Assistant, and I went up in the ranks.

27433. So that a Roorkee Engineer can go up to the highest posts open to Engineers in this province?—Yes. There have been some changes since I left the college; I think they come in now to the Provincial establishment, and in the Provincial establishment they can go up, but there is a difference in the pay and pension rules.

27434. The men who are recruited in England form the Imperial Service as opposed to the Provincial Service?—Yes.

27435. Is the Provincial Service recruited by the Chief Engineer himself or by the Central Provinces Administration?—They are appointed by the Government of India.

27436. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) Have the District Officers nothing to do with the distribution of water?—They have not actually to do with the opening of the sluice, but the whole of the arrangements are controlled by the Commissioner of the division; everything is arranged with the Commissioner after consultation with the Deputy Commissioner.

27437. You say that the actual arrangements for distributing the water are made in the first instance by the panchayat, and then you let the water through?—We open the sluice; they make applications for water for certain areas, and we open out sufficient water; if they say 2,000 acres want water, we gauge the water for 2,000 acres at the head and let it down the channels.

27438. If there is any dispute about the distribution what happens?—The panchayat decides that, or if there is any dispute between them they refer it to the Deputy Commissioner; he refers the matter to us; and if there is any further dispute it goes up to the Commissioner of the division.

27439. There is no friction?—Absolutely no friction so far as the Irrigation Branch is concerned; we work all together.

27440. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) You say that you are still in your original position of trying to prove that protection by irrigation is absolutely necessary for parts of the province. Can you illustrate that?—The best way I can illustrate it is by letting you see the letter from the Local Administration to the Government of India on the subject.

27441. You say that "So far as irrigation works are concerned the Imperial Secretary is entirely dominated by considerations of direct revenue"; does that refer to protective or productive works?—All to protective works.

27442. Then you say "progress with these works has been retarded because owing to State irrigation being recently started it has been impossible to show for certain that Rs. 2 per acre will be paid for it"; does that refer to protective works?—Yes; but we have got beyond that now; we are actually getting Rs. 4 in places; that is on small works.

27443. You say that it was a recommendation of the Irrigation Commission which was accepted with some reservation by the Government of India that you should have an average expenditure of 15 lakhs a year?—The Irrigation Commission have laid down in their report that 300 lakhs should be spent in twenty years.

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27444. What was the reservation made by the Government of India in accepting that recommendation?—The view taken by the Government of India was that this 300 lakhs was only to be spent if, after the construction of these famine works which are now being completed, it could be shown that we could get these rates.

27445. I do not quite understand your position about the supplement to expenditure from provincial revenues. If you want to get a work through, you say you should supplement from provincial revenues, and then you should share the profits?—My proposal is this. We have got 300 lakhs for 20 years; that gives an average of 15 lakhs a year; we have at present three large works under consideration; all three are in areas that need irrigation and protection very badly, but we shall not be able to do the works within the 300 lakhs; they will probably run out during the twenty years. It is very desirable to construct those works; if the Government of India cannot give us more than 300 lakhs, the Local Administration should be permitted to supplement the 300 lakhs, and recoup themselves afterwards.

27446. How would the provincial Government get the extra money?—We have run up in certain years to 25 lakhs; at the beginning we commenced lower; we began say at 11 lakhs, and have passed up gradually to 17, 20 and 25. In the beginning we may get our money, but towards the end the Government of India may not be able to give us 25 lakhs; then I ask that the Local Administration be permitted to supplement the amount given by the Imperial Government, so far as they can, in order to push on these works.

27447. From what sources?—From revenue—their own balances.

27448. Then how would they share profits—Proportionately to the expenditure that each had incurred.

27449. Is the revenue entirely separate?—The revenue would be entirely separate from each one of the three works.

27450. It would be a separate water-rate that could be ascertained?—Yes.

27451. Will those three works be likely to be productive?—I certainly think they will be productive.

27452. But you have not yet submitted them as productive?—No; worked out on the Rs. 2 rate, which we hope to get, those works will be productive under the classification of the Government of India.

27453. You also say that you think the distinction as regards estimates and so on between provincial and imperial is unnecessary, because the Government of India get their control by the grants which they make?—Exactly. We cannot go beyond the grants which they make to us every year. This would save correspondence and references.

27454. Does not the amount of the estimate react upon the amount of the grant?—But the estimates are originally sanctioned by the Government of India.

27455. Suppose you had a work of 9 lakhs, that estimate and everything connected with it you would settle here?—But then the Government of India in that case only give us so much money every year to spend.

27456. You think that they should give you a fixed sum, and that you should spend it as you chose, subject to the ordinary provincial limitations?—Exactly.

27457. You think the distinction between imperial and provincial works might be entirely abrogated?—Yes.

27458. That would practically give you complete control over protective works, to the same extent as over minor works?—Yes.

27459. You say you think the Superintending Engineer should be given practically the same powers as the Chief Engineer. Have not the Government of India proposed that they should have powers up to Rs. 50,000?—Yes.

27460. Your proposal is that their power should be unlimited?—No; it is practically the same as what the Government of India put; in fact, the Chief Engineers have not got quite those powers at present.

27461. What power has the Chief Engineer here in the Central Provinces?—I think he can only run up to something like Rs. 10,000 sanction.

27462. Your proposal is not intended to run beyond the proposals which the Government of India have recently sent in?—No.

27463. You consider that the Inspector-General of Irrigation should have nothing to do with policy, but should only advise on the technical points of a scheme?—I think he should advise the Local Administration.

27464. That is to say, before they send up to the Government of India for sanction?—When the Local Administrations are drawing up their policy they should consult him.

24765. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Protective works are financed from the Famine Insurance Grant?—Yes.

27466. Are not the funds from that limited?—Yes.

27467. Perhaps you will take it from me that under the present orders the total grant is 150 lakhs and the first charge is actual famine expenditure. Apart from that if there is money, 75 lakhs may be used for protective irrigation works; the balance, if any, goes to the reduction or avoidance of debt. Those are the Secretary of State's orders. Therefore your maximum is 75 lakhs for particular irrigation works and in a famine year such as the present it might be very much less; it might be reduced almost to nothing?—No doubt.

27468. The Government of India, therefore, having this limited sum of money to deal with all round, have to be careful about it?—Yes.

27469. Would it be practicable to earmark 15 lakhs year in and year out to a minor province like the Central Provinces?—I think it would, because this province has had no protective fund yet; other provinces have benefited not only from productive funds, but from protective funds, whereas the Central Provinces have had no share in those until within the last few years. Since the Irrigation Commission we have spent now up to this year about 40 lakhs.

27470. There may be a special case for the Central Provinces, but is it not impossible, as a matter of policy, to earmark perpetually, from a grant that necessarily fluctuates, any particular amount to any particular province?—There is that difficulty, but a certain amount might be told off to a province if it could be given except in famine years; in normal years the province should have that earmarked for it.

27471. The resources for constructing protective works being so limited, and the demand so great, is it not reasonable that the Government of India in deciding between competing schemes should give preference to a scheme that will yield some amount of profit though not the full amount necessary to make it productive?—But there are none of them that do not yield any return.

27472. But between competing projects the one that yields a higher return is better than the one that yields no return, assuming that they are both protective works?—I think preference should be given to a certain extent to a small province which has not had irrigation in it before, and which is not in a position to be able to prove its position. Take the Punjab and the United Provinces and Madras and Bombay; they have all had irrigation in progress for a long time, and they are in a position where they should be able to make their projects remunerative. We are not; we have to prove our position.

27473. You want special treatment for the Central Provinces because in irrigation matters you

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are a backward province?—Yes. We have suffered very badly here from famine. Since 1896-97 we have had practically four famines in the 12 years.

27474. Before that it was assumed by everybody that the Central Provinces was immune from famine?—Yes, because the grain did not go out of the province.

27475. Was not the Local Administration as unprepared as the Government of India?—The Local Administration applied for irrigation in the early seventies and again after the famine of 1899. We only got it after the Irrigation Commission.

27476. Are not estimates occasionally largely exceeded?—They are largely exceeded when circumstances alter the rates. For instance, here in the Central Provinces, out rates have gone up; round Nagpur they are double what they were a year or two ago; where you could get a labourer for 2 annas you cannot get him for 6 annas now.

27477. Is it not the fact that estimates on big projects tend to be materially exceeded in practice?—Yes, because there are certain points about them which cannot be definitely settled to begin with, for instance, foundations; you cannot always tell what you are going to come upon. Engineers, as a rule, not only Public Works Engineers in India, but Engineers all over the world, find difficulty in telling what they are going to come across and estimates do get exceeded.

27478. In the case of a provincial work, if the estimate is exceeded the Local Government has to pay?—Yes.

27479. In the case of a work that is financed from imperial funds, whether a protective work, or a productive work, or an ordinary imperial building, the Government of India have to pay?—Yes.

27480. Is it reasonable, therefore, that the Government of India should scrutinise the estimates of works, for which they have to pay, much more closely than the estimate of works for which the provincial Government pays?—Yes, the Government of India should have that right; they should have the right to scrutinise estimates where they provide the funds; but if an allotment is made to the Local Administration the Local Administration takes the responsibility of it.

27481. If you start a work which is debited to imperial funds and say (quite in good faith) that it is going to cost 5 lakhs, and it eventually costs 10 lakhs, you have got to see it out?—Yes.

27482. At the same time that extra 5 lakhs will fall on the Government of India?—Yes, but it will come to that in any case.

27483. But the Government of India can protect themselves as far as possible by having the estimates scrutinised by their own men?—Yes.

27484. And *primâ facie* the engineering advisers of the Government of India, are the most competent men in your department?—Yes, but I have said that the Inspector-General of Irrigation should advise the Local Administration; in that case the Local Administration would have the advice of the same advisers that the Government of India has now.

27485. But suppose the Inspector-General of Irrigation says that your estimates are in his opinion unduly sanguine; under your scheme what would happen?—The Local Administration would be bound to reconsider the matter.

27486. You admit that the Inspector-General of Irrigation in considering estimates has not to look merely at the technical estimates, but in an irrigation work he has got to scrutinise the revenue returns?—Yes; I have absolutely no objection to the scrutiny of the Inspector-General of Irrigation; the Local Administration should take full advantage of his advice.

27487. As regards productive works pure and simple, you have none in this province and you have no suggestion to make with regard to them?—No.

27488. As regards Upper Subordinates you desire that the Local Government should have a free hand in enlisting men who have come out of Roorkee? Is it not possible that you will have two or three Local Governments all addressing the same person and saying, "Come to us"?—I do not think it makes any difference because, as a matter of fact, the Local Government's recommendations are accepted; the only difference would be that the Local Administration would appoint the men they send up for, and it is merely a matter of correspondence.

27489. You have got A, B, C and D passing out of Roorkee in a particular year. Do you know much about them?—No, but the Principal, who is applied to, does.

27490. The Government of India say, "A shall go to the Punjab, B shall go to the United Provinces and so forth"?—I do not think they make much selection; the men put down the province they would like to go to; that used to be the practice.

27491. Does it make any material difference; men come out of Roorkee and in their order they are allowed to select their province; what is the inconvenience?—It is the correspondence and extra work that is entailed; it merely means a reference where no reference should be necessary.

27492. As you probably know, the Madras and Bombay Governments can appoint their own Superintending Engineers and their own Chief Engineers; other provinces cannot do so. Would you be in favour of allowing a province like the Punjab, for instance, to appoint its own Superintending Engineer?—The Superintending Engineers are appointed as a matter of selection, and it is only right that the Government of India should have the option of putting the best men in appointments where they would get the best results from them.

27493. For engineering work do the Government of India know better than the provincial Government which men will suit?—It is a question of selecting the best men for the highest appointments.

27494. So far it is an exception to your idea that it is desirable to allow provincial Governments to develop their administration on their own lines; you would have a clause "provided that the Government of India shall appoint Superintending and Chief Engineers"?—No; in that case the Government of India would apply to a Local Administration for a man if they wanted him as they do now, but it should be open to a Superintending Engineer to be appointed from one province to another; there is no reason why a good man should necessarily be kept in one place if the Government of India require his services elsewhere.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. J. B. LEVENTHORPE was called and examined.

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27495. (*Chairman.*) You are the Chief Engineer and Secretary to the Chief Commissioner in the Public Works Department for Roads and Buildings?—Yes.

27496. Have you anything to do with the appointment of subordinates in your department?—We have two sets of subordinates, the Lower and the Upper. The Lower Subordinates are all appointed now by the Superintending Engineers; they used to be appointed by the Chief Engineer; the Upper Subordinates we can appoint to a certain extent; we have just got more powers from the Government of India; previously we had to take what they sent us; now they allow us to appoint some ourselves as well.

27497. Do you post your subordinates to the different divisions?—The Superintending Engineers do that.

27498. Do they post both the Upper and the Lower Subordinates?—Yes, within their Circles.

27499. You have got three Circles?—Yes, two in "Roads and Buildings" and one Irrigation Circle; that is practically a separate business altogether. The Superintending Engineer of Irrigation in these provinces corresponds with the Joint-Secretary of Irrigation in the larger provinces.

27500. You wish to see much larger powers given to the Superintending Engineers?—Yes, and to the Executive Engineers also.

27501. Are you responsible at the present moment for all engineering work?—Yes.

27502. Would it be possible to throw the whole burden of responsibility upon the Superintending Engineers?—It would not be altogether advisable.

27503. Have they not sufficient experience or training?—The Head of the administration should know something about what is going on.

27504. I am not talking about the scheme, but about the actual technical engineering?—Subject to approval, responsibility should be thrown on the Superintending Engineer.

27505. You would not make the Superintending Engineer merely submit the details of large works and then give the Secretary power to say, "I approve" and then throw the whole responsibility on the Superintending Engineer?—No. He should have the Chief Engineer's advice when necessary, and in big works, certainly, the Chief Engineer should be responsible.

27506. You would not merely give the Chief Engineer a power of interference?—Up to a fair limit I should say the Superintending Engineer should be responsible, as it were, but beyond that the Chief Engineer should be responsible.

27507. What limit would you fix?—I should say half a lakh, perhaps in the case of roads and such like things a lakh; that is the proposal of the Government of India. I do not see any harm in that, but in the case of a building costing half a lakh, it has to go to the Government Architect and the Chief Engineer has a say in it also.

27508. It only goes there for design?—Yes, we have to take his advice on anything costing half a lakh.

27509. Both as to appearance and accommodation?—As to accommodation he has to accept what we say; as to appearance we have to accept what he says to a large extent.

27510. You would not give the Superintending Engineer complete responsibility for anything costing more than half a lakh?—Half a lakh in buildings and a lakh in other things might be allowed. The Government of India proposes a lakh in both cases, but I think the line should be drawn at half a lakh in the case of buildings because we have to refer there to the Government Architect; it should be referred through the Chief Engineer.

27511. Would you give larger powers and responsibilities to the Executive Engineer?—Much larger.

27512. Up to what limit would you give them freedom, acting on the same principle?—They might sanction anything up to Rs. 5,000, say, for original works.

27513. What is their present sanction?—Practically nothing—Rs. 200.

27514. Cannot a man pass into the first grade of Executive Engineer without selection?—There is selection the whole way through; it is seniority tempered by selection.

27515. All the way through?—Yes, the Assistant Engineer, the three grades of Assistants, and the three grades of Executive Engineers; a man cannot claim to be promoted though he is senior.

27516. Are there many rejections?—Often.

27517. What happens when there are rejections?—A man may be passed over for a time, or he may remain for many years.

27518 Would it be better to get rid of a man altogether rather than let him remain many years as a very junior officer?—It is very exceptional for them to remain as junior officers; by junior I take it you mean an Assistant?

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27519. I was thinking of an Executive Engineer of the first or second or third grade?—He does not reach the Executive, first grade, until he has about 20 years' service; that is the best he can hope for.

27520. I did not mean junior in age, I meant junior in the *cadre*. If a man has been passed over several times is it wise to let him remain in the Service?—There are some it would be well, perhaps, to get rid of.

27521. Would it be well to let them remain or to get rid of them?—I think if a man is hopeless and not fit for promotion he is not fit to be in Government service.

27522. You do not get very many of those?—Not many, but we have had some.

27523. A first grade Executive Engineer has to be reported on as fit for an administrative appointment?—Yes.

27524. Are there many rejections of that kind?—Some; not very many.

27525. Does this system of selection work well?—I think so.

27526. I suppose the money has run out for a building or a road, at the end of a year you get what is called provisional sanction to prevent your having to disperse your labourers?—No, we allow for the allotment coming next year.

27527. You spend without any sanction?—Practically we do so at the end of the year, very often.

27528. You do not have to get provisional sanction?—No, we go on without any delay, we do not stop because it is the 31st March.

27529. Even though you have got no money?—Of course on the 31st March we have got no money, but we start on the fresh year. The estimate is sanctioned and the work is in hand, and we do not stop our work; we have the greatest difficulty in getting our budget for the year published until about May or June very often.

27530. But notwithstanding that delay in getting your budget published you have no delay in continuing your work?—No, we carry on.

27531. Therefore any representation of that kind which may have been made to us has no effect so far as regards this province?—None, so far as this province is concerned.

27532. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You suggest that the preliminary budget be done away with; what do you mean by that precisely?—We have to send up a preliminary budget and then there is the final issue of the budget.

27533. When do you send in your preliminary budget?—On the 15th February.

27534. That is what the province does, but what do you do departmentally; you say you submit a six months' estimate in November and then you submit the preliminary budget in February?—Yes.

27535. Do you desire that the Local Government should go on your six months' estimate without a separate preliminary budget?—With the preliminary budget that we prepare. I think all that the Government of India require is our total figures; I do not see what use the details of the preliminary budget can be to the Government of India.

27536. Some of the works may be productive, others may relate to imperial works?—No, I am speaking purely of provincial works; I am not talking of the small budgets we have of imperial civil and imperial military works.

27537. You mean that as far as the Government of India is concerned, all they want to know is the total amount the province is likely to spend from provincial funds on Public Works?—That is all.

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27538. Who has prescribed this detailed preliminary budget?—It has been given from time immemorial.

27539. Is it in the Public Works Code?—I do not know whether it is in the Public Works Code; we have had to do it as long as I can remember.

27540. We have had it stated that in this province the whole attitude of the Public Works Department has been one of independence of what they call the Civil Department, which is really the Administrative Department—the Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners—and that the Executive Engineer regards himself as quite as good as the Deputy Commissioner and does not trouble to consult him in any way; what have you to say to that?—I should say that it is the remark of a very young Deputy Commissioner.

27541. Would you be surprised if you heard that the Head of the province shared that opinion?—I should.

27542. You think that the relations are quite satisfactory?—On the whole they are very satisfactory.

27543. Are Deputy Commissioners consulted before roads are made in their districts?—Very much so; we cannot start on any road until we have it properly in the road scheme, and that has to be approved by the Deputy Commissioner and the Commissioner, and it is not allowed to go into the road scheme until the Chief Commissioner sanctions it.

27544. But what we have heard is that there being a variety of roads in the scheme, your department fixes A or B road without consultation with the different officers?—Not at all.

27545. You do not alter the alignment of roads without consulting the Deputy Commissioner; it has been suggested that in some cases you start quite a different alignment of road from what was originally intended?—I presume that that was when the road was going down in a hollow, and when it was actually aligned it came up to the high ground.

27546. No, the suggestion was that the road was to have gone to a particular village and that it took some other line which left that village out altogether?—No. The Deputy Commissioner always has a say in that matter.

27547. Does your budget of works for the district go to the Deputy Commissioner?—No.

27548. Every year the Executive Engineer has to prepare and send up through the Superintending Engineer to you a list of the works he proposes to execute in the coming year and the amount of money he proposes to spend on any of them; and in the same way with buildings; is that submitted through the Deputy Commissioner?—It comes through the Commissioner.

27549. Not through the Deputy Commissioner?—I do not think it comes through the Deputy Commissioner.

27550. Might it profitably come through the Deputy Commissioner?—It would not do any harm, but the Commissioner is the man we deal with, and he is the most satisfactory.

27551. The real pivot of the district administration is, or ought to be, the Deputy Commissioner?—Quite so, but the Commissioner, if he does not know, will probably consult the Deputy Commissioner on the subject.

27552. It has been suggested that without in any way affecting the professional control of your department, the provincial Public Works budget should be split up; a certain amount would have to be kept at headquarters for emergencies and for the biggest works; in other matters each Commissioner should receive a minor Public Works budget and sanction work out of that. Would you approve of that scheme?—He does that to a certain extent as it is; we give him an assignment for all minor works.

27553. That is a very paltry sum—Rs. 10,000?—Something of that sort.

27554. What is your Public Works budget?—60 lakhs.

27555. It would be a matter of lakhs not of a few thousand rupees; might you give each Commissioner say 7 lakhs, and all the matters that the Chief Commissioner has now to sanction financially therefrom would be sanctioned by the Divisional Commissioner for his own division. Are you prepared to say whether you approve or disapprove?—No, I think there would be some difficulties about it.

27556. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) How many of those Roorkee men do you get per annum as Upper Subordinates?—We get Provincial Service Assistant Engineers, and we get Upper Subordinates.

27557. How many Assistant Engineers do you get?—About one a year.

27558. And how many Upper Subordinates?—It varies very much; we have not had one for two or three years now; sometimes we get them, sometimes we do not.

27559. What is the understanding with the Government of India about the Upper Subordinates?—When they send them to us we have to take them; we are allowed a certain number, and when the Government of India see that we are one short they send us a man, and we have to take him.

27560. Suppose you agreed with the Government of India to take one Assistant Engineer per annum and *x* number of Upper Subordinates per annum, the whole of your *cadre* might then well be left to you to deal with; would there then be any other reason for appointments going to the Government of India?—At present what we complain of is not that we are so short of Assistant Engineers; it is the higher grade, the senior Executive Engineers, that we are so short of. The Local Administration now has the power to appoint Upper Subordinates within limits. We are obliged to keep a place for a Government of India man who passes through Roorkee College, but if we have a vacancy, and they have no man to send us from Roorkee, then we can appoint a man ourselves.

27561. Is the arrangement you have now sufficient?—It is satisfactory now; that has come out within the last month or so.

27562. Since this note of Mr. Harriott's was written?—Probably.

27563. Is not this limit of Rs. 50,000 for buildings which requires to go up to the Government of India Architect very small?—We have no skilled Architect in these provinces and we are very glad of the assistance of the Government of India Architect; I know he is looked upon as an enemy in most parts, but we are glad of him.

27564. Would it be better to have the power of consultation with him rather than the obligation to send up everything over Rs. 50,000?—It might be done.

27565. So that you could go to him only when you were in difficulty, and not have to send up for any ordinary building?—Yes. There are plain-sailing work that we might do ourselves; it might be a good thing to make it optional instead of compulsory.

27566. In Dacca we were told that it led to considerable delay in getting under way in works; do you find that it leads to great delay here?—Only in one case that I know of in the year that I have been here.

27567. Was the result when it came back to you worth the delay?—We are quite satisfied, and so is he.

27568. Did he make important alterations, or did he just simply approve your proposal?—He made valuable alterations; one or two of our works here are practically his design; the planning is all done here, but the face work is his.

27569. Is a Rs. 5,000 limit for a really senior first grade Executive Engineer as big as it is safe to give him?—Perhaps it might be Rs. 10,000; that is at present the power of a Superintending Engineer.

27570. You think plans and estimates should be sent up in all cases over Rs. 50,000?—Only in the case of buildings.

27571. Simply because of the rule regarding the Government Architect?—Yes.

27572. Suppose that limit were raised would you raise the Superintending Engineer's powers also, or suppose the Government Architect was made simply consultative, would you alter the Superintending Engineer's powers then?—I think I would. It might go to a lakh then.

27573. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) The question of proportionate pensions has been raised for getting rid of bad bargains; would that not be very unpopular and perhaps prejudicially affect the supply of recruits?—I do not think so.

27574. What would you say to a sort of compromise, saying to a man who has been passed over and declared unfit for further promotion, "We cannot promote you any further, but if you are disgusted and want to go you can go on a proportionate pension"?—It would be a very good thing.

27575. Would it be better than compulsory retirement, or would you advocate insistence on a man's going if he was unfit for further promotion?—Perhaps it would be the safer thing to insist on his going.

27576. It would be preferable to giving him the option, allowing him to stay if he wished?—Yes.

27577. As to the requirement to refer buildings over Rs. 50,000 to the Government Architect; has it ever happened within your knowledge that a man of your own department has developed a bent for architecture?—Yes, some of them have; it is exceptional.

27578. Would not such a system of compulsory reference to the Government of India Architect tend to depress a man like that?—I do not think so; he would be very glad of the advice of the Government Architect, however good he was.

27579. Who at present compiles the Public Works budget for the province?—It is compiled in the Chief Engineer's office, that is to say, in the Secretary's office by the Secretary; it is all passed by the Chief Commissioner.

27580. The Secretary compiles it from requisitions from various departments?—The requisitions from various Superintending Engineers and departments.

27581. The budget once being completed and duly possed, who makes the re-appropriations, or who has the power to substitute one work for another, or one road for another?—That we should not do without taking the Chief Commissioner's orders.

27582. Would it be done without consulting the local officers?—I fancy the Chief Commissioner would not alter it as a rule without consulting the local officers.

27583. But there is nothing in the rules to prevent a Deputy Commissioner from getting up some morning and finding that a work in his budget had been substantially altered?—Nothing at all, as the budgets have been prepared hitherto. We are trying to alter that now so that the budget in the future shall represent exactly what is going to be done in the year, and then Commissioners and Heads of Departments will only act up to that and send in their requisitions; then in future the budget will represent what is going to be done.

27584. Is there to be any alteration in the system of making alterations in the budget?—No.

27585. Suppose, as is suggested, an allotment was made to each division for roads and original works, and suppose the Commissioner got together the chief authorities of his division and worked out a budget according to the allotment made to him; would not that tend to promote co-operation in the general interests of the division?—It might, but it would be very troublesome towards the end of the financial year. In one Commissioner's circle a great deal will have been spent, and in another very little; one would be wanting money, another would have a lot of money lapsing. It would be very difficult to co-ordinate the five divisions.

27586. But you admit that it might have an advantage such as I have suggested?—It might.

27587. (*Mr. Dutt.*) Would it relieve the Executive Engineer if the District Board roads which he is now asked to construct were taken away from his hands and given to a special officer under the District Board?—Yes.

27588. Would it be a considerable relief?—Not a very large one because the District Boards in the Central Provinces have very little money, but in Berar the system is quite unsatisfactory and they are endeavouring to alter it.

27589. In what way is it unsatisfactory?—They have a very large amount of money in the District Boards in Berar, but the unfortunate Executive Engineer has to give completion certificates. He has to make estimates for them and then give completion certificates for works that he cannot possibly see and can only take on hearsay.

27590. On the whole if a plan was worked out to make over District Board roads to special officers under the District Boards that would have your approval?—Undoubtedly, especially in Berar.

27591. In that case, suppose each District Council could appoint an engineer of its own, would you recommend a number of the provincial roads being transferred to the District Boards, keeping in your hands only very important roads and buildings?—That might be done if they had any decent staff, which they have not got at present.

27592. If they had a qualified engineer in each district you do not see any objection to that being done?—Not at all.

27593. In that case their resources would have to be increased in the same proportion?—Yes.

27594. You have spoken of the appointment of Lower Subordinates and Upper Subordinates, the Lower Subordinates being appointed by the Superintending Engineer and Upper Subordinates by yourself?—They are appointed by the Chief Commissioner really; they are appointed by the Local Government.

27595. What are these Lower Subordinates generally?—Sub-Overseers.

27596. And the Upper Subordinates?—Overseers, supervisors and sub-engineers.

27597. Where are the Upper Subordinates generally recruited from?—From Roorkee and Subpur and Poona.

27598. Do they constitute the Provincial Service in the Public Works Department?—No, the Provincial Serice consists of the Assistant Engineers that come from Roorkee; they are all Provincial now. Sometimes we get them from Poona or Sibpur, but nearly always from Roorkee.

27599. The appointments to the Provincial Service are nearly always made by the Local Government?—No, the Provincial Service consists of Gazetted Officers; those appointments are made by the Government of India.

27600. And the appointments in the Upper Subordinate Service?—They are made by the Local Government.

27601. You do not make any suggestions as regards any change in the system of appointing Lower Subordinates?—No.

27602. But the Roorkee men, you think, might be appointed by the Local Government?—The Upper Subordinates, yes.

27603. Instead of their being sent to you by the Government of India they might be appointed by the Local Government?—Yes; we have power to do that now; we have quite lately got the power; we could not before appoint a single man without the sanction of the Government of India; now, if we have a vacancy, the Local Government has power to fill it without reference to the Government of India.

27604. (*Mr. Hichens.*) Do the District Boards make any contribution of funds to the Public

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Works Department for the roads which are built by the Public Works Department?—Sometimes if they are District Board roads.

27605. Are they scheduled as provincial roads and district roads?—Yes.

27606. You look after some of the district roads?—No, we survey for them and sometimes we make them, but they are all looked after by the District Boards.

27607. They do not pay you anything in respect of the provincial roads?—Yes. We took over many roads from them and made them provincial. Each district pays a certain proportion into the provincial revenue; it does not affect our budget at all.

27608. Roughly speaking, do they pay enough to keep them up?—No, they do not now at all. Many of their roads that we took over—this was about four years ago—have been raised in class; they still go on paying into the provincial revenues the same annual rate that they paid for the road as a low class road.

27609. Will you define what is meant by provincial roads and district roads; are those the classes A and B that you refer to?—Yes.

27610. What is a provincial road?—A road that is maintained out of provincial revenues; the other roads are roads that are maintained out of district revenues. As a rule the provincial roads are first and second class roads, that is to say, metalled or gravel roads; that is, the *kacha* roads are looked after by the District Board.

27611. Do you think it would be a good plan that all the roads should be transferred to the District Board, given that they had an adequate enginering staff?—No, I do not say all of them, not the first and second class roads. I would retain the main roads certainly; I would keep them under the Public Works Department.

27612. You do not think it would be an economical plan to have a highly efficient District Board Engineer who was responsible for all the roads in the district?—I have never seen an expert District Board Engineer yet; we have not got them in these parts; I believe they have them in other parts. The District Board Engineer of the Central Provinces is generally a sub-overseer on Rs. 20 a month.

27613. You say that the rules regarding the cost and rent of residential buildings are not satisfactory, and that the Local Administration should have much wider powers. How far would you be prepared to go in recommending wider powers?—I think the Local Government should be able to sanction residential buildings as it likes.

27614. To frame its own rules?—Yes, you cannot keep to the rules in one particular building; to have to refer each individual case to the Government of India is absurd.

27615. You would have certain broad principles laid down such as that, in normal circumstances, the rent should not exceed some percentage of a man's salary, but there might be power to make exceptions?—There might be power to the Local Government to make exceptions in individual cases.

27616. (*Chairman.*) You have been out here some time?—Over thirty years.

27617. Has there been in the course of that time a great rise in the price of building materials?—An enormous rise. I should say it is certainly double what it was thirty years ago; our rates are certainly 50 per cent., if not 75 per cent., higher than they were then.

27618. The size and importance of the building you carry out now is then about one-half of the size and importance of the building you could carry out thirty years ago?—Yes, the value is only half what it was practically.

27619. Then the building or work that you now sanction on your own responsibility is practically one-half the size and importance of what you could do, or a man in your grade could do, thirty years ago?—Yes.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Major T. C. PLOWDEN, I.A., was called and examined.

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27620. (*Chairman.*) You are the Third Secretary to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes. I am responsible for the Education, Medical, Berar Revenue and Separate Revenue Departments of the Secretariat.

It seems anomalous that while Local Governments can add appointments on pay not exceeding Rs. 250 per mensem to existing grades up to a limit of Rs. 25,000 per annum they cannot create new grades or abolish existing ones. This restriction is due to a desire to secure uniformity in the pay of grades in all provinces, but the necessity for such uniformity is not apparent. I would remove such restrictions and allow Local Governments a free hand in establishing new posts, in creating new grades, in abolishing existing grades, and in adding to the pay and allowances of existing appointments subject to a rule that the net additional expenditure to be incurred in each financial year on all schemes in the year should not exceed one lakh of rupees. Local Governments should also be able to sanction deputations up to one year at least, without limit as to salary or deputation allowance.

With regard to the general question as to the best method of securing delegation, I think specific amending legislation for existing Acts is the more convenient. Future Acts should contain provision for the delegation of power by the Local Government to officers subordinate to it.

What has struck me in my Secretariat experience is the small amount of official intercourse between Local Governments. This must be due to too much centralization in matters of detail in the Government of India. If Local Governments were given greater freedom in developing their administration on their own lines, subject to general principles of policy which must remain in the hands of the Central Government, they would interchange views more frequently and each would benefit from the experience of the other. On the other hand, on all important questions of policy the pronouncement of each individual Government should be considered on its own merits and should not be overruled because the policy is accepted by some other province. I would illustrate my meaning by a reference to the question, still under consideration, of making primary education free in this country. This Administration has pronounced against the adoption of the policy as premature for these provinces, and the mere fact that other provinces in a more advanced state of progress may have accepted it should not be taken as a sufficient reason for applying it here.

Much greater discretion might be allowed to Local Governments in withholding petitions of appeal. Within my own recent experience we had to forward two memorials relating to orders with which there was not the remotest chance of the Government of India interfering. As a matter of fact that Government did not interfere, but in one of the cases a great amount of time and labour was expended in preparing the forwarding letter. Local Governments should not be required to forward returns of petitions and memorials withheld by them.

In the smaller and the more remote districts District Officers have plenty of opportunities for keeping in contact with the people, and of making themselves accessible to them. In large districts or in districts which are rapidly developing the Head of the districts has far less opportunities for keeping in touch with the people.

The real cause of increase of work is to be found in the progress and development of the country. The unit of administration in India is, and must continue to be so far as we can see, the district. One man must be the Head of the district and must be held ultimately responsible for its efficient government in all the various branches of administration. But as the country develops legislation increases, and with the increase in legislation the duties of the Head of the district must increase. For instance, factories multiply and increase, and a Factory Act follows. Again, the progress of the country demands executive initiative on the part of its administrators. It matters not whence the initiative comes, it may be from above or it may be from below, the net result means an increase of work. The initiative as often as not comes from the District Officer himself. For example, a Deputy Commissioner who has had much to do with the mineral development of his district discovers errors of form and procedure; he reports these with his suggestions to the Secretariat; other officers are consulted; all the points raised are then carefully considered in the light of the various opinions received, and the result is probably a new circular or a more elaborate form of return, as the case may be. But it cannot be contended that the new Act, or circular, or return is the result of a desire on the part of Government to legislate for the sake of legislation; it is prescribed because it has been found indispensable to the more efficient working of the matter to which it pertains. As an instance it has recently been found necessary to add a Manual on Mining to the manuals already in use in these provinces.

The only remedies are to reduce unwieldy districts to reasonable dimensions, and to give the Deputy Commissioners of those districts in which the desk work is very heavy a senior Assistant who could be empowered with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner. Recently the districts in Berar have been reduced from six to four. I think it was a mistake to reduce them. The Amraoti and Akola districts as at present constituted are too large for a Deputy Commissioner to administer properly. At least one more district should be made of portions of the Amraoti and Akola districts with headquarters at Ellichpur. Both Nagpur and Jubbulpore are very heavy charges, and might well be reduced. Chanda and Raipur are very large in area though perhaps the actual work is not so heavy as in Nagpur and Jubbulpore, but these two districts as well as Bilaspur might be reduced. I am unable to say what the dimensions of a district should be limited to; the area alone is no guide; the density of population, the state of progress in each district, the number of factories in each and kindred matters must be taken into consideration.

Appeals are far too frequent, and the result of allowing them to be made to the extent at present permitted is to diminish the District Officer's prestige and consequently his influence. The people now are much too fond of ignoring the local authorities and coming direct to the Head of the Government. This practice should be discouraged as strongly as possible. Reasonable facilities for appeal should of course be allowed, but excessive facilities lead the people to think that the higher authorities have no confidence in the ability and discretion of District Officers. Under the Berar Revenue Code it is possible for there to be two appeals and an application for revision in some cases, and one appeal and two applications for revision in other cases. As regards appeals and revisions I would lay down general principles as follows:—A first appeal should always be allowed. If on first appeal the original order is confirmed, no second appeal should be allowed unless the Appellate Court gives leave for a second appeal to be made. If on first appeal the original order is reversed or modified a second appeal should be allowed. No third appeal and no application for revision should be allowed in *any circumstances* in cases in which there has been a second appeal. In cases in which no second appeal can be made, an application for revision *on points of law only* should be permitted to the authority immediately superior to the first Appellate Court. No second application for revision should be allowed in *any circumstances*. With these principles embodied in the law, I would not deal with any details in the law. I would leave such details to be dealt with by rules under the law and having the force of law, issued by the Government. To Commissioners I would give the power of investing Assistant Commissioners in their divisions with all or any of the revenue powers (including appellate powers) of a Deputy Commissioner, and of determining the area in each district within which such powers should be exercised. When an Assistant Commissioner exercises any of the powers of a Deputy Commissioner the appeal against an order passed in the exercise of any such power should lie to the same Appellate Court as would an appeal from the Deputy Commissioner's orders, and should not lie to the Deputy Commissioner as is the case under the Berar Patel and Patwari Law. The idea of investing an Assistant Commissioner with the powers of a Deputy Commissioner is to afford relief to the Deputy Commissioner in his case work, but if the Deputy Commissioner remains the Appellate Court there is practically no relief; he does appellate work instead of original work.

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In the old days the District Officer was looked upon by the people as the principal source of their benefits and as the final arbiter of their destinies, and in remote and jungly places this idea still exists. But progress in education and in civilisation, increase in material prosperity, the opening up of the country, the great improvement in communications, and the spread of local self-government are all factors which have brought the people more into contact with the outer world and have disturbed or displaced the traditional faith of the East in personal rule. This result is only the natural consequence of progress, and is a matter for congratulation; no one would dream of putting the country in its present condition of advancement back to the old methods of administration when the work of the District Officer was law. At the same time so long as the unit of administration remains in the district, the District Officer continues to be the back-bone of our rule, and to enable him to continue to discharge his functions efficiently we must search for other means of restoring his waning influence. Among these might be the grant of larger powers of control over expenditure to Divisional Commissioners and to Deputy Commissioners, and an increase in the Deputy Commissioner's patronage. With regard to the former lump sums might be allotted to Divisional Commissioners for distribution among their Deputy Commissioners; and as an instance of the latter the Deputy Commissioner might be empowered to grant naib-tahsildars leave up to three months and to appoint the officiating incumbent.

A sufficiently high standard of colloquial knowledge is not at present insisted on. The colloquial examination should be made a much severer test, and at the same time young officers should have more leisure and greater opportunities given them for preparing themselves for the examination. In the departmental examination all papers without books should be abolished; the test is of no practical use. No one works without reference books at hand, and what we want to find out is whether the examinee knows how to use his books. I would also abolish the rule which does not allow increases of pay till the examinations have been passed, as it only encourages cramming, and would increase the period for passing from three to four years. As a standard I would insist on candidates being able to converse fluently; they should also know something of the proverbs and sayings of the people, and should be able to understand the lower classes as well as the more educated classes. A man who can crack a joke in the vernacular will always get on with the people; greater attention should be paid to pronunciation. A young Assistant on joining should be attached for at least six months to the office of a good Deputy Commissioner; he should go into camp with the Deputy Commissioner, should see how case work is done and should try his hand on unimportant cases and petty inquiries. At headquarters he should make himself thoroughly acquainted with all the routine of the

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office. He should then be attached to the office of a Divisional Commissioner for another six months. He should not be put on to regular work during his first year. I am also of opinion that every officer should be given an opportunity of seeing the working of the Secretariat, and would make it a rule that every officer of about six to eight years' service should do a spell of special duty for at least six months in the Secretariat.

I am not in favour of District Advisory or Administrative Councils. Their creation would not tend either to increase efficiency or to diminish work; on the contrary much of the work would have to be done twice over. Local self-government was started too soon in this country and a beginning was made at the wrong end. We made provision for creating elective bodies before we had a properly qualified electorate. As recently as 10 years ago at some *taluk* Board elections which I held only 4 per cent. of the voters turned up, and it was obvious that the mass of the people took no interest in the proceedings or in the results. I would not repeat the same mistake with regard to District Advisory or Administrative Councils. I very much doubt whether such Councils would be popular and whether they would attract the best class of man, and they would therefore do more harm than good by becoming barriers between District Officers and the mass of the people.

The old village panchayats cannot be revived now. The present generation is too much used to having its petty criminal and civil cases decided by properly constituted tribunals to wish to have these cases settled in the village. But a beginning might be made by forming village councils on modern lines in selected areas. Their functions should be limited to purely administrative matters such as sanitation and education. I do not think they could ever be placed in control of the police, and I am very doubtful whether they should be allowed to deal with revenue questions. Local self-government has done best in municipal areas, and I see no reason why District Boards should be given any control over the smaller municipalities in their districts.

A simpler form of legislation, especially in Acts of local application, would tend to make administration generally less rigid and more elastic. The law should be limited to general broad principles; the detailed procedure for giving effect to these principles should be dealt with in rules issued by Government under the law and having the force of law. Such rules grow up in time in the light of actual experience of the working of the law; they can be made elastic and flexible, and they can be altered from time to time without necessitating fresh legislation. The Local Government should also be empowered to delegate any of its powers to any Revenue Officer not below the rank of Deputy Commissioner.

27621. You tell us that there is very small official intercourse between Local Governments; is there any restriction on the intercourse, official or non-official, of Local Governments?—No, none whatever.

27622. So that if they do not consult each other as to their proceedings and as to the changes which they want to make in their administration, that is not due to any restriction on their actions by the Government of India, but to their own want of action?—If the Government of India did not pass detailed orders, such, for example, as in the matter of a School Final Examination, we should probably consult the United Provinces on our scheme. But when we get down a letter from the Government of India, laying down the lines on which a particular subject is to be dealt with, there is not much scope for us to discuss matters with other Governments.

27623. You get a letter down from the Government of India simply saying what they want; they do not order you?—No.

27624. Is there any reason under those circumstances why you should not write to the United Provinces Government and say, "India asks us to do so and so; we find it inconvenient; what is your practice"?—No.

27625. Nothing is done in that direction?—No, the intercourse between the provincial Governments is very small.

27626. Might it be advantageously increased?—I think it might.

27627. You have never made any suggestion to that effect during your Secretariat career?—I have. We have consulted the Bombay Government on two or three occasions as to land tenures in Berar.

27628. To the advantage of both Governments?—Certainly to our advantage.

27629. You tell us that the unit of administration in India is the district, but you also suggest that as the country develops the duties of the Head of the district must increase. That would be not only in volume, but in variety?—Certainly.

27630. Can one man have such a cognizance of factory legislation, the distribution of water, the alignment of roads and so forth, that he can possibly continue to direct the policy of a district in all these different matters?—It is very essential that one man should do it, and it is possible that he should be able to do it as long as he is relieved of a good deal of routine desk work. He has got more or less expert advisers in every department to help him; he does not profess to be an expert, for instance, on irrigation or forestry, but, as District Officer, he knows the requirements of his district, and he knows where the shoe pinches.

27631. You are fairly familiar with the work required of a District Officer and the proposals made by your Government here to lighten him of that work; if those proposals were accepted would he have time to direct the policy in all the various departments?—He would in the smaller districts; in the bigger districts you would have to reduce the area.

27632. No amount of decentralization would help him to keep pace with all the work unless the size of the area was reduced?—That is my view.

27633. No increase of the staff subordinate to himself would meet the difficulty?—It would meet it to a great extent. Suppose you have two subdivisions in a district and you made four subdivisions; that would give relief in a certain amount of case work. But I am in favour of having respectably sized districts, because the Deputy Commissioner is much more able to get to know the people and the needs of a respectably sized district than he is of a huge district like Chanda, for instance.

27634. What in your judgment would be a respectable size for a district?—You cannot do it by area alone; a very sparsely populated district of 4,000 square miles might not be too big, and a densely populated industrial district of probably 600 square miles might be sufficient.

27635. Can you give it to us by a sort of combination of area and population?—The Chanda district is 10,000 square miles; a good deal of Chanda is in a backward state; I do not know it personally, but a great deal of it is jungle. I should say that it would be easier to manage a district like that than Amraoti with 4,000 square miles which contain 4 municipalities and 32 factories, whereas Chanda contains only 7 factories; the population of Chanda is 57 to the square mile; the population of Amraoti is 169 to the square mile. I think the density of the population is perhaps the most important factor of all.

27636. You cannot give us any generalisation?—No, that could only be done by a committee going into the conditions of each district.

27637. How long would you keep your Deputy Commissioner in his district?—At the minimum 3 years. As a maximum I see no harm in 7 years, but it is as great a mistake to keep a man too long as to keep him for too short a time.

27638. You speak about a young Assistant being attached for at least six months to the office of a good Deputy Commissioner. Would you approve of a suggestion which has been made that an

assistant should be sent for training under a Settlement Officer?—It would be a good thing if he was attached to a man who was doing settlement work; there is no better way of getting to know the people.

27639. Would you send him straight to headquarters?—I would attach him first to headquarters to let him get hold of the routine work.

27640. For how long would you have him there?—At least six months.

27641. Then you would send him out on settlement work?—Yes, or he might go with the Deputy Commissioner in camp. Perhaps it would be better not to send him out with a Settlement Officer after he had done a few years both in camp and at headquarters.

27642. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You spoke of Amraoti as one of the heavy districts in respect of its population and area combined. The population I find is 85,490. Are you familiar with the size and population of the Bengal and Madras districts?—No; all I know about Bombay was when I served in Buldana, which is next door to Khandesh, a very unwieldy district which has since been broken up.

27643. You are not aware that the average Bengal district has about double that population—a million and a half?—I should be very sorry to be Deputy Commissioner of a district like that.

27644. And the area of a Bengal district may be over 4,000 square miles?—That is greater than Amraoti.

27645. The average area of a Madras district would not be less than what you have put down here for Amraoti; they run nearer 6,000 than 4,000 square miles. Considering these facts would you still think it unreasonable to expect a Deputy Commissioner in Berar to manage a district like Amraoti?—I do.

27646. Are there any other circumstances which make it very difficult for a Deputy Commissioner in Berar to manage districts, the size and population of which are less than the average districts in Madras?—Yes. One thing is that the Berari is a very litigious person; he is also a very rich person, and Berar is very small in area, very compact, very densely populated, and very well served with communications.

27647. You said that if instead of decreasing the number of districts the number of sub-divisions were increased that would give some relief to the Deputy Commissioner?—That is an alternative plan, but I prefer the reduction of districts.

27648. Is it desirable or necessary to increase the number of *tahsils* in each sub-division?—In Berar there is no doubt you will have to give some help to some of the *tahsildars*; they are very much overworked at present. Take a *taluk* like Akot in the Akola district, where the land revenue alone is 6½ lakhs; that is an enormous revenue for one *taluk*.

27649. I understand that in the Central Provinces the number of *tahsils* is even smaller than in Berar; generally there is only one *tahsil* corresponding to one sub-division?—It may be so, I am not very familiar with the Central Provinces.

27650. Is it desirable that the Sub-Divisional Officer should reside in his sub-division throughout the whole of the year or the greater part of the year?—I think he should always reside in his sub-division.

27651. You think he would be more in contact with the people?—Yes. As a matter of fact in Berar, in the three principal sub-divisions, the Sub-Divisional Officers all reside at the headquarters of their sub-divisions.

27652. (*Mr. Hichens.*) You are in favour of allowing the Local Government a free hand in the establishment of new posts?—I would rather like to qualify that. I think the powers of the Chief Commissioner should be confined to the Provincial Service, and that he should be able to create new appointments up to the maximum pay of the highest grade Provincial Officer. Under his present powers the Chief Commissioner could add two officers at Rs. 250 each, that is to say, he could add Rs. 500 to the total expenditure of the province, but he could not add a Rs. 300 post in place of those two at Rs. 250 each; therefore he cannot do a thing which would result in a saving of Rs. 200. He might be allowed to deal with his own *cadre* in the Provincial Service.

27653. Suppose every province was allowed to decide for itself in such cases what pay it would give, would that give bad results?—There would be inconveniences attaching to it, and that is probably why the Government of India have kept this power; you might find a certain grade paid a certain amount in the United Provinces, and the men in the Central Provinces might ask to be placed on the same footing.

27654. Is there any reason why the Central Provinces should be hampered in considering what they should pay their own people?—No, it should be decided on its merits.

27655. You think they would be capable and rational enough to decide the matter on its own merits?—I should say so, certainly.

27656. Would you say that the same thing applied to many of these allowances as to which there are very rigid Government of India rules, such as travelling allowances?—You must have more or less uniformity in travelling allowance rules.

27657. Is the general principle that you have got to try and find out how much it costs a man to travel, and to reimburse him his out-of-pocket expenses?—I suppose so.

27658. Is not the Local Government perfectly capable of applying itself to that problem and solving it satisfactorily?—Yes, they are quite capable of it.

27659. And if one solution applies to one Local Government and another to another, it may be that each system is more applicable to the particular province in which it is applied?—That would be the deduction.

27660. There is every reason to suppose that they would be capable of working out the schemes most suited to themselves?—I think so; I had not travelling allowances in my mind; I was thinking more of grade pay.

27661. There is no particular reason to suppose that if the Local Governments had that power they would abuse it?—None whatever.

27662. And if they would not abuse it, there is no reason to suppose that the travelling allowance in one province would be excessively higher than in another?—No.

27663. They would allow more or less the same, and if there were slight divergencies it might be even an advantage; in order to give you a basis of comparison?—Yes, if the provincial Governments had to lay down their own travelling allowance they would communicate with each other and try to get them as near the same level as possible.

27664. Would you say that there is no one road in regard to administration which is absolutely right to the exclusion of any others?—I should agree with you there.

27665. Therefore it might be well that the Local Governments should experiment to see which is the best?—Yes.

27666. (*Mr. Meyer.*) Are not Local Governments composed of officials?—Yes.

27667. And they deal with travelling allowances and other concessions to other officials?—Yes.

27668. Those officials may be related to them?—Yes.

27669. Or they may be their personal friends?—Yes.

27670. Might there not be some little risk in giving Local Governments in those circumstances an entirely free hand as to travelling and other allowances?—If they were fixed by rule by the Local Government, I do not see how friends and relations would get any advantage.

27671. If the Local Government fixed the rule, and it found it was inconveniently affecting certain

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officials, it could alter the rule?—Yes, as to officials *quâ* officials.

27672. Is there not a possible advantage in having these questions referred to higher authority which does not know the men and which deals with them as abstract personalities?—That is, of course, supposed to be the advantage of the Government of India system. I think the Local Government can be trusted not to be biassed in the way suggested.

27673. A local allowance is supposed to be simply in compensation for the additional work or additional expense of a particular locality?—Yes.

27674. There were three local allowances granted for the Berar sub-divisions?—Yes.

27675. We have been told that ever since those were granted, there has been a constant transfer of officers; was that in order that they might get the local allowance?—The posting of officers is not dealt with in my branch of the Secretariat, but I should say the senior men are posted there because they are most fitted for the post; if I had the posting, I should certainly put the most senior man in, irrespective of the local allowance.

27676. Although you knew that the senior man would be presently going off to be a Deputy Commissioner?—Yes, because being in a sub-division gives him the best training for his work as Deputy Commissioner. The only way to avoid frequent transfers would be to increase the *cadre*.

27677. You do not think that local allowances might come to be regarded as additions to salary?—The senior Assistant Commissioner always looks upon himself as having a better claim to a sub-division than the man junior to him.

27678. Because there is the local allowance?—There is the local allowance, and it is also because the work is so much more responsible.

27679. He is so chivalrous that he desires to go to the place where the work is heavier?—It is not a question of chivalry, but as a matter of *izzat*.

27680. You have read the report of the Excise Committee?—Not all of it.

27681. You have read the portion in which they brought to notice the way in which provincial Governments got into compartments in the matter of excise and had not consulted each other; is that an instance of what would happen if in all things provincial Governments were simply allowed to consult each other, and did not receive instructions from the Government of India?—We ourselves formed our own excise system here on our own initiative, and we went to Madras for help in revising it.

27682. But as regards most provinces, the Excise Committee found that they had gone on with their own provincial methods?—Yes.

27683. Have you had the Inspector-General of Excise here?—Yes.

27684. Have you had the benefit of his advice?—I only saw him once, but I can quite imagine that we shall benefit from his advice.

27685. You think the appointment is a good one, and that it is likely to help the province without sapping provincial independence?—Yes.

27686. Your old system in Berar was apparently one of centralization at the district headquarters?—Very badly.

27687. There was no such thing as a sub-division in former days?—Only in one place.

27688. Your Deputy Commissioners did everything practically through the headquarters Assistants?—Yes.

27689. At the same time they were constantly being transferred, so we have been told by a previous witness?—Yes, there were a good many transfers of Deputy Commissioners; I was most of my time in one district.

27690. The sub-divisional system has been due to the amalgamation of districts?—Partly, and partly to breaking up the old system of centralization; the revenue work in those days was very much centralized; it was almost entirely in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner.

27691. You are rather in favour of the old system; you like small districts and everything centralized in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner?—Not everything centralized in the hands of the Deputy Commissioner; I am in favour of relieving him largely of routine and case work.

27692. With regard to magisterial and revenue work you have two alternatives; you have the policy of sub-divisions with the Deputy Commissioner controlling or inspecting, and you have your old Berar policy of letting the Deputy Commissioner run things direct; which do you prefer?—*I am not in favour of the old Berar policy.* I did not mean that; I am in favour of relieving the Deputy Commissioner of a great deal of routine work and giving him more time to travel about and get to know the people.

27693. You approve of the sub-divisional system as introduced in the places you have mentioned?—Yes.

27694. You have heard Mr. Dutt's remarks about the Madras system; in accordance with the policy that you yourself indicate here, suppose your Local Government were to start a scheme of reducing districts, might it not be advisable before you do that to send an officer to study the Madras system?—I should have no objection to the case being examined on its merits.

27695. Where your Sub-Divisional Officer has been vested with the powers of a District Officer under the land laws, the appeal goes to the Deputy Commissioner as the District Collector?—Yes.

27696. Do you object to that?—I do; you relieve him of original work, and you give him appellate work; therefore his desk-work remains very much what it was before.

27697. It is much easier to deal with a case on appeal than to go through an original case and hear witnesses?—Personally, I would rather deal with a case originally than on appeal.

27698. Under the system you advocate the appeal would go to the Commissioner?—Yes.

27699. And the second appeal would go to the Chief Commissioner?—Either a second appeal or an application for revision, as the law stands at present.

27700. Your proposed system relieves the Deputy Commissioner at the expense of the Commissioner and of the Head of the province?—Yes, it would give the Commissioner more work, and would throw more work on the Secretariat.

27701. Is that a sound system?—I certainly think so.

27702. The Deputy Commissioner is to be relieved first, and the Head of the province later?—I would not put it in that way, but I do not see any other way in which you can relieve the Deputy Commissioner.

27703. In Bombay and Madras, the Deputy Commissioner hears the appeals first; it is supposed to be one of his methods of knowing what is going on in his district?—I do not wish to press the point.

27704. Might not Sub-Divisional Officers when they exist, take criminal appeal cases within their sub-divisions?—Yes, and they do; if they are considered fit for appellate powers under the Code, they have those powers.

27705. We were told that they did not take them as a matter of course, but only when the District Magistrate chose to give them those powers?—So far as I remember, we issued an omnibus notification investing all Sub-Divisional Officers in that capacity with appellate powers.

27706. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) You suggest that you should take the present opportunity of *specific amending legislation for past Acts, and* for the future have a sort of General Clauses Act allowing delegation?—Delegation clauses might be included in each new Act.

27707. You would not put it, for instance, into a general Act once for all?—No, it depends of course very largely on the nature of the Act.

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27708. Would you, by the procedure of a Legislative Council, get more security of notice to the people of what was going to be done, than by the procedure of notification of intention under a general Act?—I should think that under the Legislative Council you would get more notice. Probably people would talk about it, and would tell other people about it.

27709. There was a specific Act passed, Act I. of 1903; it was published by order of the 20th February; it was passed in the Viceroy's Legislative Council on the 6th March; do you think that people would have had more chance under that form of procedure than they would have had by notification as to specific legislation?—I think the time given by that notification is far too small to let people know.

27710. My suggestion of your opinion is that by a notification under a general Act, you can give just as efficient notice as you do in connection with the passing of a specific Act in the Viceroy's Council. If you had a general Act, which you could use at any time, with a clause of the sort I suggest, would you not practically protect the people against surprises?—Yes, if you gave very ample notice.

27711. If you had such a general Act, you could then use it without going to the Legislative Council on every occasion?—You mean a general Delegation Act, and notice given that in pursuance of the terms of that Act you propose to delegate certain powers; yes, that would be an advantage.

27712. Berar is very liable to the influence of the Deccan, Poona, and so on, and of course it is close to the Central Provinces. Have you ever found that your officials have been much affected in the matter of differences of pay in Bombay or in the Central Provinces; have you had much trouble in meeting complaints that they were paid higher in the two neighbouring provinces?—No, but as a matter of fact the pay of some of the subordinate officers in Berar has lately been raised on the merits of the case of these officers, on account of the increasing dearness of living.

27713. It is practically quite simple to hold the principle that each province can be treated on its merits without much attention to arguments as to the rates paid in neighbouring provinces?—Yes.

27714. Your system of appeals omits one contingency; there may be three views of a case; it is just possible that a first Court should take one view, your first Appellate Court another view, and your second Appellate Court agree with neither. What would you do in that case; is it provided for under your system?—I say "If on first appeal the original order is revised or modified, a second appeal should be allowed."

27715. But suppose the second Appellate Court modified it again, agreeing with neither actually, would that be absolutely final?—Yes, that would come under my proposal that no third appeal and no application for revision should be allowed in cases in which there had been a second appeal.

27716. You do not want to allow appeals to go on until you reach two concurrent decisions?—If a man is allowed a first appeal and can go on to a second Appellate Court if the first Appellate Court does not agree with the Original Court, that seems to me to be quite sufficient.

27717. Is not the Government of India composed of officials?—Yes.

27718. Even the Finance Department of the Government of India is composed of officials?—Yes.

27719. They frequently have friends and relations in India?—Yes, I think they must have.

27720. So that if you want a thoroughly impersonal decision, you must send everything to the Secretary of State?—That would be the logical conclusion from that argument.

27721. But you think you might trust the Local Government to hold the scales even in its own province, just as much as you can trust the Government of India to hold the scales even in an Imperial Department?—Yes.

27722. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) What is the rule about touring in Berar?—In the old days, before we came over, the Assistant Commissioners were allowed to do very little touring, but now the Central Provinces orders have been applied, and there is no complaint about not enough touring done in Berar.

27723. Is it not of great importance to prevent Berar from being forced into the mould of the Central Provinces as to its fundamental institutions?—Yes.

27724. Are you satisfied with the arrangements that have been made to secure that?—I am.

27725. As an officer of Berar experience, you are in special charge of Berar land revenue?—Yes.

27726. Other matters not connected with land revenue are dealt with along with similar matters in the Central Provinces?—Yes.

27727. Are you ever consulted as to any of those other matters?—Yes, I frequently have cases such as forest cases, sent across to me for my opinion.

27728. Then you are the repository of the Berar traditions in the Secretariat?—Yes; if the other Secretaries are dealing with a case referring to Berar, they can always send across to me, and they do so frequently; similarly if I am dealing with any Central Provinces matters, with which I am not very familiar, I send the file across to a Central Provinces Secretary for his opinion.

27729. Has the Berar village more of a constitution than the Central Provinces village?—I am not very much acquainted with Central Provinces villages, but the fact that you have a hereditary *patel* and a hereditary patwari in Berar means that you have a greater constitution in a Berar village, I should think, than in a Central Provinces village.

27730. Would it be possible to form a panchayat and to endow it with a certain amount of authority?—As regards civil and criminal cases, I do not think people would like to go back to the panchayat, now that they are so used to regularly constituted Courts, but you might try a sort of small village union for their own internal affairs on a small scale.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Mr. W. N. Maw, I.C.S., was called and examined.

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27731. (*Chairman.*) You are Second Secretary to the Chief Commissioner?—Yes, as such I am responsible for the Agriculture, Forests, Commerce and Industry, Finance, and Local and Municipal Departments.

The Government of India should maintain an effective control over the finances of Local Governments and that principle should not be relaxed. Proposals for giving provincial Governments larger financial powers should be confined to matters of detail, and should not be directed against this principle. Local Governments should be given a limited power of appropriating money from their estimated closing balances on objects of public utility which have not been specifically provided for in the budget. The concession of this power would not in any way impair the effective control of the Government of India over provincial finances, though it might to a trifling extent curtail its borrowing powers. At present if the budget provision of a department proves inadequate the Local Government has, if possible, to supply the deficiency by re-appropriating money from some other department. When no re-appropriation can be suggested, it is necessary for the Local Government to apply to the Government of India for an additional grant; in other words, for permission to draw on its own balance. This procedure is inconvenient and causes delay; but it is avoided to some extent by the device of providing

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lump sums in the budget estimates for the reorganisation of establishments which have not received sanction, or for improvements which are contemplated, but have not been worked out in detail. Much inconvenience and unnecessary correspondence would be saved by the introduction of a rule empowering Local Governments to reappropriate up to a certain limit from their closing balance. In the case of the Central Provinces this limit might be fixed at 5 lakhs, and this amount should be entered on the expenditure side of the budget under a new head, "provincial reserve."

The Government of India are too apt to reduce the provincial estimates of expenditure sent up with the budget. Petty reductions by the Government of India are quite unnecessary because the Local Government, which is in the best position to estimate the requirements of the province, is in the habit of curtailing the departmental budgets when they are framed on too liberal a scale. The Government of India in some cases make reductions in the estimates of expenditure with the sole object of obtaining accurate budgeting, and declare that they have no desire to curtail useful expenditure. The result of this procedure is however that the departments concerned, in their desire to keep within their budget provision, postpone works or reforms which they had intended to carry out; and thus the expenditure at the end of the year tends to approximate to the reduced estimates sanctioned by the Government of India, not because the estimates as submitted by the Local Government were too liberal, but as a direct consequence of the reduction made by the Government of India for the sake of accuracy. When this happens the Government of India must conclude that their reductions were warranted; similar reductions are made in the next year; and the expansion of the department concerned is unnecessarily retarded.

Under the quasi-permanent provincial contract which came into force with effect from the 1st April, 1906, the following heads of revenue and expenditure were divided equally:—Stamps, excise, assessed taxes, forest and land revenue as to receipts but not as to expenditure. The settlement was much more liberal than preceding ones, and the Local Administration is perfectly contented with it; but it may be found necessary from time to time to revise the allocation of funds.

I see no reason why Local Governments should not be given borrowing powers provided that they are in a position to repay the interest on the loans and arrange for a sinking fund for the liquidation of the debt. By this means it would be possible for Local Governments to raise money for feeder railway lines which are badly needed. At present there is no prospect of feeder lines being constructed on any considerable scale for years to come. The progress in opening main lines, which are the ones most likely to be sanctioned by the Railway Board, has been very slow; the provinces had for instance to wait years for sanction to the construction of the Nagpur-Itarsi line.

With regard to the delegation of financial powers the present rules confer on this Administration as much authority as could reasonably be expected. The tendency of the Government of India is to relax the restrictions imposed on the powers of Local Governments by the Civil Service Regulations and the Civil Account Code, and future delegation of powers should be left in their hands to be proceeded with gradually and cautiously. There are however numerous petty restrictions which might with advantage be removed at once. With regard to local bodies the account rules should be examined in detail, and it would then probably be found that there are numerous petty matters requiring the orders of the Chief Commissioner which might perfectly well be left to Commissioners. Much has, however, already been effected in the direction of decentralization: and the general tendency is for the Local Administration to divest itself of powers the retention of which serves no useful purpose.

Many of the districts in the Central Provinces are too large to be administered under one Deputy Commissioner. I refer especially to Chanda, Raipur and Bilospur.

27732. Is the provincial budget prepared by districts or by subjects?—It is prepared both by subjects and by districts. The budget by subjects, such as excise, is based upon estimates submitted by the districts. In the same way with all the subjects. The budgets are first of all checked by the Comptroller; he sends them on to the Finance Secretary.

27733. But who makes up the budget?—For the greater part the budgets are departmental, and they are prepared by the Heads of the Departments; the Deputy Commissioner has very little work in connection with the budget; he only prepares the budget for his own expenditure and for land revenue and for other things which are not directly departmental, such as excise, education, registration, and so on.

27734. But does a budget of expenditure and revenue come up to the Finance Department from each Commissioner's division?—Not for the division; it is prepared for the province as a whole.

27735. By the Finance Department?—Yes; first of all it comes through the Comptroller; the Comptroller makes any alterations or corrections he thinks fit, and sends it on to the Chief Commissioner for sanction.

27736. If there was a system of divisional budgets as has been suggested, either in whole or in part, there would have to be quite a new system in vogue throughout the province?—Yes, there would be a very great alteration.

27737. Do sanitary schemes come to you in the Municipal Department?—Yes.

27738. Before they come to you, are they criticised by any experts?—It is very seldom that we have had any big sanitary schemes.

27739. You have got a big one for Nagpur in preparation?—Yes, that is about the only one.

27740. Has that been to you in the Local and Municipal Department?—It is just commencing.

27741. Have you any expert advice to guide you?—The Sanitary Inspector has been employed at present, in Nagpur, working out a drainage scheme; the scheme in Nagpur is a scheme for the construction of a large reservoir because the water obtained from the present reservoir at Ambajhiri is not sufficient for the necessities of the town.

27742. Will it come to you eventually for criticism?—This big scheme about the large reservoir that they are going to construct is not really a sanitary scheme. There is a large drainage scheme which may cost about 40 lakhs; that has all been worked out in detail by Mr. Lane-Browne, who is an expert; it will come to me, because I deal with all correspondence in the Local and Municipal Department, and it will be necessary, among other things, to provide the funds.

27743. Is there any necessity for the Government to employ expert assistants?—The technical part of the work will be entirely done by Mr. Lane-Browne; we could not, of course, pretend to criticise that.

27744. You tell us that the Government of India have been too apt to reduce the provincial estimates of expenditure. What has been the result of their reductions in the last few years? Has the Local Administration spent up to the reduced estimates sent back by the Government of India?—We have not quite spent up to them, because when you get a provisional budget it is necessary to keep within it. It is impossible to exceed it without getting a grant from the Government of India, and that entails a certain amount of trouble. The very fact of reducing the estimate tends to lower the expenditure under that head during the course of the year.

27745. Have you practically worked up to it?—In 1906-07, for the Central Provinces and Berar, we budgeted 3 lakhs under excise; the Government of India cut us down to 2¾ lakhs, and we only worked up to Rs. 2,38,000. In the same way with regard to forests; as a general rule the Government of India estimates come out nearer to the actuals, in almost every case, than ours.

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27746. Did you practically work up to the reduced estimate, or were there some considerable discrepancies?—We practically worked up to it.

27747. Your suggestion is that you could have worked up to your own original estimate if you had not had your figures reduced?—Yes. If there had been a smaller margin, we should probably have worked up to a smaller amount than was given to us by the Government of India. Fresh orders have come out upon this subject, which will obviate all difficulties in the future.

27748. What is the date of those orders?—The 18th January, 1908. We are going to have two figures, one will be the full amount we ask for and want; that will be passed; for instance, the Forest Department will be allowed to work up to that figure, but the Government of India will take a reduced figure, reducing it on account of probable savings, and it will be the duty of the Comptroller and the Head of the Department to warn the Head of the Administration if the lower figure is likely to be exceeded; if it is likely to be exceeded, the Head of the Administration will apply for an additional grant. In that way the Head of the Department is unaffected by the reductions; he may not know anything about them. If he has a big scheme for roads, tanks, wells, or rest-houses, he makes up what he wants, and if he is going to exceed the figure fixed by the Government of India, it is increased without his knowing anything about it. That I think ought to work very well.

27749. You think it will give you the reasonable freedom which you desire?—It will also render it unnecessary for us to ask for reserve funds, as I have suggested.

27750. (*Sir Frederic Lely.*) You say that the system of divisional budgeting would involve great alterations; in the provincial budget all the change that would be required would be that instead of details of certain smaller Public Works, you would substitute a lump sum for each division?—I imagine that it would be necessary to put down all the details as at present in the provincial budget, but to give them according to divisions also; otherwise it would be impossible to work up to any lump sum.

27751. The details, according to this system, would be settled by the Commissioner?—There are a lot of subjects in the budget which really do not come to the Commissioner very much. I do not know whether this proposal will affect excise, for instance, and education.

27752. The proposal in one form is that the smaller Public Works, both original and repairs, of all departments in the division, should be provided for in a divisional budget, which should be framed by the Commissioner in consultation with the departmental authorities; if that was feasible, at any rate it would bring about more co-operation between the Commissioner and the various departments?—I think it would.

27753. It would probably bring them all into line more than they are at present?—I think it would, and it would be very desirable with regard to Public Works.

27754. And also with regard to other departments who demanded expenditure?—In the case of other departments, I do not know that the Commissioner has very much to say. Take the Police Department, the Inspector-General of Police makes out a list of new police buildings.

27755. Is that not a matter in regard to which the Commissioner of the division should have as much say as the Inspector-General himself?—My idea is that there would be no difference of opinion as a rule between the Commissioner and the Inspector-General.

27756. Would it not bring the Commissioner to some extent into touch with the Police Department?—It would have that effect.

27757. (*Mr. Dutt.*) You suggest that the Local Government should be given borrowing powers. Should the sanction of the Government of India be taken before a loan is contracted by the Local Government in each case?—No, that is not my idea.

27758. You think the Local Government should be allowed to borrow without informing the Government of India and without obtaining their sanction?—I imagine that if powers were granted, it would be subject to certain rules. I certainly would not like to say that it should not be necessary to inform the Government of India.

27759. You think that the Government of India should be simply informed when a loan is made?—I think so, and that limit might be prescribed as to the amount up to which we might borrow, which might depend on the state of our finances; it would not be a fixed amount.

27760. Would there be any advantage in that procedure, or could the Local Government borrow on easier terms from the Government of India when it required to borrow?—I can scarcely express an opinion as to whether they could borrow on easier terms. If we could borrow from the public, it would be very useful to carry out works for which it is very difficult at present to enlist the sympathy of the Government of India. There are several small feeder lines which I know would pay hand over fist, and which have no prospect of being constructed for years and years to come. Our recent settlement will probably enable us to borrow at any time up to about 50 lakhs or a crore. If it were laid down that we were allowed to borrow that amount for remunerative work of that kind, it would create a great stimulus to the construction of such works.

27761. You cannot tell us whether it would be possible for the Local Governments to borrow on the same easy terms as the Government of India?—I think we could borrow in the Nagpur Division on quite easy terms. Some years ago an attempt was made to raise money for a small railway; the capital was forthcoming; I do not know what the rate of the interest was. I have no doubt that money will be forthcoming at a reasonable rate of interest.

27762. That would not require any sort of guarantee by the Government of India?—No; I suggest that the Local Administration should be responsible for any loans that they raise.

27763. You do not think there is any risk of Local Governments launching into a great many enterprises which would not be remunerative in the long run?—There would be considerable risk, and therefore permission should only be given under certain conditions prescribing the kind of work for which the loan should be taken, and also laying down certain limits which should not be exceeded

27764. Could you, by any rules laid down beforehand, prevent a Local Government from undertaking doubtful enterprises, if they were so inclined?—If you give the Local Government power to embark on schemes which promise to be remunerative, they might be trusted; they would not knowingly embark on schemes not likely to be remunerative.

27765. In every such case should the Local Government have a sinking fund to pay back the loan within a certain number of years?—Yes.

27766. We have been informed that the resources of the District Boards, especially in matters of education, are so limited that the requirements of primary education cannot be even approximately met in the Central Provinces, and we were told that in a sub-division with about 500 villages, there were only about 40 primary schools. Can you suggest any way in which that could be remedied?—Every year almost we give enhanced contributions to District Councils, and these are fixed contributions; they are not doles. For instance we have just raised the contributions to Rs. 5,09,000; that was raising the contributions by about half a lakh. That is rather unsatisfactory, because there is no elasticity about it. It is really Government money which the people are expending. We have a scheme at present (we are very shortly going to send up a draft Bill to the Government of India) to give District Councils power of controlling markets in certain circumstances, also to license

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brokers, and to order compulsory registration, to charge bazaar dues, and things of that kind. There are two or three cases in which that procedure is adopted at present in the Balaghat district and the Seoni district; it is at present illegal and we propose to legalise it. The result of that will be to bring in an income of something like two lakhs, perhaps, to the District Councils in the whole province. At present the receipts are about Rs. 20,000, over one or two bazaars. It is quite possible that in the end the receipts may come out at four or five lakhs for the whole province; that is a very important measure, and it will help to remedy the present state of affairs. It will give at any rate much more elasticity.

27767. Would you invest the District Councils with the power of imposing this new taxation which has been proposed?—Yes.

27768. You would not make any rule that the taxes should be universally imposed?—No, it would be very similar to the working of the Village Sanitation Act; in fact the power is given just as it is enjoyed by the panchayat under the Sanitation Act; it is to enable the District Councils to declare markets, on payment of compensation if necessary, to be public markets, and to manage them and impose taxes, tolls and dues.

27769. Are the District Councils likely to impose these taxes in every case?—Certainly; they will take the bazaars one by one; they will take the most important ones first. In a small district there are not likely to be more than half a dozen of these markets; in advanced districts like Nagpur and Warora there may be more; in several places markets are held on waste land, markets that have been held there from time immemorial, and at present no revenue is derived from those.

27770. Would not such taxation be unpopular?—No; the compulsory registration of cattle is very popular.

27771. Apart from that, if the District Councils had a freer hand in managing their own schools at a cheap rate, could they multiply schools faster than they can under the present rules?—I do not think they will require any more power; they have as much as they desire. They can manage their own primary schools almost entirely in the Central Provinces.

27772. We understand that a part of the management is in the hands of the Education Department, that the District Boards cannot establish a school or close a school without the sanction of the Deputy Commissioner, who consults the educational inspector?—I believe there is a rule in the Education Manual to that effect; it is a very trivial matter. I know that when I was Deputy Commissioner of Chanda, the District Council wanted new schools, and they simply organised them, and no one interfered with the area in which they wanted to open them.

27773. In some provinces the schools are founded and managed by villages, and the District Council only gives them a certain monthly aid. If that system was adopted, could a large number of schools be established within a moderate sum?—No, not in the Central Provinces.

27774. You have referred to two or three districts of very large areas; is not Chanda a district with a very sparse population?—It is about half a million, spread over 10,000 square miles.

27775. Is it mostly jungle?—About 5,000 square miles is jungle—about half the district.

27776. Raipur has been recently divided?—It has been slightly reduced; it is pretty large now; I think it is 8,000 square miles.

27777. With a population of less than a million?—I cannot say.

27778. What is the population of Bilaspur?—About 700,000.

27779. Would that not be considered a very moderate population for a district in Madras?—I have never served in any other province, but I understand that they have no Commissioners, and the Collector is very similar to the Commissioner here.

27780. (*Mr. Hichens.*) What is the basis on which the provincial grants are given to the District Councils to-day?—It is different from doles in this way; it is fixed for three years.

27781. It is a dole for three years?—You can call it that; it will be renewed, and probably increased, at the end of the three years.

27782. What basis is it fixed upon?—It is based upon the requirements of the district, on their spending capacity, on their areas and their population, and on their readiness to accept education; in fact these recent grants were considered for months before they were finally sanctioned; as many considerations as you could think of were taken into account in order to make the grants as fair as possible.

27783. Do not the Government of India give a certain grant to the provincial Government to be distributed?—That is now included in the provincial settlement under the last contract; it has been amalgamated, so that it does not appear.

27784. Therefore the conditions applying to that grant are no longer in force?—They are really; we are under moral obligation to spend so much; as a matter of fact we send a report every year to the Government of India telling them how much we spend on primary education, and it is not less than the amount it was in 1903, plus this two lakhs grant.

27785. Have you ever worked out what the proportion of the provincial grant is to the amount collected locally by the District Councils?—In some District Councils it is more than half—Chanda, for instance: it varies from about 30 to 50 per cent. as far as I remember.

27786. Would it be a sound principle to give a fixed grant to the different District Councils, as opposed to an indefinite dole—to adopt the principle, for example, of giving them a percentage of their own collections?—I do not think that would be at all fair, because the poor, thinly-populated districts which have the greatest need of education and roads would come off very badly. What you do at present is to consider the requirements of each district, and having found out what you have to dispose of, you fix it for three years; it does not vary in any uniform proportion in the total calculations.

27787. You do not think that that would be a sound system here at all?—No, I do not think it would be suitable.

27788. Do municipalities get any grants?—No, they only get grants accidentally, varying from year to year; they get very few fixed grants. Lately we have been giving them fairly liberal grants on account of plague measures; that is considered a good excuse for giving them money; otherwise they are supposed to carry on their business entirely on their own financing.

27789. What is your view with regard to the appointment of a Divisional Engineer in each division?—I certainly think it is desirable.

27790. If that were done, would you increase the powers of the District Boards in regard to those matters?—Yes, their powers have been increased just recently; they used not to be allowed to construct roads; now they are allowed to construct roads of Class III. or Class IIB.; there is no reason why in a short time they should not be allowed to construct roads of Class IIA. also.

27791. Would you increase the Government contribution?—If any new roads were handed over to them under the present system, we should increase the grant. There are certain roads considered to be district roads; at present they are maintained by the Public Works Department at a cost of about 2 lakhs a year. If any of these district roads were to be handed over to the District Council, it has been ordered, or promised, that the grant shall be increased by the amount that is necessary for the maintenance of the particular road.

27792. You have nothing to do with the audit of the District Board accounts?—No, nothing directly.

27793. Is that done under the agency of the Accountant-General?—The Comptroller, yes.

27794. Does he send in reports to you?—Yes, he sends them in to me as Secretary in the Local and Municipal Department.

27795. There is no system of Local Auditors such as they have in other provinces?—No; the Deputy Commissioner inspects the offices twice a year.

27796. Suppose you had a system of that sort, would it be possible to give them wider powers and more freedom?—I am not sure that we could not give them wider powers without that; in any case we might give them wider powers, and we are sure to do so gradually.

27797. The inspection principle, roughly, is that you give a body very wide powers and trust to the system of inspection to see whether the powers are properly carried out?—Just so.

27798. Would it be desirable to adopt the English system of Local Government Inspectors?—I think not; it would be better to rely on the Deputy Commissioner for the inspection, because he is the controlling authority. The proposal is to have inspection quite apart from the controlling authority; we have inspectors now, namely the Deputy Commissioners.

27799. (*Mr. Meyer.*) You have Inspectors of Local Fund Accounts who go around and audit locally?—Yes, the auditors.

27800. We have had complaints that the municipalities and local bodies here are bound by the complete application to them of all the restrictions laid down in the Civil Service Regulations and the Civil Account Code; who is responsible for that?—It is in the Act with regard to the servants of these bodies, if their appointments are governed by the Civil Service Regulations. I do not think it is true at all to say they are bound down by the application to them of these rules and regulations. There are separate rules for the municipalities and Local Boards; they are bound by those, and the rules are constantly altered; they have been altered of recent years very much.

27801. The Codes are entirely provincial matters?—Yes.

27802. Therefore if you find that the audit conditions press too hard they can be altered?—Yes.

27803. There is no question of the Government of India at all?—No; the powers have been increased very much of recent years.

27804. Did not the Government of India intend the District Council to receive one quarter roughly of the amount it got in the shape of Land Cess?—I do not know.

27805. Did the Government of India not decide that each District Council should receive a subvention from Government amounting roughly to a quarter of what they got in the shape of Land Cess?—Yes, and our contributions to the District Councils are based on that to a certain extent.

27806. Do you apply that in this province, or do you adopt the system of giving whatever you please?—When the division was last worked out, a quarter of the amount we received as Land Cess was taken as the minimum.

27807. That is to say each District Council does not receive less than that?—Exactly.

27808. And some receive a great deal more?—That is my impression.

27809. We were told that in Berar the Boards got one-third of the cost of their schools contributed by Government, and they do not apparently get that in the Central Provinces?—They get contributions in Berar on the same system practically as in the Central Provinces; they get smaller grants because their balances are very large at present.

27810. You do not take a third and say "We will bear that"?—No.

27811. As regards these grants that the Government of India make from time to time towards education and police and so forth, do the Government of India ask of you detailed statements as to the way in which you dispose of the grant?—I only know of their having asked for a statement of that kind with regard to primary education.

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27812. All they ask is that you should compare th lump expenditure now with the lump expenditure before the grant was made?—That is all.

27813. There has been no extra accounts labour thrown on you in connection with these grants?—No.

27814. You speak of the Local Government borrowing for remunerative works. Do you mean by "remunerative works" works which will pay all their working expenses and interest on initial capital and leave something over?—I should say works which will pay about 3 per cent. interest after clearing off working expenses; I think that is a reasonable definition.

27815. Do you think the Government of India could borrow at 3 per cent.?—No, I do not think so.

27816. Would the works be "remunerative" then?—I meant after paying the interest on the amount borrowed.

27817. Suppose you could borrow at 4 per cent., do you mean by a remunerative work a work which would pay the working expenses plus not less than 4 per cent. on the capital?—I do not know that I would put down any limit on "remunerative."

27818. You talk of raising a crore of rupees in the Nagpur Division; do you really think you could raise all that money here?—I should say 50 or 100 lakhs perhaps; I think it would be easy to borrow something like that.

27819. In Nagpur?—In Nagpur or in the province; I think it would be quite possible to borrow 50 lakhs in the Nagpur division and more in Berar.

27820. Does the province contribute anything worth mentioning to the Government of India loan?—I do not know.

27821. Would you be surprised to hear that it does not?—I should not at all.

27822. I suppose you also know that estates under the Court of Wards cannot find people to lend them money in the open market?—I borrowed Rs. 60,000 for an estate under the Court of Wards when I was in Nagpur from the Alliance Bank at Simla; they gave it to us at 6 per cent.

27823. That is not in this province?—No.

27824. You seriously think you could raise large sums of money locally which people do not lend now either to the Imperial Gvernment or to estates?—When there was a proposal to start a railway from here to Samair by a local syndicate, I always understood that the money was available; there is no doubt that the money was there; a few rich bankers could provide the money themselves.

27825. We were told that your Government thinks it does not get enough money for protective irrigation works; is that your idea, too?—At present we have as much as we can spend.

27826. You have been promised, as far as circumstances will admit, an allotment of 15 lakhs a year?—Yes.

27827. That is out of the total of 75 lakhs available for all India; is that not a pretty liberal allotment?—Yes.

27828. If there is a work that you want to push on, is there anything to prevent your Government undertaking it as an ordinary Public Work out of current revenue?—I am not acquainted with the details of the works which require sanction from the Government of India, but I understand that there is a classification between major and minor works, and that reference to the Government of India is necessary before irrigation tanks can be undertaken.

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27829. If you were impressed by the desirability of getting on with a work which the Government of India could not find room for in their protective programme, and you had money to spare yourselves, might you not offer to carry it out as an ordinary work?—I do not know that has ever been thought of; on one or two occasions we have had sanction to tank projects refused by the Government of India, where we considered that they were very necessary; for instance, one tank in the Chanda district and another in the Bhandara district.

27830. There you were asking the Government of India to find the funds; I am speaking of cases where you should find the funds yourself?—It was never suggested to us that we would find the funds.

27831. You are pretty strict in regard to re-appropriations by District Councils and municipalities; we have been told that they may not make a reappropriation within their budget from one major head to another major head, and even within a single major head, without going to the Commissioner; is that so?—Yes.

27832. Is that necessary?—No.

27833. How far would you go in relaxation?—I forget what the present rule is; I think it might be relaxed.

27834. You are not prepared to say to what extent?—You might get rid of re-appropriations within the major heads, at any rate?—Certainly.

27835. (*Sir Steyning Edgerley.*) We have been told that as to matters such as re-appropriations and many similar matters, the provisions in the Municipal Manual in Berar are absurd; that I think is what was said by the Commissioner of Berar, and apparently all the responsible witnesses agree that very much more freedom could be given to Local Boards and municipalities. Is there any amendment of these local manuals on hand?—When a point like that occurs, it is considered for amendment, and it is brought out in the account rules.

27836. When were these manuals last revised as a whole?—The manuals are constantly being revised.

27837. As a whole?—No, we have got manuals such as the Forest Manual.

27838. I am talking of Local Board Manuals?—We have two; we do not take up periodical revisions as a whole; when any amendment is necessary it is added by means of an amendment slip.

27839. Is local self-government making any progress in the Central Provinces?—Yes, it is undoubtedly making gradual progress.

27840. Is it more advanced than when you first became acquainted with the province?—Yes, I think it is.

27841. Would it not be a good thing to undertake a general revision of these manuals?—It is almost impossible to foresee in what direction revision is necessary until a case arises which suggests some revision.

27842. You have taken over a certain number of roads of the Local Boards, roads which are called class I. and class II. roads, and in Nagpur at any rate apparently the Local Board still pay a lump sum contribution of some Rs. 20,000 towards their maintenance?—That will be abolished from the 1st April next.

27843. They will then become wholly provincial?—They are still regarded as district roads.

27844. But the responsibility will be wholly provincial?—If any road is transferred to a District Council.

27845. I am only asking about these roads in the Nagpur district, for which Rs. 20,000 is at present paid; you say that that is going to be abolished from the 1st April?—Yes, but the fact that it is going to cease has been taken into account in fixing the revised contribution; the money that we spent on these roads was really spent on behalf of the District Councils.

27846. So that it is simply a matter of the transfer of items in the accounts?—Yes.

27847. The District Councils will not benefit by the revision?—No, because when the contributions were revised they benefited then.

27848. There has been a Bill sent up which will give them certain limited powers of taxation; has it been considered whether those are all the powers of taxation which could be safely entrusted to them?—I do not know that that was considered.

27849. It has been suggested to us that one of the chief methods of promoting an interest amongst an electorate is to give these bodies powers of taxation; do you agree with that view?—Yes, generally.

27850. Are there any other matters in regard to which they might have powers of imposing taxation?—I cannot think of any at present.

27851. It has been suggested to us that it would be quite sufficient control that the municipalities and local bodies should send up their budget and their monthly accounts and annual reports for information, instead of for sanction; has the time come when they might go so far as that?—I do not think it would do any harm.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

Adjourned.

APPENDICES.

I.—Note on the Organization of Government in the Central Provinces and Berar, filed by Mr. Slocock, Chief Secretary.

II.—Note on the subject of Decentralization by the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

APPENDIX I.

A Brief Note on the Organization of Government in the Central Provinces and Berar.

The Central Provinces, which were constituted in 1861, were enlarged in 1903 by the addition of Berar. Berar forms part of the territories of the Nizam of Hyderabad, and the laws of British India are applied to it through the exercise of the jurisdiction vested in the Governor-General in Council under the terms of the Indian (Foreign Jurisdiction) Order in Council, dated the 11th June, 1902, but, although the amalgamation of the two territories is not complete in all respects, Berar may, for administrative purposes, be simply regarded as one division of the Central Provinces.

The Administration of the Central Provinces and Berar is conducted by a Chief Commissioner on behalf of the Governor-General of India in Council. His provincial staff consists of—

(1) Members of the Central Provinces and Berar Commissions, filling the cadre posts shown below, which are now recruited solely from the Indian Civil Service, but contain a certain proportion of Military Officers and of Uncovenanted Officers both European and Native, recruited in former days.
(2) Members of the Provincial Civil Service.
(3) Members of the Subordinate Civil Service.
(4) Officers specially recruited for the service of special departments — Police, Engineering, Education, Medicine, Forestry, Agriculture, Excise, Factories and Veterinary Science.

Under Act XXXII. of 1867 the Governor-General of India in Council has delegated to the Chief Commissioner the powers of a Local Government under Act V. of 1861 (Police Act), including the power of appointing an Inspector-General of Police. The Chief Commissioner has also been authorised by the Government of India to make appointments and promotions in the Commission, which is now entirely recruited from the Indian Civil Service, up to and including Deputy Commissioners of the 1st class; appointments and promotions in the Education and Settlement Departments, excluding the posts of Director of Public Instruction and Commissioner of Settlements; appointments to the post of Director of Agriculture and Commissioner of Excise; and appointments and promotions in the Provincial Civil Service. The appointment of a Commissioner of a division must receive the previous approval of the Government of India.

Most of the superior posts, both judicial and executive, are reserved to members of the Indian Civil Service and to the members of the Berar Commission, who were recruited by a different system before the amalgamation of the two provinces. Three posts in the cadre of the Commission are reserved for selected officers of the Provincial Civil Service, viz., one Deputy Commissionership and two Divisional Judgeships, and at the present time one post of Additional Judicial Commissioner, one headship of a district, and two Divisional and Sessions Judgeships are held by Statutory Civilians or members of the Provincial Civil Service.

The Provincial Civil Service is composed of "Natives of India" selected according to rules approved by the Government of India and by the Secretary of State. It is divided into two branches, viz., Executive and Judicial.

The Subordinate Civil Service is recruited from natives of the Central Provinces, qualified according to a prescribed educational standard. It also is divided into two branches — Executive and Judicial.

For the purposes of general administration, the unit in the executive scheme is the Deputy Commissioner. The province is divided into 22 districts, with a Deputy Commissioner at the head of each. The Deputy Commissioner as District Magistrate is the chief of the police and magistracy in his district; he is the chief collector of revenue; he is also registrar; he is in addition responsible for the administration of the forests of his district, besides having supervisory duties in connection with popular education and local bodies. He is assisted by one or more Assistant Commissioners or Extra-Assistant Commissioners, members of the Indian and Provincial Civil Service, respectively, who are generally vested with the powers of a Sub-Divisional Officer, though the Sub-Divisional system has not been adopted in its entirety in this province. Each district is divided into from two to six *tahsils*, the *tahsil* generally being co-extensive with sub-divisions. The *tahsil* is under a tahsildar, who exercises both magisterial and revenue powers, and is generally assisted by a naib-tahsildar exercising revenue powers only. In Police matters the Deputy Commissioner is assisted by a District Superintendent of Police. For the charge of forests he has the aid of a Forest Divisional Officer. In medical matters he can command the services of a Civil Surgeon, who also, as a rule, holds executive charge of the district jail. In the control of education he is assisted by a deputy inspector of schools; in the supervision and collection of excise, stamps and miscellaneous revenue, by an Excise Inspector, or, in a few districts, by an Excise Extra-Assistant Commissioner, and in the inspection of the village papers and agricultural returns by a District Superintendent of Land Records. In engineering matters he is entitled to call on the local Public Works Department officer who is generally an Assistant Engineer, but such Public Works Department officer is not in any sense an Assistant of the Deputy Commissioner.

The districts of the province are grouped into five divisions, three of which, viz., the Nagpur, Nerbudda and Jubbulpore Divisions, contain five districts each, while the Berar Division comprises four districts and the Chhattisgarh Division three. Each division is under a Divisional Commissioner selected from among the members of the Commission, who is responsible for the general administration of his division, and through whom all correspondence between the districts in his division and the Secretaries of the Chief Commissioner is transmitted.

The work of the following branches of administration of the province is vested in special officers:—

Department.	Provincial Head of the Department.	Departmental Executive Officer (District or Divisional.
Public Works	Chief Engineer...	Executive Engineer of the Public Works Division.
Forests	Chief Conservator of Forests ...	Forest Divisional Officer.
Police	Inspector-General of Police	District Superintendent of Police.
Prisons	Inspector-General of Prisons ...	Superintendent of Jail.
Education	Director of Public Instruction ...	Inspector of Schools.
Excise and Miscellaneous Revenue, Customs, Stamps and Registration.	Commissioner of Excise and Miscellaneous Revenue, Chief Customs Authority and Superintendent of Stamps and Inspector-General of Registration.	Deputy Commissioner.
Settlements and Land Records ...	Commissioner of Settlements and Director of Land Records.	Settlement Officer, or Deputy Commissioner.
Agriculture	Director of Agriculture	
Medical Relief, Sanitation, and Vaccination.	Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals and Sanitary Commissioner.	Civil Surgeon.
Factories	Inspector of Factories, Central Provinces and Berar, and Inspector of Boilers, Central Provinces.	
Veterinary	Superintendent, Civil Veterinary Department.	Veterinary Inspector.

(i.) The strength of the Public Works Department at present consists of one Chief Engineer, three Superintending Engineers, one of whom is in charge of the Irrigation Circle, 14 Executive Engineers, 25 Assistant Engineers, 17 Temporary Engineers, 2 Engineer Officers under Covenant, and 3 Sub-Engineers, besides supervisors, overseers and subordinates. The Chief Engineer also acts as Secretary to the Chief Commissioner in the Public Works Department, while the Superintending Engineer in charge of the Irrigation Circle acts as Deputy Secretary, and one of the Executive Engineers as Under-Secretary. The executive unit is the Public Works division, which may or may not correspond with the revenue district, but usually has its headquarters at a headquarters civil station. The accounts of the department are supervised by 1 Examiner, 1 Deputy Examiner, and 2 Assistant Examiners.

(ii.) The Forest Department is under a Chief Conservator. For the purpose of forest administration the province is divided into three circles, each under a Conservator, and into 23 divisions, which latter as a rule correspond with the revenue districts. The divisions are held partly by Deputy Conservators and Assistant Conservators belonging to the Imperial Service, and partly by Extra-Deputy Conservators and Extra-Assistant Conservators belonging to the Provincial Forest Service. There are at present 14 Deputy and 7 Assistant Conservators belonging to the Imperial Service, while there are 2 Extra-Deputy Conservators and 14 Extra-Assistant Conservators belonging to the Provincial Forest Service. Divisional Forest Officers form a part of the office of the Deputy Commissioner in whose district their charges fall.

(iii.) The superior cadre of the Police Department consists of one Inspector-General of Police, two Deputy Inspectors-General and 28 District Superintendents of Police. Six of the District Superintendentships are held as follows:—By Assistant to Inspector-General; by Assistant to Deputy Inspector-General, Criminal Investigation Department; by Superintendent, Railway Police; by Principal, Police Training School; by Superintendent of Police, Secunderabad and Hyderabad Residency Bazaars; and by Superintendent, Railway Police, His Highness the Nizam's Dominions. The rest are held by District Superintendents of Police, in charge of the police of each of the civil districts, who work as the assistants of the District Magistrate in police matters. There are also 14 Assistants to District Superintendents of Police and 4—to be increased later on to 17—Deputy Superintendents of Police, these last being recruited from natives of India and forming a Provincial Police Service; officers of both these classes act as Assistants to the District Superintendent of Police. There are also 31 European reserve inspectors, who are stationed at headquarters stations, and 52 circle inspectors. Each district is divided into a number of station-houses, each of which is in charge of a sub-inspector.

(iv.) The Jail Department is under an Inspector-General of Prisons who has under him three officers specially in charge of the central jails at Nagpur, Jubbulpore and Raipur, besides the Civil Surgeons of all Stations, who are also Superintendents of the district jails. The two central jails at Amraoti and Akola are also in charge of the Civil Surgeons of those districts.

(v.) The Head of the Educational Department is the Director of Public Instruction. The province is divided for educational purpose into five circles co-extensive with the revenue divisions, each under an inspector, who, except in one case, is a member of the Indian Educational Service. European Schools are under an inspector shared with Bombay, while Girls' Schools are supervised by an inspectress belonging to the Indian Educational Service. Inspectors are not, except to a limited extent, administrative, but are purely inspecting and advisory officers. The administrative and executive officer of each district in educational matters is the Deputy Commissioner. The posts of principal, Jubbulpore Government College; principal, Morris College, Nagpur; professor of English in the same College, and professor of chemistry and physics, Victoria Technical Institute, Nagpur, are also held by members of the Indian Educational Service. Schools are grouped into 41 ranges, each in charge of a deputy inspector of schools who is a subordinate of the Deputy Commissioner and is included in the Deputy Commissioner's office. In addition to these, there is a deputy inspector who has charge of the schools in the Feudatory States with the designation of inspector. The control of expenditure on primary and middle schools rests with local bodies. High schools and colleges are a provincial charge.

(vi.) The Excise Department is under a Commissioner of Excise and Miscellaneous Revenue, who is a selected Deputy Commissioner and also acts as Chief Customs Authority, Superintendent of Stamps, and Inspector-General of Registration. He is assisted by a Personal Assistant. The departmental executive officer is the Deputy Commissioner, who is assisted either by one of his ordinary revenue staff appointed by him for the purpose or by a special Excise Extra-Assistant Commissioner. These latter are members of the Provincial Civil Service, and are at present 10 in number. Each district has also one or more excise inspectors.

(vii.) The Settlement and Land Records Departments are under the Commissioner of Settlements and Director of Land Records, who is a selected Deputy Commissioner. He has under him at present 5 Settlement Officers who are assisted by 13 Assistant Settlement Officers, selected members of the Provincial and Subordinate Services, while there are 19 sanctioned posts of District Superintendent of Land Records. The Deputy Commissioner is responsible for the supervision of the land records work in his district, except when it is under settlement.

(viii.) The Agricultural Department, which has only recently been separated from the Settlement and Land Records Departments, is under the Director of Agriculture, who is a selected Deputy Commissioner, and who has two Deputy Directors and an Assistant Director to assist him. The department also comprises an agricultural chemist and a principal for the Agricultural College, Nagpur. The Director has charge of the Agricultural College, Nagpur. of the botanical and other public gardens, of Government Agricultural Stations, and of the Veterinary Department. He is also the Registrar of Co-operative Credit Societies, and is assisted in this branch of his work by an assistant, who is a selected member of the Provincial or Subordinate Civil Service.

(ix.) The medical staff is under an Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals and Sanitary Commissioner, who is appointed by the Government of India from the Indian Medical Service, and includes 19 Commissioned Officers of the Indian Medical Service, and one uncovenanted officer. There are also two Military Assistant Surgeons and 8 Warrant Officers, some of whom hold Civil Surgeonships: besides these there are 16 Civil Assistant Surgeons.

(x.) There are two Inspectors of Factories, who are also Inspectors of Steam Boilers for the Central Provinces and Berar.

(xi.) The Civil Veterinary Department consists of a Superintendent and six inspectors. Four of these latter have charges whose area is co-extensive with each of the civil divisions of the Central Provinces, whilst the two others are in charge of East Berar and West Berar respectively. The veterinary dispensaries are in charge of veterinary assistants and are paid form Local Funds, except those at Nagpur and Pachmarhi, which are maintained by Government.

(xii.) The Postal and Telegraph Services are controlled by officers of the Imperial Service. In the Department of Finance, the Chief Commissioner has the guidance of a Comptroller appointed by the Government of India.

The channel through which communications are conducted between all these various branches of the Administration and the Chief Commissioner is the Civil Secretariat, except in the case of the Public Works Department for which there is a separate Secretariat. The superior officers of the Secretariat are the Chief Secretary, the Second Secretary and the Third Secretary, the first two

of whom are each assisted by an Under-Secretary, and the third by an Assistant Secretary. The Chief and Second Secretaries and their Under-Secretaries are members of the Central Provinces Commission, while the Third Secretary has hitherto been a member of the Berar Commission. The appointment of Assistant Secretary is a special one. The work of the Secretariat is controlled by these Secretaries and their Assistants, and is divided into sixteen departments.

APPENDIX II.

Note on Decentralization by the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces.

After the first outburst of activity on the formation of the Central Provinces, mainly due to the energy and enthusiasm of Sir Richard Temple, the Administration settled down to somewhat humdrum lines. They were a poor Non-Regulated Province which seemed remote and unimportant in the eyes of the Indian world generally, and did not receive much attention from the Government of India. For 25 years they were free from anything approaching famine, and the principal distinctively local matters which came before the notice of the general public were the Land Revenue and Tenancy Acts passed in 1881 and 1883. The period from 1870 to about 1887 was one of quiet, almost parochial progress.

From the time that tenancy legislation and the new land settlements began to be made, the province began to loom more largely in the controversies which usually range round that subject. The Central Provinces Local Self-Government Act, being only a small local manifestation of the larger policy of delegation of local powers to local authorities inaugurated under Lord Ripon, excited little attention; and the change from Local Fund Committees to District Councils and Local Boards provoked no revolution in local management.

2. From 1868 to 1883 the Provinces were administered by Sir John Morris, under whom, if they had little history, they continued to prosper and progress. His times are still gratefully remembered by the people. He was succeeded by Mr. W. B. Jones, an officer of great activity and industry, but bad health compelled him to retire after one year. From that time onwards the province has been entrusted to the charge of a series of administrators sent out from the Government of India, whose abilities are testified to by the names they have made in their subsequent careers. Among this roll of names the only officer of almost purely local service was Mr. (now Sir Andrew) Fraser. That these successive Chief Commissioners have had a wonderful effect in stimulating and improving the administration of the province there cannot be the smallest doubt. They brought to the task varied experience of other parts of India, and applied themselves to the problems of administration with a wider general knowledge and with a greater power of initiative than could have been found among the members of the local Commission, though the latter contained in its ranks many excellent administrators, both military and civil, among whom especially the claims of Mr. John Neill to the Chief Commissionership were regarded at the time as overlooked by the Government of India.

The one defect in the arrangement was that the Chief Commissionership of the Central Provinces became a stepping-stone to higher office, and most of these administrators were transferred to Council or to Lieutenant-Governorships before they had an opportunity of maturing the schemes which they had initiated. With the advent of each new Chief Commissioner there was a necessary period of quiet while the Head of the Administration was engaged in acquiring local knowledge and in learning the previous history of the various branches of Government. Before he was well under way with reforms and improvements he was moved up higher, and the same process began again. In the case of Sir Andrew Fraser, he had already, on appointment, a minute knowledge of the province, but the whole of his energies were taxed with the great famine of 1899-1900 and the measures for recovering from it.

3. While, however, the province suffered from some want of continuity in policy during the period subsequent to Mr. Jones' retirement, it enjoyed the advantage of new blood and new ideas infused by men of wide experience and ability, and their very withdrawal to Council was of direct service to the provinces, for it ensured that the Viceroy's Executive Council always possessed one, sometimes two, members who had acquired experience of the Central Provinces, and understood many of its local problems, a factor which is always a most valuable asset to any Local Government or Administration.

4. Under the rule of these several administrators from outside (with which period my own service of twenty-three years happens to synchronise), the province has advanced from step to step in agriculture, trade and communications, and with its cotton industry, and its recently developing mineral enterprise, together with the accession of territory and importance that it has received in the addition of Berar, it has acquired a more important position among the provinces of India than it ever aspired to reach in the olden days.

With the Revenue Administration of the province and the early development of its Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture Departments, the name of Mr. (now Sir Bampfylde) Fuller must ever be associated. It was by his efforts, under the guidance of Chief Commissioners, like Sir Charles Crosthwaite, Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Sir Anthony MacDonnell and Sir John Woodburn, that the present Land Revenue assessment system was founded, the Land Records Department established, and the seed sown for the improvement of agriculture.

Although some doubt may be felt as to the wisdom of the actual demand made upon the landlord, now that a crushing series of crop failures have rendered abatement and reduction necessary, the skill and accuracy with which his system deduces land valuation from the facts of each village has admirably stood the test of time.

5. From the older Military Officers we, in this province, learned that system of personal government which is so much understood and appreciated of the people; by Sir B. Fuller the officers trained under him were taught to apply the information gained in the field and village to the problems of administration. The famines of 1896-97 and 1899-1900, sad and disastrous as they were, had the great compensating advantage of bringing the people and their officers into the most sympathetic relations, the memory of which will linger for many a day. These same famines and their relief also brought the province into greater prominence with the outside world and the Government of India, and induced further sympathetic and generous financial treatment to which they had long been strangers. During the administrations of all but the last two Chief Commissioners, the province was very largely dependent upon the charity of the Government of India.

After a large series of prosperous seasons in the eighties Sir A. Mackenzie had amassed together a substantial provincial balance, only to find it taken away by an embarrassed Financial Member in the stringency which accompanied the fall of exchange. Later on I can well remember as Secretary how in 1896, when our adversities had begun, we had to beg for the return of a small sum of 4¼ lakhs which had been taken from us outside our contract a short time previously. Throughout the whole period from the eighties, and up to 1902-03, the province was always desperately hard up for ways and means, and its progress was undoubtedly checked. From that time onwards, however, with the improvement of the imperial finances, we have been most generously treated, and our present contract gives no

ground for complaint. If it were not that we have so much leeway to make up in such matters as communications and buildings, we might be able to proceed further with schemes for improvement of education, extension of medical relief, and irrigation than we can at present expect: but a good deal of our progress in all directions must be rendered slow from want of men, from dearth of materials and labourers, as much as from want of funds.

6. My own earliest opportunities of forming any opinion upon the relations of the Administration with the Government of India only began in 1895, when I was appointed Revenue Secretary to the Administration; but tracing the history back from what one has learnt of it in the files, and bringing it forward from that time to this from such opportunities as I have since enjoyed, I should describe the province as gradually emerging from the position of a Cinderella among provinces into a position of a kindly-treated younger daughter; not, indeed, so important as her elder sisters, but still much more valued and recognized than in the quondam position of the step-daughter. I can remember the time when we had to justify in detail the necessity for suspension of revenue in the face of calamities and when our revenue assessments were criticised in great detail. We now enjoy nearly all the financial powers of a Local Government though not the same patronage. Also I think formerly that proposals for reforms costing any appreciable sum were apt to be set aside on the ground that much less elaborate establishment or procedure were quite sufficient for the Central Provinces and that there was no money to spare for a poor province, which must increase its own resources before it went in for luxuries. I have never had the advantage of service in any other province, or of being behind the scenes in the Government of India, and I cannot therefore say how far this view is correct, but it was very generally held, and that by many of the Chief Commissioners who had enjoyed these advantages.

7. But whatever may be the exact facts in the past, all this is now changed. I feel that our schemes for reforms will always be sure of sympathetic consideration, and will not be rejected as a matter of routine because we are a lesser province, and do not require the luxury of expensive improvements. Such causes as we have for complaint are now few, and the note put forward by the Chief Secretary will indicate a few major points in which we might still be conceded more liberty. There are of course many minor points in which reference has to be made to India on matters of irritatingly small importance because of the rigidity of principles upon such matters as conveyance allowances, officiating and charge allowances or gratuities, or because the expenditure is nominally Imperial and the Government of India are very suspicious that Local Governments will be led into making good-natured concessions, almost amounting to jobs, to officers who put in claims for cost of railing horses, or claims to transit pay. But in these financial matters it is the practice of all Governments—and I imagine that the Treasury at home is no exception—that exceptions to rule which work hardly in individual cases must be sanctioned by those who will be deciding on purely impersonal grounds. In particular one must recognize that such matters as grants of land made outside ordinary rules, or special pensions, must be left to the decision of those who can view them impersonally. Otherwise "special cases" must have a tendency to multiply, and local views as to what constitutes "a special case" to become enlarged.

8. There is one important direction in which the greater subordination of the Central Provinces to the Government of India has produced unsatisfactory results. The subject is a delicate one, but requires to be mentioned. The appointments of Chief Engineer, Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, Inspector-General of Prisons, Director of Public Instruction and Conservators of Forests rest, and have to rest, with the Government of India, because it will only occasionally be the case that there are officers serving in the provinces sufficiently senior or sufficiently fit to hold these higher appointments. I think that there has been sometimes a tendency to hold that men who are not considered fit for such posts in the larger provinces are good enough for the Central Provinces, and we have been sometimes provided with men who are about to take long leave or have only a year or two to their retirement, or are anxious for a transfer to a better paid post elsewhere. I wish to keep quite clear of any personal considerations in this matter, but I think that too little regard is paid to the interests of the province when these appointments are made. Transfers of Conservators of Forests are in particular too frequent. If these officers are officiating the Administration is consulted before they are confirmed, but an opinion is required before it can fairly be given. Allowance has always to be made for a new Head of Department owing to his strange surroundings and want of local knowledge, and no Chief Commissioner likes to condemn such an officer as unfit before he has had an extended trial.

9. There is obviously no sovereign remedy for these drawbacks, but they can be reduced if (in cases where pay is low) the pay for the Heads of Departments is put on a level with those of other provinces, and if the province is never permitted to be the dumping-ground of officers soon about to retire, who, though not quite fit for the higher administrative functions, have rendered good service to the State. It is not necessary to give higher pay to such officers on appointment, but as soon as they would be eligible for a transfer to another province, where their pay would be higher, they could be given an increment in the Central Provinces, if the Administration desired to retain their services. The expense would be very trivial as the number of these appointments is so small. I do not deny that we have had some very good men supplied to us under the present system, but we have had some unsatisfactory ones, while we have lost some good officers, because in fairness to themselves they could not be debarred from promotion. Among the particular Departments of the Government of India which appear to be too rigid in limiting the discretion of the Head of the province, I consider that the Public Works Department is the worst offender; they interfere in details to an extent which is often irritating. This is due not to a desire to interfere so much as to the over-rigid prescriptions of the Public Works Department Code. Suppose, for instance, that an official or clerk has no suitable residence; that to get one he has to pay 20 or 25 per cent. of his salary; that if private enterprise will build him one he will have to pay 15 to 20 per cent. of his pay. I build him a house and wish to charge him 10 per cent. I have to obtain the sanction of the Government of India to charge this rent, and if I want to charge him more I shall not be allowed to do so. If, on the other hand, I am to limit his rent, then the building will not pay Government the requisite return, and I shall not be allowed to continue the policy of building quarters, while the clerks and officials will continue to pay 20 or 25 per cent. of their salary as rent, or herd together in chummeries or in insanitary houses in the bazaar. Perhaps it is not generally desirable that Government should have to build houses for its officers or quarters for its clerks and officials; but local circumstances entirely alter considerations of this kind. The Local Government may sanction a work costing 10 lakhs or an establishment costing Rs. 25,000 a year, but it cannot decide whether it is expedient to charge 10 or 12 per cent. of salary on clerks' quarters in order to save them having to pay over that amount for possibly inferior accommodation. I have used this case as an illustration, but I think it is a good one, of how rigidity of rule will hamper necessary measures. Circumstances have entirely changed since the rule was framed. Rates of building materials and labour are very high. A four-roomed house which formerly cost Rs. 2,500 will now cost Rs. 5,000. Private enterprise is timid; it always lags behind a demand; and it wants 10 or 12 per cent. on its money and has no regard for the exact percentage of salary which the rent it demands represents to the occupant. But I do not want to press the subject of such sanctions; year by year these

the conversion of the District Officer into a President of a sort of District House of Representatives elected by the people and ably managing all their own local affairs, with taxation reduced or remitted and expenditure on all local objects enormously increased.

19. Both these pictures in their several directions represent a counsel of perfection—the first because the time for it has long passed, the second because the time for it has not yet come, and is yet very far distant. Sir B. Fuller in a recent article in the *Nineteenth Century and After* described Anglo-Indian administrators as opportunists, who have to decide and do what seems best to-day without attending much to what was done before, or attempting to take a long view of what is to happen in the future. But I suppose the charge might be brought against all Governments in a greater or less degree.

Long-sighted statesmen may make a shrewd forecast about future developments, and they may shape their policy with a view to them, but the immediate steps that they take at any one time have perforce to be determined by the actual needs and hard facts of the present, and they have yet to wait until public opinion is educated up to the more distant aims before they can hope for their realization.

Here in India it is again to-day with which we are concerned. The educated classes, yearly becoming more numerous, would bitterly resent any reversion to the absolute personal rule of the District Officer, and the visions of the two sections of the Indian politicians, the one of a Dominion of India under a British Governor-General as the sole representative of the Imperial Crown, the other of a United States of India under a President separated from the British Empire, are both alike too dim to shape our present policy. The only course is to fall back upon the dull realities of the moment. Any sudden upheaval of the existing system is out of the question. Heroic measures are neither necessary nor possible. The system of Government has developed after years of patient endeavour. As regards the relations of our officers with each other we must prune excrescences which retard their well-being, and as regards the people we must continue to educate them in the duties of civic life.

20. To leave again the language of metaphor, it is impossible to abolish all reports and returns, though they are no doubt capable of further reduction. They are our only means of judging progress or decadence, and though annual fluctuations are in certain branches of administration (though not in all) entirely fallacious, triennial or quinquennial figures are in all cases indispensable. The real test is whether a competent and zealous officer well acquainted with his district, on sitting down to a report with annual figures before him, finds something that he really wishes to write or has to cudgel his brains in order to write something. The latter kind of writing is generally waste of time. There is nothing so dangerous as generalization, and nothing to which an Indian officer is more prone. The periodical report, if the intervals between its submission are lengthened, and the statements attached to it further pruned, must in my judgment continue, but we require protection as much as possible from the conscientious questioner in Parliament whose demand for statistical information sometimes gives endless trouble over a whole continent to a host of hardworked men. Such persons should be referred to the published returns of the Government of India and the provincial Governments which will contain all the information that the Government considers it necessary to demand from their officers. If it appears to the Government that the desired information is of a character on which periodical information is essential it can include the return in its future periodical statements. Every Government has already cut down its returns to a great extent, and further pruning will require careful consideration. The forms and statements of the several Accounts Departments are perhaps now the most voluminous, but no one but financial and departmental experts can be trusted with the task of overhauling them. The matter is one in respect of which I should suppose that the Commission could only undertake a general recommendation. The majority of our more complicated returns are required by the Imperial Government.

21. The division of large and overworked districts into smaller ones is another measure to be gradually adopted; it is a step which is taken from time to time, but one which involves considerable expense not so much in staff as in new buildings: akin to this is the sub-division of large *tahsils* into small ones, and the addition of assistants and sub-divisional officers. One of the principal measures to reduce the work of the District Officer has been his complete relief from all civil judicial work, and Commissioners have been relieved both of this and of criminal work. The next step will be to free Deputy Commissioners, in their capacity of District Magistrates, from original criminal cases, leaving them appellate and revisional powers. Their complete divorce from magisterial work is not a step which can be taken in these Provinces for some good time yet. Step by step the District Officer is being relieved of various original work which ties him to his Court table examining and recording statements of witnesses, and during my own period of service the relief given him in this direction has been enormous. If greater powers are delegated to him by Commissioners in the manner that I have suggested, and if his reports on minor subjects are curtailed or made triennial or even quinquennial, his writing work should be much reduced. In some of our less developed districts he is certainly not overworked the year round, though, as in almost every walk of life, there are times of pressure.

22. For several years, the public have criticised our boy Deputy Commissioners, and it was certainly necessary to put in young officers in charge of districts who were quite inexperienced. This was due to insufficient recruiting at one period in the history of the province, and to an unusually heavy list of casualties. But the whole aspect has now changed, and something of a block is being felt among the junior ranks. Officiating Deputy Commissioners will no longer be mere boys. It is sometimes suggested that the appointment of a permanent Deputy Commissioner should be regulated by strict selection and not by seniority. All District Officers cannot be expected to be of equal efficiency, zeal and judgment, and there are a few rare cases of retarded development in which officers, even if painstaking, seem to lack certain qualities of managing men which experience does not bring them. Some of these men are qualified for judicial work, where the executive talent is not an essence of success. Any that fail to qualify for either branch of the service must remain in a subordinate position, or be encouraged to retire on a reduced pension. The cases will be few.

23. On the whole then I consider that the improvement of the administration of these Provinces, so far as its own officers and departments are concerned, is more a question of detail than of principle. The general principle of decentralization has been recognized, from the top to the bottom, as a desirable aim, though in particular matters it has not gone far enough in detail; it requires to be kept steadily in view, and its application to details periodically examined. It is always advisable that when some new branch of administration is undertaken it should for a time be kept centralized, until the points of principle that arise in all such matters have come up for decision and been decided, after which powers can be freely delegated, and are delegated. A good instance of this is afforded by the recent development of mineral enterprise. If local officers, or even the Administration, had been left to work out their own system, all sorts of undesirable conditions might have been imposed, or unsuitable concessions given. Now that officers have become familiar with principles, some of these powers are being delegated, and more delegation will follow.

24. The third and last branch of the subject, which is also in many respects the most difficult, relates to the share to be given to the people in the management of their own local affairs.

There will probably be three distinct schools of thought put before the Commission. The first, beginning at the top, will advocate an Advisory, or ever Legislative Council for the Administration; the second would provide the District Officer with an Advisory Council; while the third would go down to the origin of things and revive the village community and the village panchayat. Each system will find its advocates, and some persons will desire a combination of all three.

25. In considering all these and kindred questions connected with the Indian peoples, honest and enthusiastic men, such as the correspondents of Radical newspapers who pay a fleeting visit to the country, are quite fascinated by the eloquence and talents of some of the most highly educated of Indians. They consider that a country which can produce men like this must be fit to govern itself. What they entirely overlook is that the culture and trained faculties which attract them are not the product of an indigenous evolution by which these men have entirely emerged out of a vast company of their own race, all occupying various gradations in a similar process of evolution. They are the result of an exotic application of Western cultivation and knowledge to a few select individuals. The position which they occupy in respect of the great masses of their countrymen is just the position which highly educated and talented Englishman well versed in the history of olden times would occupy among the people around him, if he could be put back into the time of the Plantagenets. If the present House of Commons were bodily put back into the middle ages their knowledge and experience would not imply that the people generally were ready for representative institutions. The masses in each case, the real and imaginary, would alike be unpermeated by the leaven which had produced the exceptional individuals

26. Under the British Government steady endeavour has been made to stir up the mass by means of direct primary education generally, more advanced instruction in towns and by the general educational effects of an enlightened policy, but as yet the response is very small. The sanitary panchayats in the larger villages, the small municipalities and the Local Boards and District Councils have not really caught on. The problem before us is the reason for that small response. Is it that we have expected too much from them, or that we have given them too little to do? or is it that the whole spirit of local self-government and corporate action is foreign to their inclinations and sympathies, and that the whole fabric of local self-government as designed and framed by our lawgivers was and is doomed to failure? There are those who contend that the fault lies with the people, and not with the system, and there are others who say it is the system, and not the people. The adherents of the former belief bid us to wait patiently and success will come, and the latter class would have us root out the artificial system, and begin again with the village as the unit. There are again others who assert that the experiment has been a success, and that all that is wanted is to give the people enlarged powers and they will quickly rise to their responsibilities.

27. There are many persons ready to draw up a paper constitution for village panchayats, boards and advisory councils; but as usual they do not stop to think who are the persons who will occupy seats on those committees and assemblies and whether the class of man who takes no interest in existing bodies will take an interest in the new ones. I am one of those who believe that progress in everything in India must proceed at a very slow rate, that interest in affairs which do not directly or obviously affect a man's honour, his religion, his pocket, his family or his caste, is a matter of very slow growth, but I am also prepared to find, in the fact that here and there interest has been taken, that here and there good men have arisen, that here and there some sense of corporate interest has been developed, an augury of hope for the future. Twenty-five years is a very short period for developing new institutions dependent on a change in the ideas and temperament of a conservative people, and to throw away all that has been done may be to uproot the crop just as it is about to put forth ears. I would therefore hold fast to our present institutions for local self-government, and devote attention towards their weak points and towards measures tending to infuse interest in their work, not only among the persons who are members, but on those who elect these persons. As Mr. Walker, Commissioner of Nagpur, has insisted, the creation of an intelligent and interested electorate is a condition precedent to the success of the elected body.

28. The electorate at present take no interest in the election of a Local Board member, because, firstly they are not very interested in sanitation, or schools or roads; secondly, because, if they are interested in these things in their own village, they are not interested in them in other and perhaps distant villages; and, thirdly, because, if these things come about, they do not feel that their coming about has been the result of the action of the member, but because the mysterious power that they call the "Sirkar" took it into its head to do the thing. While, therefore, it would be in my opinion a serious error to do away with such institutions as we have already created, artificial though they may be now, yet we should shape our action in any direction which may promise to infuse life into what is lifeless, and encourage and stimulate such effort as may be shown. The family, the caste, the village, the town, have hitherto formed the largest centre round which interest can be aroused. With an aggregation of entities the interest does not exist. The Local Board area, the *taluk*, the *tahsil*, or the district inspires no local patriotism, or at the best a very faint one, and that only among a few advanced individuals; to the masses it does not appeal. Next, the objects for which common advice is sought must appeal to the interest of the community concerned; and that interest must be a very vivid and present one. The people all combine to save a bursting tank which is about to inundate their fields; it is with much more difficulty that they will co-operate in the construction of a new irrigation tank. They will combine and co-operate to resist unpopular plague measures, but they will not combine to enforce sanitation. They will at times combine to make a well, but it will not occur to them to combine to improve a steep *nala* crossing at which carts have for years experienced great difficulty and trouble. They will combine to resist a tax, but they will not combine to see that the common money is not wasted. They will combine readily to raise a charity, but very imperfectly to administer one. The objects to be aimed at are thus to reduce the local area which is to be the unit of local administration, and to educate the people up to an appreciation of the things which are necessary to their welfare, but which as yet they do not appreciate.

29. In a province in which the land tenures are proprietary, it is extremely difficult to obtain any sort of village panchayat in the purely agricultural villages. In the majority of them it will be the landlord first, and the tenants dominated by him; or, if the relations are bad and the tenants have quarrelled with the landlord, the two cannot work harmoniously. One might of course appoint and recognise village panches, but they could not be independent administrative units, since the funds that could be given to each village would either have to be assigned in annual driblets too small for any useful purpose, or if larger sums were given, at such long intervals of time that the panches would very rarely exercise any functions. While therefore we might recognize village panches in villages as a body to assist the village headman (*mukaddam* or *patel*) in some of his duties to the public, and in large villages have, as at present, a village sanitation committee, for the administration of rural works we require to find the smallest unit round which a local and parochial patriotism might centre, but which would yet be large enough to have assigned to it sufficient funds and sufficient work to arouse interest in its proceedings.

30. The exact method of grouping to be followed is a matter which requires most careful local enquiry and consideration, and I am certainly not

prepared with nay precise definition of the rural circle or village union. Probably the market town and the villages which resort to it most would make a convenient unit, and to the village panchayats found in the larger villages of this circle might be entrusted the duty of electing the Local Board members for that circle. If the panchayats themselves were elected by the householders of the villages there would be a sort of electoral framework introduced. But there would have also to be *some nominated* members of Local Boards in order to secure representation for important interests. Above the Local Boards would be the District Councils, the Boards returning their own representatives with the addition of nominated members. The small towns not yet suited to municipal Government would be administered by a Local Committee under the Local Boards; but it is on the whole better that small municipalities should be independent. There would then be the following steps in the ladder of local administration of extra municipal areas:—

(1) The village panchayat.
(2) The village union, being (*a*) representative panches for the circle returning one Local Board member, and (*b*) the Local Committee of the minor non-municipal towns.
(3) Local Board.
(4) District Council.

31. The above is merely a sketch of one possible method of hanging together a system of representation of the people in the matters of their local affairs. It is a measure which it would be foolish to introduce simultaneously and universally over a whole province. This, or any similar system, should be tried first of all experimentally in a few advanced localities, the ideal aimed at being the wedding of the ancient system of village elders on to a modern one of Boards and Councils. In order to give the village panchayats interests to bind them together it would be necessary to give them some authority, such as the decision of petty disputes, and the punishment of offenders in petty cases. Panchayats would have to be selected for this. They could not all be given powers, or be trusted to use them, but the fact that selected panchayats were given such powers would be an incentive to others.

32. The second important essential to any successful scheme of local self-government is the interest of the electorate in the public weal. For this we have to create wants and provide the means for satisfying them. Progress in these matters is indeed very slow; but there has undoubtedly been progress. The people have begun to grumble; they have begun to complain about bad smells, bad roads, or absence of drains. They have shown themselves ready to pay money for education; here and there they have begun to be keen about dispensaries. The complaints are at present confined almost entirely to the towns and to a limited number of persons in the towns, but the tendency is for them to increase. The creation of the wants to which the complaints are due has been brought about partly by extension of education, partly by the growth of material wealth, but principally by experience, the fruit of more teaching, and the appreciation of benefits of which the advantage has been perceived. Thus one may find an actual prejudice against a water-supply scheme and the distribution by means of water-standards. It quickly disappears before experience. In the beginning of things the Government had to supply advantages, *e.g.*, roads, which the people did not know they wanted, or even thought that they did not want. When they had experience of them, they gradually began to appreciate them, and later on to feel the absence of them in other places. It has been so with schools, it has begun to be so with roads, and in towns the demand for sanitary improvements is just beginning to make itself felt.

33. It is on these lines that development must be looked for, but the different parts of the country have as yet reached very different stages of progress. There are many rural villages in which the people do not wish for a school, and there are many considerable villages and minor towns in which the people prefer to be insanitary to the payment of a tax for cleansing and conservancy; while there are others in which a substantial number of the inhabitants voluntarily ask for municipal Government, even though it be accompanied, as they know it will be, by local taxation.

In my opinion the progress made has been not unsatisfactory, and during the last few years has become more rapid; it is sufficiently marked to justify us in increasing the powers and resources of these local bodies, wherever they show signs of fitness; and the Administration has taken measures to that end and will continue to do so. But it would be a gross error to confuse the improvement among the people generally with the views of the small section of highly advanced people educated in the Presidency towns, and developed artificially from outside in the manner which I have described in an earlier part of this Note. Among this class the great majority are those trained in the law. Some few of them may have connection and touch with rural India, but the great majority know much less about village economic conditions than our own British Revenue Officers, and their statements about the rural classes are generally pitched in terms of the widest generalizations based not upon any critical analysis of concrete facts, but upon general assumptions that every ryot is starving, and that all sums paid for imports whether of men rendering service to the country, or of goods consumed in the country, are a dead loss, and might just as well have been thrown into the sea. Below this class comes a lower one, of men whose education is a veneer, who have imbibed a few catch-phrases of western thought, but not a particle of its spirit, and whose real motives and conduct are a *living denial of the principles* they profess. Among these even there may be honest self-deceivers, but a great number are mere agitators and self-seekers, and it is not from them that the Government can find advice or support, or the masses any elevation.

Apart from these two classes (the only one which as yet takes any active interest in politics) is the commercial class. They are the backbone of India's trade, as the ryots are of India's agriculture. They do not make many speeches, but they do a great deal of silent work, and no system of local self-government or advisory councils could be framed in which they were not given a place. The commercial class covers a great number of sections, from the great merchants, bankers, and mill-owners, through the large grain-dealers, money-lenders and shop-keepers, down to the petty contractors, village *banias*, and superior artizans, but as a class they are less dependent upon the frowns or smiles of the executive than any other. They come most in contact with the Government in respect of income-tax assessments and municipal regulations. Lastly is the great agricultural class, with its three sections, the land-owner, the raiyat, and the labourer. The highest section contains a very mixed body of men, from large and enlightened proprietors (of whom in these provinces there are but few, but their number is increasing) down to persons of ryot status. At the bottom come the smaller village artizans, the labourers, and, on the outskirts of all, the lowest menial castes in the towns and villages and the wilder tribes of the forest.

34. During the last twenty-five years there has been going on a process of fusion of sharp divisions, and an interchange of pursuits and occupations, the effect of the enormous increase in communications and the levelling tendencies of British administration. The trained lawyer is taking up agriculture, commerce or industry, the commercial classes are beginning to be attracted by English education, and the land-owners are taking to trade and politics. The despised menial castes are rising by means of petty contracts into the commercial section. The labourer has begun to rise in prosperity and intelligence. Even the ryot and village artizan, though the last to move, are not quite unstirred by the processes going on around them.

Such being the mixed composition of the Indian populations, the task of evolving from them a system of praticipation in the affairs of the Government is not a simple one.

From the first class we may look for our best co-adjutors in Government service to be trained in administration, and to do the legal and scientific work of the country, but they are not, and will not for a long time become, in any sense the representatives of the people below them.

For the second class we have in their present shape no use whatsoever. The majority of them will sober down and take their places in the various humbler walks of public or private service; and some few may eventually find better occupation in commercial pursuits. The residue who remain unchanged will serve neither Government nor their own countrymen, requiring repression whenever they show signs of mischief. They are the tares which have sprung up among the educational seed which we have sown.

35. It is on the gradual elevation of the third and fourth classes that our efforts must be concentrated with the help of those among their numbers who have raised themselves. We have to teach them first the principles and practice of local self-government before they can effectively assist us in the conduct and control of provincial and imperial administration. It is no doubt from the District Councils that formal Advisory Councils for the District Officer, for the Commissioner and for the provincial Administration, may be gradually built up. The Government of India's reference on this subject has yet to be answered, and I do not feel prepared to state definitely whether the time is ripe or not for the trial of such an experiment. While, however, the constitution of such Councils on a formal basis is a question of great difficulty, I entertain no doubt whatever of the benefits to be gained by constant and informal consultation with intelligent representatives of the various classes. Our officers are trained to do this. Every measure of any importance that is adopted is discussed beforehand, whether it be by summoning a few representative men, or by conversation with individuals, or at informal gatherings of the people in rural areas; and this practice must continue to increase if we are to keep pace with the times. I cannot say what prevails elsewhere in India, but in this province a very general confidence is reposed by the people in their District Officer once they have learned to know him. Men are not all alike; and no possible system can ever eradicate entirely faults of tact or temper but as a body our officers are not at all deficient in sympathy or unwilling to take the people into their confidence. It is our endeavour to reduce transfers of officers as far as it is possible, but requirements of leave and breakdowns of health often upset our best laid schemes.

36. There is one last matter to which I must refer in conclusion, namely, the satisfaction of the aspirations of the educated classes. Although, as I have contended, the presence of some highly educated men, and of a good many fairly educated men, does not connote any corresponding fitness among the remaining 95 per cent. of the population, yet the small sprinkling of men improved by higher education is yearly growing larger; and periodical advance in the higher avenues of employment open to them must be made. Strict selection is, of course, essential, for there are many Indians who, though they work devotedly and excellently under higher supervision, seem to fall away when they approach the top. Either they shrink from responsibility, or, having reached the summit of their ambition, lose the inspiring motive of further prospects of promotion. This future is not confined to Indians, but is more pronounced among them. At the same time the exceptions are sufficiently numerous to warrant further advance in the kind of work open to them. On the judicial side there is no rigid limit to their chances of winning the prizes; and though I am far from believing that a similar advance is desirable on the Executive side, I still think that further steps must be taken. Circumstances will soon make it necessary to propose some changes in the constitution of the Central Provinces and Berar Commissions and to amalgamate them into one, and it is then my intention to make some further recommendations for the enlargement of appointments open to the Provincial Services. We can in these matters never go as far as the advanced classes would have us go, for there is no limit at which they would cry "enough"; but we can always make some steps forward and remove what is most urgent and real in their complaints. We must always remember that intellect tends to develop in advance of moral stamina and force of character, and that if we make too liberal and rapid a concession to intellect only, we may lower the standard of impartiality and strict probity in our Administration to an extent which will endanger the government of the masses by justice, equity, and good conscience.

R. H. Craddock,
Chief Commissioner,
Central Provinces.

The 8th January, 1908.

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