

1. Name of the Officer
2. Date of the Order
3. Initials of the Officer

M.R.O. 1-82,400-22-11-80.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Rublee DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1564	Press
		Mis.
Dated	21 31-12-	1868

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
31st December 1868.*

No. 145. Read the following letter from the President of the Municipal Commission, Madras, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 15th December 1868, No. 955.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 18 of Act IX. of 1867, I have the honor to enclose the Minutes of the Proceedings of an adjourned General Meeting of the Municipal Commissioners for the Town of Madras, held on the 9th December 1868.

At an adjourned General Meeting of the Municipal Commissioners for the Town of Madras, under Act IX. of 1867, held at their Office in Errah Bauloo Chetty street, Black Town, on Wednesday the 9th December 1868, at noon.

PRESENT.

Colonel C. A. DENISON, *President.*

Dr. D. H. Patterson.

G. Nursimulu Chetty Garu.

Y. Vencataramiah Garu.

C. Parthasaradi Naidu Garu.

V. Kristnama Chariar.

C. V. Iyasami Moodelliar.

M. S. Sadagopa Moodelliar.

Mr. J. G. Coleman.

P. Sommasundrum Chettiar.

P. Chackra Chettiar.

C. V. Parthasaradi Iyengar.

Mr. J. W. Gantz.

„ Cyrus Grant.

Mr. F. Doderet.

„ C. E. Gover.

„ G. Hamnett.

Colonel A. C. Silver.

Dr. J. Miller.

Mr. J. Grose.

Janay Jahan Khan Bahadoor.

P. T. Ramanjuloo Naidu Garu.

Captain W. H. Edgcome.

Lieutenant-Colonel T. Gillilan.

The Honorable Meer Humayoon Jah Bahadoor.

M. Venketasami Naidu Garu.

The President read the following minute:—

GENTLEMEN,—In submitting the Budget at the adjourned meeting, I shall be glad to find that it has, on consideration since last General Meeting, met with your approval. It has been framed with care, and I think you will admit that the improvements suggested are urgently needed. At the last meeting in my Minute I dealt with most of the items, so it is not necessary (and I will not take up your time as we have a good deal on hand to-day) to recapitulate them. The two great items of expenditure are, of course, for Conservancy and Engineering projects, and I have kept in view in both the absolute requirements of this great and densely crowded city. Our probable cash balance, on the 31st of December, is considerably larger than I like to see, though it is pleasant, no doubt, to have a large balance in hand; still I should have been glad to have spent the whole sum allotted in last year's Budget for roads and communications; but, as stated at last meeting, we had been so impeded, by the inaction of the contractors, that it was impossible to do this, and it was only by working up to the full extent of office labor that we were able to keep matters going at all. The roads, I freely admit, are in a terrible state; but I am using every exertion to get them in better shape, and trust, before another six months are over, we may see great improvements.

I am in hopes that, for next year at all events, we may not be deprived of this source of revenue. Market Loan 1,00,000 to be raised on debentures. I hope what I said in January 1867, and at last meeting, may induce you to accede to this. The reports of the Sanitary Inspector and Executive Engineer on the subject, will, I think, serve to show, not only how absolutely necessary it is to have a new General Market, but also that it would, in time, be a fertile source of revenue.

I shall be glad of your sanction to the additional 50 Rupees proposed for the Book-keeper and Manager.

Conservancy.—The increase under this head is, I consider, essential, but with regard to No. 18, viz., 25,000 Rupees, assumed as the probable cost being the average expense of taking the census

at Bombay, I consider this quite as much an Imperial as a Municipal question, and that Government should, therefore, contribute a fair proportion.

I have heard a complaint that, in printing the details of the Engineer and Sanitary Inspector's estimates, we have not gone sufficiently into details. I can only say that last year exception was taken to our having gone too far, and caused an unnecessary expense in printing, so I was not going to subject myself to the same remarks, but I may say that I was always accessible, as were Heads of Departments to any Commissioner who required further information, and should have readily given it, either personally or in writing, had I been asked.

With regard to the improvements projected under heads 8, 9, and 10, the Commissioners will have had before them the Engineer's Report, as also what I stated at the last General Meeting.

I have not placed so large a sum on the estimate for maintenance of roads as for last year, but a lakh of Rupees, is, I expect, the full extent of what we shall be able to spend; and should the sums entered for each Division be expended at the expiration of next year, I trust the Commissioners will be able to say that the roads, in their several divisions, are in good order.

I have placed a sum of 21,050 on the estimates for metalling roads and streets not hitherto metalled, and think this will be a very great boon, for I am constantly having applications on this score, and it will also be a manifest improvement, and by letting the poorer classes see they are not neglected, and that they get some equivalent for the taxes screwed out of them, we shall render the visits of the Collector's conocopolies a little more endurable.

I have also, as far as lay in my power, extended the lighting as you will see by the addition proposed, viz., 9420 Rupees. The number of Lamp Posts erected, since January last to date, is 290.

I shall be glad if you pass No 12, viz., 10,000 Rupees, for constructing new drains, for I have been now for nearly two years waiting for something to be done on Captain Tulloch's system, but the commencement of this good work seems as far as off as ever, though I have had sent me that Officer's report on the Bombay drainage.

New street boards and new names for streets are urgently needed, the names of most of our streets are unpronounceable.

I consider we should do something more for the ratepayers than merely water the Mount road and bear half the expense of watering the North Beach as at present, for dust is one of the great nuisances of Madras, moreover watering the roads, as long as it is not done too lavishly, protects them.

As the Executive Engineer rightly remarks should a great fire take place in Madras the Municipality would be in the painful position of not being able to render much assistance. It should not be "a fire engine to be purchased" for 5000 Rupees, as, with this sum, we should be able to import two or more, not first class of course, but sufficient for our wants. I got out the other day, for gardening purposes, at a cost including freight and all charges of 130 Rupees, what is called a Crystal Palace Fire Engine, and which will throw a powerful jet of water up to the top of any house in Black Town; but for an extensive fire this, of course, would not be sufficient. In Bombay and Calcutta they have steam fire engines. We will now, gentlemen, if you please, take the budget in detail.

It was then proposed by the President and seconded by Mr. Coleman and carried—"That the following taxes, tolls, and rates, under the Madras Municipal Act IX. of 1867, be let in the ensuing year 1869, subject to the approval of Government:—

Tax on carriages, horses, and other animals, as provided in Sections 26 to 43, and Schedule A of Act IX. of 1867.

Tax on carts and other wheeled vehicles, without springs, as provided in Sections 45 to 47 of the said Act.

Tolls on carriages and animals entering the municipal limits, as provided in Sections 49 to 55, and Schedule B of the said Act.

Tax on professions, trades or callings and liquor licenses, as provided in Sections 57 to 62, and Schedules C and C2, respectively, of the said Act.

A rate of 7½ per cent. on the annual value of all houses, buildings, and lands, as provided in Sections 69 to 82 of the said Act.

Resolved that the estimated receipts, aggregating Rupees 5,91,188, be approved.

It was next proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Colonel Silver and carried—"That the item of charges A and B (in Budget estimate) as far as extra writers be sanctioned."

Then it was proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Colonel Silver and carried—"That C., D., and E. (in budget estimate) be sanctioned."

Mr. Gover then said—

GENTLEMEN,—It is with considerable reluctance that I venture to address you on this subject, since my duty with the public and Government may appear somewhat to clash with my duty to the President. The President is, of course, anxious that his proposal should be sanctioned, because he thinks they are necessary for the well-being of the people of this town. On the other hand we are appointed to use our judgment regarding all measures proposed, and should fail in our duty were we to pass, out of deference to the President, matters of which we do not ourselves approve. I am the more anxious to explain this, because I think that this is a time when special care should be exercised. We know very well that we are on the eve of an enormously increased expenditure. The water project will involve an extra lakh of Rupees at least. Next week Captain Tulloch is expected to arrive laden with a drainage project, which will, if adopted, launch us into an expenditure of nearly 40 lakhs with a minimum annual charge of at least two lakhs of Rupees. On the other hand, there will probably be a contemporaneous loss of income. The old Trade Tax, which this year is expected to return nearly Rupees 30,000, will yield nothing next year. Then, again, after the Minute of the Governor General, it is very doubtful whether the Government will, after next year, sanction the levy of tolls, and about Rupees 42,000 will thereby be lost. We, therefore, must, in any case, meet, at an early period, a greatly increased charge, while our resources will be actually less than now. But permit me, for a moment, to carry this argument a step further. As a business man I feel that we ought never to spend, in any one year, more than the estimated receipts of that year, unless some special circumstances arise which will demand special and unusual expenditure. Such special charges may fairly be met from a cash balance, and in this lies the great advantage of having a decent balance at the bankers. If this be true the preceding considerations would seem to show that this year, above all others, we should be careful not to pass beyond our income, for it is not pretended that, except the market, any unusual charge is likely to arise, and the market is not proposed to be erected out of the cash balance.

But, gentlemen, on referring to the budget statements I find that, not only is it proposed to spend all the income of the year, but also to draw enormously upon the cash balance. The balance on the 1st January 1869, is estimated to reach Rupees 1,75,000, or, including the Government surpluses, Rupees 20,10,062. But if the budget plans are carried out, there will be, on the last day of 1868, a balance of only Rupees 54,000; so that the President proposes that we should spend more than one and half lakhs of Rupees in excess of our revenue. With the utmost deference to Colonel Deane I would submit that this cannot be right. If the market be included we are asked to spend 2½ lakhs more than we shall receive. On the face of things this should not stand.

Unquestionably, of course, the President has placed us in a dilemma. It is now December while the budget should, according to the Act, have been passed in November. The dilemma is this: we shall fail in our duty if we pass the budget as it stands; yet we shall infringe the Act, which is our charter, if we do not pass it.

Again, every consideration of propriety and business demands, that, before we allot our expenditure for next year, we should know how far that which was allotted last year has gone. If we are asked for an increase we should certainly be informed how, and how far the last year's supply has failed to secure efficiency. But this has not been done. We know absolutely nothing of what has been done this year. We are as innocent as children as to the results of our labors in 1868. How then can we vote expenditure for 1869. Last year it was confessedly done blindfold, because there was not trustworthiness of experience to guide the Commission. But there has been ample

It was proposed by the President and seconded by C. Parthasarady Naidu and carried—"That the Government be requested to contribute a moiety of the expense of taking a census in the coming year, which may be estimated at 25,000 Rupees.

Colonel Gillilan after this rose and said that the Commissioners would never get through the business set down for the day, if each Commissioner was to bring forward any special grievance which he might have. With regard to the items to which Mr. Gover had taken objection they were such as would occur once and for ever. They were not likely to occur again next year. Then as to the Tinnevely settlement question, it was a subject which ought to have been communicated to the President in order that the President and Sanitary Inspector might have prepared an estimate of the cost for the removal of the nuisance. Mr. Gover had brought the subject forward rather late in the day.

After some further discussion among the members, Dr. Patterson rose and said time was as precious as money. Long speeches were generally painful, and tended to confuse the minds of persons. The Commissioners had met to pass the budget. It would be well to deal with each separate item as it came.

Dr. Patterson's suggestion was adopted, and then with regard to item No. I, as to the employment of Europeans in the Conservancy Department, Mr. Hamnett observed that the employment of Europeans had been sanctioned, and that the European Overseers had worked satisfactorily.

Mr. Gover upon this withdrew his objection to item No. I.

Colonel Denison observed that, with regard to the European Overseers having worked satisfactorily, the present condition of the Perambore Rubbish Depôt was a proof.

Item No. I was passed.

With regard to the subject of latrines, Dr. Patterson said that he had once been unfortunate enough to plan a latrine, which was not approved of, as the Commissioners came to the conclusion that the old latrines were the best. He had no doubt that the existing latrines were better than any they could devise, but there was one thing wrong, for, as he went often to see the latrines, he noticed that, so far as the Executive Department was concerned, the work was not done satisfactorily. Nothing could be possibly worse than the filthy manner in which the latrines were kept, and this was mainly owing to there not being a sufficient number of men to attend to the latrines. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary, if the Commissioners wished to have clean latrines, to employ a larger number of men, and more efficient hands.

Mr. Hamnett concurred with Dr. Patterson.

Items Nos. 2, 3, and 4 were passed.

With regard to item No. 5, in reference to a sum of 3000 Rupees being set down for the cleaning of parcherries and other crowded localities, Mr. Coleman observed that it was very necessary that the President should have in his hands such a sum, for otherwise Colonel Denison would have to call a meeting whenever he wanted any money for cleaning out parcherries.

Item No. 5 was passed.

With regard to item No. 8, Rupees 200 as cart hire for bringing the carcasses of dogs slaughtered to the Park, Colonel Denison observed that, of the dead dogs brought to the Park, the spare dogs were buried under the trees, while the better class of them were given to the animals as food.

The subject of the General Market was then introduced—whereupon Mr. Grose observed that, as the market would be a source of large income, he could understand Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu's proposal; but the Board would like to have the market for themselves.

It was then proposed by the President and seconded by C. Parthasarady Naidu Garu—"That the Right Honorable the Governor in Council be requested to move the Government of India to grant the Municipality a loan of a lakh of Rupees for the purpose of erecting a market on the same terms as the loan for water distribution."

Mr. Gover then moved as an amendment—"That the matter be deferred for the consideration of Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu's offer."

Mr. Kristnama Chari seconded this amendment.

Mr. Vencataramiah observed that the market was a speculation. If the Municipality had funds at its disposal he would have no objection to the speculation. The offer of Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu should be taken advantage of.

Dr. Patterson wished to know till what time the matter was to be deferred, and for whose consideration; and why could not the Commissioners present dispose of Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu's offer.

Mr. Gover's amendment being then put to the vote was carried.

Mr. Gover then proposed—"That the consideration of the items 9 and 10 of the Executive Engineer's estimate, Part II., be deferred until the submission of a report from that officer regarding those portions of the streets (Ummen Covil, Annapillay, and Salay streets,) which required widening.

Mr. Vencataramiah observed that the Commissioners were called upon too suddenly to decide on this matter. If plans of the streets had been sent round some two or three months before, the Members of the Board would have been prepared to come to a conclusion. It was wrong to effect improvements hastily, for, if the Commissioners acted thus, the public would be led to believe that their interests were not consulted. He would, therefore, support Mr. Gover's amendment.

Dr. Patterson also said that notice of these subjects should have been given early, as, before the Commissioners could approve of the estimates in the budget, they should satisfy themselves on the points. If he was called upon to sanction an amount for widening any particular street, as a member who lived in Madras, he would like, before giving a conscientious opinion, to visit and inspect the place. Of course, the Commissioners felt it their duty to help the President. If details had been placed before them, they would most willingly have rendered him all the aid in their power. The Commissioners were asked to approve of a budget to come, when no information had been given them as to how the items in last year's budget were expended.

Colonel Denison replied that the receipts and disbursements were laid before the Board regularly every two months, and a statement for receipts and disbursements for nine months had lately been put before the Commissioners.

Colonel Gillilan thought that Dr. Patterson's objection was met by the fact that all the subjects were circulated a fortnight before the meeting, and it had been open to Dr. Patterson to visit any of the streets if he chose.

The Honorable Meer Humayun Jah Bahadoor was of opinion that it was impossible, from the statements of receipts and disbursements only, to know how the items of the budget were expended.

Colonel Silver also agreed with Dr. Patterson that it was impossible, from the statement of receipts and disbursements for nine months which had been prepared, to know how the budget items were disposed of. It should be clearly shown how each of the budget heads has been expended.

It was then proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Mr. Narasimulu Chetty and carried—"That the consideration of item 12 of the Executive Engineer's estimate (for constructing new drains) be deferred until the receipt of the new drainage scheme."

It was then proposed that items 2 to 8, 11, 13 to 18 of the Engineer's Budget, Part II., be sanctioned.

The subject in reference to the necessity for a fire engine was introduced. Mr. Gover objected to the purchase of a fire engine, as he considered that it would be useless as it was difficult to get water in Madras.

Colonel Gillilan held that it was a disgrace that the Municipality had not its fire engine.

After some future discussion Mr. Gover withdrew his objection upon which the item was passed.

It was next proposed by the President, and seconded by Dr. Miller, that Part III. of the Executive Engineer's estimate be sanctioned.

Mr. Krishnama Chari then read the following:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN,—You are all aware that at the last General Meeting I proposed to move two questions for consideration. One of them referred to that nuisance which was allowed to spring up in the shape of permanent beds in front of the old line of houses in the

Evening Bazaar, and I gladly withdrew it because the President gave us to understand, at the last meeting, that he concurred with me in regarding those sheds as a nuisance, and that he had said so in a letter to Government, and had taken action to remove the same. In proceeding to say now a few words on the other question respecting revision of assessment on houses and lands, which, at my request, was deferred for consideration to to-day, owing to the very late and inconvenient hour up to which the Commissioners were occupied at the last general meeting, I think it necessary to state that, after the unpleasant remarks which the mere notice of my intention to move the question has already elicited from the President, I am unwilling to be drawn into a discussion upon a subject which is somewhat complicated by the defects of the Municipal Act; and my reason for venturing to draw the attention of the Commissioners to the subject just now is, that the inconvenience connected with the present mode of revising the assessment is becoming so great, and is affecting so much the temper of the Native inhabitants of the town, that, under any circumstances, the attention of the Commissioners must be called to the evil at an early period; and I thought it right to bring it forward at once, rather than allow matters to get serious, and give room to complaints against the Commissioners before the Government or the Police Courts, which are becoming very common, and the rule, instead of being the exception. Now the gist of my motion is simply this: The house and landed property in our town is being re-valued in order to raise a higher assessment of 10, or 20, or even 30 per cent. on them, without an actual increase of the rate. I do not say that the increase in the value of landed property will not, to some extent, enable us to secure this by a revision of house and land assessment; but I maintain that this is a measure which affects the interests of thousands in a permanent way, and neither the Commissioners, as a body, nor the public have been told the necessity, or expediency, for the re-valuation that is going on. I say in a permanent way, because the valuation of houses, when once fairly fixed, ought to last for some time, so that the minds of the owners of houses and lands may be set at rest, instead of being kept constantly in an unpleasant and an angry mood, by frequent attempts to raise or alter the existing rates. Consequently, when attempting to secure an increase of revenue from the house and land rates, nothing is so important for the reputation of the present Municipal administration, as also to secure at the same time a just and proper re-valuation; for even without going to the length of attributing defects and inequalities in the previous valuation which perhaps do exist, and only not cared much about, owing to the general lightness of the Municipal taxes formerly, I may mention that great changes have taken place in the relative importance of the different parts of this town, and it will have come within the experience of every Commissioner that localities which were once valuable and fashionable have now deteriorated from want of good water, and other causes, and have lost a large number of substantial and paying tenants. By way of illustration, let me give one or two instances. In Black Town I know that in the 2nd Division, at all events, a house which yielded a rent of 5 Rupees formerly hardly procures Rupees 5 for its owner now, while if you go in an opposite direction, say, Egmore or Nungambalam, a house that was rented there, in previous years, at 5 or 50 Rupees per mensem, is now at 7 or 70 Rupees. Consequently, in the latter case, there will be some justice in increasing the value of buildings, but none at all in the former. I know, also, that several persons in the town are actually paying the house-tax and quit-rent without earning an anna in the shape of rents from the tenants who occupy the houses, simply taking care of them. All these considerations require that the re-valuation of houses should be carried out in the most careful and accurate manner possible, with all the aid which the Municipal Commissioners are able to afford. And I now venture to ask, with all the respect and deference due to the President, whether a mere passing allusion made by the President in some former meeting in regard to his intention to seek the assistance of the Commissioners in the matter of re-valuing the houses and lands, and in taking the census of the population, and his subsequent Memorandum addressed to five or six individual Commissioners to aid the Assessor, constitute the best and the most satisfactory way of achieving this great object. The few gentlemen called upon to give their assistance will be able to explain for themselves why they omitted, as alleged, to respond to the call; though I could see some difficulty in unpaid

honorary members, who have other business enough on hand, dancing attendance on the Assessor, whenever he chooses to call in the streets, just as they are required to do under the Act. I, however, trust that the Commissioners will concur with me that what little communication the President might have had with individual members would not be sufficient to inform the general body of Commissioners on the subject, and much less the thousands of house and land-owners who are concerned. What I expected, and what every body would naturally have expected in such an important measure as this, is that the whole plan of operations would have been laid before the Commissioners, in order to elicit their opinions, and counsel, in regard to the necessity for the revision as well as the *modus operandi*, so that the best line of action possible might be adopted, and clear instructions laid down for the conduct of the officers employed for the purpose of carrying out that plan, and for the information of the public who are to be affected by the measure.

But when I saw, three weeks ago, Mr. Bazely, the Assessor, and about half a dozen belted peons, and other servants, entering my house as well as a dozen other native houses in my neighbourhood, without giving any previous intimation whatever, and to the great confusion and annoyance of all the inmates, insisting on visiting the inner apartments, and treading on sacred ground to the great offence of their religious feelings, it was the first notice I had of such an important measure being carried on in such a summary and objectionable manner. It has, I assure you, sir, excited great dissatisfaction and outcry in the town; and who will not make an outcry where money and religion are the question; and I have been spoken to on the subject by several respectable ratepayers in the 2nd Division in which I reside. Furthermore, I am really unable to see what provision has been made for securing a correct valuation. I saw the Assessor going rapidly from house to house, and noting down what he would call *results*, as he came out of each house, without any proper inquiry, for making which he did not stay sufficiently long. Here are two notices in my hands served by the Assessor on one of our honorary Commissioners, the first in March, and the other in November of this year, the former fixing the annual rental value of his house at Rupees 610, and the latter at Rupees 800, while no addition was made to the building during this interval of eight months. The new value is nearly double the former, which is certainly a summary way of revising the value. I have brought this case to your notice, gentlemen, not because it affects one of our body, but as an instance of what is being done in the name of the Commissioners. (Then Mr. Sadagopa Moodelly made some additional remarks on the subject.) I confess I cannot comprehend what trustworthy results he could have arrived at without a fair inquiry. But I suppose he noted down, as he came out of each house, what I suspect to be simply the addition of 20 to 50 per cent. over the former valuation, which the people everywhere fancy we, the Commissioners, are determined to clap on by any and every means. After this description of the mode of re-valuation followed by the Assessor, need I say that it is most perfunctory, unreliable, and unjust.

Now to be brief, gentlemen, I maintain that, according to Sections 73, 74, and 75 of the Municipal Act, it is clearly our province, or rather it is our bounden duty as representatives of the public, whose interests we are here to protect, to discuss and decide on the plan of operations and the agency to be employed for carrying this general revision of house and land assessment, and thus facilitate the action of the President. If we neglect to do this our proper duty, all the obloquy of the present irregular proceeding of the Assessor would be thrown upon ourselves.

Colonel Denison next read this Memorandum:—

At the General Meeting of 25th ultimo, I alluded to Mr. Kristnama Charriar's question regarding the revision of assessment, and the agency by which it should be done, and remarked on the vagueness of the Sections of the Municipal Act of 1867, as regards the assessing of buildings and lands, especially Section 73.

I cannot believe it was the intention of the Legislature that the valuation was to be made by the Commissioners *in person*. It appears to me to come strictly within the province of the executive. And, moreover, I would remind you, gentlemen, that, at your first General Meeting, I pointed out that "it is indispensable to the proper carrying out of the executive duties, that the President should have at hand an Assessor, who will be able to assist him and the Honorary Com-

21st December 1868.

missioners in the very troublesome and onerous duty of assessment under the present Act," and I accordingly proposed and Mr. C. Parthasarady Naidoo seconded — "That an Assessor, who shall also be an Assistant to the Collector, be appointed on a salary of Rupees 300 per mensem from 1st November 1867, and that Mr. N. Bazely, Junior, be nominated to the said office."

After some remarks by Colonel Silver, the resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

I have, on several subsequent occasions, alluded to the subject of re-assessing the Town, and notably on the 31st July last, as mentioned in my minute of 25th ultimo; and on the 28th August issued a circular to certain of the Commissioners soliciting their valuable assistance in their respective divisions.

I submit, therefore, that the work is being done in accordance with the Act, by an Assessor appointed by the Commissioners, and with their full knowledge and concurrence.

I also observe that the subject is prominently alluded to in the Finance Committee's Report, with their suggestions for its more speedy completion.

That Mr. Kristnama Charriar was not on the list of gentlemen whose assistance I solicited is uncertainly unfortunate, as he seems so deeply interested in the matter; but in selecting Mr. C. Parthasarady Naidoo, who was a member of the former Commission, and had much experience in assessing property, I considered I made the best possible choice.

Colonel Silver thought that their native friends had taken alarm by being under the impression, from an item in the budget, that the value of the houses would be raised by 20 per cent. The natives, however, had no cause for fear. He was also aware of the discontent which prevailed with regard to the machinery which was employed for carrying out the revision.

Dr. Patterson wished to mention an interesting fact in connexion with this subject. The general complaint amongst Natives was that the persons who were employed in the work of revision entered into such parts of buildings as were considered sacred. He could state a case which was very different. He knew of an instance where a house, which was valued last year at 1200 Rupees, was valued this year at 1400 Rupees, without either Mr. Bazely or any other Municipal officer setting foot within its walls.

Mr. Gover said that, in the Finance Committee's Report, it had been suggested that Mr. Stephenson should assist Mr. Bazely, but as Mr. Stephenson's services could not be spared for that purpose, he did not see why a native could not be appointed as Assistant Assessor, on about 200 Rupees a month. This person would be able to enter any native house in case of a dispute arising.

It was then proposed by Colonel Silver and seconded by Ramanjooloo Naidu — "That the revision of the estimate for 1869 be stopped until the next General Meeting, to allow the Commissioners time to give the matter full consideration, and devise such measures for carrying it into effect."

The meeting then resolved itself into a Special Meeting to consider the Finance Committee's Report.

(Signed) C. DENISON,

President of the Municipal Commission.

No. 146.

ORDER THEREON, 21st December 1868, No. 1561.

To be recorded.

(True Extract).

R. S. ELLIS,

Chief Secretary.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC.

Dated December, 21st.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 21st December 1868, No. 1461.

DECEMBER.
Nos. 145-146.

Recording letter from the President, Madras Municipality, forwarding Proceedings of an adjourned General Meeting of the Commissioners held on the 9th instant.

mation, and should have readily given it either personally or in writing, had I been asked.

With regard to the improvements projected under heads 8-9-10 the Commissioners will have had before them, the Engineer's Report, as also what I stated at the last General Meeting.

I have not placed so large a sum on the estimate for maintenance of roads as for last year, but a lac of rupees, is I expect, the full extent of what we shall be able to spend, and should the same entered for each Division be expended at the expiration of next year, I trust the Commissioners will be able to say that the roads, in their several divisions, are in good order.

I have placed a sum of 21,050 on the Estimates for metalling roads and streets not hitherto metalled, and think this will be a very great boon, for I am constantly having applications on this score, and it will also be a manifest improvement, and by letting the poorer classes see they are not neglected, and that they get some equivalent for the taxes screwed out of them, we shall the more render the visits of the Collector's concopios a little more endurable.

I have also, as far as lay in my power, extended the lighting as you will see by the addition proposed, viz., 9420 rupees. The number of Lamp Posts erected, since January last to date, is 290.

I shall be glad if you pass No. 12, viz., 10,000 Rs. for constructing new drains for I have been now for nearly two years waiting for something to be done on Captain Tullloch's system, but the commencement of this good work seems as far off as ever, though I have had sent me that officer's report on the Bombay drainage.

New street boards and new names for streets are urgently needed, the names of most of our streets are unpronounceable.

I consider we should do something more for the rate payers than merely water the Mount Road and bear half the expense of watering the North Beach as at present, for dust is one of the great nuisances of Madras, moreover watering the roads as long as it is not done too lavishly protects them.

As the Executive Engineer rightly remarks should a great fire take place in Madras the Municipality would be in the painful position of not being able to render much assistance. It should not be "a fire Engine to be purchased" for 5000 Rs., as with this sum we should be able to import two or more, not 1st class of course, but sufficient for our wants. I got out the other day for gardening purposes at a cost including freight and all charges of 130 Rupees, what is called a Crystal Palace Fire Engine and which will throw a powerful jet of water up to the top of any house in Black Town, but for an extensive fire this of course would not be sufficient. In Bombay and Calcutta they have steam fire engines. We will now, gentlemen, if you please, take the Budget in detail.

It was then proposed by the President and seconded by Mr. Coleman and carried—"That the following taxes, tolls and rates, under the Madras Municipal Act IX of 1867, be levied in the ensuing year 1869, subject to the approval of Government:—

Tax on carriages, horses and other animals, as provided in sections 36 to 43 and schedule A of Act IX of 1867.

Tax on carts and other wheeled vehicles without springs as provided in sections 45 to 47 of the said Act.

Tolls on carriages and animals entering the municipal limits as provided in sections 49 to 55 and schedule B of the said Act.

Tax on professions, trades or callings and liquor licenses as provided in sections 57 to 62 and schedule C and C2 respectively of the said Act.

A rate of 7½ per cent. on the annual value of all house buildings and lands as provided in sections 66 to 82 of the said Act.

other hand there will probably be a contemporaneous loss of income. The old Trade Tax which this year is expected to return nearly Rs. 30,000 will yield nothing next year. Then again, after the minute of the Governor General it is very doubtful whether the Government will after next year, sanction the levy of tolls, and of about Rs. 42,000 will thereby be lost. We therefore must in any case meet at an early period a greatly increased charge while our resources will be actually less than now. But permit me for a moment to carry this argument a step further. As a business man I feel that we ought never to spend in any one year more than the estimated receipts of that year unless some special circumstances arise which will demand special and unusual expenditure. Such special charges may fairly be met from a cash balance, and in this lies the great advantage of having a decent balance at the bankers. If this be true the preceding considerations would seem to show that this year above all others we should be careful not to pass beyond our income, for it is not pretended that, except the market, any unusual charge is likely to arise, and the market is not proposed to be erected out of the cash balance.

But, gentlemen, on referring to the budget statements I find that not only is it proposed to spend all the income of the year, but also to draw, enormously upon the cash balance. The balance on the 1st January 1869 is estimated to reach Rs. 1,75,000, or including the Government paper Rs. 2,010,062.

But if the budget plans are carried out there will be on the last day of 1869 a balance of only Rs. 54,000, so that the President proposes that we should spend more than one and a half lacs of rupees in excess of our revenue. With the utmost deference to Colonel Denison I would submit that this cannot be right. If the market be included we are asked to spend 2½ lacs more than we shall receive. On the face of things this should not stand.

Unintentionally of course the President has placed us in a dilemma. It is now December while the budget should according to the Act have been passed in November. The dilemma is this—we shall fail in our duty if we pass the budget as it stands—yet we shall infringe the Act, which is our charter, if we do not pass it.

Again every consideration of propriety and business demands that before we allot our expenditure for next year, we should know how far that which was allotted last year has gone. If we are asked for an increase we should certainly be informed how and how far the last year's supply has failed to secure efficiency. But this has not been done. We know absolutely nothing of what has been done this year. We are as innocent as children as to the results of our labors in 1868. How then can we vote expenditure for 1869. Last year it was confessedly done blindfold, because there was not trustworthy experience to guide the Commission. But there has been ample means during the last ten months of discovering what was needed. Why then was not this valuable knowledge afforded to us?

These considerations, gentlemen, appear so important to me that I cannot consistently with my duty vote blindfold an expenditure of 2½ lacs. Had there been time, I would have moved that the budget be returned for reconsideration with the instruction that the proposed expenditure must not exceed the expected income. This cannot be done. There is but one alternative left, it is to use the utmost care in sanctioning any increase. I have given the most anxious study to the question, and would move that items 1, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 10 be struck out from the proposed increase in the conservancy department. I am the more confident this is the right course to pursue, since it is only 12 months ago that a certain scale of expenditure for this department was laid down by a special committee after the most careful investigation. At the urgent request of the President an increase of 25 per cent on this scale was granted. To alter now that scale without having received one word of explanation would be most disrespectful to that committee, and indignant for ourselves. If the increase be absolutely necessary, let that necessity be proved to our satisfaction, and then it will be cheerfully granted.

While on this subject, gentlemen, there is another matter to which I would ask your most earnest attention. The proposals of the Sanitary Inspector remind me of the Irishman who brushed his coat most carefully and then lifted his pig out of a bag and carried him home. We are sweeping our streets but leaving in the midst of the city a vile hot-bed of pestilence whose influence must poison the air far and wide. I refer to what is called the Tinnivelly Settlement just beyond the Mouligar Choultry on the Trivatore Road. Words fail me to describe this abominable place, but, with your permission, I will attempt to describe something of what I have seen there. The settlement is a large patch of cherry comprising perhaps 7,000 people. They are

of the city. On my first visit, Vencataramiah I followed the course of this drain. Need I tell you, gentlemen, what are the contents of the main drain. In all its horrible filth the sewer rolled along an open channel into a coconut top, and there discharged itself on to the level soil. You must believe me, though I own it is difficult, when I say that the whole contents of that drain are diligently spread over the ground. The sight was horrible, the stench was overpowering. I am not very fastidious, but from my first entrance I had to bury my face all but my eyes in my handkerchief. Even then as I passed along the stench was so awful, that I positively had to run out at my best speed to avoid violent nausea. It makes me shudder now to think of what 7,000 people are daily exposed to. But I will not stay to dwell upon this, and will turn to another visit I paid in company with Mr. Lee. It was the day

submission of a report from that officer regarding those portions of the streets (Ummen Covil, Annappillay and Salay Streets) which required widening.

Mr. Vencataramiah observed that the Commissioners were called upon too suddenly to decide on this matter. If plans of the streets had been sent round some two or three months before, the members of the Board would have been prepared to come to a conclusion. It was wrong to effect improvements hastily for if the Commissioners acted thus, the public would be led to believe that their interests were not consulted. He would therefore support Mr. Gover's amendment.

Dr. Patterson also said that notice of these subjects should have been given early as before the Commissioners could approve of the estimates in the Budget they should satisfy themselves on the points. If he was called upon to sanction an amount for widening any particular street, as a member who lived in Madras, he would like, before giving a conscientious opinion, to visit and inspect the place. Of course the Commissioners felt it their duty to help the President. If details had been placed before them, they would most willingly have rendered him all the aid in their power. The Commissioners were asked to approve of a Budget to come when no information had been given them as to how the items in last year's Budget were expended.

Colonel Denison replied that the Receipts and Disbursements were laid before the Board regularly every two months, and a statement for Receipts and Disbursements for nine months had lately been put before the Commissioners.

Colonel Gillilan thought that Dr. Patterson's objection was met by the fact that all the subjects were circulated a fortnight before the meeting and it had been open to Dr. Patterson to visit any of the streets if he chose.

The Hon'ble Meer Humayun Jah Bahadoor was of opinion that it was impossible, from the statements of Receipts and Disbursements only, to know how the items of the Budget were expended.

Colonel Silver also agreed with Dr. Patterson that it was impossible from the statement of Receipts and Disbursement for nine months which had been prepared to know how the budget items were disposed of. It should be clearly shown how each of the budget heads has been expended.

It was then proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Mr. Narasimulu Chetty and carried—"That the consideration of item 12 of the Executive Engineer's estimate (for constructing new drains) be deferred until the receipt of the new drainage scheme."

Resolved that items 2 to 8, 11, 13 to 18 of the Municipal Budget Part IV be sanctioned.

The subject in reference to the necessity for a fire engine was introduced. Mr. Gover objected to the purchase of a fire engine as he considered that it would be useless as it was difficult to get water in Madras.

Colonel Gillilan held that it was a disgrace that the Municipality had not its fire engine.

After some future discussion Mr. Gover withdrew his objection upon which the item was passed.

It was next proposed by the President and seconded by Dr. Miller that Part III of the Executive Engineer's Estimate be sanctioned.

Mr. Krishnama Chari then read the following:—

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN.—You are all aware that at the last general meeting I proposed to move two questions for consideration. One of them referred to the nuisance which was allowed to spring up in the shape of permanent sheds in front of the old line of houses in the Evening Bazaar, and I gladly withdrew it because the President gave us to understand at the last meeting that he concurred with me in regarding those sheds as a nuisance, and that he had said so in a letter to Government, and had taken action to remove the same. In proceeding to say now a few words on the other question respecting revision of Assessment on Houses and Lands, which at my request was deferred for consideration to to-

day, owing to the very late and inconvenient hour up to which the Commissioners were occupied at the last general meeting. I think it necessary to state that after the unpleasant remarks which the mere notice of my intention to move the question has already elicited from the President, I am unwilling to be drawn into a discussion upon a subject which is somewhat complicated by the defects of the Municipal Act; and my reason for venturing to draw the attention of the Commissioners to the subject just now is that the inconvenience connected with the present mode of revising the Assessment is becoming so great, and is affecting so much the temper of the native inhabitants of the town, that under any circumstances the attention of the Commissioners must be called to the evil at an early period; and I thought it right to bring it forward at once rather than allow matters to get so serious, and give room to complaints against the Commissioners, before the Government agent, the Police Council, which are becoming very com-

Resolved that the estimates Receipts aggregating Rs. 99,188-11-11 be approved.

It was next proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Colonel Silver and carried—"That the item of charges A and B (in Budget estimate) as far as extra writers be sanctioned." Then it was proposed by Mr. Gover and seconded by Colonel Silver and carried—"that C, D, and E. (in Budget estimate) be sanctioned." Mr. Gover then said—
Gentlemen.—It is with considerable reluctance that I venture to address you on this subject, since my duty as a public man and as a member of the President of the Board is to advise you on the subject. His proposal should be sanctioned, because he thinks they are necessary for the well being of the people of this town. On the other hand we are appointed to use our judgment regarding all measures proposed, and should find in our duty were we to pass out of deference to the President, matters of which we do not ourselves approve. I am the more anxious to explain this because I think that this is a time when special care should be exercised. We know very well that we are on the eve of an enormously increased expenditure. The water project will involve an extra lac of rupees at least. Next week Captain Tullloch is expected to arrive laden with a drainage project which will, if adopted, launch us into an expenditure of nearly 40 lacs with a minimum annual charge of at least two lacs of rupees. On the

request to be informed with regard to the plan which was to be adopted in carrying out the census.

mat Vencataramiah Garu concurred with Kristna-pers ma Chari.

It was proposed by the President and seconded und by C. Parthasardly Naidu and carried—"That had the Government be requested to contribute a moiety of the expense of taking a census in the for coming year which may be estimated at 25,000 lac rupees.

Colonel Gillilan after this rose and said that the Commissioners would never get through the business set down for the day, if each commissioner was to bring forward any special grievance which he might have. With regard to the items to which Mr. Gover had taken objection they were such as would occur once and for ever. They were not likely to occur again next year. Then as to the and Tiunevelly settlement question it was a negl subject which ought to have been communicated the to the President in order that the President and Sanitary Inspector might have prepared an estimate of the cost for the removal of the nuisance the Mr. Gover had brought the subject forward rather late in the day.

After some further discussion among the mem- bers Dr. Patterson rose and said time was as pre- cious as money. Long speeches were generally to painful, and tended to confuse the minds of per- sons. The Commissioners had met to pass the cer- Budget. It would be well to deal with each N separate item as it came.

Dr. Patterson's suggestion was adopted and stre then with regard to item No. 1 as to the employ- ment of Europeans in the conservancy depart- ment, Mr. Hammet observed that the employment Nor of Europeans had been sanctioned and that the the European overseers had worked satisfactorily. the Mr. Gover upon this withdrew his objection prot A to item No. 1.

Colonel Denison observed that with regard to the European Overseers having worked satisfac- torily the present condition of the Perambore Rubbish Depot, was a proof.

Item No. 1 was passed.

With regard to the subject of latrines the Dr. Patterson said that he had once been unfortunate enough to plan a latrine which was not approved of as the Commissioners top came to the conclusion that the old latrines sive were the best. He had no doubt that the Bor existing latrines were better than any they could devise but there was one thing wrong, for, as he went often to see the latrines, he noticed that so far as the executive department was concerned, the work was not done satisfactorily. Nothing could be possibly worse than the filthy manner in which the latrines were kept and this was

mainly owing to there not being a sufficient num- ber of men to attend to the latrines. It was there- fore absolutely necessary if the Commissioners Act I wished to have clean latrines to employ a larger number of men, and more efficient hands.

Mr. Hammet concurred with Dr. Patterson. Act. Items No. 2, 3 and 4 were passed.

With regard to item No. 5 in reference to a sum- munc of 3000 Rupees being set down for the cleaning and scd of parcherries and other crowded localities, Mr. Tax Coleman observed that it was very necessary that the President should have in his hands such a shedu sum for otherwise Colonel Denison would have to A rat call a meeting whenever he wanted any money fo r use b cleaning out parcherries.

Item No. 5 was passed.

With regard to item No. 8, Rupees 200 as cart hire for bringing the carcasses of dogs slaughtered to the Park, Colonel Denison observed that of the dead dogs brought to the Park the spare dogs were buried under the trees, while the better class of them were given to the animals as food.

The subject of the General Market was then introduced—whereupon Mr. Grose observed that as the market would be a source of large income he could understand Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu's proposal, but the Board would like to have the market for themselves.

It was then proposed by the President and it seconded by C. Parthasardly Naidu Garu—"That d by the Right Honorable the Governor in Council be requested to move the Government of India to over grant the Municipality a loan of a lac of Rupees for the purpose of erecting a market on the same terms as the loan for water distribution."

Mr. Gover then moved as an amendment (Mr. The the matter be referred to the Government.

Mr. Kristanna Chari seconded the amendment. Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu observed that the market was a speculation. If the Municipality had funds at its disposal he would have no objection to the specu- out lation. The offer of Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu which should be taken advantage of.

Dr. Patterson wished to know till what time the matter was to be deferred and for whose considera- tion; and why could not the Commissioners pre- the e rent dispose of Mr. Vencatasawmy Naidu's offer.

Mr. Gover's amendment being then put to the vote was carried.

Mr. Gover then proposed. "That the consid- eration of the items 9 and 10 of the Executive En- gineer's estimate Part II be deferred until the

will turn to another visit paid in company with Mr. Lee. It was the day

mon, and the rule, instead of being the ex- ception. Now the gist of my motion is simply this. The house and landed property in our town is being re-valued in order to raise a higher assess- ment, of 10 or 20 or even 30 per cent. on them without an actual increase of the rate. I do not say that the increase in the value of Landed Property will not, to some extent, enable us to secure this by a revision of House and Land Assess- ment, but I maintain that this is a measure which affects the interests of thousands in a permanent way, and neither the Commissioners, as a body, nor the public have been told the necessity or expedi- ency for the re-valuation that is going on. I say in a permanent way, because the valuation of houses when once fairly fixed ought to last for some time, so that the minds of the owners of houses and lands may be set at rest, instead of being kept constantly in an unpleasant and an angry mood by frequent attempts to raise or alter the existing rates. Consequently, when attempting to secure an increase of revenue from the House and Land rates, nothing is so important for the re- putation of the present Municipal Adminis- tration as also to secure at the same time a just and proper re-valuation; for even without going to the length of attributing defects and inequalities in the previous valuation which perhaps do exist, and only not cared much about, owing to the general lightness of the Municipal taxes formerly, I may mention that great changes have taken place in the relative importance of the different parts of this town, and it will have come within the experience of every Commissioner that localities which were once valuable and fashionable have now deteriorat- ed from want of good water and other causes and have lost a large number of substantial and paying tenants. By way of illustration, let me give one or two instances. In Black Town I know that in the 2nd Division, at all events, a house which yielded a rent of 5 rupees formerly hardly procures rupees 3 for its owner now, while if you go in an opposite direction, say, Egmore or Nungunabakum, a house that was rented there in previous years at 5 or 50 rupees per mensem is now rented at 7 or 70 rupees. Consequently in the latter case there will be some justice in increasing the value of buildings but none at all in the former. I know also that several people in the town are actually paying the house tax and quit rent without earning an anna in the shape of rents from the tenants who occupy the houses, simply taking care of them. All these considerations require that the re-valuation of houses should be carried out in the most care- ful and accurate manner possible, with all the aid which the Municipal Commissioners are able to afford. And I now venture to ask, with all the respect and deference due to the President, whether a mere passing allu- sion made by the President in some former meet- ing in regard to his intention to seek the assistance of the Commissioners in the matter of re-valuing the houses and lands, and in taking the census of the population, and his subsequent Memorandum addressed to five or six individual Commissioners to aid the Assessor in moving this great object, the law gentlemen called upon to give their assis- tance will be able to explain for themselves why they omitted, as alleged, to respond to the call; though I could see some difficulty in unpaid hono- rary members, who have other business enough on hand, dancing attendance on the Assessor, when- ever he chooses to call in the streets, just as they are required to do under the act. I, however, trust that the Commissioners will concur with me that what little communication the President might have had with individual members would not be sufficient to inform the general body of Commis- sioners on the subject, and much less the thou- sands of house and land-owners who are concerned. What I expected and what every body would naturally have expected in such an important measure as this is that the whole plan of opera- tions would have been laid before the Commis- sioners in order to elicit their opinions and coun- sel in regard to the necessity for the revision as well as the modus operandi, so that the best line of action possible might be adopted, and clear instructions laid down for the conduct of the officers employed for the purpose of carrying out that plan and for the information of the public who are to be affected by the measure.

But when I saw, three weeks ago, Mr. Bazely, the Assessor, and about half a dozen belated peons and other servants entering my house as well as a dozen other native houses in my neighbourhood, without giving any previous intimation whatever, and to the great confusion and annoyance of all the householders, I was obliged to the inner sanctu- ary of my religious feelings, it was the being carried on in such an important measure in a manner. It has, I assure you, Sir, ex- cited great dissatisfaction and outcry in the town, and who will not make an outcry where money and religion are the question; and I have been spoken to on the subject by several respectable rate-payers in the second Division in which I reside. Furthermore, I am really unable to see what provision has been made for securing a cor- rect valuation. I saw the Assessor going rapidly from house to house and noting down what he considered as the value of each house, without any proper enquiry, for making which he did not stay sufficiently long. Here or two No- tices in my hands served by the Assessor on one of our honorary Commissioners, the first in March and the other in November of this year, the for- mer fixing the annual rental value of his house at Rs. 610 and the latter at Rs. 800, while no addi- tion was made to the building during this inter- val of eight months. The new value is nearly double of the former which is certainly a sum- way of revising the value. I have brought case to your notice, gentlemen, not because it is one of our body, but as an instance of what is being done in the name of the Com- missioners. (Then Mr. Sadagopa Moodally made additional remarks on the subject.) I cannot comprehend what trustworthy he could have arrived at without a fair but, as he noted down, it was

after heavy rain, and the whole place had therefore been thoroughly washed, but it seemed if nothing could be worse. The first street we came to was about as wide as this table. Down its centre ran an open drain. The level of the lane was considerably above that of the road, and the whole extra altitude was composed of the deposit of that drain. The soil was black as ink, and slimy with reek. The mud walls of the houses barred in this deposit. Is there any doubt that the sewage was then, and long had been, percolating through the walls into the very rooms in which the people lived. This is horrible enough but there is worse to come. We went from lane to lane and found the place one mass of filth. But one thing will fix itself on my memory while I live. We came to a well out of which people were then drawing water. I had noticed an abominable drain in the lane, but could not find its outlet. We looked again, and saw that this vile filth channel terminated in this well. The sewage was standing many inches deep three fourths of the distance round the wall of the well, the rest was dry as there the people had heaped a little earth for them to stand on as they drew the water. We looked in. The whole of the sewage was oozing through the walls for many feet down, this horrible slime was flowing gently down into the water. Gentlemen, that is some of the water in which the rice we eat every day is boiled. Such was the whole of this densely populated district. Nothing apparently had been done to amend it.

Now I would put it to you whether it is not absolutely necessary to set apart some of the receipts of 1869 in carrying out a comprehensive scheme of drainage for this district? what is the use of a host of the items of the budget compared with this crying need. But if the budget be adopted nothing can be done. The whole of the small balance anticipated at the end of the year belongs to the improvement Fund, which may not be touched.

Under these circumstances I implore that you will not pass this budget as it stands. Permit me to name certain items which may be omitted. I have already remarked with regard to the conservancy estimate that we know absolutely nothing of how far last years grant has been insufficient. yet we are asked to grant yearly Rs. 60,000 additional. I will not say one word regarding the last years grant, and will only touch this addition. Items 1, 3, and 5, ought not to be asked and consequently ought not to be granted without further information. Item 18 is for Rs. 25,000, the supposed expense of a census. This is an imperial charge and should be met wholly or at least half by the government and the proper officer, Dr. Montgomery should carry it out. The whole should therefore be struck out of this estimate. Turning to the Engineer's estimate, I am authorized by my excellent and public spirited friend Mr. Venkatasawmy Naidu to state that he is prepared to build and maintain at his own expense such a market as that proposed by the president. He will build it in plans, will manage it on our rules and will place it under our inspection, without costing this one pie. This generous offer will, if accepted, relieve us from all risk, and obviate the necessity of raising the large sum named in the budget. I therefore suggest that the item be struck out pending negotiations with Mr. Venkatasawmy Naidu. Items 9 and 10 propose the expenditure of Rupees 70,000 in widening two Streets in Black Town. They doubtless require it and Mr. Lee was good enough to accompany me when I visited them, but in his report he suggests that this widening may be carried out in sections as to spread the work over a few years. The portion near the Cutwal bazaar is very narrow and might be undertaken this year, the rest may be deferred. I would therefore suggest that this item be deferred until the receipt of a report from the Engineer as to what should be done this year. The expense of this portion only should be charged. Item No. 12 proposes the expenditure of Rs. 12,000 in making new drains. Now that they are much wanted cannot be denied, but the President has explained that he has kept this charge over for some months in anticipation of Capt Tulloch's report, but that he does not wish to wait longer. Now, gentlemen, I believe Capt. Tulloch is expected here next week, and surely, after having waited so long, it would be odd if he did not wait now. If we make the drains they may be useless before they are completed. This then should be postponed. Item 18 for fire engines might also be deferred until we have water to put into them. It is just in those very neighbourhoods where the engines will be most required that there will be least water. If not used, the engines will be out of order in twelve months.

Gentlemen, if these suggestions be adopted, not one object the need of which has been ascertained will be neglected, while a sum of about one lac, excluding the market which it was proposed to day for by a loan, will be restored to our funds. A portion of this may well be spent upon the Tinnevely Settlement and other parcherries. The rest should be added to the balance at the end of the year, and will enable us when next we apportion the Municipal expenditure, to be liberal and where liberality will be needed, and also to meet the heavy contingent charges which the great changes to be worked in the city must entail. Our great difficulty will be to be regretted on principle, but I am glad to see that the care and foresight shown in the last years have left a balance which we have thus been able to draw upon to so large an extent.

The Hon'ble Meer Humayun Jah Bahadur supported Mr. Gover's views with regard to the census. He said that it was important to consider whether so large a sum as was set down should be expended, and if the census was to be carried out he thought the commissioners should apply to Government to bear a moiety of the expense.

Kristnama Chari wished to know whether Government would not, when applied to on the subject,

came out of each house what I suspect to be simply the addition of 20 to 50 per cent. over the former valuation which the people everywhere fancy we the Commissioners are determined to clap on by any and every means. After this description of the mode of re-valuation followed by the Assessor, need I say that it is most perfunctory, unreliable and unjust.

Now to be brief, gentlemen, I maintain that according to Sections 73, 74 and 75 of the Municipal Act, it is clearly our province, or rather it is our bounden duty as representatives of the public, whose interests we are here to protect, to discuss and decide on the plan of operations and the agency to be employed for carrying this general revision of house and land assessment and thus facilitate the action of the President. If we neglect to do this our proper duty, all the obloquy of the present irregular proceeding of the Assessor would be thrown upon ourselves.

Colonel Denson next read this memo:—

At the General Meeting of 25th ultimo I alluded to Mr. Kristnama Chariar's question regarding the revision of Assessment and the agency by which it should be done, and remarked on the vagueness of the sections of the Municipal Act of 1867 as regards the assessing of buildings and lands especially section 73.

I cannot believe it was the intention of the Legislature that the valuation was to be made by the Commissioners in person. It appears to me to come strictly within the province of the Executive. And moreover I would remind you, gentlemen, that at your first General Meeting I pointed out that "it is indispensable to the proper carrying out of the executive duties, that the President should have at hand an assessor, who will be able to assist him and the Honorary Commissioners in the very troublesome and onerous duty of assessment under the present act," and I accordingly proposed and Mr. C. Parthasarady Naidoo seconded, "That an assessor, who shall also be an assistant to the Collector, be appointed on a salary of Rs. 300 per mensem from 1st November 1867, and that Mr N. Bazely jr. be nominated to the said office."

After some remarks by Colonel Silver, the resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

I have on several subsequent occasions alluded to the subject of re-assessing the Town, and notably on the 31st July last as mentioned in my minute of 25th ultimo; and on the 28th August issued a circular to certain of the Commissioners soliciting their valuable assistance in their respective Divisions.

I submit therefore that the work is being done in accordance with the Act, by an assessor appointed by the Commissioners and with their full knowledge and concurrence.

I also observe that the subject is prominently alluded to in the Finance Committee's Report, with their suggestions for its more speedy completion.

That Mr. Kristnama Chariar was not on the list of gentlemen whose assistance I solicited, is certainly unfortunate as he seems so deeply interested in the matter, but in selecting Mr. C Parthasarady Naidoo, who was a member of the former Commission and had much experience in assessing property, I considered I made the best possible choice.

Colonel Silver thought that their native friends had taken alarm by being under the impression, from an item in the Budget, that the value of the houses would be raised by 20 per cent. The natives however had no cause for fear. He was also aware of the discontent which prevailed with regard to the machinery which was employed for carrying out the revision.

Dr. Patterson wished to mention an interesting fact in connection with this subject. The general complaint amongst natives was that the persons who were employed in the work of revision entered into such parts of buildings as were considered sacred. He could state a case which was very different. He knew of an instance where a house which was valued last year at 1,200 Rupees was valued this year at 1,400 Rupees without either Mr. Bazely or any other Municipal officer setting foot within its walls.

Mr. Gover said that in the Finance Committee's Report it had been suggested that Mr. Stephen should assist Mr. Bazely, but as Mr. Stephen's services could not be spared for that purpose, he did not see why a native could not be appointed as assistant assessor, on about 200 Rupees a month. The person would be able to enter any native house in case of a dispute arising.

It was then proposed by Colonel Silver and seconded by Ramanjooloo Naidu—"That the revision of the estimate for 1869 be stopped until the next General Meeting to allow the Commissioners time to give the matter full consideration and devise such measures for carrying it into effect."

The following Order was passed by the Municipal Council on 25th ult.
That the revision of the estimate for 1869 be stopped until the next General Meeting to allow the Commissioners time to give the matter full consideration and devise such measures for carrying it into effect.
J. M. Denson
President of the Municipal Council

9755.

Municipal Commissioners' Office,
MADRAS, 15th December 1868.

The Chief Secretary
to Government
Fort Saint George.

Sir,
In accordance with the
provisions of Section 18 of Act IX
of 1867, I have the honor to enclose
the Minutes of the Proceedings
of an Adjourned General Meeting
of the Municipal Commission
for the Town of Madras, held
on the 9th December 1868.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your Most Obedient Servant

Chandrasekhar President
of the Municipal Commission

Received Dec 21/18 du d 1165

Dec 21/18 du d 1165

Copy of 26 Jan'y

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1. of 1868) Madras.

Public

Date Dec. 21.

Recd.

Encd.

G. O., 21. Dec. 1868, No. 1584.

Nos. 145. 146.

According letter from the
Madras Municipality
regarding Pros. of an adjourned
General Meeting of the Council.
Held on the 9th Instant.