M.R.O. 14—5,450—22-10-25.

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 1870-71 Press Mis.

241. 243

Dated 12 — 8 — 1867.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 12th August 1867.

No. 241. Read the following Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India in the Home Department, under date, Simla, the 25th June 1867, No. 1,728 :—

Read again the Resolution of the Home Department, Nos. 3,835-3,840, dated 20th June 1864, and the papers referred to therein, on the subject of reforming the system of weights and measures in India.

Read also the following correspondence with the Secretary of State :—

To the Secretary of State, No. 46, dated 29th July 1864.
From ditto ,, 1, ,, 7th January 1865.

Read the following reports having reference to the Resolution of 20th June 1864 :—

From the Government of Madras, No. 2,334, dated 27th September 1865, 1 enclosure.
From ditto Bombay, ,, 2,008, dated 4th November 1865.
From ditto ditto ,, 609, dated 21th March 1866.
From ditto Bengal, ,, 1,673 T., dated 23rd August 1866.
From ditto ditto ,, 87, dated 4th January 1867.
From ditto North-Western Provinces, No. 3,380 A., dated 27th October 1864.
From ditto Punjab, No. 2,310, dated 20th November 1866.
From the Chief Commissioner, Oudh, No. 3,080, dated 3rd September 1866.
From ditto ditto Central Provinces, No. 358-4,278, dated 27th November 1865.
From ditto ditto British Burmah, No. 294-2,003, dated 13th September 1866.
From the Commissioner, Mysore, No. 4420-50, dated 28th December 1865.
From the Resident, Hyderabad, No. 29, dated 18th July 1866, 1 enclosure.

Read also the following papers :—

From the Financial Department, No. 1,874, dated 9th August 1866, containing addresses delivered by Earl Fortescue, President of the International Decimal Association, and Sir John Bowring, Chairman of the Metric Committee of the British Association, on the subject of metric weights and measures.

Memorandum by the Honorable Mr. Shaw Stewart, dated 7th February 1867, submitting a Draft Bill.

REMARKS.—On the 13th May 1863, the Government of Madras drew attention to the importance of steps being taken for a reform of the various systems of weights and measures in use in British India, and suggested the appointment of a Committee, consisting of properly qualified persons, one from each Presidency, to consider and report on the system which, in their opinion, it would be desirable to adopt for all India. "The Government," it was suggested, "would instruct "the Committee to limit their enquiries and suggestions to the substitution for the "present numerous and contradictory scales of weights and measures, of such a "simple form as would, while it reduced the alteration in the existing scales to a "minimum, and disturbed the present nomenclature as little as possible, make the "Indian system universal throughout British India, and place it in a simple "relation with that now existing in England. Without a restriction of this nature," it was added, "the Committee might enter on the very broad question of the "theoretically best system, and the result might be the suggestion of a scheme "which, however perfect in theory, would be attended with such disturbance of "existing relations as to render its adoption impracticable. On the other hand, the "Government would not confine the Committee to any particular standard or unit "of weight."

2. The Calcutta Trades Association also, on the 10th July 1863, addressed the Government of India on the same subject, and proposed that a mixed Commission should be appointed to enquire into the existing system of weights and measures, and to adjust the same to one Imperial standard, and that the revised system should be enforced by legislation.

3. The question of revising the Indian metrical system had engaged the attention of the Government of India at various periods since the year 1837, but the information available had always been found insufficient for a decision as to the scale which it was most expedient to adopt.

4. Accordingly, when the proposals of the Madras Government and the Calcutta Trades Association were laid before the Governor General in Council, His Excellency observed that a uniform system of weights and measures for all India would doubtless be of great advantage, but that the difficulties in the way of attaining so useful an object were grave and numerous. There was much to be done before a practicable scheme for general adoption could be discovered, and it was anticipated that, when discovered, it would be better introduced by indirect means than by penal legislation.

5. The mode of dealing with the subject which most recommended itself to His Excellency in Council, was to constitute a separate Committee of well-selected persons for each Presidency and Province, each Committee to consist of three or five members (for preference three, viz., a Civil Servant, a Merchant, and an Engineer Officer), who should meet together in the chief city of such Presidency or Province, and deliberate on the subject, reporting the result of their labors to the Local Government or Administration, for submission to the Government of India, with any further remarks which the local authorities might deem necessary.

6. For a Central Committee for all India, as proposed by the Madras Government, there was not at that time sufficient information available, and His Excellency in Council therefore believed that, as a preliminary measure at any rate, Local Committees would be more useful, besides being far less expensive.

7. In accordance with these views, a Resolution was passed on the 20th June 1864, and was communicated to the local Governments for information and guidance, together with a selection in a pamphlet form of all the more important portions of the correspondence on this subject which had, from time to time, been addressed to the Government of India.

8. The Secretary of State, on the 7th January 1865, approved of the decision of the Government of India, and observed as follows:—

"It is obvious that great care and circumspection will be required in dealing "with a question so closely connected with the interests and habits of the "people; and I have to request that I may be placed in full possession of the "proposals of your Government, together with the reports of the Committees "and the recommendations of the Local Governments, before any measures "involving authoritative interference with the existing systems of weights and "measures are brought into operation."

9. The replies of the Local Governments and Administrations, reporting the steps taken by them to carry out the views expressed by the Government of India in the Resolution of the 20th June 1864, have now been all received, and the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th August 1867.

Governor General in Council has given his attentive consideration to the several proposals made therein.

10. These differ greatly in the modes which they propose to adopt, and His Excellency considers that the best method of arriving at any definite result will be to submit the entire question to the decision of a well-selected Central Committee to meet at Calcutta.

RESOLUTION.—The Governor General in Council is accordingly pleased to resolve that a Committee be assembled at Calcutta on the 15th November 1867, constituted as follows:—

PRESIDENT:

Colonel Strachey, R. E.

MEMBERS:

The Master of the Calcutta Mint for the time being.
The Comptroller General of Accounts, Mr. E. F. Harrison.
Two Members to be nominated by the Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta.
A Member of the Bengal Civil Service (Mr. R. B. Chapman.)
A Member of the Bombay Civil Service (the Honorable Mr. J. Shaw Stewart.)
A Member of the Madras Civil Service (to be nominated by the Madras Government.)
Three Native Members to be appointed by the Government of Bengal.

2. Any gentlemen, Natives of Bombay and Madras, who being in Calcutta, may be recommended by their respective Governments and may be willing to serve on the Committee.

3. The Committee will have power to add to its members any gentlemen present in Calcutta, whose assistance they may desire to obtain, and who may be available for the duty and willing to undertake it.

4. The Committee will submit its report within three months from the date of assembling. A selection of the correspondence which has passed will be sent to each member when nominated.

5. It will be sufficient instruction to the Committee to accept generally the views of the Government of Madras expressed in their letter of the 13th May 1863, and already quoted above. Although the Governor General in Council does not wish entirely to preclude the Committee from examining what may be theoretically the best system of weights and measures, His Excellency desires that they may be guided in their selection of any system rather by considerations of its practical convenience for adoption in India generally, and its capability of being placed in easy relation with that now existing in England. Nor does the Governor General in Council consider it expedient that the Committee should narrow their inquiries by the arbitrary adoption of any particular standard unit from any existing system of measurement or weight.

6. The entire correspondence which has passed on this subject, and the reports of the Local Committees, will be laid before the General Committee, and the Governor General in Council trusts that these materials will enable them to construct such a system of weights and measures as will give general satisfaction, and to submit a Bill for giving effect to their recommendation which the Legislature may be able to adopt without objection.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
12th August 1867.

Copy forwarded to the Government of Bombay.

Copies forwarded also to the Governments of Madras and Bengal, with the request that the services of a qualified Civil Servant may be nominated from the former Presidency, and that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal will be good enough to lend the services of Mr. R. B. Chapman, and to nominate three selected native members to sit on the Committee, including, if available in Calcutta, a member of the up-country mercantile body and of the Parsee community.

Copy forwarded also to the Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce, with a request that the Chamber will be good enough to nominate two gentlemen of experience willing to sit on the Committee.

Copy forwarded also to the Department of Public Works and Financial Department, with the request that the services of Colonel Strachey, of Mr. E. F. Harrison, and of the Mint Master of Calcutta, may be made available for the duty in question.

Copy of the Resolution, with a selection of the correspondence referred to, forwarded to the President of the Committee and to each of the members already appointed; copies to be forwarded hereafter to the other members as they are appointed.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) E. C. BAYLEY,
Secretary to the Government of India.

No. 242. ORDER THEREON, 12th August 1867, No. 1,870.

Miscellaneous.

1. The Government have appointed Mr. J. Minchin, Collector of Vizagapatam, at present on leave in England, to represent this Presidency in the Committee on Weights and Measures, which is to meet at Calcutta on 15th November, and have notified his appointment to him by telegraph.

2. The date on which Mr. Minchin's leave expires will necessitate his return to India in time to be present at the first meeting of the Committee.

3. The Supreme Government will be requested to forward to this Government, for transmission to Mr. Minchin, the selection from the correspondence that has passed, which is referred to in paragraph 4 of the Resolution.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

To J. I. Minchin, Esq., Collector of Vizagapatam.
,, the Acting Collector of Vizagapatam.
,, the Board of Revenue.
,, the Accountant General.
,, the Examiner of Claims.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
FORT SAINT GEORGE,
12th August 1867.

No. 1,871.

No. 243.
To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
HOME DEPARTMENT.

SIR,

Miscellaneous.

1. With reference to the Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India, dated 25th June 1867, No. 1,728, I am directed to inform you that this Government have appointed Mr. J. Minchin, Collector of Vizagapatam, at present on leave in England, to represent this Presidency in the Committee on Weights and Measures, which is to meet at Calcutta on 15th November, and have notified his appointment to him by telegraph.

2. The date on which Mr. Minchin's leave expires will necessitate his return to India in time to be present at the first meeting of the Committee.

3. I am to request that the selection from the correspondence that has passed, which is referred to in paragraph 4 of the Resolution, may be forwarded to this Government for transmission to Mr. Minchin.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Dr 1870. 4m

The Sec. have asked
W. J. Hinchin Coll of Engrs
at present leave in England
& represent this Presidency
in the Committee of Enquiry
Hinchin W. is Executive
Calcutta on 15 Nov. & have
to find his appt. & train
in Telegraph. Instructed

W. Hinchin leave & join this
Presidency to return & India
in time to resume at the first
meeting of the Committee.

The Sec. will
be requested to forward to the

12th Augt

For the transmission
of U.S. Currency, the Question
from the Commissioners that
has passed. It is approved
in pursuance of the Resolve

H. J. Hinchman Com. of Claims
The Hon. the Speaker of the H. of Rep.
The Hon. the Pres. of the Senate
Examiner of Claims

Pro: 27 September 1866 N° 370—4
" 15 November " " 241—2
" 11 July 1867 Dept
" 31 " " 624. 26.
Telegrams: 18 July 1867. PD

Revenue 1867. Oct. 4
No of Govt. for Sup.t

No. 1758.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Govt. of India in the Home Dept.

(1)

Dated 26th June
Received 10th July. 1867

No. 1728

Forwarding a copy of Resolution appointing a Committee for the purpose of considering and reporting the steps that may be taken for reforming the various systems of weights and measures in use in British India, requesting that a qualified Civil Servant may be nominated by the Madras Govt

Ans 1870 - 12 Aug.

N° 241-242

Copies despatched

12th Augt 67

Revenue Department.

No. 1871.

To

The Secretary to the Government of India.

Sir,

Home Dept.

With reference to the Extract from the Proceedings of the Govt. of India, dated 25 June 1867, N° 1728, I am directed to inform you that this Govt. have appointed Mr. J. C. Hinchin, Collector of Vizagapatam, at present on leave in England, to represent this Presidency on the Committee on Weights and Measures which is to meet at Calcutta on 15th November, and have notified his appointment to him by Telegraph.—

The date on which Mr. Hinchin's leave expires will necessitate

necessitate his return
to India in time to
be present at the first
meeting of the Committee=
2 I am to request
that the selection from
the Correspondence
that has passed which
is referred to in para
4 of the Resolution
may be forwarded
to this Govt for trans=
mission to Mr. Hinchin.

Revenue 1867 Dispatches
Pro Govt of Ind Augt

No 1871

To The Govt of India
Home Dept

Dated 12 August 1867.

No 243.