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WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

NAMED BY

THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY

TO CONSIDER AND REPORT

ON THE QUESTION OF

THE EXTENSION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

IN REGARD TO

LOCAL BOARDS



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Annexure to the Report of the Committee appointed by the Government of Bombay to inquire into and report on the question of the extension of the principles of Local Self-Government in regard to Local Boards.

WRITTEN ANSWERS.

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**Annexure to the Report of the Local Boards Committee appointed
by Government Resolution, General Department,
No. 6444, dated 18th August 1915.**

*Questions set by the Committee to which written answers were invited
through the Local District Officers.*

1. Should District and Taluka Boards have elected majorities?
2. Should election be by communities? or, if not wholly so, should any provision be made to secure the due representation of any special communities or interests?

In the case of election by communities can you suggest the constitution of your District and of one of your Taluka Boards? Do you think the present number of members sufficient or should it be increased?

3. Is it advisable that the Presidents of your District Board and Taluka Boards should be non-officials, and if so, elected or nominated?
4. To what extent do you think the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works can be removed or modified? Please see sections 57 and 61 of the Act and the orders thereunder.
5. Do you think the Taluka Local Board could be freed to any extent from District Local Board's control in such matters as the following:- engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants by the District Local Board (section 38); sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets (section 55).
6. In regard to education do you consider the time has come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board? Please see paragraph 751-754 of the report of the Decentralization Commission.
7. In what ways, if any, do you consider that the rules under section 48(b) of the Act should be altered or modified? (see page 177 of Cumming's Local Boards Manual).
8. Has the Taluka Local Board ever been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas? Please see section 48 (a).
9. If the suggestions made above are carried out, there will be need for certain additional Local Board establishments entailing extra expenditure on the boards. Do you think that in order to meet this increased expenditure
 - (1) Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee?
 - (2) Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on Educational, Medical, Sanitary and other matters in important villages by extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act so as to include a larger number of such villages with a view to establishing 'notified areas' in them?

(3) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on:

(a) Income Tax,

(b) Abkari Revenue,

(c) Forest Revenue?

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased?

10. It is said that the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. Is this true? If so, what are the causes and remedies?
11. Can any additions be made to the qualifications of voters (*vide* section 10)?
12. Can any means be suggested for forming separate groups of electors with a view to secure at least some men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10?
13. In the event of Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continuing to be official, is it not desirable that the Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-official?
14. In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights and consequent divisions of holdings, what statutory minimum of assessment should be adopted in place of the present figure of "Rs. 48-0-0"?
15. What is your opinion as to the desirability of making the provincial share of land revenue and income tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards? If you are in favour of such division, what should be the Local Boards' share?
16. Under section 45 (a) (5) of the Local Boards Act it is left to the discretion of a District Local Board in what proportion the proceeds from one anna cess after deducting its "Educational" portion should be divided between a Taluka Board and a District Board. Are you of opinion that this proportion should be fixed by law? If so, in what ratio?
17. Under the existing law it is provided that at least half of the nominated members on a Local Board should be non-officials. Do you think that the administrative efficiency of a board is likely to suffer if this provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished and a board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials? If you are of opinion that the administrative efficiency will in no way suffer, what should be the proportion of such nominated officials to elected members?
18. Are you in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act? If so, what reduced limits you propose under each head?

ANSWERS.

[The figures at the beginning of each paragraph correspond to the numbers of questions printed on pages 1 and 2.]

BOMBAY CITY.

Mr. Damodar Ganesh Padhye, Bombay.

1. Yes; not less than three-fourths of the members should be elected. Else, the proper sense of responsibility and impetus for work for the best men out of the non-official classes would never develop.

2. Communal elections should be absolutely banned. The due representation of minorities (and minorities only) should be secured by taking care to have some electoral divisions where they will be the majority, and, secondly, by nomination. I do not think that any "special interests" beyond those of minorities should be taken at all into account.

3. The President should be elected, and, save by special sanction of Government on the petition of any Board at its first meeting after periodical reconstitution, they should always be non-officials.

4. I would delete entirely the first and the third paras of Section 61 and make the provisions of the second para applicable to all works.

5. The present provisions should remain as they are.

6. Yes. The time is come to vest full control of all primary schools in the District Boards. But autonomy in this regard should be conditional on each District Board appointing a special Schools Committee and giving to it at least all executive authority and also a capable and adequately paid executive officer. The Government Educational officers should of course have the right to inspect and make reports to the District Boards and in case of inattention by the Boards the Government should have the right to intervene.

7. If the principle laid down in my answer to question 6 be accepted all these rules shall have to be rehailed. Rule 7 must go in entirety. Rules 8, 9 and 10 and 12 and 15 may remain as they are. Rules 13 and 14 may remain but the figures Rs. 1,000 in Rule 13 should be changed into Rs. 3,000.

8. I am not in a position to answer this question.

9. Yes, under my suggestion there will be considerable additional expenditure and I should think that the best way to meet it is that recommended in paras numbered (1) and (4) under this question. I do not like the method marked (3) and not at all that marked (2).

10. Yes; the complaint is considerably true in the present state of things. The reasons are that the elected members are not in a majority and the nominated members are not properly chosen by Government. The bodies, as they are at present, are hide-bound by Government control and men of self-respect have no stimulus. The remedies are to give clear elected majorities to these Boards and full autonomy. If they fail anywhere they should be clean suspended. The experiment may for a time affect efficiency, but I think that the principle of full autonomy will educate the leaders of the people into a full sense of responsibility and public spirit within a measurable period of time.

11. Yes. Persons holding University degrees should be added and so also persons paying in any capacity as tax a sum of not less than Rs. 20 per annum either to Government or to a Municipal body.

The words "twenty," "two thousand" and "three hundred" (Rupees) should be substituted for the words "forty-eight," "five thousand" and "five hundred" in (1), (2) and (3) respectively.

12. There should be no separate electoral groups at all.

13. There need be no hard and fast rule.

14. Rupees twenty.

15. I would leave the Income Tax untouched. In regard to land revenue, I think at least 10 per cent. of the total net earning should come to the Local Boards irrespective of the proportion in which the Local and the Imperial Governments share it.

16. It may well be fixed by law as half and half.

17. I would have three-fourths elected members and provide that none of these should be Government officers. I would not in any way limit the discretion of Government in nominations for the remaining one-fourth seats.

18. Please see answer to question 11.

Sir N. G. Chandavarkar, Kt., Peddar Road, Bombay.

Before addressing myself to the printed questions, in response to the invitation of the Committee appointed by Government to consider Local Boards Administration, I desire to make a few preliminary observations.

I am not familiar with the actual inner working of Local Boards. Such knowledge as I have of them has been derived by me as an outsider, from my visits to villages, my conversations with villagers, and the official literature on the subject.

I can, therefore, but answer the questions and offer my suggestions for the improvement of Local Boards Administration with an eye generally to the principle underlying it as that principle was laid down by Government in clear terms when the Administration was initiated.

I start, then, with the simple and sole idea which Government had in view and declared when the Local Board system was started in the sixties of last century. As was remarked by the Hon. Mr. Laing, who was then the Financial Member of the Government of India, in his Financial Statement for 1861-62, the object of Local Boards Administration was to "teach the people not to look to Government for things which they can do far better themselves."

And who were "the people" Government had mainly in view? "The people" of villages.

In their Circular Letter No. 2246, dated the 21st of May 1864, the Government of India made that point clear. It was said there:—

"When the people see that they have the management of their own affairs in their own hands they will feel confident to do things which they would not have accepted from Government. When the field is open, the more advanced members of the community naturally take the lead. The Municipal feeling is deeply rooted in them. The village communities, each of which is a little republic, are the most useful of Indian institutions. They maintained the framework of society, while successive swarms of invaders swept over the country."

That was the object—to bring our villages into the life of the Empire by extending the narrow scope of their isolated life as units in the village system and teaching the villages to take a vital interest in their own local affairs and develop their power of initiative, corporate action, and public spirit so as to enable them to grow into citizens of the Empire at large.

What has been the result? The villages and villagers are nowhere, the Districts are everywhere, so to say. The principal vice of Local Boards Administration is that villages have been supplanted by Talukas and these in their turn have been swamped by Districts. Wherever and whenever I have been to villages, whether in this Presidency or the Presidency of Madras, and talked to the villagers, I have heard the same tale, *viz.*, that the "Sirkar" takes taxes from them and spends them for the aggrandisement of towns and cities and neglects the villages. Some officials, having the experience of Local Boards Administration, have denied that and remarked to me, when I have mentioned the villager's complaint to them, that the villager does not know. But one fact stands unchallenged. The villager, as we see him to-day, is more or less "demoralised"—he has no interest of a vital character in local affairs; he is not capable of corporate action where local interests are concerned; and he has lost all power of initiative for the betterment of his village.

The Local Boards system was inaugurated in this Presidency in about 1863-64, with the special object of developing that interest, capacity, and power among the villagers.

And yet in 1879 what was, according to official testimony, the condition of our villagers? In that year the Government of Bombay had to admit, on the reports of its district officers, that the condition was one of "demoralisation."

That admission was indeed with reference to matters not directly relating to Local Boards Administration. It was in connection with the depredations in certain villages of the Konkan and the Deccan by the gang of dacoits either headed or instigated by the notorious Wasudev Bulwant Fadke in 1878 and 1879. But the point of the admission lies in the fact that it applied to villages in Gujerat also, where those dacoities never reached. "These gangs"—so remarked the Police Commissioner, N.D., in his report for 1879—"might easily have been suppressed, but the villagers were reduced to such a state of demoralisation that they deserted their villages at the first alarm and did not even stop to enquire whether they were dacoits or not." The Police Superintendent of Ahmedabad complained of similar demoralisation among the villagers in his charge in his report for the same year. And it was on all that testimony that the Government of Bombay founded its verdict that our villagers had become "demoralised."

I admit that several causes have contributed to the weakening of village life, but among these the failure of Local Boards Administration to touch the heart and awaken the soul of the villager holds, in my humble opinion, a primary place. How could the villager be expected to take an interest in his local affairs, show public spirit, and develop the sense of corporate action for the common good under a system, in which a number of villages, comparatively large areas, was formed into a group for the purposes of Local Boards Administration, and each group consisting to a great extent of villages at some considerable distance from one another had to send a member to a Taluka Board and that Board was a consultative body, under the thumb of its District Board? It is only by forming a compact group of villages near to and recognisable, so to say, by one another

that the wants and interests of each village could be ascertained. The whole system as it has been is vicious because it has put villages into the background and thus defeated the very principle of Local Boards Administration until it has become a body without soul.

The first thing to attack by way of improvement is that vicious system of grouping villages. They must be so grouped as to minimise the evil of distance between one village and another. *The second thing* is to give some power of initiative and control to each group over some questions of local interest, unfettered by Taluka and District Boards. This should not be difficult of accomplishment in these days when the Co-operative Movement is growing in popularity in villages and under its influence the lessons of self-reliance and united action for the general good are being learnt by our villagers. *The third thing* is to appoint a special officer to advise, guide, and connect into a whole the threads of Local Boards Administration throughout the Presidency. He should be the centre of it and he should move among the people, in villages especially, study their local wants, and by sympathy arouse their interest in Local Boards Administration. We have a special officer for Agriculture: we have one for Co-operative organisations. And both these officers have given life to the causes they have made their own by their devotion and free movement among the people. An officer of the type and temperament of Mr. Keatinge and Mr. Ewbank, set to the duty of Local Boards Administration, guiding it by his advice, is much needed to give it vitality. Elections, non-official Presidents, non-official Vice-Presidents, independence of action, freedom from official control—all these have their virtues but they have also their vices. But because of the vices they are not to be contemned. They have an educative influence and that has to be sought even in the midst of the vices inherent in them and consequent failure for some time. But these measures must be resorted to to the accompaniment of a special officer who can advise and guide Local Boards, watch their conditions, find their weak spots, and above all be a friend of the villager and enable him to take his place in the Local Board system. *My fourth suggestion* is this. We have now a large number of retired Government servants and the number of public workers is increasing. Our Social Service Leagues, Servants of India Society and so forth are bringing into existence men who are anxious to serve Government and the public as *volunteers*. The special officer I have suggested should invite their co-operation and get them to go about in villages and do what they can to find out local wants, educate villagers in the matter of interest in their own affairs. At any rate the experiment might be tried with reference to one or two districts and their villages until men could be found for all to serve as volunteers.

It is on these lines that I have ventured to indicate that Local Boards Administration should be put if it is to achieve the object of its principle and if the villager is to be made to realise that in serving the local interests of his village he is serving the Empire of which under present conditions he has a vague idea and his part and lot in which he is not yet able to comprehend as he should.

I now proceed to answer such of the questions as I think I can fairly answer —

No. 1.—My answer is in the affirmative.

Elected majorities are not without their drawbacks, but, having regard to the main ends of Local Boards Administration: *viz.* (1) “to teach people not to look to Government for things which they can do far better themselves, (2) to develop the spirit of initiative and united action for the common good among them, (3) that the tax-payers should have an influential voice in the disposal of the funds” (see Resolution No. 3115 of the Government of Bombay, dated the 16th of September 1863); it is essential that there should be elected majorities. For some years these may seem to yield disappointing results and make the system a failure. But with the spread of education and other progressive influences set free by the genius of British rule, the evils of election may be expected fairly to disappear and the very failures of the first stages may lead to the success of the system. What is necessary is to help the villager to rely on himself, to fill his mind with a consciousness that he counts as a subject of His Majesty; that his opinion embodied in his vote is of value. That is the way to make him realise that the Empire and his village are bound together by a common destiny. Self-reliance the villager needs and he will not acquire it unless he is trained in it by means of his power to vote for the common good of his village.

What are the incentives held out now to village headmen and other leaders of village opinion, who in the days of the old *Punchayet* system had influence socially and politically for the purposes of village administration? That system was no doubt hereditary in its character but there were men bred up in it who identified themselves with the interests of their village. As to the principle of election, it prevailed to some extent in caste organisations and temple management. In that way village vitality was kept up and the villager learnt self-reliance as a member of the social group of his village. The vice of that system was that it confined the vision of the villager so far as public interests and spirit were concerned to his little spot of a village, living its own life unconcerned so far as other villages and the Government at large forming them all more or less nominally into a whole went. The supreme advantage of British rule is that it tends to bring everyone even in the remotest corner of a hamlet or village into the domain of the Empire and breed in him the larger spirit of citizenship. The villager has now the opportunity which he had not before of the essentials for the development of the consciousness that he is not a mere villager living apart from the rest of his political surroundings, but is part of the life of the Empire. But as things stand, those essentials have had no real scope given them to burn into the narrow life of the villager. He is neglected; *all* is done for him and he thinks he lives only to cultivate the soil and pay taxes. His village life is almost gone; his Imperial life is a shadow and it will be a shadow unless it is lighted up by his village life. Give him a vote; let him learn to elect his own men for local interests. He may for some years abuse or misuse the power; but will learn to use a vote well after having misused it and learnt the lessons of wisdom which comes through failures and experience.

No. 2.—The election should not be by communities. Election by communities only demoralises the people. I am not aware the old Panchayet system proceeded on such principles. The interests of minorities can be safely guarded by nominations by Government, where desirable or necessary.

No. 3.—The President should be a non-official, where one possessing the necessary qualifications is available. That is to say, Government should first ascertain whether there is a competent non-official and then give the power of election.

In all cases the Vice-President should be a non-official

Nos. 4 & 5.—I am unable to answer these.

No. 6.—In my opinion, the time has come.

Nos. 7 & 8.—I am unable to answer.

No. 9.—(1) No. At any rate, not before every other means is exhausted.

(2) This solution seems to be illusory. It is immaterial whether extra taxation is levied under the Local Boards Act or the Municipal Act. Past experience shows that the application of the Municipal Act except to very large villages will be a failure.

(3) (a) Preferable to cess on land.

(b) Much the best source suggested.

(c) Ditto.

I may add that, in my opinion, "the unearned increment" is a legitimate source of Local Board revenues.

(4) Permanent assignments of a proportion of certain heads of revenue are to be preferred to annual subventions.

No. 10.—See my preliminary remarks.

Nos. 11 & 12.—I am unable to answer.

No. 13.—See my Answer to Question No. 3.

No. 14.—I am unable to answer.

No. 15.—I do not think it desirable. The suggestion is premature.

No. 16.—It should not be fixed by law.

No. 17.—See my Answer to Question No. 1.

No. 18.—I am unable to answer.

Mr. K. R. Daphtary, Bombay.

1. I think District and Taluka Boards should be wholly constituted of members who are elected by the people and there should be no nominated members.

I think the system of nomination on these Boards has no good reasons to support it. On the other hand it has a great suppressing and degenerating influence on the people. The material from which persons are either elected or nominated is the same, and the system of nomination, side by side with a half-hearted system of election, means a distrust of the people and a lurking suspicion that the electorate will not return persons who are the proper persons according to the prepossessions of the Government or the Government officials, and the Government must therefore nominate persons to counteract the vote of the unfit persons returned by the electorate. I think this and other arguments of the sort are full of fallacies and open to serious objections. An elective system may have its faults and drawbacks but if it is to be introduced at all, it should be in the right spirit and in its proper form whereby it can be useful at least in educating and elevating the people and its good effects should not be nullified by nomination being placed by its side.

I do not ignore the consideration that the Government may have its own point of view on some questions which the people may not appreciate or which the people may obstinately oppose. I can also conceive of reasons why Government would like to strictly supervise the working of the Board; but the Act has more than sufficient provisions to serve these objects and if more such provisions are wanted they may be added as long as the self-governing character of the Board is not thereby affected.

2. An election by communities or any provision for representation of special communities or interests will be against the very principle of Local Self-government and the political education of the people on healthy lines.

3. The President may be an official or a non-official. He should only be one who is elected by the Board itself.

4. I think these restrictions must be removed. They are not necessary from any valid point of view, and restrict the opportunities of the Local Boards to execute their works at less cost. The Government, the Commissioner and the Collector have otherwise more than ample powers to interfere (Ch. VII).

5. I think the present provisions had better remain. The Taluka Boards have their representatives on the District Boards and there will be questions and works in which more than one Taluka are interested and the same staff may be used. These provisions also introduce an uniformity of the concerns in the whole District.

6. Yes.

7. As matters stand at present these rules will not be altered.

8. I cannot answer this question.

9. I do not see how there will be need for additional establishment entailing extra expenditure
However—

(1) Local Boards must have the power to raise the cess to its maximum if they like.

(2) No. Notified Area Committees increase the cost while they cannot serve the purpose either of Municipalities or of Local Boards.

(3) No. These taxes and revenues are Imperial and a cess on them by Local Boards is not proper. The Government should of course help the Local Boards out of such revenues.

(4) Yes. This is the proper way.

10. The complaint is not groundless but that is chiefly on account of the present constitution of the Boards. The official members are the governing authorities of the District and as such have various drawbacks. They are trained to differentiate between the interests of the people and the interests of the Government and to consider that they are as Government servants bound to carry out what they consider to be the Government interests or Government policy. The Government out of their policy to keep up the prestige of their officials always support them. If the people know that Boards represent only themselves and they can without interference think of and do what is good for them, proper persons who really want to do service to their Taluka or District will come forward for election and the people will elect them. At present most of the persons that come forward are such as want to increase or maintain their own prestige or power and for these nothing more than being on the Board and being in the good graces of the official is needed. They have neither the due sense of responsibility nor the necessary public spirit to make them useful. From top to bottom the system is to govern people and not to allow them or educate them to govern themselves.

I do not mean to say that this is the only cause. The thoughts and habits of the people, the present system of education and the policy of the Government to maintain these thoughts and habits and the system of education are also responsible. There being want of means of acquiring knowledge through their vernaculars is also a cause.

I think the remedy is to make the Boards purely elected with little interference from officials and to leave the education system to them without undue interference from the authorities.

11. Section 10 should be modified by striking off (4), (5) and (6) and by adding (4) persons who have got a University qualification or who are professional men living independently in the Taluka or District. (5) persons who pay any tax, however small, to the Government or to the Municipality.

In (1), (2) and (3) the limit should be Rs. 12, Rs. 500, and Rs. 250 respectively.

12. I cannot suggest any.

13. That makes no substantial difference and means no real improvement.

14. I cannot answer this.

15. I am not in favor of any fixed rule on this point.

16. No.

17. See Answer 1.

18. See Answer 11.

Mr. Daji Abaji Khare, Bombay.

1. My answer to the question is in the affirmative. It is now high time that this principle should be conceded.

2. There should be no elections by committees. It is a vicious principle and is calculated to retard the advance of Unification. If however there be found any unjust inequality in representation the power of nominating some number can be utilized to correct it.

3. I am of opinion that as a rule the Presidents of District Boards should be elected non-officials. As regards the Taluka Boards a general rule would not be advisable. However, an honest effort should be made to approach the principle underlying the rule as far as possible.

4. I adopt the view of the Royal Commission upon Decentralisation on this question as embodied in the 2nd clause of para 749 of their Report.

5. Both as to engagement and payment of their servants as well as sanction and revision of their budgets, I think the Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Boards.

6. I think the time has come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. I agree with the view of the Decentralisation Commission on the point.

7. Cumming's Local Boards Manual is not available to me and I am unable to answer the question.

8. This is a matter within the knowledge of each Taluka Local Board.

9. In order to meet the increased expenditure :—

- (1) I am not in favour of empowering Local Boards to raise the present one anna Local Fund Cess.
- (2) I am against the suggestion embodied in clause (2) of this question.
- (3) I do not think Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on Income-Tax, Akbari Revenue and Forest Revenue. But I am of opinion that a certain fixed proportion of the receipts under certain progressive heads of revenue, such as Land Revenue, Excise, Income Tax and Forest be allotted to the Local Boards in order that they may be able to meet the increased expenditure.
- (4) In view of the suggestions contained in answer to clause (3) of this question, I think Provincial subventions may not be necessary.

10. It is true that the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of active co operation on the part of non-official members. The causes are the predominantly official character of the Bodies and the consequent absence of free scope and lack of a sense of responsibility of non-official members, as also the circumscription of the powers and resources of these Bodies. The causes mentioned are suggestive of the remedies.

11. Yes. I propose that the following clauses be expressly added in Section 10 :—(a) Graduates of any University residing in the local area ; (b) Pleaders other than Graduates practising within the local area, and (c) assessors and jurors appointed for the local area.

12. I think that a separate group should be formed of the classes I have mentioned in answer to question 11 to be added to Section 10, provided the individuals belonging to any of these classes may have the option of not being included in this group and being included under any of the other classes of Section 10 under which they may be qualified. As to persons falling under clauses (2) and (3) of Section 10, they may be also grouped separately with the option mentioned above.

13. Yes.

14. *Vide* our answer to Question 18 *infra*.

15. *Vide* our answer to clause (3) of Question 9.

16. I am of opinion that it is not desirable to fix by law the proportion in which the proceeds from the one anna cess should be divided between the District and the Taluka Boards.

17. I do not think it desirable to abolish altogether for the present the provision for nomination of non-officials, but at the same time I think that not less than three-fourths of the members of a Local Board should be elected.

18. I propose the following reductions in the qualifying limits prescribed in Section 10 :—

- (a) In clause (1), for 48 Rupees per annum, Rs. 16 per annum be substituted.
- (b) In clause (2), for Rs. 5,000 substitute Rs. 2,000.
- (c) In clause (4), for the words "fifty per mensem" the words "five hundred per annum" be substituted, so as to bring the qualifying limit into conformity with that laid down in clause (3) of the Section.

The President, Bombay Presidency Association.

1. We think District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities. The elected members are likely to feel greater responsibility for and take greater interest in the work if they are in a majority on the Boards.

2. Election should not be by communities at all. The business to be transacted by the Boards would hardly involve questions which would justify or necessitate communal representation. The Bodies not being wholly elected, Government would have the power by nomination to secure the representation of any important community left unrepresented on the Boards as the result of the election.

3. We think both District and Taluka Boards should have, as a rule, non-official elected Presidents, as in the Central Provinces. We venture to think that Bombay is not behind the Central Provinces in intelligence and public spirit.

4. We adopt the view of the Royal Commission upon Decentralisation on this question as embodied in the second clause of para 749 of their Report.

5. Both as to engagement and payment of their servants as well as sanction and revision of their budgets, we think the Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Boards.

6. We think the time has come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. We agree with the view of the Decentralisation Commission on the point.

7. Cumming's Local Boards Manual is not available to us and we are unable to answer the question.

8. This is a matter within the knowledge of each Taluka Local Board.

9. In order to meet the increased expenditure—

(1) We are not in favour of empowering Local Boards to raise the present one Anna Local Fund cess.

(2) We are against the suggestion embodied in clause (2) of this question.

(3) We do not think Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on Income Tax, Abkari Revenue and Forest Revenue. But we are of opinion that a certain fixed proportion of the receipts under certain progressive heads of revenue, such as Land Revenue, Irrigation Revenue not included in Land Revenue, Excise, Income Tax and Forest should be allotted to the Local Boards in order that they may be able to meet the increased expenditure.

(4) In view of the suggestions contained in our answer to clause (3) of this question we think Provincial subventions may not be necessary.

10. It is true that the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members. The causes are the predominantly official character of the Bodies and the consequent absence of free scope to and lack of a sense of responsibility on non-official members as also the circumscription of the powers and resources of these bodies. The causes mentioned are suggestive of the remedies.

11. Yes. We propose that the following classes be expressly added in section 10 :—(a) Graduates of any University residing in the local area ; (b) Pleaders other than Graduates practising within the local area, and (c) Assessors and Jurors residing within the local area.

12. We think that a separate group should be formed of the classes we have mentioned in our answer to Question 11 to be added to section 10, provided the individuals belonging to any of those classes may have the option of not being included in this group and being included under any of the other clauses of section 10 under which they may be qualified. As to persons falling under clauses (2) and (3) of section 10, they may be also grouped separately with the option mentioned above.

13. Yes.

14. *Vide* our answer to Question 18 *infra*.

15. *Vide* our answer to clause (3) of Question 9.

16. We are of opinion that it is not desirable to fix by law the proportion in which the proceeds from the one anna cess should be divided between the District and the Taluka Boards.

17. We do not think it desirable to abolish altogether for the present the provision for nomination of non-officials, but at the same time we think that not less than three-fourths of the members of the Local Board should be elected.

18. We propose the following reductions in the qualifying limits prescribed in sec. 10 :—

(a) In clause (1), for 48 Rupees per annum, Rs. 16 per annum be substituted.

(b) In clause 2, for Rs. 5,000 substitute Rs. 2,000.

(c) In clause (4), for the words "fifty per mensem" the words "Two hundred and fifty per annum" be substituted.

Mr. Narayan Vishnu Gokhale, Bombay.

Intimates his agreement with the views expressed by the President of the Bombay Presidency Association.

The Hon'ble Mr. Manmohandas Ramji, J.P.

1. Yes.
2. No.
3. Yes, wherever available excepting in backward districts where proper persons may not be available.
4. The District Local Boards should not be required to submit their plans and estimates, etc., for sanction of Government authorities.
5. The Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of District Local Boards in matters described in the question.
6. Yes.
9. I approve of the first suggestion given in this question for getting extra revenue to meet increased expenditure.
10. Yes, it is true. The reason is, to my mind, to be found in the non-official members not being given all the powers and so their not feeling the responsibility.
This can be remedied by introducing some changes like appointment of non-official Presidents, etc.
11. I recommend the following additions to the qualifications of voters :—
 - (a) Graduates, Lawyers and Honorary Magistrates should be recognised as voters.
 - (b) The limit for property-holders should be reduced from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 2,000.
 - (c) The annual net earning mentioned in Sub-section 3, Section 10, should be reduced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 300.
 - (d) The limit mentioned in Sub-section 4, Section 10, should be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25.
13. Yes, certainly.
14. Rs. 16.
16. I am against fixing this proportion by law. It should depend upon local circumstances.
17. I do not think the administrative efficiency will suffer if the appointment of non-officials by nomination is done away with. The proportion should not be more than one to three.
18. See my reply to question No. 11.

Rao Bahadur Narayan Trimbak Vaidya, J.P.

1. A time has arrived when the District and Taluka Boards may have elected majorities. The relative proportion of elected to nominated members should for the present be two-thirds and one-third.

2. The only important community besides the Hindus on the score both of population (in British Bombay, 14,083,033) and political importance is the Muhammadans (1,347,548), the other communities being numerically comparatively very small. The Buddhists and Jains (211,385) and the Christians (219,621) are very small in number, and have the advantage of better education, and therefore self-assertion, than the Muhammadans. The Parsis, though numerically very insignificant, have, on account of their education, enterprise, unity and mutual cohesion, actually, and deservedly, asserted themselves very prominently everywhere. Under these circumstances, though election by communities as a rule is undesirable, the Muhammadan community should have a separate representation. At present where the Muhammadans are not properly represented by election they find representation by nomination. Separate *interests* will be duly represented as by the sub-sections under Section 10 of the Act (I of 1884) provision is made for duly representing these. This provision can be extended if necessary; but there is no necessity for the present at least.

For election to Taluka Boards the Muhammadans of a Taluka should be formed into one or more separate groups in accordance with the proportion of their population in the Taluka to the

general population. For the District Boards the Muhammadan representatives on Taluka Boards should be allowed to elect one or more members, in accordance with the proportion of the Muhammadan population in the District to the general population therein.

The present number of members need not be increased.

3. The President of the District Board should be official, that is, Collector of the District. For various reasons,—his knowledge of the district and of the wants of the different classes of people in it, his naturally disinterested attitude towards all, his experience and talents,—the Collector should be President of the District Board. Presidents of Taluka Boards may be non-official. These should be nominated and not elected, at least for some time. For Taluka Boards non-official Presidents can be found. But these should be nominated in order to avoid the possibility of a worthless, unbusinesslike, tactless agitator being elected, which in many cases is possible. The Revenue officers in charge of different divisions should be *ex-officio* members of the District Board and the Revenue officers in charge of the Taluka should be *ex-officio* members of the Taluka Board. In the Madras Presidency about 28 Presidents of Taluka Boards are non-official, and endeavour is being made to increase this number. Almost all of them are, however, nominated, and they have on the whole been working very well.

In the case of Vice-Presidents, whose powers may to a certain extent be enlarged, there need be no objection to an official Vice-President where there is a non-official President; but where there is an official President the Vice-President should be non-official.

4. Provided the District Boards employ a superior class of Works officers of the grade of Executive Engineer or Assistant Engineer, the limitation imposed by Sections 57 and 61 should be entirely removed, the Local Board Work officers being allowed, under instructions from their respective Boards, to consult a higher Government Public Works officer when found necessary. Local Board works generally do not require an extraordinary departmental knowledge or skill; Road-making, especially, requires very little of it. It has been found by experience that in executing Local Board works the local agency, if well selected, has been found to give better satisfaction and decided economy than Public Works agency. There are instances in which, perhaps, Local Boards subordinate, and even members, have been careless, or even dishonest; but such instances are not lacking in the Public Works Department. The former agency has the advantage of local interest; the latter lacks this and also sympathy, and has, in many cases, the arrogance of their position.

5. Engagement and payment of Taluka Boards servants may be left to those Boards, the engagement being subject to veto by the District Board. Sanction and revision of Taluka Boards budgets may be left to those bodies, subject to veto by the District Boards, Taluka Boards requiring sanction of District Board in cases of re-appropriations.

6. Management of primary schools may be entrusted to District Boards, the different Taluka Boards under them acting as their agents in this work. Rules for such management must be approved by the Government Educational Department. Government Inspectors or Deputies should visit and examine these schools though the Boards may have their inspectorial staff.

7. In Rule 5 delete the proviso, fixing however the proportion of the amount to be so spent.

In Rule 7 for "shall be conducted by the Government Educational Department" substitute "shall be conducted by the District Local Board in consultation with the Government Educational Department."

In Rule 8 for "fixed by the Government Educational Department," substitute "by the District Local Board on the recommendation of the Taluka Board concerned."

To Rules 13 and 14, add a proviso at the end as follows: "provided that if no reply is received from the Educational Department officer concerned within six months of the date of communication asking for the approval, the approval may be taken as given."

8. An occasion for the consultation mentioned may not have risen, as the amount expended within each taluka has never fallen short of the portion of the revenue described in clause (a) or (b) of section 44 allotted to the taluka.

9. The extra expenditure will not be only on account of extra establishment; but also on account of travelling expenses of members, and the execution of some additional works. For meeting the increased expenditure—

- (1) Local Fund Cess may be allowed to be raised from its present stationary proportion of one anna in the rupee of land revenue to "a minimum of 1 anna and a maximum of 2 annas," so as to make this source of revenue elastic, the maximum reaching only in cases of great necessity, and being reduced as circumstances permit.
- (2) Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be made an adjunct of the Local Boards Act instead of the District Municipal Act, and 'Notified areas' or similar rural institutions should be established as a rule almost everywhere. This will go a great way to relieve the Local Boards of a large expenditure. In the Madras Presidency village 'unions' or Panchayats exist in almost all villages or groups of villages, and they form an integral part of the Local Boards there. These unions work very well in that Presidency.

(3) It is but equitable that the same proportion as that of land revenue, of (a) the Income Tax, (b) Abkari revenue, and (c) Forest revenue, should be given over to the Local Boards. There is no reason why a small proportion of salt revenue also should not be given to the Local Boards. These additions should be given to the Presidency as a whole, the Provincial Government being entrusted with their distribution with due regard to the relative poverty of resources and necessities for expenditure of the different districts.

(4) Provincial subventions should also be increased to the extent possible, having regard to Provincial needs.

10. It is true that the interest and co-operation necessary for the success of the administration of Local Boards is lacking; but it is not true that this lack is on the part of all non-official members, or that all official members wholly and entirely are free from it. The nominated non-official members are on the whole better workers than the elected members because they are chosen on account of their usefulness or ability. It is possible that some non-official members are nominated only because they happen to be hangers-on or toadies of the District Officers. Lack of interest on the part of many members is due (1) to their ignorance of their duties and responsibilities as members, (2) to their supposition that they have reached the goal of their ambition when they were once elected or nominated members, forgetting that their trial begins and not ends with their entrance into Local Boards, and (3) to the general desire not to displease or cross the supposed wishes of the Government officers or of men who derive importance by carrying tales, very often false, to the powers that be, and by impressing upon the people, very often by falsehoods, their own relation with high authorities. (It must be stated here that generally the district officers are ignorant of the doings of such men, and that they have a conscientious desire to do good to the people, preserving their own self-respect, position and dignity.) The lack of interest is also, in some measure, due (1) to autocratic tendencies of some officers who will not brook any opposition, real or supposed, (2) to want of patience and to even vindictiveness, to want of ordinary courtesy and to arrogance of some officers. (It must be stated that the consciousness and arrogance of authority and rudeness is found to a larger degree in the Indian than in the British officers.) All these causes tend to damp the enthusiasm and courage of non-official members. It may safely be stated that if the Government officers, taking into consideration the natural defects of the generality of the nominated members, adopt an encouraging, benevolent and liberal attitude, and assume that it is one of their duties to inculcate the principles of local self-government sympathetically, the lack of interest and the supposed absence of active co-operation will soon disappear. The word "supposed" is advisedly used, because there is no want of will to co-operate on the part of non-officials, but a strong and active desire on the part of officials to avail themselves of that co-operation is wanting.

11. The following additions be made to section 10 :—

(8) Graduates of any University.

(9) Title-holders.

(10) Persons exempted from certain provisions of the Indian Arms Act.

After "Officiating revenue and Police Patels of villages within the taluka" add possessing holdings situated in the taluka assessed (or capable of being assessed) to the land revenue at half the amount fixed in (1) of this section.

12. No separate grouping seems necessary. Men from classes 2 to 6 have the same chance, as those from class 1, to come forward.

13. As stated in answer to Question 3, it is not only desirable but necessary. Otherwise there will be no opportunity to non-officials to learn work and realize responsibilities of office.

14. For general reasons the statutory minimum of assessment be fixed at Rs. 30.

15. It is believed that the Provincial share of land revenue and Income-Tax (which are Imperial heads) is fixed by the Government of India under a quinquennial contract. It may be left to the discretion of the Provincial Government (whose Budget is now discussed and passed by the Legislative Council consisting of many representatives of the people) to determine the annual assignment to Local Boards.

16. A minimum should be fixed, and that should be one-fourth of the proceeds from one anna (or whatever it may be) cess after deducting the "Educational" portion.

17. It is feared that the administrative efficiency of a Board is likely to suffer if provision for appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished.

18. The qualifying limit in clause 1 should be reduced to Rs. 30; in clause (2) to Rs. 3,000 and in clause 4 to Rs. 25.

Some other changes in the Local Boards Act, e.g., power of removal of members; reimbursement to members of their expenses for attendance at meetings and for visiting works, etc., appear to be necessary. There is no reason why representatives of Municipalities should be on the Board; also why persons who own immoveable house property outside municipal limits should have any position in the Local Boards if they do not pay anything for the property to Local Boards. It may be stated that in the Madras Presidency this sort of property is taxed by Local Boards.

The question of appointment of Executive Officer for District Boards, like the Municipalities, is also worthy of discussion.

Village or Union Committees.—I think the first point in importance in connection with local self-government is the "Village or Union Committees." These may be considered as the backbone of local self-government. The seed of the knowledge of the duties and responsibilities connected therewith must be sown in the villages. When it takes root there, it will be firmly established. As a rule each village containing over 2,000 inhabitants should have its own committee, smaller villages being grouped for the purpose. Almost in every Indian village there are two or more parties, but the existence of the parties could be utilized to the advantage of local self-government. Election of members should be at a general meeting of voters by open votes. Members should not be hide-bound by a number of sets of rules. In the case of Taluka Boards also these two principles should be followed as far as possible. A simple code of rules and their common interest and common sense, if well directed, ought to be successful. A district officer will have to devote great care, in the beginning, to form and shape these bodies, and they will be of much use to him in his administration of his charge. The Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885, and the Madras Local Boards Act of 1884, provide for such committees, and those provisions, altered where necessary to suit local circumstances, should be adopted for this Presidency. These committees will also be a great help to taluka boards as the latter are to district boards. The Village Panchayat Bill, I think, intended to provide a much larger scope for general village administration, but the consideration of that Bill may take its time. It is independent in its scope from the provision of village or union committees for purposes of local self-government.

Power to construct Railways.—The next point for consideration is the vesting of powers in District Boards to construct, either singly or jointly with other District Boards, their own railways. Great advance has been made in Madras in this direction. An extra tax of a quarter anna in a rupee of land assessment is allowed to be levied there specially for providing light railway communications. Local Boards Acts of some other Provinces also provide for railway communications by local bodies. It is, however, not known how far, if at all, these provisions have been actually put in use elsewhere except in Madras. The boards will have to be vested with power to raise loans and to give loans to other District Boards. This, again, is already done in Madras. There is no reason why both these should not succeed in Bombay. This point may be specially pressed on the attention of the Local Boards Committee.

Payment of travelling expenses, etc., to members.—Another necessary reform in the Local Boards Act is the provision of payment of travelling expenses to non-official members and even of fees for attendance at meetings. It is too much to expect 20 or 30 unpaid members residing in distant villages or towns, visiting roads, institutions and works, scattered over a whole taluka or district or attending meetings at headquarters without even the payment of their actual travelling expenses. The time they would devote is valuable enough, but to expect them to spend money on travelling for local board work makes it very often impossible for some really good and conscientious workers to take part in local self-government. The theory of dependence on the so-called patriotism of members to spend out of their own pockets has now been abandoned in higher quarters. The Additional Members of the Imperial or Provincial Councils are now paid their travelling expenses and hotel, etc., charges. Members of the British Parliament are also, it is understood, now paid fees for attendance at Parliamentary Sessions. The payment of expenses and fees will have a good moral effect on the members. It may be left to the patriotism of members not to receive the travelling allowances or fees if they so wish.

Power of removal of members.—Another provision for the good working of local self-government is the power for removal of members. At present only an absence for more than four consecutive months from the limits of the district, or uncertificated bankruptcy, or convictions by a criminal Court for certain offences, can disqualify a member. He may be careless or negligent in the discharge of his duties; he may be the cause of bringing the administration of the board of which he is a member into disrepute: he will still be there. Very often for one man the whole board suffers. The responsibilities of local boards are bound to increase with extended powers; and some provision for the removal of members of the above class becomes more necessary now than heretofore. It is therefore suggested that some provision on the lines given below should be made:—

"The local Government may, if it thinks fit, on the recommendation of a local board, supported by the Collector of the district, remove any member of that board, elected or nominated, if he has been guilty of misconduct in the discharge of his duties or of any disgraceful conduct, or if he refuses to act or becomes incapable of acting; or on the application of the board passed by a vote of three-fourths, or even four-fifths, of the members of the board of which he is a member, supported by the Collector, considering him unfit to act as such owing to neglect of duty, or likely to bring the administration of the board into contempt."

Provision should be made for an independent enquiry if considered necessary by the Commissioner. All these safe-guards may be provided as the reputation of an unpaid member is at stake. It is extremely improbable that this power may ever have to be utilized; its moral effect will be a sufficient deterrent.

Appointment of an independent Executive Officer.—The next question for consideration is the appointment of an independent executive officer. It will be too much to saddle the Collector, who is already over-worked with his multifarious duties in the district, with executive duties of local boards. The area under the administration of a District Board is too large to be managed by one paid executive officer. Moreover, the essence and spirit of local self-government—ability to manage one's own affairs—is gone if the executive work is separated and placed entirely in paid (mercenary) hands, local boards being only made deliberative bodies, or, as some would say, merely debating societies. The case of Municipalities is different. The area is compact; dwellers of towns and cities cannot afford time to devote to Municipal executive work. With the creation

of village or union committees there will be no difficulty, under proper supervision and advice, to execute local board works in any part of the district. The necessary supervision and advice may be provided by the appointment of a competent Works Officer of the grade of at least an Assistant Engineer. He should be a servant of the District Board, but he should be fairly independent, his independence being like that of a Chief Officer of a Municipality, or even a little more than that. There should be a paid secretary who should have charge of office and account work. The Works Officer's principal duties should be supervision and advice, as little desk work as possible being thrown upon him. Where works are entrusted to local agency he should devote his particular attention, seeing that no dishonesty or waste occur. He should sympathetically advise local men as to how they are to utilize useful material found in the locality, how to secure contributions of labour and how they are to be utilized. Where paid agency is employed he should devote his particular attention to seeing that proper return for the money paid is obtained. He should be made personally responsible for these. He should make suggestions to members regarding different works; create an initiative spirit and keep awake their sense of self-esteem, public spirit and consistency. There may be some mistakes; there may be a little waste of money; but experience has to be purchased with as little cost as possible. In fixing the pay of the appointment of Works Officer, secretary and subordinate establishment, care should be taken that the cost of it does not exceed in any year a certain proportion, say, 20 per cent., of the amount available for expenditure on works during that year.

Reforms of minor importance.—Some reforms of minor importance may also be suggested. Election should be made by open votes taken at a public meeting of voters. Provision should be made for taxing houses outside municipal limits by village committees. Care should be taken to check the tendency on the part of the boards, or rather some members of them, to undo what may have been done by their predecessors. Provision should be made by legislation that except with the consent of the Collector and with not less than three-fourths votes of members of the board, no former resolution of the board be revised or altered within six months of its passing. Provision should also be made for Commissioners of divisions taking more direct interest in the working of local boards, several powers now vested in Government being delegated to them. The board should not be hampered with a large number of complicated rules, and should be worked more on practical business lines than on red-tape.

The success of local self-government will always depend upon the attitude of responsible district officers towards it. A central authority to guide generally the district officers in this respect and to sympathetically guide and control the Boards, both municipal and local, would be very desirable. A Local Government Board, as exists in England, will, if created, be able to do this work. It would not be necessary to incur very heavy expenditure for this purpose. The Government Member in charge of the Local Boards and Municipalities, assisted by the heads of the Public Works, Sanitation, Education and Medicine and the several Additional Members, representing the Local Boards and Municipalities of the Presidency, with the Secretary to Government in charge of the Municipalities and Local Boards branches, will be an ideal board for this purpose. The extra expenditure will be only the travelling, etc., allowances of the non-official members, if and when they are called away from their homes to the seat of Government.

The Hon. Mr. C. H. Setalwad, Advocate.

1. I think, yes.
2. I am against communal representation. It is really not needed in Local Boards. Government nomination is sufficient to secure the representation of any particular community that may be desirable.
3. Non-official and elected.
4. I agree with the view of the Decentralisation Commission.
5. Yes, in both the matters suggested.
6. Yes, but there must be inspection by the Government Educational Department. I agree with the views of the Decentralisation Commission.
7. I cannot answer this.
8. Ditto.
9. I agree with the views submitted by the Bombay Presidency Association.
- 10 to 12. I adopt the views expressed by the Bombay Presidency Association.
13. Yes.
- 14 & 18. I adopt the views of the Bombay Presidency Association.
15. See answer to question 9.
16. I would leave the matter as it is at present.
17. I would not just at present abolish nomination altogether. But at least three-fourths of the members should I think be elected.
18. I adopt the views of the Bombay Presidency Association.

NORTHERN DIVISION.

AHMEDABAD DISTRICT.

Mr. H. L. Painter, I. C. S., Collector of Ahmedabad

I see no reason why, if the establishment and other charges (*e. g.*, review, tools and plant and audit) paid by the local boards to the Public Works Department provide enough the Board should not have its own Engineer. But I would stipulate that he should be appointed by Government, preferably from the junior rank of the Public Works Department: incapable Engineers, appointed on considerations other than efficiency, must be avoided.

As regards the constitution of the Boards I do not believe that even if they were all non-officials the members would be likely to take any interest except in matters which concern them personally. It is notorious that a municipal member as a rule only cares to be so because of the prestige it involves and the opportunities it gives of voting against taxation and for curtailing expenditure (from the fear of additional taxation) and, occasionally, for obliging a friend who may be seeking a concession from the body of which he is a member: the working of the staff is a matter he leaves severely alone. This must be a not less obvious defect in a local board, of which the members are scattered all over a district: the Engineer will be the sole inspector of works, and I am puzzled to know how a non-official President will command the personal acquaintance with a large rural area which alone can fit him to appreciate its varied requirements. Any mere alteration between the number of officials and non-officials is merely trifling with the main issues.

As regards education the board might be constituted the master of the Inspector of Schools, instead of that officer being lent to the board, without any very obvious local dislocation, but I imagine the Educational Department would have objections to offer, if only on grounds of uniformity.

I am strongly opposed to any raising of the cess on land revenue. The rayat already pays more than his fair share of the cost of benefits which are shared by others.

The printed questions appended to your reference appear to me merely to fringe round the subject, which in my opinion is one for broad treatment, and I have no time to answer them *seriatim*.

As Sir Frederick Lely has said the only real territorial unit in India is the village; the local board is a pure exotic in a country eminently unsuited to anything but one man-government. In my opinion an amplification of the board system would be to carry a mistake further: this has been recognized by the recent appointment of a Municipal Commissioner for large cities and it would be inconsistent to legislate in precisely the contrary direction in the case of large rural areas.

At the same time I agree that bigger incomes are necessary for the development of the districts. The various revenues of Government are far greater than they were in the days of primitive communications, and I think that there ought to be no real difficulty in devoting a portion of the increase to the needs in question. It is probably hereby to say so, but if primary education were made to pay for itself, school fees being made more commensurate with what is given in return, the practical necessities of local boards would be much more easily met by the fact that the income available for general purposes would immediately increase in the proportion of three to two, while if a similar principle were applied to secondary education a large sum of money would annually be set free to Government which could be utilized still further to augment the local board exchequer.

L. J. Sedgwick, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

Answers are attached. The only one to which I would draw attention is No. 4. The Madras system of having high class wholetime Engineers is admirable, and has resulted in the local fund roads of that presidency being as good as provincial roads, and in local fund expenditure being generally well controlled;—

1. I am sorry I do not think this desirable. In practice we nominate the best available men to our boards, whereas election would fail to do so.

2. No. I think by areas. Government can always equalize the representation of communities by nominating the necessary persons.

I think the present numbers are sufficient.

3. No, certainly not.

4. The best remedy lies in the employment of good wholetime local board Engineers, as is done in the Madras Presidency. There they rank about equal with the Public Works Department, or very nearly so, and are often Englishmen belonging to the ordinary clubs, etc. I believe their pay is something like Rs. 500—1,000.

5. No. I do not think the taluka boards can be trusted in either of these matters.

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6. Yes, but of rural schools only. Full primary might for the present remain with the Educational Department. This would necessitate two cadres of masters, the lower of which would be entirely under local board control and would never rise higher than head master of a rural school. This is, I think, quite a feasible arrangement. Young men selected for the upper cadre would start as assistants in full primary schools, and would never go to rural schools.

7. I do not feel competent to express an opinion.

8. Do.

9. (1) No, certainly and emphatically not. I consider that the agriculturists already bear a wholly disproportionate share in the burden of taxation.

(2) I am also opposed to this idea. Notified areas seem to me only suited to suburban conditions, which mostly fall within municipal limits. Our previous experiments in petty local self-Government, e.g., sanitary committees, and small municipalities have been egregious failures.

(3) (a) Certainly. The trading classes could pay double their present taxes and still grow fat.

(b) Yes and (c) yes in part, namely where the income is realized from contractors or trading communities. Where it is realized from villagers, no. I cannot say of course whether it is possible to separate these sources of income. In both (b) and (c) the cesses should be credited to Government and redistributed by Government to *all* local boards irrespective of whether the income accrued in that district or not.

(4) I am not in a position to answer.

10. I deny the failure.

11. I think the qualifications of voters should be clearly distinguished from the qualifications required for election, and the former qualifications made much less severe. It would be idle at this stage to work out details. But I would remark that in a taluka like North Daskroi Rs. 48 assessment represents a much smaller khata than in Karjat or Man, say 30 acres as against 100.

12. I do not think that persons of classes (2) to (5) are very desirable as members, and class (6) is usually well represented.

13. No, certainly not.

14. I have answered this above in (11).

15. Do.

16. No.

17. Yes. For the reasons stated in (1) I think it most-desirable that we should be able to nominate the best available non-officials, as these men, whose opinions are the most valuable of all, will often not have been elected.

18. No.

Mr. M. Joshi, Mamlatdar of Dholka.

1. No, the bulk of people in this taluka are agriculturists. They have no sufficient time and education to look to the working of the Local Board Code, even under the present circumstances. If the elected majorities be increased the burden of the work on the nominated minority would be proportionately increased as the elected majority would not find time, has not the intelligence to look to the management of the local boards. They even do not care to attend the local board meetings regularly and even if they attend the meetings, they do not come prepared with the subjects before the local boards.

2. No. There are no particular communities in this taluka whose claims are unrepresented in the taluka local board. In the case of local boards, the groups of villages should be the unit and not the communities. There is no particular community in this taluka that is in a state of progress. There is no necessity to increase the present number of members.

3. It is not advisable that the Presidents of our board should be non-officials. The non-officials have no working capacity, and cannot exercise independent control without the aid of officials.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and execution of public works should stand as it is, as the local board working agency is not properly qualified. A properly qualified working agency should be employed and duly paid.

5. The taluka local board could be freed from the control of the district local board as to the payment of the taluka local board's servants and the sanction and revision of the taluka local board budgets, should rest with the district local board. The taluka local board is not yet competent to exercise due discretion in the selection of its proper establishment and select works of general utility. The independent and impartial check of the official President of the district local board is necessary in the interest of the taluka local board and people.

6. No. The majority of the members do not understand the advantages of the primary education. Hence it would be a stumbling block to the primary education in the hands of wrong men.

7. No modification is needed.

8. No.

9. No, if properly qualified local board working agency is employed for the execution of the Local Fund works. It is necessary to pay it handsomely, and in order to meet this increased expenditure local boards should be empowered to raise the local fund cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee.

10. Yes. The causes are :—

(1) Want of proper education.

(2) Want of time.

(3) Want of sense of public duty.

(4) Want of the idea to sacrifice self-interest in the interest of common good.

I find no remedies to root out this laxity in the near future.

11. Please *vide* answer 13.

12. None.

13. No. It is the official Vice-President who keeps up the working of the taluka local board under the official supervision of the official President. The administration of the taluka local board under a non-official Vice-President is sure to fail under the present circumstances.

14. None. The introduction of the record of rights has brought the working of the clauses of section 10 of the Local Board Act in its true sense. Any minimum of assessment in place of present figure of Rs. 48 would burden the taluka local board with undesirable members.

15. It is not necessary to make the provincial share of the land revenue and income tax divisible between the provincial Government and local boards. Government have many calls on these revenues. The local boards can make up the deficit by enhanced taxation by raising the limit of local fund cess from one to two annas. Government should in my opinion give some grant to the local boards from the provincial share and income tax, according to the efficiency and capacity of the local boards. This arrangement would give an impetus to the local boards to secure more grant by increasing the efficiency of the boards.

16. No. The district local board has full interest in the upkeep of the taluka local boards and gives reasonable share according to the requirements and efficiency of the taluka local board. In my opinion time has not come to lay down a proportion by law. Laying down a proportion by law would mean a waste of public funds or unnecessary deposits with the taluka local board at the end of the year.

17. The administrative efficiency of the board is not likely to suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished, and a board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. In my opinion, it is the nominated officials who take interest in the working of the local boards. The non-official nominated members are found to be solely dependent on the views of the nominated officials and apathetic in carrying out these views. The proportion of such nominated officials to elected members should be half to half to relieve the burden of external work, falling on the nominated officials.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2 and 3 of section 10 of the Local Board Act. In the case of clause 4, I am of opinion that the qualifying limit should be reduced to Rs. 25 per month. I have reduced this limit because a Government servant drawing Rs. 50 per mensem would naturally have a good capacity for work. This capacity would be of great service to the local boards when he retires on a pension of Rs. 25 per mensem.

Mr. Mulchand Asharam Shah, B.A., LL.B., Pleader.

1. Yes. Having regard to the progress of people in point of education since Bombay Act I of 1884 came into force, the boards should now have elected majorities.

Even the present law, section 5 (proviso) puts an elective minimum, which can be raised to any limit.

2. No. As these are rural boards, the element of landholders should be predominant. Communal representations through a special electorate of Mahomedans, etc., is not desirable. A Mahomedan agriculturist, if he is intelligent and influential can get into a taluka local board through group elections and can secure a seat in the district local board. The principle of special electorates to represent minorities should not be carried to rural areas, where Hindoos and Mahomedans work harmoniously.

3. The Presidents of district local boards of important districts like Ahmedabad, Surat, etc., should be non-officials elected by the district local board. An elected or nominated non-official should be allowed to stand as a candidate for the presidentship. The taluka local boards have not advanced materially, and if a suitable non-official President is available the franchise may be given.

4. In those local boards where a qualified Engineer has been appointed, plans and estimates up to 1,000 may be prepared by him, and approved by the local board. Works estimated to cost over Rs. 1,000 but less than Rs. 2,500, the same may be prepared by the local board Engineer, and approved by the Executive Engineer, for which no charge should be levied by the Government. For works over Rs. 2,500, the present rule should obtain good. But in view of the limited means of these local bodies, Government may be pleased to forego the percentage charges.

5. Yes. There should be decentralization in these matters.

6. The internal administration of schools may be entrusted to an educational officer who should be a fulltime servant of the district local board. The present system of inspection and examination by the Government Educational Department, and the system of control of the schools staff lead to unnecessary friction and want of efficiency.

7. In view of my answer to question No. 6 I do not wish to make any suggestions on this head.

8. I do not think this is usually done.

9. (1) No. The agriculturists are already overtaxed.

(2) I think instead of applying the provisions of notified Area to such towns, the scope of the Village Sanitation Act may be extended so as to include expenditure on primary education in the list of compulsory duties.

(3) (a) No.

(b) Yes. Also on excise revenue including opium, bhang, ganja.

The present system of paying compensation to local boards for loss of revenue from one anna cess on abkari revenue which was realisable some 30 years ago should be abolished and one anna cess on the actual abkari revenue should be levied.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. It is not true. In many cases the official demeanour is responsible for the apparent lack of interest and desire for active co-operation. If the officers were to be more sympathetic in their attitude, less autocratic and would desire co-operation the non-officials would evince greater interest.

11. See my reply to question No. 13.

12. I do not suggest any. (See my reply to question No. 2).

13. It is essential.

14. It may be reduced to Rs. 25.

15. I think the following kinds of land revenues should be transferred to local fund :—

(a) Fines under sections 61, 65, 66, Land Revenue Code, for non-agricultural use of agricultural land, as Government take altered assessment. In such cases the agricultural area is reduced and the benefit of capitalised sum should be given to the rural area as a local source of revenue.

(b) Fines for all coercive processes notice fee, etc.

16. Yes. After deducting expenditure on "education" and "district local board roads, etc.," the revenue should be distributed among taluka local boards in proportion to their contribution to the one anna cess fund. A poor taluka local board may in case of necessity be given a special grant-in-aid by the district local board from other sources of revenue.

17. The administrative efficiency would not suffer by the course suggested in the question. The same proportion of official element may be kept as in the case of municipalities, where Government have been pleased to grant majority of elected seats.

One or two *ex-officio* members may be retained in order that the boards may have an opportunity of knowing the official view.

18. Minimum qualification of land revenue should be reduced to 25 from 48.

Clause 2.—The property value may be reduced to 2,500.

Clause 4.—The pension scale should be Rs. 20.

Rao Saheb Harilal Desai

1. It is desirable that the district and the taluka local boards should have elected majorities. The elected members should at least for the present be two-third and the nominated one-third of the whole number. One half of this one-third may be officers of Government and the other half thereof may be non-official members selected with a view to give representation to minorities, to special communities or interests, or bring on the board men of ability and experience.

2. It is highly undesirable to have elections by communities; but the proposal made in answer to question 1, as regards nominations, would serve to secure the representation of minorities, special communities or interests, or men of ability and experience.

I am of opinion that the present number of members on the district and taluka local boards should be increased. The following may be taken as the general lines in addition to the present provisions of sections 6 and 7 of the Local Boards Act.

In the case of a taluka local board—

- (1) every municipality enjoying the elective franchise should send one member ;
- (2) every village sanitation board of two years standing enjoying the elective franchise should send one member ;
- (3) every group of a taluka should send two members, or the present groups may be doubled in which case each group may return one member ;
- (4) barristers, solicitors, pleaders, sardars, title-holders, graduates and Honorary Magistrates and pensioned Government servants whose pensions are not less than fifty rupees per mensem may be grouped into a distinct electorate and may be allowed to return one member.

In the case of a district local board—

- (1) every taluka board should be entitled to return two members ;
- (2) each municipal district enjoying the elective franchise should be entitled to return one member ;
- (3) barristers, solicitors, pleaders, sardars, title-holders, graduates and Honorary Magistrates and pensioned Government servants whose pensions are not less than fifty rupees per mensem may be grouped into a distinct electorate and may be allowed to return two members.

3. The local boards have practically been treated hitherto as a department of the Government administration. Hence it would not be advisable just at present to do without the Collector as the President of the district local boards. As regards the Presidents of taluka local boards they should be elected from the members of the boards. The Vice-Presidents, however, should in both cases be elected from the non-official members only; and definite powers ought to be delegated to them by statutory provisions. In the case of local boards at large centres where capable men could be had a beginning should be made by allowing Presidents to be elected from non-official members.

4. Each district local board should have an independent local board Engineer of the grade of a supervisor or an Assistant Engineer with a salary of Rs. 150 rising to Rs. 300 per mensem for the execution of all local board works in the district. All plans and estimates should be done by him. The Government Executive Engineer of the district may have general powers of supervision of an advisory character.

The local boards are so much officialised at present that people look upon them as a branch of the Government administration. They require to be disentangled so as to secure and encourage popular co-operation. Hence the local board Engineer may also act as the Secretary of the district local board with an office distinct from the Collector's office.

The local fund overseer may also act as the Secretary of the taluka board. This arrangement would save the percentage now charged by the Executive Engineer on the local boards work done by his staff, and at the same time would serve as a start for providing independent existence to the local boards and removing official tutelage.

5. As regards the engagement and payment of taluka local board servants and the sanction and revision of the taluka local board budget by the district local board, I would let the present arrangements stand as they are for the present.

6. As regards education, I think that the management of primary as well as middle Vernacular schools should be entrusted to the local boards.

7. In addition to more liberal assistance of grants-in-aid from provincial revenues, the following rules, *viz.*, rules 2, 4, clauses 4, 5, 6, and rules 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, will have to be altered so as to—

- (a) let the local boards have a free hand in fixing salaries of teachers and in fixing the establishment to be maintained in schools ;
- (b) let the local boards prescribe the standard of teaching, but that it should never be below the standard laid down by the Government Educational Department ;
- (c) let them have free hand in fixing the rate of monthly, admission and readmission fees to be paid by pupils and the number of free scholars to be admitted ;
- (d) let them conduct the administration of the local boards schools in matters referred to in rule 7 ;
- (e) let them fix the grant-in-aid to be given to a private school ;
- (f) let them have their own inspecting staff, maintaining at the same time the periodical inspection and examination of schools by officers of the Government Educational Department ;
- (g) let them have a free hand in building or extending schools or selecting sites for schools ;
- (h) let them also have practically all powers allowed to municipalities in matters of education.

8. So far as I am aware of the taluka local board is not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised in the taluka for being spent on education outside its area.

9. In any case the funds at the disposal of the local boards are insufficient; and there is need to supplement their revenues:—

- (1) I am however against the raising of the local fund cess. No increase of the cess under land revenue ought to be made above one anna. The land assessments are already high and the additional revenue should come from non-agricultural sources.
- (2) The scope of section 187 of the District Municipal Act appears to me to be restricted; but I am in favour of relieving local boards of a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, and other matters by the establishment of "notified area" in a number of important villages.
- (3) I am distinctly in favour of permitting the local board to levy a anna cess on all abkari revenue in the first instance. Next, I would deal with the forest revenue in the same way. Lastly, I would levy a cess on income tax.
- (4) As regards provincial subventions they should be increased so as to be equal to the land revenue cess.

10. The lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members is mainly due to the present officialised character of the boards. The members are not encouraged by the officers on the board to evince interest. The general feeling is that any curiosity on the part of non-official members would be misunderstood and resented. The remedies are:—

- (1) Extension of the elective franchise both by broadening its basis as also by increasing the element of elected members.
- (2) Removal of the boards from official tutelage; and
- (3) Expansion of their revenues.

11 & 12. This is considered under section 13.

13. Yes, the Vice-Presidents should invariably be elected from non-official members only with definite powers delegated to them by statutory provisions. This applies to taluka as well as to district local boards.

14. I would reduce the statutory minimum of assessment to rupees sixteen.

15. I am in favour of making the provincial share of land revenue and income-tax divisible between the provincial Government and the local board. The local boards' share may be one anna on land revenue and income tax. I would add that the abkari, the forest and other revenues such as salt, registration, and stamps, may also be similarly requisitioned one after another.

16. I think that no statutory provision is needed to fix the proportion in which the proceeds of the one anna cess after deducting the educational portion should be divided between taluka and a district local board. The proportion may be settled or revised by rules or resolutions of the district local board concerned at the instance of the taluka boards.

17. The administrative efficiency of a board is not the least likely to suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-official members by nomination were abolished. Boards constituted of elected members and nominated officials would work better than the present boards. This is so because non-official nominations appear at present to be generally made more or less on the basis of patronage. I would put the maximum proportion of nominated officials at one-fifth of the elected members in such a case.

18. I would amend section 10 of the Local Boards Act so as to reduce the qualifying test to—

- (1) holdings assessed to the land revenue at not less than *sixteen rupees per annum*;
- (2) persons owning immovable property estimated to be of not less than *three thousand rupees*;
- (3) persons whose annual net earnings are estimated to be not less than *three hundred rupees*;
- (4) pensioned Government servants whose pensions are not less than *fifteen rupees per mensem*.

I would suggest that barristers, solicitors, pleaders, sardars, title-holders and graduates should also be qualified to be entered in lists Nos. 1 and 2 and they along with Honorary Magistrates and pensioners whose pensions are not less than fifty rupees per mensem may be grouped together as a distinct electorate to return one member to a taluka local board and two to the district local board.

Mr. Manilal Maganlal Vakil, Dholka.

Before I proceed to answer the questions, I beg to express that the time has not as yet ripe to hand over the management to non-officials as the past experience has shown that not

a single member of the taluka board has gone out to watch the work in progress except when he may have been asked by the working committee or the Vice-President to move and see the work. I mean to say that the members of their own accord have not taken keen interest in the taluka local boards work. As a member of the district and the taluka local board I beg to say that the elected members have even failed to attend meetings, even when the work of the locality concerned to them had to be discussed. It is due to the officers move in the district, that the works are supervised and done properly well. The majority of the elected members, possessing capacities, to grasp the work of the board if belong to the professional class will hardly be able to move in the district to render the honorary duties at the risk of their business and hence there will be the lack of interest. When there is an elected franchise the officials also are not expected to take the interest as much as they take at present under the existing statutory provisions as their bounden duties.

1. Yes.
2. Not necessary, hence sub-questions require no answers in connection with the election by communities.

The present number is quite sufficient.

3. The President should necessarily be an official one in both the boards.
4. If the qualified staff is engaged on the boards, the works which require plans, etc., from the Public Works Department, will do away the interference of the Public Works Department and could be executed by the board's agencies early and with costs as little as possible.
5. Engagements and payment of taluka local board servants may be allowed to be made by the taluka local board and not by the district board. So also the budget by the taluka local board with the sanction of the President, district local board.

6. No. The management should rest with the Educational Department.
7. Rule 7—

It is necessary to add the words "with the approval of the boards concerned."

Rule 13—

Omit words "extension of buildings".

8. Not to my knowledge.
9. (1) Yes.
(2) If the boards are empowered to raise the cess up to the maximum of two annas a rupee the expenses can be met with from the enhanced cess.
(3) Yes, if it is paid out of the income.
(4) Yes.
10. Yes, the members do not realize the importance of their membership. When attend the meeting, they care not what matters are being discussed. Finally when the votes are asked for they say "yes" or "no" without paying any attention to the work according to the sweet will of the presiding authority.

The remedy for this is in my opinion that the board should be constituted of members having some educational test and capable of understanding.

11. *Vide* answer 18.
12. No.
13. I see no objection to the system being introduced.
14. *Vide* answer 18.
15. Not in favour.
16. Yes, it should be fixed by law half and half.
17. No.

Three-fourths elected.

One-fourth nominated.

18. Section 10, clause (1)—
Limit to be reduced to "24" instead of "48" and
in clauses 1, 2 and 3—
"possessing the certificate of educational test" be added.
in clause 4—
"25" may be substituted for "50".

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Mr. Jivanlal Varajrai Desai, B.A., Bar-at-Law.

1. In my opinion time has now come where district local boards should have elected majorities.

2. I am against election by communities. The first object of the boards is to look after the interests of cultivators and landholders. This is a community by itself.

3. In my opinion the Presidents of the boards—both district and taluka—should be non-official and they should be elected.

4. I think the recommendation of the Decentralisation Commission in this respect should be accepted.

5. The taluka local board should be an autonomous body by itself. Whatever matters are assigned to that board should be left to be carried out by it without any control of the district board.

6. When people are to be taught to take interest in public matters education of the masses is the first object which may be left to them; so the primary schools in villages may be left to be managed by the local boards on the express understanding that the Government will supply the necessary funds out of the provincial funds.

7. In my opinion the rules framed under section 48 (b) be modified on the basis of the rules obtaining in connection with municipalities which control primary education.

8. I am not in a position to reply to this question on first hand. But I am told that there has been no occasion on which a taluka local board could be consulted for such an object, as the finances of one board are hardly sufficient for the full requirements of that board.

9. The present assessment of land revenue falls rather heavy on the rayats and consequently the incidence of the local fund cess is heavy enough:—

(1) In my opinion there should be no additional burden on the rayat.

(2) The plan suggested will be impracticable. There will be very few villages to which the provisions of chapter 14 of the District Municipal Act will be applicable so there will not be any appreciable relief to the local boards.

(3) (a) I do not think there should be any cess levied on income tax.

(b) and (c) A cess may safely be levied on the abkari and forest revenue.

(4) In my opinion provincial subventions should be increased. I would suggest that 25 per cent. of the provincial revenue should be allotted to the local boards.

10. In one sense it is true that the lack of interest and the absence of co-operation of non official members has led to the failure of district and taluka local boards. But under the present circumstances nothing else could be expected. In some cases certain officials are known to have taken a direct part in the appointment of members and these members are perpetually beholden to the officers. Again some members of the boards have not the courage of their convictions much less any courage to put up their voice against any proposal that has found the support of the taluka officials with them they have constant dealings. This evil will be remedied if the Presidents and Vice-Presidents are elected non-official members.

11. The present qualifications are based on the principle that those who contribute towards the collection should have a voice in the expenditure. If an educational qualification were recognized, I think the work of the local boards will be made more popular.

12. I am opposed to communal representation in any form. Persons described in section 10, sub-sections 2 to 6, ought to raise with those mentioned in sub-section 1 and by reason of their position and character ought to command majorities in case of contested elections.

13. I am against the Presidents being officials, but in case official Presidents are indispensable, Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials.

14. Please see my reply to question 18.

15. In my opinion a portion of the provincial share of the land revenue and income tax should be allotted to the local boards. As mentioned above in reply to question 9 (4) the local board share should be 25 per cent of the provincial share.

16. As the villages mostly contribute towards the one anna cess, a fixed portion thereof should be reserved for the taluka local boards, and this proportion should be fixed by law. To start with the surplus cess should be divided half and half between the district boards and taluka boards.

17. Administrative efficiency of the boards will in no way suffer by the discontinuance of nomination of non-official members to the local boards. The boards constituted of certain nominated official members and elected members will be as efficacious, if not more, as the existing boards. A board may consist of a certain number of members $\frac{1}{4}$ th of whom may be nominated officials.

18. The qualifying limits in section 10, sub-section 102, may be reduced. In view of the constant sub divisions among the members of the families of holders the qualifying assessment of Rs. 48 will eventually reduce the number of qualified persons. These boards should be made as popular as possible and I would therefore suggest the reduction of the 48 Rs. qualification to Rs 10. The 5,000 Rs. property qualification may also be similarly reduced to Rs. 2,000. The other qualifications may be allowed to remain as they are.

Mr. Govindrao Apaji Patil, B.A., LL.B., Pleader.

1. (a) I am of opinion that the Local Boards should have a substantial elected majority to make them really representative bodies.
- (b) To carry out the aforesaid object the number of elected members should not be less than three-fourths of the whole Board, and the remaining one-fourth should be nominated members. Half of this one-fourth, that is one-eighth of the whole Board, should be non-officials to represent minorities, and the other half may be officials to represent official opinion.
- (c) The suggestion for an elected majority of three-fourths is not without a precedent; for in the Central Provinces not less than three-fourths of each District Board are elected by small tehsil constituencies, though the members of the latter are nominated (*vide* the Report of the Decentralisation Commission, paragraph 788).
2. (a) I am against election by communities, for it will raise needless sectional animosities.
- (b) No special provision need be made for the representation of—special communities Government can, if they are so minded, secure a due representation of “minorities” by nomination.
- (c) The present number of members on the Local Boards is not sufficient; it requires to be increased.
3. (a) The time has now come when the Presidents of the Taluka and District Local Boards should be elected non-officials. The nomination of officials to be Presidents of Local Boards prevents a free ventilation of opinion amongst non-official members, keeps the Boards under official leading strings, reduces their independence and power of initiative, and operates as a serious drawback to the full development of Local Self-Government.
- (b) The Decentralisation Commission is against elective non-official presidents (*vide* paragraphs 792 to 797 of their Report), but I do not agree with its view.
- (c) For I do not agree that the members of the Taluka and District Local Boards are so ignorant of the needs and exigencies of the areas within their jurisdiction as to require the Collector's or other Revenue peripatetic official's help and guidance, and that, too, as a President.
- (d) The Collector, the Commissioner, and the Government have been invested with powers of control under Chapter VII of Bombay Act I of 1884 that are sufficiently wide and drastic to enable the Collector to compel Local Boards to conform to his view. It is therefore not necessary for him or for any other official to be president of a Local Board.
- (e) Section 33 of the same Act confers upon certain Government officers the right to be present at the meetings of a Local Board, and, with the Board's consent, to take part in the discussion. The Boards also have similar powers under the same section to require the presence of the said officers at their meetings. It is therefore not necessary for the Boards to have a nominated and official President.
- (f) Even the Decentralisation Commission was of opinion that “Collectors have, in some instances, been in the habit of ruling rather than guiding,” and that there is a large element of truth in the assertion that the appointment of official presidents had made the Boards “practically a department of the Government Administration and the proceedings of the Boards subject to excessive official control.” (*Vide* paragraphs 792 to 797 and paragraph 807 of its Report.) The system of nominated official presidents should therefore be abrogated.
4. I am of opinion that the recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission in this respect ought to be accepted. (*Vide* paragraphs 747 to 749 of the Report.)
5. The recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission contained in paragraphs 786 and 787 with regard to Local Board establishments and in paragraphs 780 to 784 regarding Budgets should be accepted.
6. Yes, the time has come; and the management of primary schools should be entrusted to the Local Boards in accordance with the recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission contained in paragraphs 751 to 754 of their Report, but under an express understanding that the Government agree to find and to supply the requisite funds from Provincial Revenues for the extension and development of primary education.
7. In my opinion the rules under section 48 (b) should be so modified as to carry out the suggestions of the Decentralisation Commission put forth in paragraphs 753 and 754 of their Report. Detailed suggestions on this head would be useless until it is known how far Government are prepared to free Local Boards from the supervision and control of the Government Educational Department.
8. I do not know.
9. (1) The raising of the Local Fund Cess will press heavily upon the agricultural classes and is likely to create dissatisfaction.

- (2) The establishment of notified areas will only transfer the burden of taxation from one Board to another kind of Board and can hardly be considered advisable.
- (3) Local Boards should be authorised to levy a cess on income-tax and on Abkari and Forest Revenue. A cess on Abkari Revenue will fall on the people who drink and by raising the price of liquor will to some extent discourage drinking and is therefore a good impost.

A cess on Forest Revenue is a form of indirect taxation falling ultimately on the consumers of forest produce; its incidence will not be much felt.

- (i) Yes. Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. To ascribe the failure of Taluka and District Local Boards to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members is to throw the blame on the wrong party. That non-official members are to a great extent apathetic in matters concerning the Local Boards may at once be conceded, but their apathy is due to no inherent defect in their nature, for they evince a great deal of zeal and interest in Municipal matters. The dominating influence which high Revenue officials exercise over the Local Boards both as Presidents and advisers, and the excessive official control to which the former are subjected under the law and rules of Government Departments leave the Boards little scope for freedom of action to non-official members; and it is a matter of small wonder if they do not actively co-operate in the management of the affairs of a Board in which the Government Educational and Public Works Department and high officials of the Revenue Department are practically supreme.

Further, the resources of the Local Boards are limited while their sphere of functions is getting enlarged. Even His Excellency the Governor in Council in his review of the Reports of the Administration of Local Boards for 1913-14 contained in Government Resolution No. 2410, dated 19th March 1915, General Department, paragraph 17, has had to admit that "the fact that so considerable a proportion of the Boards' funds is absorbed by such objects as education, which is largely under departmental control, establishments, and the upkeep of existing works, while the openings for improving their revenues are so restricted, accounts, to a great extent, for non-official apathy."

The remedies that I would suggest for remedying the above state of things, is—

- (a) To increase the financial resources of the Local Boards;
- (b) To make them free from official domination, and excessive official control;
- (c) To make them financially independent;
- (d) To give them wider powers of initiative, management and control over their affairs.

11. Yes, persons who have passed the Matriculation or School Final Examination and those who have appeared at or passed higher examinations of the Universities, District and High Court Pleaders and Barristers, private practitioners in medicine, and agricultural graduates should all be recognised as qualified to vote.

12. I have not thought out this question.

13. Yes, the Vice-Presidents should be both non-official as well as elected.

14. Kindly refer to my answer to question 18.

15. Yes, it is desirable to make the Provincial share of the land revenue and income-tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. The expenditure on primary education is sure to increase as time passes, proposals to impart free and compulsory education and for increased expenditure on village conservancy and sanitation and other cognate subjects are likely to be mooted, and unless the Provincial Government were to help Local Boards by making large grants from Provincial Revenues, a time may arrive when such Boards will find it almost impossible to meet the ever increasing demands upon their revenues even with the assistance of the new resources in the shape of fresh cesses which Government may think fit to impose on their behalf. I therefore think that an arrangement by virtue of which Local Boards can claim a definite share of Provincial Revenues is eminently desirable, to make them financially strong and independent. What that share ought to be, it is difficult to define at this stage before we know what fresh cesses Government are going to impose, and in what proportion, and what such fresh cesses are likely to yield.

16. Yes, the proportion should be fixed by law, and the ratio should be fifty per cent.

17. The administrative efficiency of a Local Board is, in my opinion, not likely to suffer if a Board is constituted only of elected members and nominated officials. In such a case the proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be one to seven, that is 1 nominated official to 7 elected members.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limit prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act, and am further in favour of extending the franchise of voting to graduates, pleaders, doctors, and merchants.

In clause 1 of section 10 of the Act, I would suggest Rs. 20 per annum instead of Rs. 48.

In clause 2 of the same section, I would suggest Rs. 2,000 instead of Rs. 5,000.

In clause 3 of the same section, I would suggest Rs. 300 instead of Rs. 500.

Clause 4 I would retain intact.

Mr. Shivabhai Motibhai Patel.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. Even when the Act of 1884 was passed, the intention of the Legislature was that the number of elective members should be gradually increased so as to form the majority. And it was in accordance with this intention that drastic powers of control were given to the Executive Authorities under sections 62 to 65. If the intention of the Legislature was to create Local Boards as mere Departments of Government Administration, as they practically now are, there was no necessity to clothe the executive with the extraordinary powers of control enacted by the said sections 62 to 65.

And thirty years have elapsed since then and it is high time that the Boards should have elected majorities by express Legislation.

2. There is no just cause whatever justifying election to be by communities. There is no necessity to make any provision for the representation of any special communities or interests. There is no divergence of interests so far as the work of Local Boards is concerned. The election by communities instead of serving any useful purpose would be to accentuate sectional differences and jealousies. The obligatory duties of Local Board under section 30 could be well discharged without any sectional elections, and so long as the executive have the drastic power of control given by sections 62 to 65 there is no just cause for introducing communal representation in Local Boards. The present number of members in the boards is not sufficient. Their number should be increased.

3. It is not only advisable but it is just and proper that the Presidents of District and Taluka Boards should be elected and non-official. It may be here noted that the work of Local Boards may be simply left to non-official elected Presidents so long as the present sections of control, *viz.*, sections 62 to 65, are on the Statute Book. The public are not yet given any real opportunity to work the Local Boards freed from official control, and it is respectfully submitted that it is high time that the Local Boards should be worked by the people freed from all official trammels.

4. The Local Boards should be left to execute public works by their own officers. The present charges by Government for plans and estimates prepared and approved by the Government Executive Engineer are high.

5. The present control of the District Local Board over the Taluka Local Boards so far as the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants is concerned may be retained, but the Taluka Local Boards may be freed from the control of the District Local Board so far as the sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets are concerned.

6. The management of the primary schools should be entrusted to the District Local Boards. But this is on the understanding that this increased scope of their work should involve no increased responsibility to finance the primary schools. The rural parts are taxed to their utmost capacity, and I would strongly object to any increase in the scope of the duties or rights of the Local Boards, if the said increase is likely directly or remotely to enhance the burden of taxation on the rural parts. I agree with the remarks of the Decentralisation Commission that notions of departmental efficiency must give way to the education of the people in Local Self-Government.

7. Rules framed for Local Boards' Schools under section 48 (b) shall have to be altered so as to correspond with the proposed changes in the wider powers to be given to Taluka and District Local Boards. The rules may also be changed so as to be in a line with the rules relating to schools under the Municipalities.

9. (1) Local Boards should not be empowered in any way to raise the Local Fund cess from its present limit. No increase of popular rights will justify any increase of land taxation. In Gujarat particularly the Government assessment is at the maximum pitch, and so far as Gujarat is concerned I would strongly object to any increase of land cess for any object however laudable it may be.

(2) It is not feasible to create notified areas as suggested. The creation of notified areas of important villages would be a way, I am afraid, to increasing the burdens on the agriculturists.

(3) Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on (a) income-tax, (b) abkari revenue, and (c) forest revenue.

(4) Provincial subventions should also be increased substantially.

10. It is not true that failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and to the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. So far as the nominated non-official members are concerned it may be true that a good many of them think that they have discharged their duties when they vote with the officials. The evils connected with the system of nominating non-officials are so great as to outweigh any good that may be resulting therefrom. And if the elected members of Boards do not take any active interest in their work it is due not to any incapacity or unwillingness on their part. Any dissent from the official view on their part is for the most part looked upon as due to self-interest or factious motive. The elected members are sought to be kept in leading strings by the officials. Instances of subordinate revenue officials interfering with the conduct of

elections so as to exclude candidates not likely to say "Ditto" to their views are not rare. It is needless to pursue this subject any further now that there is an unanimity of opinion that there should be a radical change. The real remedy lies in freeing the Local Boards from all official trammels. There should be elected majorities, and there should be elected Presidents of both Taluka and District Boards. All supposed notions of departmental efficiency must give way to the education of the people in Local Self-Government; and it is also necessary that the powers of control given to the executive by sections 62 to 65 should be considerably curtailed.

11. Yes. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act should be reduced as suggested in answer to question No. 18; and I would also suggest the addition of an educational qualification. All persons who have passed the School Final Examination or Matriculation Examination of any University should be qualified to vote. The electorates need to be broadened by including as many educated persons as possible.

12. I do not think it advisable to form separate groups of electors with a view to secure at least some men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10.

13. The Presidents as well as Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-official.

14. The statutory minimum of assessment in place of the present figure of Rs. 48 should be Rs. 20.

15. Provincial share of land revenue and income-tax should be divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. The share of the Local Boards should be one-fourth.

16. It is advisable that the present discretion of the District Local Board, in the matter of the proportion of dividing the proceeds of one anna cess after deducting its educational portion, should be substituted by some fixed rule of Law. The proportion should be, it is respectfully submitted, half to half.

17. The administrative efficiency of a Board is not likely to suffer in any way if the present provision for appointment of non-officials by nomination were abolished. I have rarely heard the present system of nominating non-officials defended on the grounds of its ensuring administrative efficiency except it be that their voting with the official President secures efficiency; and in that case I would suggest that 5/6th should be the proportion of elected members and 1/6th of nominated officials.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act.

The limit of Rs 48 of land revenue per annum should be reduced to Rs. 20. The limit of owning the immoveable property of Rs. 5,000 in value should be reduced to Rs. 2,000. The qualifying limit of annual net earnings should be reduced from Rs. 500 to Rs. 300; and pensioned Government servants whose pensions are not less than Rs. 20 per mensem may be also included.

Mr. Maganbhai Chaturbhai Patel, B.A., LL.B., Bar-at-Law.

1. Yes.

I should rather like to go further and say that the Boards should be entirely elected. To carry out the intention of Government to popularize the local Boards, Government tutelage should be wholly withdrawn. It does not allow the non-official members to feel the responsibility of their vote and it fails to create any enthusiasm in them for want of their identification with the measures mainly suggested, initiated and carried out by the officials. Presence of revenue officers on the Board and their patronising care in the mofussil have nothing but a paralysing effect on the life of the Boards; and I am strongly of opinion that the local self-Government will not be a success until it is left in the hands of the people themselves and their mistakes be pointed out by higher officials only from afar with a sympathetic pointing out of the results of such mistakes and suggestions of how to avoid them in future and *not with* a threat of visiting such mistakes with an extreme punishment provided for by the Act. Expert official experience necessary in the three main functions of the local boards is provided for in section 33 of the Local Boards Act and it is not necessary that they should actually be on the board; and looking to the functions of the Local Boards as defined in section 30 there is no danger of minority interests being looked over. Besides any wilful abuse of powers by the elected Boards is effectively controlled by sections from 62 to 66 even without resorting to extreme penalties. Nominations, therefore, are not necessary; at any rate, Government should in no case make more than three nominations, and that, too, mainly for the purpose of giving the Boards the benefit of expert official experience in certain works of importance to be undertaken by the Boards, and for minority representation only where it is necessary under special circumstances of the case.

This, moreover, seems to me to be the clear intention of the Legislature when it has defined in carefully chosen words the constitution of the Boards in section 5 of the Local Boards Act and in my humble opinion the time has come when full effect should be given to that intention of the legislature.

2. No.

I am decidedly against any election by communities. It creates friction and animosity between communities where there is harmony and good-will prevailing. It will create a sense of separation where at present a sense of unity blesses their intercourse. Besides, the scheme would involve us in endless confusion, for communities might be by religion, profession, castes, business, etc., and that would tear asunder the whole rural population for the purposes of this political franchise and disturb the whole social fabric. The one object of local self-Government, *viz.*, creation of solidarity of the district population would be ruthlessly frustrated.

Looking to the sources of revenues assigned to the Local Boards and the works to which they are to be applied there seems to be no conflict of interests of communities in any sense of the term.

To my mind the present number of members of the Boards is not sufficient. I should like it to be doubled and to create equal number of elective groups or wards in each taluka, and in District Board elections two seats should be assigned to each constituency except holders of a whole alienated village.

3. Yes. They should be non-officials and elected.

To my mind, it is not only advisable but it is a bare necessity to have the presidents of the Boards non-officials elected by the members of the Boards. Any member getting a majority of $2/3$ votes should, I think, be declared as elected president by Government, and if there be more than one candidate and none has got a majority of $2/3$, then the result of the voting of the Board be laid before Government, who will select any one of such candidates whom the Government may think fittest for the responsibilities of the office.

Sufficient provision made to meet the touring expenses of non-official members in the areas within their jurisdiction will stimulate them to work with greater vigour.

4. The Law requires that plans and estimates of all schemes and projects involving expenditure of more than Rs. 500 should be prepared or approved by the Executive Engineer and those works should also be executed by the Public Works Department and the Local Boards should pay for all the services which the Executive Engineer's staff would thus render excepting that of the Executive Engineer himself. The Local Boards have at present to keep a small Engineering Department and certainly a double apparatus like this should be more costly and even inconvenient. To me it seems reasonable that the Engineering Department of the Local Board should be increased; and all the plans, estimates and even the works should be prepared and executed by them and the Government Executive Engineer may be consulted only in very big schemes involving questions of very high expert knowledge and highest standard of efficiency in the work done. The Government Executive Engineer may have a power of supervision over these works. Local Boards will not have to bear any costs for these consultations or supervision of the Government Executive Engineer. The Engineering Department of the Local Board will not be, though increased, more expensive and everything will be done under direct supervision and control of the Local Boards. The Local Boards will also be saved the unnecessary costs of a very very high standard of Public Works Department in the village life of the people.

5. Yes.

Both to confer upon Taluka Boards sufficient dignity and authority over their servants and workmen it is necessary that they should be freed from unnecessary control of the District Boards. All the Taluka Board servants may be engaged and dismissed by that Board. Supervising Officers would be engaged by the District Board and I have no reason to suppose that Taluka Boards would not give proper consideration to their reports with regard to the Taluka Board servants.

Even in the matter of Budget the Taluka Board should be given a free hand within a certain limit. If the budget were to exceed that limit it might require sanction of the District Board.

Controlling hand of the District Boards in all matters would naturally make the work of the Taluka Board tasteless and unless some responsibility is placed on them to exercise their own judgment in matters affecting the local interests enthusiasm could hardly be aroused.

6. I think time has come when the management of primary schools can well be entrusted to the District Local Boards. This would however be of any advantage only when the Boards would be thoroughly popular in constitution and the Educational Inspector be quite free from the influences of Revenue officers like Mamlatdars, Sub-Divisional officers or even Junior Collectors, for otherwise the influence of the Director of Public Instruction is, to my mind, much healthier.

7. If the management of the Educational Department be handed over to the Local Boards, naturally many of the rules shall have to be altered to suit such change in management.

In rule 3, sub-clauses 5 and 6, the Local Boards may with advantage be given a freer hand in fixing lower rates of admission and readmission fees to be paid by pupils in each Local Board School as well as in fixing the number of free scholars to be admitted therein.

Rules may also be framed authorizing the Local Boards to enforce even compulsory attendance of school-going boys to Local Board schools in certain localities.

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8. At present, as I have learnt, the practice varies with the individual Collector who is at the head of the District Local Board and perhaps also with the strength of the Taluka Board in asserting its just rights.

9. (1) No.

Any increase on the land tax in the form of a local cess is to my mind quite out of question, for the burden is already unbearable by the peasantry. The only justification for further tapping this source would be the introduction of free and compulsory education which is to them a necessary next only to their daily meals, and that, too, when all other available resources would seem exhausted.

(2) This is neither advisable nor would it prove very feasible. It would mean an increase of burden on a Town Municipality which would not be justifiable unless the town is in a very flourishing condition.

(3) and (4) This leaves us to resort to one or the other of the suggestions contained in sub-clauses (3) and (4) of the question. In my opinion a portion of the Abkari revenue should be first appropriated to the Local Boards funds and an anna or even two annas in a rupee would not be too much. The revenues are mostly derived from the increasing drink evil among the district population and a portion of it may justly be spent in educating them to avoid the horrors of such habits. Forest revenues and Income-tax would come next in order for appropriation if Abkari portion be not sufficient.

In my opinion appropriations of a portion of one or the other of the revenues in the sub-clause (3) would be much better than resorting to provincial subventions.

10. The failure is due to the lack of interest. Non-official members are not wanting in willing co-operation with the officials wherever the atmosphere is inviting for such willing co-operation. The reasons of the failure I have tried to show in my answer to question 1.

Besides compulsory education I should like to add one more remedy here. The system would be working with full vigour if it be thoroughly popularised and the Village Panchayats be established on popular basis giving it a sufficient share in the local administration mainly on the basis suggested by the Decentralization Commission. The Village is undoubtedly the basis of all political life in the country, and these institutions are still in a position to be revived to life if sympathetic attention be paid to them. Their potential capacity to do service rather than their failings and mistakes should be kept more prominently in our mind to utilise them as centres of activities carrying the spirit of local self-Government into the very heart of the country.

I should also like to suggest that Local Boards be given powers to appoint non-members on various work-committees rather more freely than is provided for in section 31 of the District Municipal Act. This will associate many enthusiastic workers with the Local Board activities although they may not have a chance to be actually on the Board.

11. Yes.

Education.

Barristers, pleaders and medical practitioners and all those who have passed a Vernacular third grade examination or a School Final or Matriculation Examination residing within the local area be entitled to vote as well as to stand as a candidate in elections.

13. Yes. It is most desirable.

I am however of opinion that Presidents should be non-officials elected. (See answer to question 3.)

14. Rs. 12. (*Vide* answer to question 18.)

15. It is quite clear that the duties enumerated in section 30 of the Act are not capable of performance with the small funds at the disposal of the Local Boards. If these duties were to be successfully performed by the Local Boards it would be appreciably sharing the burden of the provincial administration, and the scheme of the Act discloses this to be the intention of the legislature. I am of opinion that the Local Boards should now fully share this burden of the provincial administration by discharging almost all the duties enumerated in the Act. When this is done it is but a logical necessity that the provincial share of the Land revenue and Income-tax be divided between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards in order that sufficient funds be placed in the hands of the Boards to discharge these duties.

Without going into figures of various heads of expenditure and determining the actual share that would fall to the lot of the Local Boards I am not in a position to fix such shares of the revenues to be assigned to the Local Boards for this purpose. I suppose however it could be fixed easily working out the figures available.

16. Yes. I think it should be fixed by law.

There might be certain poor Talukas requiring help from others. After deducting a lump sum to be applied towards such expenses the rest of the funds should be distributed among Taluka Boards in proportion of their contribution towards the local cess.

17. Not at all.

I should rather think that it is necessary for the better administration of Local Boards that non-official nominations should be abolished at once.

As I have already stated at some length in my answer to question 1, I should like to have in no case more than three nominations mainly for the purpose of giving the Board the benefit of expert official experience, and for minority representation only where it be found necessary under special circumstances of the case.

18. Yes.

In order to make the institution more popular the franchise should be extended to all—

- (1) Holders of 3 acres of land or lands assessed at not less than Rs. 12.
- (2) Owners of immovable properties worth not less than Rs. 1,500.
- (3) Persons whose annual net earnings be not less than Rs. 150.
- (4) Pensioned officers whose pensions are not less than Rs. 15 per month.

Mr. Jivantlal Pranjivandas Lakhia.

1. Yes. I think so.

2. There is no such thing as special interest in the administration of Local Board. The interest of the cess-payers of all the different communities is all alike, and therefore there is no reason whatever to bring in the question of any special community's interest.

3. Looking to the principles laid down for Local Self-Government, time has now come that the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should have elected non-official Presidents.

4. In order to save time and heavy charges for scrutiny the plans and estimates by the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department, who has many other important duties of his own department to perform, I am of opinion that it would be better to appoint an officer no higher than an Assistant Executive Engineer for Local Board, who will scrutinize the plans and estimates and also supervise the works of the Local Board under construction.

5. I think the Taluka Local Board should be made more independent than at present on the lines suggested by the Decentralization Commission.

6. In my opinion time has now come to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Board.

7. The rules framed under section 48 (b) of the Local Board Act may be modified on the basis of the rules obtaining in connection with the municipalities which control primary education.

8. As far as I am aware the District Local Board very rarely consult the Taluka Local Board as to the appropriation of revenues raised by that Board to be spent on education in other areas.

9. Certainly not, because the agricultural class is over-taxed.

(1) No.

(2) Not unless proper representations of villages by election on "notified area", as there will be very few such villages in which Chapter 14 of the Act be applied.

(3) (a) No.

(b) Yes, as far as I know, Government were levying a cess on the Abkari revenue some years back, which was subsequently abolished. Now there is no objection to renew the taxation on the Abkari revenue.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes. The Provincial grant be increased.

10. It is true owing to the following reasons:—

(a) Absence of elective majority.

(b) Want of responsible powers.

(c) Want of funds.

11. No.

12. I think it is not advisable to make any change in the present procedure of grouping electors.

13. In the event of Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards continuing to be officials, I am of opinion that the Vice-Presidents should invariably be elected non-officials.

14. Please *vide* answer to 18.

15. I am in favour of these divisions and the Local Board's share should be 10 to 12 per cent.

16. I am of opinion that the proportion be fixed by law, and that it should be half by half.

17. I don't think the efficiency of the Board will suffer in any way; on the contrary, I believe the Board constituted by the necessary number of officials and the remaining elected would be a very good board. The proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be 1 to 1/6.

18 & 14. Yes. I am in favour of reducing the limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act as under:—

- (1) Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 instead of Rs. 48.
- (2) Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 3,000.
- (3) No change is required.
- (4) A pensioner getting pension of not less than Rs. 20 per month.

Mr. G. V. Bhachech, Retired Deputy Collector.

1. I would have non-official Presidents (*vide* answer to question 3 *infra*) and not elected majorities, unless where specially necessary for a smooth working.

2. No. The election should be by qualification and not by community. It is the management of Local Fund, and the election should be mostly by Local Fund payers irrespective of community.

There is no need for the representation of any such special community or interest as does not fall within the existing provisions on the subject.

The present number of members is sufficient.

3. The President of the District Board should be an elected non-official. The President of the Taluka Board should also be non-official but nominated in the beginning.

4. As to preparation of plans, the limit should be raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 (section 57 (b) of the Act).

As to execution of works the present limit should continue, unless it pays a Local Board to have an Engineer of its own.

5. I would defer the consideration of this question till a Taluka Local Board is put under non-official control and is set working.

6. The time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to District Local Board.

7. The rules under section 48 (b) should be so altered as to allow casual inspection and annual examination of schools by the Educational Department of Government and leave other management with the District Local Board.

8. To my knowledge a Taluka Local Board is not consulted for appropriating the taluka revenue on education in area outside the taluka. I have not the means at hand to verify my statement.

9. If it be only to meet extra expenditure for additional establishment incidental to the proposed change in the working of the Board, I would give an extra grant to the Board or relieve it of some of its charges rather than give an extra source of revenue. I think the time for putting the Local Self-Government on its own wheels is neither the time for extending its scope nor enlarging the source of its revenue. The expansion should come in when the non-official management has fairly established itself.

For increasing the Local Fund revenue—

- (1) I will not increase the local cess to 2 annas in the rupee.
- (2) Extending Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act to important villages will not yet be appreciated by the people.
- (3) Non-agriculturists of the Local Board area are profiting by local improvements without contributing their share to the charges and a cess on income-tax, Abkari revenue and Forest revenue of a Local Board area sufficient to form this share of the non-agriculturists will not be wrong. A cess on income-tax or Abkari revenue derived from area outside the Local Board will not be fair.
- (4) Till the extent of the Local Board want for each district is ascertained, it is difficult to say if Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. It is true that there has been lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members in the work of District and Taluka Local Boards and the cause of it lies in the existence of official control and its remedy in the removal of that control.

11. It is difficult to find qualifications having reasonable claim on the administration of Local Funds other than those already provided in section 10.

12. Village groups are sufficient to include men from classes 2 to 6. No separate groups are necessary.

13. If the President of a Taluka Board is official, the Vice-President should be non-official.

14. I have not the required knowledge to be able to answer this question.
15. The desirability of dividing the Provincial share of Land Revenue and income-tax between the Provincial Government and Local Board can only follow and not precede a necessity for such division and the necessity for it has yet to be established.
16. The desirability of fixing by Law what is now left to the discretion of the District Board has not made itself apparent.
17. Election should not have a monopoly for the admittance of non-officials to the Local Board. But for a nomination the Board will be wanting in completing the complement of its usefulness and the proportion left to nomination of non-officials is not overmuch.
18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits. Time wants higher calibre, and the standard to judge of it should be sufficiently high.

The Thakore Sahab of Utelia.

1. Yes.
2. I do not approve of election by communities. The administration of Local Funds seldom raises communal questions. If any important community is found to be unrepresented or inadequately represented, it is within the power of authorities to supply the deficiency by nominations.
- Having regard to my answer to the first part of the question no answer is required to the question involved in the first head of the second paragraph. As regards the second head of the second paragraph my answer is that the present number is insufficient.
3. Should be elected non-officials.
4. (a) From section 57 (b) the limitation of obtaining sanction of the Government Executive Engineer should be removed.
- (b) The Local Board should have powers to execute their work. The limitation involved in Government directing by general or a special order that works of any kind should be executed by their Executive Engineer should be removed.
5. In the engagement and payment of its own servants and in connection with the sanction of its budget the Taluka Board should be freed from the control of the District Board.
6. In my opinion the time has now come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to District Local Boards. I fully agree with the views of the Decentralization Commission referred to in the question.
7. As the rules are not before me or accessible to me, I am unable to answer this question.
8. Not, so far as I know or remember.
9. (a) In my opinion it is not advisable to empower the Local Boards to raise the cess up to a maximum of two annas in a rupee. Even the present maximum of one anna in the rupee is rather heavy.
- (b) It is not advisable to relieve Local Boards of their responsibilities to incur expenditure in connection with educational, medical, sanitary, and other matters by the establishment of "notified areas" under the District Municipal Act.
- (c) I am of opinion that Local Boards should be empowered to levy a cess on Abkari and Forest revenue. It may be noted that the Act authorised the levy of cess on Sayar revenue, which has now become developed with Abkari or Excise.
- (d) Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. My answer to the first part of the question is it is true. It is due to the influence of the Collector President, the fact of the official majority, lack of independence on the part of nominated members, and in consequence of the influence of Taluka officials, the frequent failure of persons not favoured by officials to obtain their return even at elections, and in consequence of a feeling has grown among independent non-officials of utter helplessness. My answers to the different questions suggest remedies against this condition of things.
11. I should suggest that graduates of Universities, Pleaders and Jurors and Assessors should be given franchise and declared qualified to stand as candidates.
12. I think the object will be attained by forming of persons falling under sub-sections (2), (3), and (4) of section 10 as modified as above suggested together with University graduates and Pleaders into a separate group and giving them power to elect for one or two seats.
13. In conditions referred to in the question, the Vice-President should be a non-official.
14. See my reply to question 11.
15. I am of opinion that it is most desirable that in the place of subventions in lump sums provincial Governments should assign to Local Boards fixed proportion out of their share of the Land revenue, Abkari, Income-tax and Forest revenues. Without knowing out of which revenues such assignments will be made, it is not possible to fix the Local Boards share in each.

16. I am of opinion that it is not desirable to fix by law the proportion of the Local cess to be assigned to Taluka Boards.

17. I am not in agreement with the suggestions for the abolition of the system of nomination of non-officials. I am of opinion that out of the total number 2/3rds should be elected non-officials. The total number of *ex-officio* members and nominated officials and non-officials should be one third or less.

18. (1) The qualifying limit of assessment should be reduced from Rs. 48 to Rs. 16.
(2) The qualifying limit of the value of non-agricultural immoveable property held should be reduced from Rs 5,000 to Rs. 2,500.
(3) The qualifying limit of annual income at Rs. 500 may be retained.
(4) In the case of retired servants of Government the qualifying limit of pension should be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 20 a month.

KAIRA DISTRICT.

Mr. J. Ghosal, I. C. S., Collector of Kaira.

1. Theoretically it is possible and desirable that there should be an elected majority in the Taluka and District Boards. But there are two factors which at present make such elections not truly representative. These are (1) the majority of the voters take no interest in these elections and are guided entirely by interested wire-pullers, (2) the best class of men will not come forward at elections unless they are promised a walk-over.

Thus at present if we want to have good men on the Board we have to trust a good deal to nominations, and if we were to reduce their number it will be at the cost of efficiency.

2. I am not in favour of communal representation, nor am I in favour of election by interests.

What I would suggest is that power should be given to the Board to elect temporary members representing a particular community or interest when any specially important measure affecting that community or interest is on the tapis.

As long as there are a sufficient number of nominated seats available, different communities and interests can to a certain extent be provided for as now actually done.

I attach a statement showing what are the present constitutions of the District Local Board and Nadiad Taluka and what they would be if governed strictly by the theory of representation by communities. I think this will support the answer to question 1.

I do not think there is any need to increase the present number of members.

3. As a rule the Presidents of both District and Taluka Local Boards should be officials, but I think there is no objection in special cases to nominating non-officials as Presidents. I would never have the President elected.

4. This is a difficult question to answer. There is no doubt that at present the District Local Board has not a staff qualified to prepare plans and estimates or to execute very big works. Thus the first point for decision is whether the District Local Board is to have its own engineer or not. If the District Local Board gets extra grants for this purpose, or if the District Local Board can afford it, I would certainly recommend that it should be freed from all control and restrictions as at present.

In Ratnaguri we tried to have a Chief Overseer on a higher pay for checking plans and estimates and the execution of many works ordinarily executed by the Public Works Department were entrusted to him. But this did not prove a success. This was presumably because the Chief Overseer was not sufficiently qualified.

I am strongly in favour of the District Local Board being its own master as to works constructed at its expense.

But if the District Local Board cannot command a sufficient income to afford an independent qualified staff of its own, then some check is necessary, both as to preparation of plans and estimates and execution of works.

The present limit is too small.

I would increase to Rs. 1,200 the limit for preparation of plans and estimates. I would raise the limit for execution of works to Rs. 5,000. But I would give the District Local Board the further concession that with the sanction of the Commissioner any work could be carried out by its own agency.

5. I think the Taluka Local Board budgets need not receive the District Local Board's sanction. I think the Taluka Local Board should have entire control as to the appointment, etc., of servants whose services are not pensionable or whose appointments are local. Thus dharamshala peons should be appointed and paid by the Taluka Board but not the overseers who are liable to be mutually transferred from one taluka to another.

6. I certainly disagree. This control of education by the Municipalities has been its biggest curse.

In this connection I might mention that the Rewa Kanta Educational staff was one for all the States combined. Each Native State wanted independent control, and had to give up the idea as they realized that this could only be done at the cost of efficiency. No District Local Board could have a staff big enough to ensure good prospects to the teachers.

7. I advocate no change in section 48 (b). The District Local Board must have entire control over the staff. But I think rule 4A may be repealed. The Taluka Local Board can be given the powers to fix the class of each school and the standard of teaching.

8. No case can be traced.

9. (1) I am not in favour of taxing agriculturists any further for Local Board purposes.

(2) This is a practical suggestion, but I think for surrounding villages a limited taxation may be sanctioned for providing educational and medical facilities only.

(3) (a) I think it is desirable to make commerce pay some contribution to the Taluka Local Board.

(b) I do not think the Local Boards can legitimately claim a share of the Abkari revenue but this might be the most easily sanctioned.

(c) Forest revenue is practically a revenue on land, and so ought to pay a cess.

(4) It is difficult to answer this question at present. Naturally the subvention should be increased as far as possible, but the principle adopted for distribution should be that of relation between the income and necessary expenditure of the different Boards.

10. This is too broad and vague a question for discussion here. The growth of public spirit is a question of time and education, and I do not think it can be forced by legal measures.

11. Not as the Act stands at present.

12. I see no necessity for this. I do not know that classes 2 to 5 require special representation. At present they pay no direct cess to the Local Funds. As to class 6 (patels) they deserve no special representation as such.

13. There can be no "invariability" about it. It is entirely a question whether one suitable is forthcoming and has the confidence of the Board.

14. I do not think any fixed minimum can be prescribed for any district. The degree of sub-divisions vary in each district. In some districts the individual holdings are large and in some small. The number of persons qualified to be members ought not to be too large.

15. I think a fixed share like this would create unequal distributions through accidental causes. Many Boards which really require more money will have little, while others would get more than they require. I am not in favour of this proposal.

16. I am not in favour of any change. The needs of each district must be considered independently and the District Local Board can be trusted to do justice to the Taluka Local Boards.

17. It is unquestionably a fact as explained in answer to question 1 that non-officials who are best qualified by education or social position and influence will rarely come forward for election at present.

So I am not in favour of any modification in this direction.

18. If the Local Fund income is to be increased by taxing local merchants and others, the present qualifications need no modification; otherwise it may be pointed out that many who pay no Local Fund cess have the right to vote. This is anomalous.

Statement showing the information as to the present number of elected members according to caste and the number that would come on the Board if elected by communities.

Board.	Area.	Popula- tion.	Number of members on the present Board.					Number of elected members on the present board by communities.				Number of members to be on the Board if elected by communities.					
			Nominated.		Elected.	Total.	Officials.	Non-officials.	Patidars.	Wanags.	Brahmins.	Musalmans.	Dharalas.	Dheids.	Patidars.	Musalmans.	Others.
			Ex offico.	Nominated.													
District Local Board ...	1,505	691,744	4	6	9	19	5	14	5	3	1	...	3	1	1	1	3
Taluka Board, Nadiad ..	224	133,467	2	8	9	19	3	16	6	...	2	1	3	1	2	1	2

Mr. S. N. Ziman, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

1. I do not think there is any great difference between the qualifications of the members at present elected and those nominated. If anything, the nominated members are slightly better, as very often a good and influential man will not take the trouble to contest an election. In any case I do not consider that the question whether there is an elected majority or not is of any importance at present.

2. I do not think the election should be by communities but by areas as at present. The interests affected are more territorial interests than those of particular communities.

The present number of members is sufficient.

3. I think that though in general the Presidents should be officials there should be some provision whereby the Governor in Council might have power to appoint a non-official President of a District Local Board, and the Commissioner, of a Taluka Local Board.

At present the two best managed Taluka Local Boards in the Broach District are almost entirely managed by non-official Vice-Presidents who might well be the Presidents of their Boards. Of course, such men are extremely rare but there is no reason why there should not be the power to appoint them when they are found.

4. I consider that the compulsory approval by the Executive Engineer might be removed but the power to submit plans when felt necessary by the Board for approval to the Executive Engineer retained. I think the District Local Board can be trusted to see that its plans and estimates are drawn up properly and checked when necessary. It may also safely be trusted with the choice of agency by which a work is to be carried out.

5. I think the District Local Board's power should be retained with regard to the Boards' servants. The staff is not large and is better controlled by one authority only in the district. I see no particular advantage in the submission of Taluka Local Boards' budgets to the District Local Board for sanction. It is in almost every case a purely formal matter, and I think the Taluka Local Board should be made independent and responsible for the proper spending of such portion of the funds as the District Board allots to it. There should, of course, be proper provision in the Code of such Local Board for audit of the budget to prevent serious clerical errors.

6. If the rules under section 48 (b) are properly carried out I think the District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards have sufficient control over education. I would strongly oppose any power being given to the Local Board with regard to the pay, promotion, leave, etc., of teachers as in section 7 of the rules under section 1, 8 (b). For this is the great stumbling block for Municipal Educational Committees and is a source of constant intrigue and mal-practice. It is better that the control over the teachers and the discipline and supervision over the studies in the schools should remain entirely in the hands of responsible Government servants.

7. I think the rule 4A should be repealed and the Taluka Local Board given power to fix the class of each school and the standard of teaching; otherwise I have no suggestion to offer.

8. None that I know of.

9. (1) Any increase in the cess in agricultural land would be bitterly opposed and I do not think it is an equitable tax. At present the agrarian population bears sufficient of the burden of taxation.

(2) I am strongly in favour of such a course.

(3) I see no reason why these sources of revenue should be exempt and am in favour of levying a cess on them.

(4) They should be increased as far as possible as a method of equalising the relation between the income of different Local Boards and their expenses.

15. I prefer the system of subventions as likely to lead to a fairer distribution rather than a fixed division dependant purely on chance which would certainly favour some districts more than others.

16. I think that the decision should be left to the District Local Board for the same reason as given in section 10.

17. See reply to No. 1.

18. I do not think the limits of qualification need to be reduced.

Mr. N. M. Parekhaji, District Deputy Collector.

1. Yes.

2. No. No provision deems requisite to secure the due representation of any special communities. The public must be left to themselves to look for their own interests. The present number of members appear to be sufficient. The more the number is increased the more would be the complications in the administration.

3. No. It is difficult to secure capable non-officials to cope with these functions. If any non-official is elected or nominated, he will not be able to manage the affairs of the Board owing to party spirits prevailing everywhere.

4. The intervention of the Public Works Department should be removed altogether and the Local Boards should be given the full powers to manage their own affairs by employing special establishment of their own.

5. No. Present arrangements are sound.

6. Yes.

7. Rules 7 and 12 to 14 should be modified so as to give the respective powers to the Local Boards.

8. No.

9. (1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) (a) No. As the income-tax is in itself a tax it would be unjust to levy any tax on a tax.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes.

15. It may be divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. The latter may be given 2 annas per rupee.

16. No such division should be fixed by law. It should remain as at present in the discretion of the District Local Board.

17. It is not for some time desirable that the Board should be formed of only elected members and nominated officials. There should also be non-official members as at present. The proportion of elected should be $\frac{2}{3}$; out of $\frac{1}{3}$ nominated, $\frac{1}{2}$ should be officials and $\frac{1}{2}$ non-officials exclusive of President.

18. Yes.

(1) Rs. 30.

(2) Rs. 3,000.

(3)

(4) Rs. 30 (to allow chance to retired Government servants)*.

Rao Bahadur Bulakhidas Bapuji Trivedi, Huzur Deputy Collector, Kaira.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should not have elected majorities because the elected members are not generally sufficiently advanced in education and have that liberal spirit and diligent attention to Local Board works which are necessary to safeguard the interests of the Local Boards. The Taluka and District Local Boards should have the advice and guidance of at least some responsible officers of higher educational attainments and this end can only be secured by the Board having at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of its members nominated by Government.

2. Election should not wholly be by communities, but provision might be made to secure due representation in the case of large number of a particular (sect) community or in that of a community having a comparatively smaller number but with better education and refinement.

3. It is desirable that in these times the President of a Taluka Local Board should be non-official but he should be a man of high talents and education, while that of the District Local Board should be official. In both the cases the appointment should be subject to the approval of Government. The appointment of a President of the Taluka Local Board should be on elective principles.

4. In view of the intended strengthening of the Local Board establishment in connection with execution of works by their own agency, the provisions of section 57 of the Local Board Manual may be amended so as to admit of their execution independently of the Public Works Department: (1) in the case of roads of an average Rs. 100 per mile and (2) in the case of other works costing more than Rs. 1,000. It may be added that works costing more than Rs. 5,000 should be entrusted to Public Works agency.

5. The control of the District Local Board is absolutely necessary so long as there is not education and refinement to the desired extent and so the Taluka Local Board should not be free from the control of the District Local Board.

6. The District Local Board with its multifarious duties is not likely to supervise and control the management of schools particularly with the same efficiency as is done by the Educational Department.

7. The time has not yet come when the teaching, discipline, management and direction of schools and the administration of establishment can be handed over entirely to the Local Boards concerned and I think that no change in the existing rules is necessary.

8. Taluka Local Board is not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. To meet extra expenditure cess might be raised to $1\frac{1}{2}$ anna instead of the present rate of anna one.

15. I am not in favour of the proposal contained in question No. 15.

16. In Kaira District it is the practice long standing that the proceeds from one-anna cess after deducting its educational portion are divided between Taluka and District Local Board in proportion of 3 to 5 pies. There seems no necessity of making any provision of law on this point.

17. If the proposal contained in this paragraph is to be carried out the administrative efficiency of the Board is not likely to suffer if the proportion of nominated and elected members is 2 to 3.

18. I am not in favour of the proposal of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act.

Mr. M. M. Gandhi, Mamlatdar of Anand.

1. Yes.
2. The election should be by communities. In the case of small communities several may be joined into one whole. If the election is not wholly by communities then due provision should be made in nominations for the proper representation of these communities. At present the Board consists of three Government servants, two Municipal representatives of the Anand and Umreth Municipalities, one inamdar, seven elected and eight nominated members, and by communities the representation is as under :—three Government servants, nine Patidars, two Garasias, one Gosai, one Barote, two Baniyas, two Brahmins and one Mahomedan. The proposed constitution may be as under :—three Government servants, two Municipal representatives, one inamdar, ten elected and five nominated. Of the ten elected members the representation should be by communities as under :—one Mahomedan, two Dharalas, two Patidars, one Baniya, one Brahmin, one Garasia and Rajputs and two from the miscellaneous communities. The present number of members is sufficient.
3. No. Time has not yet come to give this franchise to the people. The result would be serious. For a quarter of a century at least the head of the Board should be a Government officer.
4. *Vide* paragraph 14 of the notes by the Honourable Mr. Lawrence. I concur entirely with these views.
5. No. It is not necessary.
6. Yes.
7. Rules 7 and 12 of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act would have to be recasted.
8. No instance is traceable.
9. (1) Yes.
(2) Yes.
(3) On income-tax yes. This taxation will be general and very welcome but Abkari and Forest revenues might affect particular individuals or districts; the taxation would not be general and therefore no.
(4) Not necessary if the cess is raised to two annas in the rupee.
15. Not in favour of such divisions.
16. The District Board should have a very wide discretion and no limit should be fixed by law. The Board could be well trusted to use their discretion.
17. The Board should not wholly be constituted of elected members and nominated officials but at least one-fourth of the whole representation should be by nomination of non-officials. Even in City Municipalities, where fairly advanced representation is available there is one-sixth nomination of non-officials, and in the Taluka and District Local Boards one-fourth nomination of non-officials would not be too much but would seem very desirable [at present for some time.
18. Yes. The limit should be as under :—
Clause (1) ... Rs. 30.
" (2) ... Rs. 3,000.
" (3) ... Rs. 300.
" (4) ... Rs. 20.

Mr. R. P. Magalvala, Mamlatdar of Thasra.

1. Yes. Not less than two-thirds exclusive of the President.
2. Not necessary. Forward communities take care of themselves. For backward classes—say Dharalas in this district—special groups and wards should be formed. The present number of members are not insufficient. But then there is no harm in increasing the number. On the other hand, it will afford greater scope for activity in the zealous masses. On the Thasra Taluka Local Board there are 17 members: let it be raised to 22: 14 elected (2 Dharalas), 7 nominated (3 non-officials and 4 officials) and 1 President nominated or elected.
3. This depends upon the fitness of non-officials in backward Talukas; people certainly desire official guidance and it is necessary. He may be elected by at least two-thirds of the majority of the total number of members but the election should be subject to the approval of Government or Commissioner.

Cost of works.	Plans and estimates.				Work by whom to be executed.
	By whom to be prepared.		By whom to be approved.		
Rs. 1,500 and under—Rs. 100 per mile in case of road ...	Local Board	...	Local Board	...	Local Board.
Rs. 1,500 to 5,000—Rs. 200 per mile in case of road ...	Executive	Engi- neer.	Executive	Engi- neer.	Local Board.
Over Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 200 per mile in case of road ...	Executive	Engi- neer.	Executive	Engi- neer.	Executive Engi- neer.

5. Yes, but engagement of overseers should be made subject to the approval of the District Local Board. Budgets may be finally sanctioned by the Taluka Local Board concerned.

6. Yes.

7. The management of primary schools can be entrusted to District Local Board School Committee under the general control of the Board as we have in Municipal schools. Inspecting officers of the rank of Assistant Deputy Educational Inspector may be appointed by the Board or lent by the Educational Department. To begin with, duties and powers of the School Committee and the Educational Department in this matter should be nearly the same as we have in Municipal schools.

8. No.

9. Yes; but the first proposed source of increased revenue should be put last in order that recourse can be had to it only when the other proposed sources are found insufficient; (2) that too upto the extent of the supposed deficiency.

15. Circumstances and the changes in contemplation require that the Provincial share of Land revenue and income-tax be divided between Provincial Government and Local Board. The Local Board should get at least 20 per cent.

16. It is unnecessary and undesirable to fix the proportion by law. Needs of Taluka Local Boards vary greatly in the same district and elasticity is necessary.

17. Abolition of the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination, all of a sudden, is not advisable. Very likely administrative efficiency would suffer in some cases. The existing law should be changed that at least half of the nominated members on a Board should be officials.

18. I am in favour of reducing the limit in clause 1 only of section 10 from Rs. 48 to Rs. 30. This will have a far-reaching effect. Contemplated changes will be a boon to the masses and creditable to Government. As contemplated, the Notified Areas will increase in number; but still there will be left a very large number of villages, people wherein will remain dead to healthy activity outside and to the responsibility which sooner or later must fall on them in this age of very active and confused (but sure) evolution. Every now and then petitions are received from the people for minor road repairs, cleaning wells, railing to wells and small repairs. They have been accustomed to look upon Sarkar (they understand Local Board as Sarkar) for doing such trivial things which they can better manage themselves. They, in fact, believe that it is Sarkar's duty. Can we not make them alive and put them on the right track? They must be taught to help themselves and co-operate with Boards in a better spirit. We may rule that such petty unskilled works costing upto Rs. 100 should be managed by headmen of the villages themselves and on their so doing they can get a grant not exceeding two-thirds of the cost from Taluka Local Board. Such works may not be undertaken by Boards.

Mr. C. N. Joshi, Mamlatdar of Nadiad.

1. District and Taluka Boards may be given elected majorities in advanced tracts. This is not likely to cause any friction in the working of the Board.

2. Election by communities should be discouraged, as it tends to intensify sectional feelings. Due representation of any special communities or interests can be brought about while proposing nominations.

The present number of members does not require any special increase.

3. Presidents of District Boards should be the Collectors and of Taluka Boards the Prant Officers. It is further desirable to have Mamlatdars as Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards. The Vice-President of a District Local Board may be a non-official.

On principle, I would prefer Vice-Presidents and sometimes even Presidents of Taluka Local Boards to be non-officials, but it would be very difficult for them to satisfactorily manage

the affairs. Even the members themselves who are entrusted with supervision of a small number of works near their home seldom care to keep an eye on the works. The difficulties of Vice-Presidents and Presidents would still be greater. They would have to supervise the works widely apart in the whole taluka, and also see the grievances of people on the spot. This is a question of time, money and inclination, involving a deal of self-sacrifice. The non-official Presidents or Vice-Presidents should also be local residents, and it is difficult to secure men of the desired type. On the other hand, Prant Officers and Mamlatdars in the course of their various duties find it easy to supervise the Local Fund works and look to the needs of the people.

Again, the co-operation of village officers can also best be secured when the Vice-President or the President is an official. No suitable comparison can be drawn between Local Boards and Municipalities, as the activities of the latter are confined to a limited area, and men of greater intelligence and self-sacrifice can be secured for the Municipalities. The existing system may, therefore, be maintained. It may be noted that in the initial stage of the Local Boards there were non-official Vice-Presidents on the Taluka Boards, but subsequently the invariable practice seems to be that officials have been elected Vice-Presidents. This may be due to the fact that the non-officials either could not manage or did not like to come forward and bother with the management.

4. The existing system of getting plans and estimates for works costing above Rs. 500 checked by the Public Works Department may be maintained, as the charges for this are not heavy; and any serious mistake committed by a raw overseer would be brought to light. A beginning may, however, be made in some advanced districts to engage officers having full technical engineering knowledge and experience; and all the work sent up at present to the Public Works Department may be entrusted to him. If the scheme is successful, it can be extended to other districts.

As regards the execution of works by Public Works Department, the present limit of Rs. 2,500 may safely be raised to Rs. 5,000. Occasional help and advice when needed may be given by the Public Works Department. This will relieve Local Boards of great expenditure involved in the high percentage at present charged by the Public Works Department.

Small deviations from the plans (where approved by the Public Works Department) need not be minded, provided they do not affect the stability of the works.

5. There seems no objection in continuing the existing arrangements.

6. The time has not yet come to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards. The management would be extremely difficult, as the Boards would have to supervise the management of numerous schools in different parts of the district and to study a new literature. The Educational authorities are best fitted to manage the affairs. Besides, personal predilections of members for certain teachers would sometimes prevail in case the management is left to the Board. It would be enough if the recommendations of the Boards be more freely attended by the Educational Department than at present.

7. There are complaints at some places regarding conversion of rural schools into full primary ones. The suggestions of the Taluka Local Boards in this respect should receive greater attention on the part of the Educational Department than at present.

The construction of school houses on a cheaper and simpler pattern may be encouraged.

Services of members or other gentlemen taking keen interests in the school affairs may be publicly acknowledged so as to serve as a stimulus to others.

8. Taluka Local Boards do not seem to have been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. (1) Raising Local Fund cess from 1 to 2 annas would be very unpopular and would also be hard on agriculturists.

(2) It would be useful to establish 'Notified Areas' in important and well-off villages, as this would partly relieve the Local Boards of expenditure in these villages.

(3) A cess may be levied on income-tax and Abkari revenue. Income-tax payers are supposed to be in well-to-do circumstances, and need not grudge a small extra cess. Abkari revenue is also growing largely, and a cess on that revenue would bring in a substantial amount. The tax would, of course, ultimately fall on the masses, but that is good in the interests of abstinence and temperance which need encouragement.

Forest revenue is confined to a few districts, and hence it may be left aside at present.

(4) Much of the Local Board income is spent up in education and medicine and in part improvement of water-supply. There are overwhelming demands on the Board. The water-supply improvements cannot be satisfactorily carried out for want of funds. Similarly, improvements in communications and sanitation cannot be taken up. In various villages one work or the other would always be found which could not be undertaken for want of funds. Provincial subventions may, therefore, be largely increased as recommended by the Commissioners in paragraph 4, clause 4, of their Joint Report to Government, dated 29th July 1915.

10. It is true that non-official interest and co-operation is very rare.

The reasons are :—

- (a) want of realization of their duties to the public ;
- (b) want of self-sacrificing spirit ;
- (c) the satisfaction of their feelings which are restricted to self-respect only ;
- (d) the decrease in their influence with the public through party spirit ; and
- (e) the absence of any recognition of services of special merit by way of encouragement.

Some of the remedies are :—

- (1) improvements in the culture of the head and heart ; and
- (2) encouragements to members taking keen interest and the free intercourse between them and the Chair.

12. Not necessary.

13. No.

15. The Provincial share of Land revenue and income-tax may be divided between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards at the rate of 1 anna in the rupee for the latter.

16. No statutory provisions are needed but ordinarily about 60 per cent. of the net proceeds may be given to the Taluka Local Board and 40 per cent. may be kept by the District Local Board, as the needs of all talukas are greater.

17. If nomination of non-officials is wholly abolished, it would not be possible to make a due representation of minorities or special communities or interests. The administrative efficiency is not likely to suffer, but the unrepresented minorities would be discontented. Further, it would not also be possible to bring on the Board capable and respectable persons who hesitate to stand for election. Especially in backward tracts nominations of non-officials cannot wholly be dispensed with. If, however, only officials are to be nominated, their proportion may be put down from $\frac{1}{4}$ th to $\frac{1}{8}$ th.

18. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Act may be fixed as under :—

Clause 1	...	Rs. 30.
Clauses 2 and 3	...	As at present.
Clause 4	...	Rs. 20 pension.

Mr. Shevklal Ratanlal Desai, High Court Vakil.

1. District Local Boards should have elected majorities. Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities in those places where the classes are educated. At the time when the Local Boards Act was framed (in 1884) the people were far backward in point of education and so the Act was framed in such a way that the public may be trained up for local self-government and the efficiency of the Boards may not suffer. More than 30 years have passed since the passing of the Act and the spread of education coupled with newspaper reading even in villages have altered the state of things to a great extent. I am, therefore, of opinion that except in backward talukas inhabited by Kaliparaj people, the public should be given a greater voice in the management of their funds and that can only be done by extending the elective franchise. Unless this step is taken there will be no progress.

2. No. If provision is made for election by communities there will be no end to disputes in every part of the Presidency and the liberal and beneficent intentions of Government will be misconstrued into the adoption of "Divide and Rule" policy. Instead of doing this it is in the interests of both the public and Government that a course is adopted which would teach the people to forget all communal prejudices and to merge into one whole British subject. I think that the subjects, trusted fully as they will be, will like to be guided by Government and see for themselves that good representation is made suitable to all the communities. In order to facilitate this result I think that a group of 5 villages at the most should be represented by one member. There should also be a corresponding expansion in the District Local Board.

3. I don't think the time has yet arrived to make a hard and fast rule that the Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials. In order to secure efficiency and economy the President of the District Local Board should invariably be the Collector of the district. In order to give due training to non-officials it would be necessary to have invariably a non-official Vice-President for every District Board. I am also of opinion that some Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to elect their own Presidents from non-officials as an experimental measure and with a view to lead the people to their ultimate goal. The Vice-Presidents in Taluka Local Boards should as a rule be non-officials.

4. The preparation of the plans and estimates should be left with the Government Executive Engineer* only in cases of those works which are to be executed through the Public

* The present practice of having the estimates above Rs. 500 checked by the Executive Engineer may be allowed to continue.

Works Department. In the case of works to be executed through the Public Works Department the limit should be raised from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 5,000. There will thus be a clear saving of the 12 per cent. establishment charges which the Local Boards have to pay to the Public Works Department. These savings could be utilized by the Boards in keeping staff of overseers of better calibre than the present one. The works executed by the Public Works Department are sometimes not to the convenience of the public because the Public Works Department sometimes goes by its own whims and ideas of scientific knowledge and keeps the public to weep over its own grievances. The Collector also in such a case remains powerless to assist the public. If, therefore, the execution of works is to a great extent left with Local Board overseers the voice of the public will be duly heard, their conveniences will be properly looked to and the Collector will be enabled to help the public in having the works in every way suitable to them. If works upto Rs. 5,000 are executed by the Local Boards with successful results the limit may then be raised to Rs. 10,000 and so on till the Local Boards attain to the efficiency of carrying out their own works without any assistance from the Public Works Department.

5. No. Such control is necessary for the efficient working of the Taluka Local Boards. However, the promotions, fines and granting of leave should rest with the Taluka Local Boards.

6. No. The present arrangements are quite satisfactory. The Local Board schools being in various villages of a taluka, and some of the members being not so well up in education, the management of primary schools at the hands of Local Boards will be very unsatisfactory and will lead to very undesirable results. With regard to this matter of so vital an importance there is a sort of parental duty on Government and that duty will satisfactorily be discharged if the management is left in the hands of Government.

7. No alteration or modification is necessary.

8. I do not know.

9. No. Each Board should be taught to stand on its own legs. If there be a good surplus at hand and no demand thereon to arise in near future in any particular Local Board, that Board will see its way to spend it on education in other areas and not otherwise. Thus no extra expenditure will be entailed. It is a matter of convenience only and it is bad economy to raise additional funds for that purpose.

(1) Raising of Local Fund cess to 2 annas maximum is undesirable. It will raise a loud cry from cultivators and cause discontent.

(2) In every Municipality half the yearly income goes towards maintenance of dispensary and education. So Municipalities will not afford to do this without impairing their own administration.

(3) No. All the three courses are undesirable

(4) Not as a rule. They may be in cases of necessity. Generally the Boards should cut their coat according to their cloth.

15. In my opinion the Provincial share of Land revenue and income-tax should be divided between the Provincial Governments and Local Boards; the share of the latter should be one anna in a rupee.

16. Yes. It should be in the ratio of half to half.

17. Yes; it will, I fear, suffer. However, 2/3rds of the Board should be elected and among 1/3rd there should be half non-officials and half officials. These should be nominated members.

18. Yes. In section 10 (2) the limit should be Rs. 24 instead of Rs. 48. This change is necessitated by the abolition of the old khata system and the introduction of Record-of-rights.

In section 10 (4) the limit should be Rs. 25 per mensem instead of Rs. 50.

There is no danger in extending the number of voters by reducing the qualifying limits. In order to prevent abuse it is necessary that the qualifications of candidates should be raised. Thus Local Boards will have educated and efficient members elected after hard competition.

Mr. Gopaldas V. Desai.

1. Yes.

2. No. In the administration of Local Funds there do not arise questions of varying or conflicting communal interest. The present number of members should be increased so as to admit of greater representation, as also to permit a sufficient number of official and non-official nominations.

3. It is advisable to nominate a non-official as President of Taluka Local Boards.

The President of the District Local Board in whatever form they may hereafter be retained should be the Collector, but the Vice-President should be an elected non-official.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should be given greater freedom in order to develop their capacity and interest in the concerns of the talukas.

The primary schools should yet be kept under the control of the Government Educational Department, but an Advisory Committee in each taluka should be appointed to offer suggestions and call for information with regard to the primary schools.

9. (1) The funds at the disposal of the Taluka Boards are too poor and require to be augmented either by giving them powers to raise the Local Cess or by larger contributions from the Provincial Revenue.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes, when need arises.

17. I have said above that the number of members should be increased. It is with a view to increase the number of elected majority say two-third to one-third of nominated consisting of officials and non-officials.

Communal representation is bad in principle and where that is not allowed there should be room for non-official gentlemen to come on the Boards through nominations.

Mr. Chimanlal K. Dave.

1. Yes. There should be two-thirds elected members on Taluka and District Local Boards.

2. No, as regards communities, but as regards "interests" I have expressed my opinion in my reply to the question No. 12.

3. Presidents of District Local Boards should be elected ones, while Presidents of Taluka Local Boards may be ordinarily nominated, but Local Government should be given power to authorize any particular Taluka Local Board to elect its President.

4. The present practice may be continued.

5. The present practice may be continued.

6. No. Management should remain as it is, but the educational charges should be borne more from the Provincial Revenue than from Local Fund.

9. If the above suggestions are carried out, then as regards IX (1) No. That should not be allowed. It would be a very heavy charge. But funds should be raised by levying cess on (a), (b), (c) of clause 3 and by the method suggested in 4.

10. The causes of the absence of real interest in the affairs of Taluka Local Boards are two—

(1) most of the elected members not sufficiently educated to understand their responsibilities leave things to be done by the official heads; and

(2) want of full scope for educated classes to enter Taluka Local Boards as elected.

I believe the members of District Local Boards are now taking interest. As for remedies against this want of interest I suggest the following:—

(1) Election in Taluka Local Boards should be thrown open to pleaders, graduates, and men who have passed any University examination without restrictions of income; and

(2) There should be a provision in law disqualifying a member to continue for the remaining portion of the term of the Board in case he has failed to attend a certain proportion of meetings in one official year.

11. I would like to substitute in section 10 (2) Rs. 3,000 for Rs. 5,000, in (3) Rs. 300 for Rs. 500, in (4) Rs. 20 for Rs. 50. Besides these Vakils holding sanads from the High Court, pensionable Government school masters and masters of non-Government schools registered for grant-in-aid drawing Rs. 20 a month, jurors, assessors, income-tax payers of Rs. 20, all graduates and non-graduates of any University should be qualified to be members of Taluka Local Boards.

12. All qualified under section 10 (2—6) and proposed to be qualified as suggested above should form a group by itself returning a certain proportion of elected members of Taluka Local Boards.

13. Yes.

14. Rs. 48 should be reduced to Rs. 30.

15. A proportion should be fixed by law.

16. Ditto to the above question.

17. If the elected members form two-thirds of Taluka Local Boards then the remaining one-third members may either be officials or non-officials as it pleases Government.

18. Replies to this question are included in answers to the questions 11 and 14 of the Honourable Mr. Sathe.

Mr. Giridhardas Mangaldas Desai.

I have nothing further to add to what I have already said in my replies. But I would strongly urge to the Committee that time is not yet ripe for handing over the complete management of the schools to the Local Boards, more especially in this Division of the Presidency. The Municipalities are also likely to be affected by such a change, and their interests too will, I hope, be well considered. I am strongly of opinion that the question of education should be allowed to remain untouched for some time to come. Every other autonomy may with safety be given. I would consider it a breach of faith if the intellectual welfare of the present rising generation and the future one is surrendered to persons who are not themselves well educated and who cannot well appreciate the needs of education. If other parts of the Presidency are well advanced so as to exercise powers with advantage both to themselves and the future generations, they may be given such powers of management and control. But this Division particularly is still very backward. The question of loans of teachers to the Municipalities as undertaken by Government when they handed over the management of schools to the Municipalities, will have to be seriously considered, and I respectfully submit to the Committee that the Municipalities should also be considered, before finally deciding the question of transferring the complete control of education to the Local Boards.

J. The Boards should have elected majorities.

The District Board is, however, in my opinion unnecessary. It hampers the independent growth of Taluka Boards. Every Taluka Board should as a matter of justice be an independent corporate body. Just as a Municipality is a corporate body of a Town or a City, so should a Taluka Board be a corporate body of a taluka so far as the local cess is concerned. It must have its own roads, etc., and it must, have an absolute right to spend its own money for its own benefit and for its own needs and requirements. It must grow and develop by itself. Condition of every taluka differ and every taluka should be allowed to grow on its own requirements. A taluka, cannot in fairness, be made to share the growth and development of another Taluka or works of very general utility. If a taluka is a poor one, it must have a few wants also. If it needs help Government should give it.

The Collector may be the controlling authority and may exercise powers of control as is provided in the District Municipal Act.

The Sub-Divisional Officers or the Mamlatdars should be *ex-officio* Presidents of the Taluka Boards and a non-official gentleman of experience and ability as Vice-President.

If Taluka Boards had been independent of District Boards, talukas would have ere long been developed more rapidly. Instead of big trunk roads, there would have been good roads in the taluka connecting every village; water-logging places would have been removed; nullas and culverts would have been built for the benefit of cess payers. Some more autonomy should be given to Taluka Boards than at present.

It would not be considered to be out of place if I were to quote, in support of my views, the opinions expressed by an old member of the Civil Service and the Government of Sir Philip Wodehouse.

Mr. J. Thelwall says: "The objection to the tax (one-anna Local Fund Cess) is that it is levied for a special purpose, and, as far as the majority of the people see it is not devoted to that purpose. Every man who pays the land revenue pays the local fund, and is aware of the object for which it is levied; but very few see any return for the money. The money, no doubt, is spent for the benefit (or for what the Collector and his Assistants believe to be the benefit) of the District; but either it is not an immediate benefit or it is a benefit which is at least doubtful or it is a benefit which the people generally don't appreciate or it is a benefit which the people do not see. Large sums are spent upon great lines of roads, for instance, but these lines are not always judiciously chosen, and so, though they may ultimately prove advantageous, they are not of immediate benefit, and they cost a great deal for maintenance. Some lines are undoubtedly of immediate advantage, but the advantages are perceptible only to the villages whose traffic they feed. The majority of the contributaries have hitherto no tangible return for the sums they have paid, since the institution of the funds, and discontent is the natural, the inevitable return, for there is not a village in the country which has not some public object upon which its contributions might be spent." (*Vide* Taxation Reports in British, India 1872).

The Government of Sir Philip Wodehouse also expressed their views in the following words:—"The limit of the (local fund) expenditure is the taluka; and it having come to the notice of Government that the receipts have, in some cases, not been strictly confined to the talukas in which they were raised, orders have been issued on the subject. Government are particularly anxious that the local funds revenues of each taluka should be spent, as far as possible, on improvements, etc., in it" (Bombay Administration Report for 1872-73).

2. Communal representation is in my opinion a wrong policy. Representation should purely be on the principle of "no taxation without representation." Any minority or any special community should have no special representation. It has an immediate effect in creating communal feelings and jealousies and the unsophisticated village cess payer, who have all along been living in full fellowship will learn to look upon his neighbour of another community with an eye of jealousy; it would disturb the peace and quiet life of a village and shall have an undesirable effect.

The present number is enough. But it may be raised in proportion to the number of cess-payers. The numbers of cess-payers vary in different talukas and districts, and the number of members of Taluka Boards should be in proportion to this.

3. For the present should be ex-officio. But provision may be made for a non-official one when such is available.

4. A separate Engineer for Local Boards of a district would be more economical and beneficial in the interests of the works under the Boards. He would supervise the work of various Overseers under the Boards and advise the Boards in matters of public works.

Checking the Taluka Board Budget (section 57) is nothing but a farce, inasmuch as there is hardly any Taluka Member who possesses any appreciably sufficient knowledge of the requirements of a taluka other than his own.

The Taluka Budgets may be sent to the Collector for approval as is done in case of Municipalities. Approval by the District Local Board should be dispensed with altogether, leaving the Taluka Board perfectly free to spend its own needs, and not contribute towards roads, culverts, wells, etc., in other talukas, except education proportion.

5. Taluka Boards should altogether be independent of the District Board and should have a perfect autonomy.

6. Primary schools should be entrusted to a body called the District Schools Board, consisting of Members elected from every Taluka Board, with Collector as President. The management, should however, be left with the Educational Department as at present. Every taluka should contribute its proportion towards Education. This fund should be named "The Local Boards Education Fund." Any surplus should be credited to the fund and may be spent for special improvements.

7. No change or modification is needed, except that where District Board is mentioned "The District School Board" should be inserted.

8. I hardly know of any such instance.

9. The Taluka Boards may be empowered to levy none, but the cess on education, vaccination, medical relief, trunk roads, etc., should, in my opinion, not form a part of Local Board's legitimate duties. These should be maintained from Provincial Revenues.

Local Boards should not be given any share from the several taxes mentioned in question 9 (3). It would be more proper if roads, vaccination, dispensaries, etc., are maintained by Government out of these taxes independent of Taluka Boards.

Provincial subvention may be increased according to the requirements of each taluka.

10. Yes, by creating a public conscience, and allowing them to profit or suffer by their own actions, and by allowing them to learn and improve by experience, with occasional gentle and encouraging suggestions, help and sympathy on the part of the higher officials. The leaders should also come in close touch of the people, and study their wants at first hand. This duty on the part of the leaders and representatives is wanting, if not elsewhere, at least in this division. The representatives of the various public institutions on the Legislative Council have hardly any acquaintance with their constituents, their wants and grievances, except through canvassing agents, and this much also so far as the voting is concerned. After the elections are over, every touch with the electors and their representatives cease. If the leaders and the representatives were to visit public bodies at important and convenient centres, and educate them as to their duties and responsibilities, study their wants and wishes at first hand, the objects of Local Self-Government will be amply fulfilled.

I therefore venture to suggest that regular publications of the reports of the working of the Boards, in vernacular, would to a great extent, create lively interest in their working on the part of the people. Publications of quarterly and annual accounts of income and expenditure should also be made.

The qualification of a voter and a candidate should also be raised.

11. No.

12. These classes have no claim whatever on the cess-payers.

13. The Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials. The Presidents should, for the present, be officials.

14. So long as the average elector is not aroused to some sense of responsibility and duty, a minimum is not advisable; nay on the contrary, to ensure satisfactory election, it would be well to raise the present figure, both for the voter and the candidate.

15. No.

16. Except the educational proportion the whole amount of the cess of each taluka should be left to the taluka itself.

17. Election franchise and corporate life on western principles is a new thing in this country. It is bound to develop and grow to the satisfaction of all. But this depends much upon the attitude of the members of the Subordinate Service.

Recommendations for nominations usually originate with the Mamlatdar, who forward them to the Sub-Divisional Officer. The latter in his turn forwards them to the Collector with or without any addition or alteration.

These two latter officers hardly have any personal knowledge about the nominees they recommend.

The Taluka Officers have invariably their likes and dislikes—based on what I should not like to discuss here—and these facts speak for themselves.

Elections, too, at times, are worse than nominations. But they are bound to improve if local officials allow them to be held without any sort of interference on their part. I am morally sure that there is hardly any election in which there is no hand of a local official. Notwithstanding Government orders, such interference does exist. Even the Legislative Council elections are not free from such interference.

Unless the local subordinate service allow the intentions of Government to be fulfilled, any extension of franchises is bound to be a failure for some years to come.

At any rate I am of opinion that the number of elected Members of a Taluka Board should be greater than at present, at least not less than two-thirds of the total number. The remaining number may be nominated by Government and should include non-officials, having agricultural interests in the taluka or the district, and who are themselves cess-payers. The number of officials should not be more than three, including the Sub-Divisional Officer, and in the Taluka Board and in the District Board including the Collector.

18. Clause (2) of section 10 is not fair. As property owner has no interest at stake with regard to the local cess. As the cess is paid by the holders of agricultural lands any other property holder is not entitled to any representation, and the principle of no representation without taxation should absolutely hold good here.

Clauses (2), (3), (4), (5), (6) and (7) are also unfair. Such persons may well be allowed a voice in a Municipal District, but a Taluka Board purely represents the interests of the agricultural cess. Persons mentioned in these clauses do not contribute towards the funds and it would be unfair to allow them any voice in the management of the funds.



Mr. Dolatram K. Pandya.

1. Taluka Local Boards need not have elected majorities at present. District Local Boards may have elected majorities, provided that the Collector as *ex-officio* President is authorised to exercise the right to veto a proposition which is not supported by two-thirds of the members thereof. The guidance of, and encouragement by, the Collector cannot be dispensed with under present conditions.

2. Election by communities is hardly advisable in an institution whose function is the general good of a Taluka or a District as an indivisible whole. The present number of members need not be increased except where the area of an electoral group is very large. The output of more and better work alone must be the justification for the increase in the number of members.

3. Presidents of District Boards should invariably be the Collectors of Districts. Taluka Boards may also be presided over by nominated officials (preferably Assistant Collectors) except where non-officials having time, inclination and capacity for work are available. In both the Boards the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials. Non-official Vice-Presidents must be actually residing in the talukas or districts.

4. Local Boards may be given the option of choosing their own agency for the carrying out of the public works provided that those works do not require expert knowledge or do not entail an expenditure over five thousand rupees. It is to be hoped that local supervision and zeal may make for cheapness without affecting the soundness of such works.

5. Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to appoint their own servants and to frame their own budgets subject only to the revisional jurisdiction of the District Board.

6. The time has not yet arrived when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards. It may be borne in mind that the villages or the groups of villages from which representatives are drawn have not yet emerged from the stage of elementary education.

7. The starting of private Grant-in-Aid Schools for imparting elementary as distinct from primary education may be fully encouraged. Expenditure on model buildings may be curtailed. A suitable school-house not inconsistent with the general condition of houses in a village is all that is needed. Local supervision by members of the Board may be more frequently invited and encouraged. The views of local members when supported by the Boards may be allowed to prevail as far as possible. A little more elasticity in the management of schools even at the loss of some uniformity may be beneficial in the long run. These are some of the points on which rules under Section 48 (B) of the Act may be altered or modified.

8. Section 48 (A) may be deleted from the Act. Each Taluka Board should be made to thrive on its own resources. Private subscriptions may be encouraged where money is scarce. The tapping of the vast yet wasteful field of private charity is a task which need not be considered as beneath the notice of the Local Boards.

9. The right of Local Self-Government cannot be said to have been cheaply purchased if it entails avoidable extra expenditure to be recovered from the masses, who care

more for their purse than for their rights. However, if the executive and deliberative functions are to be separated, some extra expenditure shall have to be incurred. That expenditure may be met from existing funds without any resorts to the levy of extra cess. Nevertheless, it is in the fitness of things that a cess may be levied on Abkari and Forest revenues as well as other revenues derived from land. The increase of Provincial subvention may only be sanctioned in cases of extreme necessity or proved success in the economic management of affairs of the Boards. Provincial bounties need not be allowed to degenerate into mendicancy on one side and charity on the other.

10. Without admitting the failure of District and Taluka Boards it may confidently be said that more zealous interest and active co-operation of non-official members can be secured by—

Firstly, the insistence by the presiding authority on the supply of information regarding the wants of the groups of villages by the non-official members.

Secondly, by the encouragement of initiative by such members.

Thirdly, by the patient hearing of full, free and fearless discussion even though that discussion may be tedious or may not be entirely germane to the point.

Fourthly, by not only feeling but also showing sympathy towards the propositions and suggestions of non-official members.

Fifthly, by in short acting the kind mentor rather than the unfeeling master.

11. *Vide* reply to question 13th. (in the first batch of questions).

12. It is very advisable under the present circumstances that the qualifications of candidates must be made higher than those of voters. If this is done, it will hardly be necessary for the formation of separate groups of electors with a view to secure at least some men from classes 2 to 6 given in Section 10 of the Act, to be made.

13. *Vide* reply to question 3.

14. *Vide* reply to question 18.

15. It is desirable to make the provincial share of land revenue and income tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. It is, however, not necessary at this stage to fix an uniform share for all the Local Boards. The circumstances of each district must in the beginning decide its share for a fixed number of years.

16. The proceeds from one anna cess after deducting its educational portion should be divided in equal proportions between the Taluka and the District Boards. Taluka Boards have much to do in the matter of the repairs of internal roads, removal of water-clogging, sanitation and so on, and so on.

17. The retention or otherwise of nominated members is not a question of administrative efficiency alone. So long as men of intelligence, culture and position are shy of courting votes of an electorate swayed by personal considerations, and indifferent to the merits of opposing candidates, nominations are absolutely necessary for maintaining the strength, the credit and the prestige of the Boards.

18. Lists of voters framed on records of rights are very likely to exclude many of the present voters. They will also include new voters. It is however safe to make the electorate as wide as possible. That being so it is right that the qualifying limits should be the ownership of land assessed or assessable at Rs. 32. Government servants drawing a pension of Rs. 25 per mensem may be included as voters. Pensioned first-grade Talaties may be included in the list of voters if only on the ground of their local experience for a number of years.

Mr. Jeshingbhai Bhaibabhai Patel, Barrister-at-Law.

1. I think District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities, there should be two-third elected members and one-third nominated members; out of the one-third nominated members one-half should be official and one-half non-official and at the time of nominations of non-official members the interest of important communities not represented by election should be protected by nomination.

2. I think election should not be by communities. The Boards not being wholly elected, Government would have the power to secure the representation of any important community left out unrepresented on the Boards. The present number of members on the District Board is not sufficient and it should be increased.

3. I think there should be no hard and fast rule that the Presidents of District and Taluka Boards should be non-officials. In some talukas and districts it is hard to get capable and desirable men for the posts of Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Taluka and District Local Boards from non-officials, but I think both District and Taluka Boards should have elected Presidents and Vice-Presidents, whether they be either officials or non-officials.

4. On this question I think the views of the Royal Commission upon Decentralisation should be adopted.

5. I think the Taluka Local Board should be freed from the control of the District Local Board both as to engagement and payment of their servants as well as sanction and revision of the budgets.

6. I think the management of the Primary Schools can be entrusted now to the District Local Board and I agree with the report of the Decentralisation Commission on this point.

7. I am not able to answer this question as I am unable to obtain a copy of Cumming's Local Boards Manual and the rules under Section 43 (b) of the Act.

8. I do not know whether the Taluka Local Board was ever consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. In order to meet the increased expenditure—

(1) I am not in favour of empowering Local Boards to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee ;

(2) I am against the suggestion mentioned in clause (2) of this question ;

(3) I think Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on (a) Income Tax, (b) Abkari revenue and (c) Forest revenue, at least two annas in the rupee to enable them to meet the increased expenditure ;

(4) I think Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. It is true that the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-officials. The causes are that the many people go on the Taluka and District Local Boards without having any capacity to work or with very little independent means to maintain themselves. These defects can be remedied by sending best men on the Boards from the district.

11. Yes, *vide* my answer to question 18.

12. I think there is no necessity of forming separate groups of elections from classes 2 to 6 given in Section 10.

13. I think it is not advisable to have Vice-Presidents of Taluka Boards invariably non-officials, even in the event of Presidents being officials.

14. I think the statutory minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 be reduced to Rs. 18.

15. I think it is desirable to make the Provincial share of Land Revenue and Income Tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. Local Boards should get at least two annas in the rupee.

16. I think it is not desirable to fix by law the proportion in which the proceeds from the one anna cess should be divided between the District and Taluka Local Boards.

17. I think if the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished, the administrative efficiency of the Board will suffer.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clause 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act—

(a) In clause (1) for Rs. 48 per annum Rs. 18 per annum be substituted.

(b) In clause (2) for Rs. 5,000, Rs 3,000 be substituted.

(c) In clause (4) for the words "fifty per mensem" the words "twenty-five per month" be substituted. Also I think graduates of any University, (2) Pleaders and Advocates residing in the local area be added in section 10.

Mr. Manecklal Harilal Vakil, B.A., LLB., President of Kapadvanj Municipality.

1. Yes.

2. Not by communities. In proportion to the magnitude or importance of special communities or interests special seats might be reserved.

The present number of the members of the District Local Board, Kaira, might with advantage be increased.

3. Taluka Boards must have official Presidents. District Local Boards may have non-official Presidents determined by election subject to confirmation.

4. In section 57 (b) the words "five hundred" may be replaced by "two thousand". Limitations on the execution of public works prescribed by section 61 must be retained.

5. Taluka Boards ought not to be freed from District Local Board's control in the matter of engagement of servants.

District Local Boards ought not to have the power to return more than twice a budget sent up to it for sanction by the Taluka Boards.

The District Boards ought not to have the power to modify a budget sent up to it by Local Boards [section 55 (b)].

6. Yes, subject to general supervision by the Educational Department.

7. Rules might be framed to suit the requirements of each division separately, or the present rules must be retained.

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. (1) Raising of the maximum up to two annas is hardly desirable.

(2) "Notified areas" might be extended and increased.

(3) Local Boards might be permitted to levy a cess on (a) Income Tax, (b) Abkari revenue, (c) Forest revenue.

Income-Tax payers hardly pay anything although they also enjoy greatly the benefit conferred from Local Board finances.

(4) Yes.

15. Division of the Provincial share of Land Revenue and Income Tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards is highly desirable.

Local Board's share must be one-third.

16. Yes. The proportion should be fixed by law. Equally.

17. Efficiency is not likely to suffer by Boards of elected members and nominated officers. There might be a little loss in despatch and strict administration, but immense gain in the extension of popularity.

18. Yes. Rs. 48 ought to be reduced to Rs. 30 in clause (1) and Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 200 in clause (2) of section 10.

PANCH MAHALS DISTRICT.

Mr. C. W. M. Hudson, I. C. S., Collector, Panch Mahals.

1. Speaking for this district I do not think it at all advisable. The Boards here have only just been given the franchise, so that a step forward has been taken. The maiden elections did not show that the electors took more than a perfunctory interest in the proceedings.

2. No. Special communities or interests can be represented by suitable nomination.

3. Not at all. Even the elected Vice-Presidents here are invariably officials.

4. This is only $\frac{1}{2}$ a district: so a District Board balance of Rs. 2,500 should be enough.

Section 57 (b) and section 61 cannot be relaxed unless the Boards are able to employ properly qualified engineers.

5. I think it should be possible to arrange for greater freedom under both sections. It should be quite possible to increase the Taluka Boards' incomes by a percentage to be worked out and let them engage servants. Section 55 is hardly ever used seriously, and the Taluka Board might be left to deal with its own budget.

6. No. I agree with the opinions expressed by Sir F. Lely and Sir S. Edgerley.

7. No suggestions occur to me.

8. No.

9. (1) I see no objection.

(2) Will be unpopular, and I doubt if it will give much relief.

(3) (a) Yes, but the relief will be small here.

(b) and (c). Yes, but will Government consent?

(4) Yes.

10. This is rather a "tall" question.

11. Already answered.

12. Not necessary here.

13. It does not necessarily follow.

14. Already answered.

15. 9 per cent.

16. Yes. After deducting the educational share the proportion should be as at present—
District Board: Taluka Board: : 7:3. The ratio was fixed by a Commissioner's Circular.

17. See answer to question 1. I advocate no change at present.

18. As above. No change is advocated.

I must apologise for the apparent curttness of some of my answers. My excuse is that I have been lately engaged on special work connected with crop failure, and have not been able to spare as much time as I should have liked for a more thorough study of the subject.

Paragraph 4 of the Government resolution does not apply here. I agree with paragraph 5.

Mr. Hamid A. Ali, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

I would point out that extensions of the elective franchise and several other progressive measures are unsuited to this district, where elections have been introduced since a few months only and with doubtful success.

1. No.

2. No. Representation of minorities should be secured by suitable nomination, not by election by communities. The present number of members is sufficient.

3. No.

4. Limitation should be modified only where qualified engineers are employed, which is not the case in this district.

5. Power under section 38 may be given to Taluka Local Boards, but no change as regards revision and sanction of budgets seem expedient.

6. Yes, I think the Honourable Mr. Lawrence's suggestion should be accepted.

7. In so far as to leave the Educational Department only general supervision and the duty of advising.

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8. No.
9. There is a Deputy Educational Inspector with Assistants in each district. The Assistants with their establishments could be transferred to District Local Boards and an educational committee appointed by each Board.

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Yes.
- (d) There would be no necessity if (10) is adopted.

10. There is, generally, a lack of co-operation, which is due to ignorance, want of public spirit, and narrowness of interests. These causes will only gradually disappear with "Political education."

- 11. *Vide* 18 below.
- 12. I cannot suggest and do not think necessary or advisable.
- 13. Not practicable here.
- 14. *Vide* 18 below.
- 15. Yes, 10 per cent.
- 16. No, because the circumstances of each taluka vary so much that no uniform proportion laid down by law would suit the case of each Board.
- 17. The present proportion should continue at least in this district, else efficiency is likely to suffer.
- 18. Not necessary yet. No one takes interest in elections here.

Rao Sahab Bhanu Rai Desai.

- 1. Certainly.
- 2. Certainly not. There is no such thing as special interest in the administration of Local Boards. The interest of cess-payers, whether they are Hindus, Mahomedans or Christians, is alike, and I deprecate any suggestion or proposal to bring in the question of any special communities or interest.
- 3. Certainly. They should be elected non-officials.
- 4. I am sorry I have not got the copy of the orders referred to in the question.
- 5. Yes. The Taluka Boards should be made more independent than at present on the lines suggested in the Decentralization Commission Report.
- 6. Yes. I fully approve of the recommendation of the Commission on the point.
- 7. I am sorry I have not got Cumming's Local Boards Manual.
- 8. No.
- 9. No. Agriculturists are sufficiently, I should say, overbated and I am entirely against any proposal to raise the Local Fund cess on land.
 - (2) Yes. If any, only if due representation of villagers by election on Notified Area is secured.
 - (3) (a) No.
 - (b) Yes.
 - (c) Yes.
 - (4) See answer to question No. 15.
- 10. Absence of elective majority and real responsible powers are in my opinion responsible for any lack of interest on the part of non-official members.
- 11. No.
- 12. No.
- 13. See answer to question No. 3.
- 14. The present limit of assessment requires no alterations.
- 15. In my opinion all progressive revenue must be made divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. I would put down Local Boards' share to be 15 per cent. This along with one-anna cess on Land, Abkari, Forest and Irrigation revenues ought to suffice to put the House of Local Boards in order.

In that case the question of the increase of grants does not arise; such grants should be for some special limited purpose.
- 16. Yes. One-half.
- 17. I do not see how the efficiency will suffer. I rather think that a Board consisting of two or three officials and the remaining members elected would be an ideal Board with non-official Presidents sympathetically guided by those officials.
- 18. No.

Mr. Ismailji Abdulkhusen Shaherwalla.

1. My reply is in the negative. For this district it should, in my opinion, suffice if the number of elective members is kept at one-half of the total number (excluding the President).

2. I think it would be well if each community is allowed to have a representative of its own on the Boards. If this proposal be accepted the constitution can be framed by the Collector with reference to the interests of the several communities. I also think that the number of members should be increased so as to secure efficient management without extra cost to Boards, provided of course good men are available.

3. For this district I must frankly admit that the non-officials have not done anything to deserve the appointment of a President either of the district or of a Taluka Local Board. These onerous duties can be entrusted to them only after they have displayed themselves as efficient members. The present Code contemplates the framing of work committees, etc., and these committees have been framed in some places. In my opinion, they are only in name. I would suggest that before entrusting any further powers to non-officials the Code should be brought into more practical working than at present and the members made to understand their duties thoroughly well.

4. The limit of Rs. 500 for works other than roads laid down in section 57 (b) can with advantage be raised to Rs. 1,000. Such works are generally carried out by Local Board agency and the estimate of the Local Fund overseer can be accepted in such cases after scrutiny by the President. Public Works Department frames estimates on the standard of Government works while the execution of works by the Local Board agency is done on the standard of private works. Public Works Department estimates are thus over-liberal and leave margin over which no efficient check can be maintained. Again, Local Boards have to pay for the preparation of plans and estimates. It would thus, in my opinion, be economical to raise the limit to Rs. 1,000.

5. Sanction of the Taluka Board budgets by the District Local Board is only formal. Taluka Local Boards are the best judge of their needs and they can be authorized to work independently within the funds at their disposal. The pay of Taluka Local Boards' servants should, however, continue to be paid by District Local Board as the Taluka Local Boards cannot be expected to pay these charges unless their funds are supplementary. It is also desirable, to secure uniformity in a district, that the power to appoint a new clerk or a servant or to revise the pay of those already in employment should continue to rest with the District Local Board.

6. My answer is in the negative.

7. I have no modifications to propose.

8. The question can be answered by reference to past records.

9. I have not suggested the appointment of any additional establishment, but even yet the Local Boards here are financially unable to carry out their functions to the fullest extent. There are no dispensaries except at taluka head-quarters and there are no sanitary arrangements even in important villages like Shehra, Vejalpur, Gerbada, etc. With their present income the Boards are not in a position to organize any systematic measures on these purposes and the like but it is necessary that quinine should be distributed gratis in rural areas more freely than at present and Sanitary Boards or Committees established for all important villages or groups of villages. These, however, will need extra funds, and these can be met by permitting Local Boards to levy a cess on Abkari revenue and Forest revenue. As regards income-tax, I leave it to the Collector to decide whether it would be advisable to levy the cess on taxes. The proposal to establish Notified Areas hardly feasible in this district, but Sanitary Boards or Committees can be encouraged as suggested above. I am not in favour of increasing the rate of cess, as the rayat here is too poor to bear any extra burden. As regards the increase of Provincial subventions, I would say that they will not require to be increased if the Local Boards are permitted to levy cess on Abkari and Forest revenue; otherwise an increase in Government grant is very essential for a district like the Panch Mahals, where the Boards have a limited income and the rayats are too poor to bear any extra burden.

10. I have admitted above that the members do not take sufficient interest. This is either because they are incapable or because they do not care to take interest. I think if efficient management is to be secured without extra costs to the Boards only capable men should be nominated as members. And as regards elective members, I would suggest that those who may be found incapable or lacking in taking interest should be announced disqualified for election again.

11. I have no addition to propose.

12. I do not think it would be feasible to carry out the proposal, but in case it be I see no objection.

13. I agree that the Vice-President of Taluka Local Boards should be a non-official in places in which capable men are available for the post. The appointment should, however, be by nomination by Government.

14. I have said above that the Rs. 48 limit should be reduced to Rs. 30.

15 and 16. I am unable to answer these questions for want of necessary figures.

17. As suggested above the number of members should be increased and half the number should be of elective members and the other half should be nominated. Of the nominated members I think $\frac{2}{3}$ should be non-officials and $\frac{1}{3}$ officials. The nomination should be entirely by Government.

18. Limit of land assessment Rs. 48 may be reduced to Rs. 30 and that of Rs. 50 for pensioners to Rs. 25 or 30.

Mr. Dwarakadas Motilal Desai.

1. Yes.
2. No. There is no such thing as special interest in the administration of Local Boards. The interest of cess-payers, whether they are Hindu or Mahomedan or Christian, is alike. The present number of members is sufficient.
3. They should be elected non-officials.
4. I am sorry I have not got the copy of the orders referred to in the questions.
5. Yes. The Taluka Local Board should be more independent than at present on the lines suggested in the Decentralization Commission Report.
6. Yes. I fully approve of the recommendation of the Commission on the point.
7. I am sorry I have not got Cumming's Local Board Manual.
8. No.
9. No. Agriculturists are sufficiently, I should say, overbated and I am strictly against any proposals to raise the Local Fund cess on land.
 - (2) No.
 - (3) (a) No.
(b) Yes.
(c) Yes.
- (4) See answer to question No. 15.
10. Absence of elective majority and real responsible power are, in my opinion, responsible for the lack of interest on the part of non-official members.
11. No.
12. No.
13. See answer to the question No. 3.
14. I am of opinion that the present limit of assessment requires to be lowered to Rs. 16.
15. In my opinion some progressive revenues must be made divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. I would put Local Board share to be 15 per cent. This along with one-anna cess on Land, Abkari, Forest and Irrigation revenue ought to suffice to put the house of Local Board in order.

In that case the question of the increase of the grants does not arise. Such grants should be for special limited purposes.
16. Yes. One-half.
17. I do not see how the efficiency will suffer. I rather think that a Board consisting of two or three officials and the remaining members elected would be an ideal Board with non-official Presidents sympathetically guided by the officials.
18. No.

BROACH DISTRICT.

Mr. W. O. Alcock, I. C. S., Collector of Broach.

I would make the following remarks in general.

There is nothing to justify the proposition, so commonly assumed true, that Local Boards fail from apathy. There is plenty of interest in all concerned, and any amount of desire to loyally co-operate in matter of public interest.

But the Boards are tied and bound by account complexities, and account forms, and detailed rules of procedure.

Even the average Official President is at sea in dealing with the clear question: "What funds have we available from time to time."

It is no so much lack of funds that is in fault. Many Boards find themselves yearly with large balances. Indeed we keep too big balances, under the Accountant General's orders

But we have not the staff for efficient execution of work. It is idle to expect non-official members to do technical checking of work out-turn, etc. They have no proper power to put irregularities right. Their inspections from being fruitless become mechanical.

Without efficient executive officers we cannot get the cheapest rates and are lucky if we secure contractors who are "indifferent honest."

We do not need changes of detail in reconstitution of Boards, in the constitution of electorates, in the procedure of office administration.

We do need emancipation from the swaddling-clothes of our dry nurse, the Public Works Department; and from the strait waist coat put upon us by the Local Fund Account Department.

There is probably no branch of local public life in which it is so easy for officials and non-officials to work in complete harmony as in Local Board work.

We do need more funds; but still more do we need a simplified procedure, especially an account procedure, and an efficient executive.

1. Most persons seem to think that there should be an elected majority. My own opinion agrees with that of the experienced Deputy Collector, that the point is immaterial. Mr. Joshi notes that - to avoid mere position-seekers—elegibility for election should be qualified by *residence within the group*.

2. All here are unanimous against election by communities.

For myself, I think it unsound in principle.

Some gentlemen suggest an increase in members; but idly.

3. Election of Presidents; should they be non-official.

There is a certain amount of prejudice in favour of elected non-official Presidents.

This is, however, irrational prejudice; though harmless enough.

The correct view is that it matters nothing whether Presidents be official or not; provided (if non-officials are wanted) that fit men be forthcoming, and that (if officials be appointed) they lay themselves out to make their measures intelligible to the members.

Officials would often be *elected* if the right to elect be conceded.

4. There is great unanimity that Local Boards should entertain a competent Engineering staff of their own.

Of course the present Overseer class is hopeless; a useless incubus.

They think the restrictions on Local Fund works in favour of the Public Works Department are alike obsolete.

5. Emancipation of the Taluka Local Board.—

This is an obvious reform: a cutting-away of red tape.

A few officials cannot emancipate themselves sufficiently from the bonds of habit to advocate the change: non-officials are free to admit its advantage; and do so.

6. Education—

Municipal management of schools is not encouraging.

Taluka Local Boards take no notice of the school inspection reports which go to them for scrutiny.

In truth Local Boards do not want the schools. They cannot be bothered with the details, but they might tinker with appointments in the interests of party or of friendship.

The opinions of those consulted are very diverse: those who have thought out the working of the Schools Committees oppose the change.

There is no sort of popular dissatisfaction with the working of the Educational Department.

7. The matter (rules under section 48 (b) is a technical one which arouses no interest here.

8. No. The Taluka Local Boards do not object.

The only feeling of *the sort* is that of individual villages, which irrationally imagine that the Local Fund Cess levied in the village ought to be spent on public village works.

9. (1) Increase in the rate of Local Fund Cess would be universally unpopular. People would prefer to grub along. Personally I think that it is not called for so urgently as to make it worth while.

Almost all agree that a cess might be levied on (a), (b), (c). (I. T.; Excise; Forest.)

(2) Will not make much difference: is not worth discussion.

There is no serious demand for further Provincial subventions—which would be most injudicious.

Indeed it is not appreciably to officially raise expenditure on reforms of method: not possible to raise it on effective* public works (we have not the staff to cope with the present works programme).

10. Lack of interest by non-officials.

This appears to be admitted by most: causes assigned are—

Failure to find proper men:

Lack of responsibility of members:

For my part I should say that there is no lack of interest at all: that men are forthcoming, and willing to work.

But the Executive is weak, and the Boards have little or no hold on it.

11. Additions of qualifications:

Unnecessary and futile.

12. Possibility of grouping electors:

There is no lack of representation of the classes 2 to 6 (section 10) on the present Boards.

13. It is essential to have one man appointed who will burden himself with details. A Vice-President's functions are mainly routine, and no one but an official would carry them out.

Qualification of voters: limit.

14. The minimum of Rs. 24 is commonly suggested.

But the present electorate is satisfactory.

Division of Provincial share of Land Revenue.

15. This question appears to be over the heads of most men consulted.

To me it appears needlessly subtle and a needless breach in precedent.

16. Division of income between District and Taluka Boards.

Those consulted do not seem to have thought out this question; an equal division is suggested.

No fixed proportion of division is needed. Each Board has its own thought-out method of division—which is quite fair in all cases I have seen.

The real determining factor is not abstract principle; but what facilities exist for spending and for execution of works by the several Boards.

17. Abolition of nomination of non-officials, etc.

There is no question of efficiency; we have to get useful men where we can find them and cannot do without (1) the officials, (2) nominated good men who are too proud to canvas at elections.

It is very strongly felt by gentlemen of position that to stand for election is not dignified. Hence the principle of nomination, so far from being disliked by the better classes of Indians, is extremely natural and congenial to them.

18. Qualifying limit.

What good does anyone expect to gain by extending the electorate when a considerable number of the present electors care little or nothing?

It is true that Local Board elections arouse a great deal of interest in the villages; but it is mainly amongst a small knot of village leaders.

It is generally felt that—

(1) Local Board incomes must be increased.

(* The Public Works Department's extravagance at present is so exhausting a drain.)

- (2) If Local Fund Cess be levied on Excise, Forest, etc, things will work out pretty fairly—one district having a large Excise revenue, another a forest revenue, etc. Further; distribution equally between districts would be possible.
- (3) If 2 annas in the rupee is to be levied, the extra amount must be taken by villages (or at most talukas) for a specific work of utility within the area of levy.

Mr. H. K. Kirpalani, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

1. District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. I think there is a growing appreciation of the honour and responsibilities of election both on the part of members and their constituents. Recently a case came to my notice in which a member failed to secure re-election ostensibly on the ground that "he did nothing" for his constituents. At the same time there need be no apprehension that elected majorities will prove unruly. Experience of municipalities does not point that way.

2. Election should not be by communities. There is no room for any conflict of interests between the various sections of the rural population. Whether a well should be sunk and a road repaired are matters in which all are equally interested. What is really wanted is that all parts of a taluka or district should be properly represented. (Further please see 12.)

The number of members should be increased to, say, 24 in the case of all boards.

3. I think the Presidents should be officials.

The case is different from that of municipalities, inasmuch as non-officials are rarely acquainted with all parts of a taluka or a district in the same way as revenue officers are. Local Board members would moreover stand in need of guidance, which can be best given by officials.

4. All plans should be prepared by Local Board establishment, and those above Rs. 500 should be approved by the Executive Engineer.

All works should be carried out by Local Board agency, but those for which plans and estimates have been approved by the Executive Engineer should be certified by him to have been properly carried out.

It should however be left to a Local Board to have any work of special importance planned and carried out by the Executive Engineer.

5. I think the District Local Board should retain its control over the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants in order to ensure that there is no waste of money over excessive establishments, and that the scale adopted is uniform throughout the district.

The Taluka Local Board should be altogether independent as to the preparation and revision of budgets. The present practice of submitting budgets to the District Local Board for sanction serves no purpose but that of delay. Control is purely formal.

6. I prefer the present arrangement to continue. So far as my experience goes, I think that boards of all sorts are ill-adapted for managing educational institutions.

7. I think rules 13 and 14 about buildings require to be relaxed. It is no doubt desirable that schools even in remote villages should be housed in model, up-to-date buildings; but the difficulties in the achievement of this ideal are great and often insuperable. The District Local Board, for instance, has no such absolute choice of sites as appears to be implied; and the carrying out of standard requirements, specially in case of extensions, is often impossible. The result is protracted correspondence and the constant shunting of plans, etc., between a number of offices. In my humble opinion, airy, well-lighted buildings is all that is required at present and Local Boards may be trusted to provide these, without too much expert advice.

8. No; but I am not aware that any occasion for this has arisen.

9. (1) Local Fund Cess should not be enhanced. The mere fact that such a cess would yield the largest revenue, is in my opinion, not a sufficient ground for resorting to it. Land already bears more than its due share of the burden of taxation. Other sources, e. g., Excise should be tapped. I am not in favour of a cess on irrigation revenue either; for it is merely a cess on land. Should the cess be raised however, I am strongly of opinion that it should be spent on areas more strictly local in character, than a taluka or a district.

(2) The establishment of Notified areas in all large villages, would not in my opinion, be a fair solution of the problem. It would in the majority of cases merely amount to making the agricultural community of those areas pay twice for the services it receives. Where however there is a large non-agricultural population, e. g., in taluka towns or industrial centres the establishment of a Notified area would be justified.

(3) (a) *Cess on Income Tax.*

The bulk of the income tax of a district comes from towns, which generally have Municipalities. In Broach out of a total of Rs. 58,377 last year Rs. 41,453 came from the city. The proportion in Ahmedabad must be greater still. Now Municipal areas do not receive any direct benefit from Local Funds. A cess on income-tax would thus be represented as a tax on urban for the benefit of rural areas.

Personally, however, I take a different view of the question and consider that the benefit derived indirectly is considerable. The cotton trade and industry for instance benefit by an improvement in country roads. So does every consumer of grain and other agricultural produce in towns and cities. A cess on income-tax for the assistance of Local Funds is thus theoretically justifiable. But at the same time the political effect of such a cess deserves to be considered. Direct taxation is almost universally disliked. This is specially so in India; and I believe an increase in the burden of income-tax would make that tax more hateful than ever. If, however, the cess is imposed I would suggest that the limit of exemption, as far as the cess is concerned, should be raised to Rs. 2,000 at least in the case of fixed incomes.

(b) and (c) A cess on Abkari Revenue is the one I would advocate. The advantages are clear. It is an indirect tax; and though a tax on consumption, it falls on luxuries like liquor and opium which are generally held to be injurious. No one need complain of it for he can avoid the incidence if he likes. The proceeds would be considerable. If it is adopted there is no need to bind ourselves to the rate of one anna in the rupee. The rate may be as high as 10 per cent. or better still 12½ per cent. The only argument against it is that it would not be equally productive in all districts.

But is the Local Fund Cess? Ahmedabad with its nearly treble the area of Broach gets about as much from it as does Broach. If a new vigour is to be infused in Local Boards by giving them powers of taxation, there is no need for any hide-bound uniformity. Let local resources every where be taxed—whether Abkari, Forests or any other; and let provincial subventions be reserved for those areas which are deficient in such resources.

If the argument about unequal productiveness proves a stumbling-block, I would suggest that a cess on all the abovementioned resources should be pooled and should form a fund from which Local Boards may be assisted according to their needs. It may be objected that money raised in one area will under this system be spent in another. But the objection applies with equal force to several items of imperial and provincial expenditure and the only answer to it is that we cannot apply a *quid pro quo* theory of taxation in a very narrow sense.

(4) The figures adduced in the Honourable Mr. Lawrence's note make out a case for increased subventions from provincial revenues but I cannot indicate the proportion in which this increase should take place.

10. Local Boards are in my opinion thoroughly successful so far as their work goes. What is meant by their failure, is that non-official members take but little interest in them. This lack of interest is thus the very fact which constitutes the failure, and not the cause of it. The chief cause is, I think, lack of funds and the uninteresting nature of the work to be performed. The bulk of the income of Taluka Local Board is spent on the current and special repairs of existing works, in the carrying out of which there is no question of 'aye' or 'nay'. The new works to be carried out are similarly more or less fixed beforehand. There is therefore little room for initiative or interest. What is wanted is that the Boards should have more money for carrying out projects and that a little life should be infused in their work. I will give two instances of how this last might be done. At present exemption from payment of school fees is quite automatic. But if exemptions are hereafter determined by the Board, in the same way as exemptions from taxes are settled by Municipalities, members will have something worth fighting for. Secondly, if the Boards are to be given powers of taxation, I would propose that the taxes should be renewable by a periodical, say, triennial vote; and that the Boards should be free to impose not a fixed but a varying amount, say, between 3 pies and one anna. When members know that it is not Government but they themselves who have to provide funds for the improvements they want carried out, that they would incur odium for increasing taxation, or paralyze their activities by repealing it, they are far more likely to develop an interest in their work and a sense of responsibility than when voting petty sums for annual tile-turning of schools or an occasional increase of pay of the Pagi of some unknown dharmshalla.

11. I would suggest the following additional classes of voters:—

(a) Persons who have passed the Vernacular School Final or any higher examination.

(b) Persons who have advanced sums of Rs. 50 or above to a Co-operative Society for a period of at least 6 months prior to the framing of the list.

12. Persons referred to in clauses 2 to 6 of Section 10 may from special electorate for the purpose of returning one or more members for the whole taluka. This would be in addition to the representation they enjoy in common with others. The elections could be held at various centres as in the case of Council elections.

13. Vice-Presidents should be non-officials. I cannot say "invariably", as my official experience is confined to two districts only. But I think that except in rare cases, there will be no dearth of proper men.

14. Please *vide* 18 (1).

15. I am unable to offer any opinion on this point.

16. The proportion should be fixed by law—25 per cent. going to the District Local Board and the rest to the Taluka Local Board.

17. I think that in the interests of administrative efficiency the power of appointing non-officials should be retained. It could also be utilized to secure due representation of special interests wherever necessary.

I would suggest the following constitution as a model :—

Elected members	...	...	16
Nominated (a) Officials	...	...	4
(b) Non-Officials	...	...	4
Total			24

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits, as under :—

- Clause (1). From "Rs. 48" to "Rs. 30"
 „ (2). From "Rs. 5,000" to Rs. 2,000".
 „ (3). No change.
 „ (4). From "Rs. 50" to "Rs. 20".

Mr. N. A. Parnaik, Huzur Deputy Collector.

1. Even though the Boards were allowed an elected majority, the result would be the same. It might be conceded that the present Boards do not make vast strides in supplying the wants of the people, but their constitution has nothing to do with this supposed failure. The area in their jurisdiction is extensive, the wants are innumerable and the funds to meet them are limited. At present the Boards are practically in the hands of Officials and to say that they are failures is to assert that the Officers who guide them are not competent for this part of their duty. The crippled state of the finances is the main drawback and the improvement of the funds must therefore be chief object. If it is thought fit, the total number of members constituting a Board may be increased by one and one-half and two-thirds of it may be reserved for election.

2. The present District Local Board consists of 15 members including the Collector who is *ex-officio* president. Five of these members are elected by the five Taluka Local Boards, one by the Iramdars and one by the Broach Municipality. The remaining seven include 3 Officials and 4 nominated members.

This number may be raised to 22 including the *ex-officio* President. 14 of these seats may be filled up by election, three may be reserved for the Prants and the Treasury Officer and the remaining four allotted by nomination.

The Taluka Local Boards of Broach, Jambusar and Ankleshwar have 17 members, Wágra has got 14 and Amod 13 including the Prant as the *ex-officio* President.

This number may be increased to twenty-one and two-thirds of the seats may be reserved for election.

The Local Boards are intended for looking to the wants of the people living within their limits and only those who contribute to the revenue should have a voice in spending it as of right and any suggestion for a preferential treatment must be discouraged for more than on reason.

The groups should be so arranged as to give a fair chance to every community of importance and if any of them be left out, the defect should be made good by nomination.

3. The Local Boards require Officers and Members who would be constantly moving. A thorough knowledge of the whole charge is a necessity and personal interest should not be allowed to interfere with the precedence to be given to the various works. No non-official can be expected to possess all of these qualifications. It is therefore advisable that there should be Official Presidents as long as the funds are limited.

4. If the Boards entertain the services of a well-paid staff, the monetary limit on the preparation of plans and execution of works may altogether be removed. Such works as are of local importance should be left entirely to the Local Board Staff and others which are of wider significance may be entrusted to Public Works Department for a continuity of the Policy. There are certain works which require sound professional advice while there are others which can safely be left to a Taluka Overseer, whatever the total cost might be. The first set of works requires the help of the Public Works Department even though the cost might not be much, while some of the second sort are unnecessarily sent to that Department, purely for the money limit.

At present the District Local Board has to pay a little over Rs. 5,000 a year to the Public Works Department for the establishment charges, review charges and audit charges and a greater part of the amount requisitioned by that Department is spent on works which can safely be left to an intelligent master. The thing to be guarded against is fraud; but the Local Board can have a competent and trustworthy establishment of its own within the amount of Rs. 5,000—and the supervision of members would be an additional help.

5. For more than one reason, it is necessary to continue the present practice. The whole establishment, borne on a gradation list, can then be maintained, there is sufficient scope for encouraging a good work and punishing faults.

The budget estimates can scarcely left purely to the Taluka Overseer and an independent scrutiny is necessary before they are passed.

6. There will be a difference of opinion on this point. The transfer of the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards will increase its importance and will certainly be a stimulus to the members to take greater interest, but the Educational Department will be loathe to lose this power of patronage. At present the Deputy Educational Inspector or of his Assistant visits a school only once in the year in his examination tour, but when a Local Board School Committee would be formed, the supervision would be closer. If Municipalities are entrusted with the management of the primary schools within their limits, there is no reason why Local Boards should be treated otherwise.

7. This change would require an amendment of rules Nos. 7 and 8 by substituting the words District Local Board in the place of words Government Educational Department and a similar formal amendment will be necessary in rule No. 11 of the rules made under section 48(b) of the Local Boards Act.

8. This point was never raised in this District.

9. (1) The raising of the cess would be unpopular.

(2) The establishment of notified areas would be a very small relief. If Government would relieve the Boards of Expenditure on Educational, Medicine and Sanitation, it would be a substantial relief, but the Boards would then be merely a minor Public Works Department and the members will lose interest in these important matters.

(3) To allow the Boards to charge cess on Income-tax, Abkari Revenue or Forest Revenue would be a source of irritation and introduce complications.

(4) It is therefore advisable to increase the amount of Government help in proportion to the money spent on Education, Medicine and Sanitation.

10. The District and Taluka Local Boards are not a failure. For want of funds no marked progress can be shown. A native as a rule loves ease. For want of sufficient education most of the Taluka Board Members cannot assert their position and sometimes self-interest induces them to give in. Time will bring about the much-desired change.

11. Graduates, Pleaders and certain other persons of Education are allowed to vote at Municipal elections and question No. 11 seems intended to elicit an opinion on the eligibility of these persons in Local Board elections. I am not in favour of introducing this element in Local Boards because, these men have no direct interest in the Boards and as they will lead the debate the real representatives of the people will be thrown in the back ground.

12. No separate groups need be made for persons falling under classes 2 to 6 given in section 10 as these persons are elected if they have sufficient local influence.

13. The interests of Officials and non-officials are not so antagonistic, as the question seems to insinuate. No hard and fast rule need be laid down and the Vice-President may be an Official or non-official according to the circumstances of each Board.

14. The present number of voters is sufficiently large. It might go down a little by the statutory limit of Rs. 48 but such a reduction in the number is welcome. It is not advisable to reduce the limit and to bring in men of poor means in the Boards with whom certain members would object to associate.

15. Any proposal to pay a fixed portion of the provisional share of the Land Revenue and Income-tax to the Local Board will never be acceptable. Government have certain claims to meet. They can therefore contribute as much as they can spare and this they will pay as grants to the Board.

16. No hard and fast rule need be laid down.

17. There must be a few seats reserved for nomination and to bring in a really useful person who won't stand as a candidate at the elections and to remedy the defects of the election.

18. The qualifying limits presented in classes 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 need not be reduced as such a reduction would make room for men of poor means to be on the Boards, which is not desirable for more than one reason.

Mr. N. M. Joshi, District Deputy Collector.

1. There is no harm if elected majority is allowed on condition that the candidate elected is a resident of the group for which he is elected. What happens at present is that a man living in head-quarters represents a tract which is about 30 miles distant. The elected candidate gets second-hand information. His interest is never one with the locality he represents. If this condition is not possible I would like to have a majority of the nominated members selected from each group.

2. No. There is no use having election by communities. There is no distinction of caste and creed in the rural area. If there is any such distinction it is in the mind of the so-called advanced people, in the advanced Towns. The election of a resident candidate removes all the social difficulties.

3. I tried to appoint non-official Vice-Presidents and I could secure only two men—Thakors of Amod and Kerwada. If a man of lower position is selected even as Vice-President the Board is not likely to work impartially. When we can not get impartial Vice-Presidents, it is not possible to get Presidents from the non-official class. If the idea is to allow the non-officials to use their own money and influence in any way they choose, any President can do, and you will get as many as you want. At present they want power without any responsibility. There is no social, moral, or internal sanction to prevent him from acting in his own way: Legal sanction can easily be evaded.

It is true that an official native belongs to the class from which such materials are to be elected or selected. It is moral control of the head of the District Administration that keeps him straight. If the head of the District Administration is suspected, there is no way to the solution of the question in the present condition.

An experiment may be tried. All non-officials be elected as members and let there be an elected President in the rural area. The Local Self-Government will, I believe, come to an end sooner than it is expected.

4. I would put down the limit to Rs. 5,000 in order to allow Local Boards freer hand.

5. The Taluka Local Boards ought to be under the control of the District Local Boards. Budget ought to be brought to the notice of the District Local Board.

6. In the urban area the Municipalities are not able to manage their schools. Those who have to work in the Municipalities are aware of the unspeakable state of things. I would not allow Primary Education in the present conditions in the hands of even the District Local Board.

7. I suggest no alteration.

8. No.

9. (i) The Local Board should be allowed to raise Local Fund Cess up to two annas. The villagers would not object to the raising of the tax if a certain proportion is reserved for the improvement in the village.

(ii) The scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be extended.

(iii) Local Fund Cess should be levied on Abkari and Forest revenues. It matters very little if there is inequality. The area in which there is larger income will be better served.

(iv) I have no experience.

10. As a rule the non-official members take no interest. They come forward as candidates simply to have the honour of sitting with Government Officers, or some such sentiment. If any work is entrusted some of them would expect remuneration (self-interest and not the ideal with most persons). It is hopeless to expect any work until their minds are enlarged or some positive reward is offered to induce them to work. At present the reward is that their agricultural work is made easier and they are considered busy bodies in the eyes of the villagers.

11. The Land Revenue limit be reduced to Rs. 25 (including Local Fund Cess).

12. I cannot suggest any means.

13. It is a good step towards educating people if Vice-Presidents are non-officials. The difficulty is in finding a man in whom people have faith. It ought not to be compulsory, but our purpose will be served by an executive order.

14. *Vide* answer to question 11.

15. I am not in favour of the division. The Local Fund Cess, if increased, will be enough for the local improvement. The increase must be spent in the village in proportion to the amount paid by the village.

16. It should be fixed by law. 6 pies of the proceeds should be given to the District Local Board and the 6 pies to the Educational Fund; 6 pies to the village and 6 pies to the Taluka Local Board. The reply is made on the assumption that 2 annas in the rupee will be levied as Local Fund Cess.

17. The Board may be made elective if the non-official member is the resident of the group which he represents. In this case the officials only should be nominated. The efficiency of the Board depends on the guiding head, and not on the units of the Board.

18. The qualifying limit be reduced to Rs. 24 Assessment.

Mr. Keshavlal Chhotalal, Mamlatdar of Broach.

1. There is no objection if District and Taluka Local Boards elect majorities but then, I think, we should increase number of groups in a Taluka. Two-third may then be elected and one-third nominated.

Election should be restricted to *resident voters* in groups.

2. I think we should increase the number of present members, *viz.*, 24 in Taluka Local Board and 36 in District Local Board. This is village representation and hence the number should be more than on Town Municipal Board.

If election to *resident voters* is restricted, I think there is no reason why we should make election by communities. Rajput, Bohra and other Hindu castes who are learned do and would always stand on Board and in Local Boards (unlike municipal) there is no special work but village interests to be preserved. If some caste is backward, still the other learned members would advantageously represent them. They do even *now*. Personally I am fully convinced in this.

3. In rural tract, I am of opinion that at least Presidents of Taluka and District Local Boards should invariably be *officials*. They are touring officers and have got lot of opportunities to look to village interests. Vice-President should, in this case, be *non-official* where available (as a rule). This is also consonant with villager's opinion with whom I had casual talk.

4. I think there would be no objection at all if plans and estimates up to Rs. 3,000 are prepared by Local Fund overseer and works up to that extent carried out; at present plans and estimates over Rs. 500 are sent to Executive Engineer for review but we will require for many purposes the services of District Local Board supervisor of Rs. 250 per mensem who should be an *L.C.E.* and he can do this work.

Our Local Fund overseers are, in a majority of cases, with few exceptions, not men of intelligence and character and if some highly paid official supervises, we will get better work.

Works over Rs. 3,000 can be done by *Public Works Department*.

5. I think the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants and sanction and revision of a Taluka Local Board Budget should remain, as at present, with District Local Board.

The above things are virtually done by Taluka Local Board and the sanction of District Local Board is *nominal*.

In our present rural state, some check is required.

6. So far as my experience goes, I think the time has still not come when the management of Primary Schools should be entrusted to District Local Board.

There is some moral check over masters from Educational Department and we see the deplorable state in certain Municipalities regarding the result of management of schools owing to partial influence of several members. No loss is caused by the management of school by Educational Department but on the contrary we see improvement; secondly our sources are also restricted. The present state of things can, advantageously, continue.

7. I do not see any alteration in rules under section 48 (b) of the Act for determining the relations between the various Local Boards and Educational Department in educational matters is required. Virtually all these matters are done by Local Board and appointment and supervision, which is the legitimate duty and better done by Educational Department, can safely be left as it is.

8. The District Local Board is the best available authority for deciding that the revenues raised in the District should be spent on *education*. It does that now.

It would be clearly fettering the hands of District Local Board if one Taluka Local Board revenue is not allowed to be spent in *other areas of the District* with that Taluka Local Board's consent; at any rate the District revenue should not be spent *in other District*.

This is an educational matter and concerned with District arrangements and only District Local Board should do this. It may consult, if it likes, the Taluka Local Board.

9. (a) Yes: there is great necessity to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee:

At present I have had lots of complaints that in some villages though they have been paying Local Fund for many years past, no work is done in them. This is no doubt a pitiable state of affairs but owing to our restricted resources and expenditure of large outlays on education and roads, we have to spend little on village conveniences.

In former times when village revenue was restricted to the expenditure on that village after deducting some portion, wells, tanks, which we see and welcome at present, were done.

Even before this I had had a talk with villagers in some talukas and they agreed with me that if two annas are taken, they would not object but the additional amount of 9 pies in the rupee should at least be spent on *every village*. This opinion was at random. We get this reference now. District Local Board can then have one anna three pies for education, roads, etc., in taluka.

If in one year, some work to be done, cannot be executed owing to lack of funds, every year's amount should be collected and credited to that village and work done

when 3 or 4 years' revenue is amalgamated. Even from villages' amounts, any work can be done in that grant if essential.

If this is not done, I am positive, the increase of cess to 2 annas would be looked on with utter discontent. Even in increase Resolution, Government should kindly refer to this to gain confidence of the public.

In some cases, the roads which connect one or two districts should be provincialized and Taluka Local Board roads be improved which are in bad condition.

(b) So far as I know, there are few important villages worth turning "Notified area" If there are any, they are made into such.

Other villages of smaller importance have Sanitary Committees and these work a good deal in sanitation.

I should put the village having 1,000 souls or more, or if even with less population, it can be termed into "Notified Area" if it has any trading importance and on Railway station.

Even in this and Sanitary Committees' villages, there is agricultural population and both (Notified area and Sanitary Committee area) should be relieved of expenditure on Education, Sanitary, Medical, etc. They pay cess and there is large scope to do other work. The funds are not extensive and when two annas in the rupee is taken as Local Fund Cess, the Local Boards should continue to do the works referred to in this question.

(c) I would not go in for Local Fund Cess on income-tax. It is a tax on some villagers who own lands also in villages. They pay Local Fund Cess also, and this would be double increase and will be looked with discontent.

In towns, the income-tax payees have also to pay many taxes of Municipality and hence there also, it is undesirable.

(d) There is no objection if Abkari revenue is taxed with Local Board Cess. The cess would be nominal and licence fees are a voluntary fee on part of shopkeepers. They make profit at cost of villagers as a rule and the additional revenue would be a most welcome income for better utility. On the interests of villages as a whole. Though this is unequal in districts but it matters not.

(e) Forest revenue is also contract work like shop licence and it should pay Local Fund Cess as we get on occupancy price of land and trees' sale.

10. Yes: it is true that there is lack of interest and absence of active co-operation among non-official members but of late it is improving a good deal and great energy is being shown. The only way to remedy is to throw more responsibility on these non-official members as is done on official ones.

11. I do not see any addition to the qualifications of voters is necessary but if suggestions for reducing the limits of qualification referred to in Honourable V. J. Patel's question, are carried out the desired object will be achieved.

12. There is no necessity to form separate groups of electors with a view to secure at least some men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10. If they are really deserving, the villagers would elect them as elected members as is done in Local Board election where intelligence and leading public interest are valued. Even if this is done, such men would come as nominated members and for this even nomination of non-officials is necessary.

Yes: Most certainly it is very desirable that President of Taluka Local Boards should be official and Vice President should invariably be non-official. For latter it should be a rule but in case where none is available, there would be no help.

14. I would suggest adoption of statutory minimum assessment of Rs. 24 per annum in lieu of Rs. 48 per annum.

15. As I am not in favour of cess on Income-tax, I have not ventured to show the division of the share of Local Revenue and Income-tax between Government and Local Board. If, however, cess is levied on Income-tax, the share should be 2 pies and 10 pies between Government and Local Board as is done in certain city survey cases with regard to land sale. Even it may be half to half without objection as Government will have to increase their subvention.

16. At present it is the standing obstacle that Taluka Local Board gets only $\frac{1}{4}$ th of its revenue. This is really less and much important work is left unredressed for many years. If the cess is increased to 2 annas in rupee, 9 pies be reserved for each village, 5 pies for Education and 10 pies for District Local Board. District Local Board can then do work for the conjoint interest of Taluka Local Board or District Local Board as a whole.

17. Yes: I am of opinion that the administrative efficiency will certainly suffer if appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. In election we see that there is great corruption and influence. The nomination is never a matter of partiality with President, District Local Board, who looks to the interests of the Board from a fair point of view. In my experience the Boards, when they get some nominated selected non-officials, are fairly represented—even election has brought in some undesirable persons.

The nomination is strictly of *non-officials* and in our village rural Local Board area this rule is a preferential advantage though there might on the face of paper look otherwise. Practical advantage is also to be seen.

18. (Section 10, Local Board Act.)

- I. The assessment of holding should be reduced to Rs. 24 per annum from the limit of Rs. 48 owing to plane table, etc.
- II. The limit of immovable property should be reduced to Rs. 1,500 from Rs. 5,000 in value. Houses in villages are not of higher value and a man of Rs. 1,500 house would be considered a fair intelligent voter.
- III. The limit of net earnings of Rs. 500 per annum should remain as it is ; men of less earning than this are not desirable.
- IV. The limit of pensioned Government servants should be reduced to Rs. 25 from Rs. 50 per mensem.

Mr. Darabhai Raghunathji, Mamlatdar of Jambusar.

1. The District or Taluka Local Boards should be given elected majorities. Now much interest is not taken in Local Board work by elected members. The reason is that they know that they are in a minority, their proposals cannot be carried out and they have not the moral courage to oppose the proposals put up by Government officials, for the fear of incurring their displeasure. Some Government officials are not also trained to exercise self-restraint. They think too much of themselves.

2. The election should be by groups as is the case at present. Any man of whatever community, if he has the merit and if he tries to be elected, has ample opportunities of being represented in this taluka ; besides, there are no other special interests whose representation is necessary by special representation. The present number of members on the Taluka Local Board is 17 and the number may be increased to 20, by increasing the number of the groups.

3. I would wish that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials. But it would be difficult to obtain men fit to discharge the trust, men who have an idea of public duty and men who will not serve their own purpose out of the authority entrusted to them. In order to avoid the evil of the appointment of unfit men to these posts, provision may be made in the law for the appointment of non-official Presidents only in those places where such men are available. The President should be by election but the power of confirmation of the election should be reserved by Government.

4. The present rules provide that the estimates of works costing more than Rs. 500 should be approved by the Public Works Department and works costing more than Rs. 2,500 should be executed by the Public Works Department. The Local Boards have trained overseers and sub-overseers and so the sanction of the Executive Engineer to works costing less than Rs. 1,000 should be done away with. As regards execution of the works by the Public Works Department, I am of opinion that Local Board works should not be entrusted to Public Works Department whatever be their amount. If the Local Board staff is not trained enough to execute any work requiring special engineering skill, the services of trained Public Works Department officers can be obtained from Government. The means of Local Boards are limited. The execution of works by the Public Works Department is always costly. The worst principle in the execution of Local Board works by the Public Works Department is that the Local Board has no control over the works done by the Public Works Department. The Local Board members are not given the files of the estimates and of the works and they are not allowed to inspect the works at all. No private man will allow his money to be spent by other men in this way. The sooner this is stopped the better it will be in the interest and self-respect of the Boards.

6. The primary schools cannot at present be managed by the Local Boards. The present practice should continue for some more years.

7. The rules under section 48 (b) do not require to be altered.

8. The Taluka Local Board has never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka Local Board to be spent on education in other talukas. The Taluka Local Board has no means to know whether its revenue is thus spent out of its jurisdiction.

9. (1) The Local Fund cess may be increased to annas two per rupee.

(2) Notified Area Committees are not possible in this taluka.

(3) The Local Board should be permitted to levy a tax on income-tax, Abkari and Forest revenues.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased and some more roads should be provincialized. This taluka is the worst in the district in the case of road communications and so some roads should be made in the taluka.

10. The failure of the Boards is not admitted in this district and I cannot say that the Boards have failed in this taluka. There is some truth in the charge against the members that they do not take sufficient interest in Local Board work. This is because the members have nothing to take interest in. In the case of Taluka Local Boards some portion of its income is

devoted to educational work and a greater portion is appropriated by the District Local Board : so a very small amount remains with the Taluka Local Board which is absorbed in current expenditure, such as repairs to roads and wells. A very small amount remains over by which the Boards cannot take up new works or new responsibilities. This being the case, the members do not much meddle in the routine works. The District Local Board members are generally distant from the place where their money is spent. Many of its works are executed by the Public Works Department and a District Local Board member has no authority to inspect their works executed by the Public Works Department. The remedy is that the Boards should have full control over their funds and that the Taluka Local Boards should be made more free with regard to the execution of their works and should be given a fixed portion of their revenue which they can spend as they like. This will create a sense of responsibility in the members and then they will naturally take more interest in their work.

11. Educated men are not sufficiently represented and it is only they who are expected to take an intelligent interest in the work. All graduates of any University, all pleaders and all men who have passed any University examination should be allowed to vote and to become members.

12. I cannot suggest any means. Under the present rules all have equal opportunities. No special representation is necessary.

13. When Presidents are official the Vice-Presidents should always be non-official but they should be elected by the Board. Government should reserve the power of rejecting any man who is not fit.

14. The present figure of Rs. 48 is sufficient in this taluka but in talukas where the assessment is low and where there are many small khatedars the amount may be reduced to Rs. 30.

15. The Local Boards may be allowed one anna in the rupee of the Provincial share of Land revenue and income-tax.

16. The share of the Taluka Local Boards in the total revenue of the taluka should be fixed. At present District Local Boards have appropriated as much as they can and the increased amounts have always been spent near district head-quarters at the expense of distant talukas. The proportion should be four pies in the rupee and it should be fixed by law.

17. The Boards will not suffer if the number of nominated officials is reduced. At present out of 9 nominated members only two are officials and this proportion is sufficient.

18. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2 and 3 of section 10 do not require to be reduced in the case of this taluka. In the case of clause 4 of section 10 pensioners drawing a pension of Rs. 15 per month may be allowed to vote and be members, because these men are more educated than an ordinary khatedar. The present limit of Rs. 50 is very high and it excludes many qualified men.

Rao Saheb Ambashankar U. Malji.

1. Yes.

2. No; the number of members should be increased both in the Taluka and the District Boards.

3. Yes; non-official elected Presidents will be available, but they should be assisted by a Chief Executive Officer.

4. The Public Works agency is very costly and should be entirely dispensed with. An experienced engineer should be engaged by the District Local Board and he shall supervise all the taluka works and prepare and revise all plans and estimates.

5. Yes; the Taluka Local Boards should be entirely freed in the matters mentioned. This is merely routine.

6. If Government are pleased to continue their Deputy Educational Inspectors assigned to the district and if the District Local Board is compelled to engage an Inspector of Schools, I think the management of schools can be undertaken by the District Local Boards. I, however, cannot solely count upon School Committees. A whole-time Inspector would be absolutely necessary.

7. This is a matter of details and the rules should be modified to meet the principal changes when the same are decided upon.

8. No.

9. (1) No; unless this additional levy from each individual village is guaranteed for use within its own limits. As a last alternative to the following, this cess may be raised by six pies on the above conditions.

(2) As the districts are not connected by a net-work of railways the idea though laudable cannot be enforced. It is suggested that if the restriction specified in clause 3 of section 187 of Act III of 1901 is removed, this would be the best solution. I would then be in favour of Notified Areas.

- (3) If these sources of Government revenue are to be made to contribute a certain ratio the suggestion may be accepted. The question is, however, not clear; and I do not desire to add any taxation on the subject.
- (4) If the Provincial subventions are fully allowed and enforced that would be enough. No increase will be necessary.
10. No; the non-official element is not able to look after a very unwieldy charge. The groups are very large and the members have, therefore, to depend upon the overseers. Without a whole-time engineer the overseer's work cannot be checked or tested. Unhappily the rules and the agency are not encouraging in this behalf. The smaller the group the better the supervision.
11. Yes; members of rural Co-operative Societies, wherever the same exist, should be included.
12. Yes; it would be much better to have one general group of all these voters and this will attract some trained element in the Local Boards. I would also suggest to reduce pension figure from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15 only, so as to bring in pensioner school-masters and karkuns and thus add to the usefulness of work.
13. Certainly it is desirable.
14. Rs. 24.
15. It is desirable to give a share to the Local Boards from Land revenue and income-tax. Such shares should respectively be in the ratio of $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$.
16. Yes; the proportion should be fixed by law at $\frac{2}{3}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$.
17. No; nomination should be one-third of election.
18. It is already mentioned in answer to question 14 that the limit in clause (1), section 10, should be reduced to Rs. 24 and in clause 4 to Rs. 15. The limits of Rs. 5,000 in clause 2 and of Rs. 500 in clause 3 may also be similarly reduced to Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 300 respectively.

Sardar Rao Bahadur Motilal Chunilal.

1. Yes.
 2. No.
- Due representation of any special community or interest can be secured by nomination.
- I think that there should be not less than 24 members on any Board, of whom two-thirds should be elected. I do not approve of communal elections.
3. I think the time has come to give the District and Taluka Boards non-official Presidents where available, who may for the present be nominated.
 4. My opinion is that the District Local Boards should engage their own engineer and prepare the plans and execute public works. It will considerably facilitate work and the cost of the engineer and his establishment will be less than the total amount of fees paid to the Public Works Department by the Local Boards.
 5. Certainly. The Taluka Board being made absolutely free there will be more enthusiasm in the members and facilitate the execution and completion of works.
 6. I am not in favour of the existing arrangements in regard to the maintenance and management of primary schools even by the Municipalities in many of which it is not possible to get eligible members to serve on a School Board and the difficulty will be greater in regard to District Board. I would, however, strongly recommend that all the primary schools including those within Municipal limits should be placed under a distinct School Board for the whole taluka formed on Joint Committee system, i. e., by election of three or four members by the Taluka Board and in the case of a Municipality two members with a President of its own; the officers of the Educational Department and others who take special interest in education being nominated in the proportion of two-third elected and one-third nominated. The Joint Schools Committee should be quite independent of the Taluka Boards and the Municipalities. Their income will be one-third of the Local Fund plus the fees, Government grant and the Municipal grants fixed with reference to the number and expenditure on schools within the Municipal limits.
 7. The answer to this question can be given only after my suggestion about the formation of Joint Schools Committee is accepted or rejected.
 8. Not to my knowledge.
 9. I think every Taluka Board maintains an overseer and a karkun and the establishment is sufficient for its requirements. If after further experience any addition is required it will be so small as compared to the revenue each Board will get under my suggestions in answers to questions No. 9 (3) and 15 that it will be very easy to meet it without any embarrassment. It will, however, be necessary to create two additional appointments of Assistant Deputy

Educational Inspectors, as there are, I think, three of them, while the number of Taluka Boards is five in the Broach District :—

- (1) I am not in favour of it, as the amount of Local Funds on the Abkari and Forest revenues, if approved and sanctioned, will give a fair addition to its present income.
- (2) All villages with a population of 3,000 and upwards may be so notified, and half the amount of the Local Fund, except the Educational portion realized within their limits made over to the Committees for expenditure within the Notified Areas. The schools and dispensaries should not be handed over to them. Sanitary, conservancy, roads, lighting, repairs and construction of wells and tanks should be their responsibilities.
 - (a) No.
 - (b) Yes, at one anna per rupee. I would use the words "Excise revenue" instead of "Abkari revenue".
 - (c) Yes, at one anna per rupee.
- (4) Yes, only when the Local Board revenues are at one anna in a rupee on Land revenue, Excise and Forest. As also the share from the Provincial Land Revenue and Income-tax (*vide* my answer to question No. 15—The Honourable Mr. Patel's) falls short of the requirements of a Local Board.

10. It is true. The causes are that the executive power being vested in the Official Presidents and Vice-Presidents, the members have not much to do except act as deliberative or consulting body.

11. There is scarcely any one of importance in village communities left out.

12. It will not be possible to form such separate groups. My experience is that men falling under clauses 2 to 6 are able to secure elections at present without the existence of separate groups.

13. Most certainly.

14. I think Rs. 24.

15. I think the Local Boards should be given one-sixteenth of the Provincial share.

16. Yes. The ratio should be equal division between the District and Taluka Local Board. The former should bear the cost of the establishment of the District Local Board, that of the Engineer, the dispensaries of the district, maintenance of stallions, upkeep of the Travellers' bungalows and the construction and repairs of all roads the length of which exceeds five miles and the planting and rearing of trees on the sides of the said roads. All the other works are local and should be left to the Taluka Local Boards who will not lack funds if the levy of one anna cess on Excise and Forest revenues and payment of one-sixteenth part of the Provincial share of the land revenue and income-tax is sanctioned. These items together with the existing Local Fund revenues will raise the total income of the District Local Board to about twice the present amount. The District and Taluka Local Boards will then be able to produce substantial works of sanitation, water-supply and communication, and protect the health of the masses of rural population by opening more dispensaries.

17. I am not in favour of abolishing the appointments of non-officials by nomination. There ought to be at least 25 per cent. of the total number by nomination to enable Government to give representation to minority. It may also in some instances be found that a competent man has not been elected who can discharge the duties of the President or Vice-President. If there are nomination seats it would be possible for the Collector to recommend a competent man. Not more than half of the total number of nominations should be of officials.

18. I would beg to propose the following reduction :—

- Clause. (1) Rs. 24.
" (2) Rs. 3,000.
" (3) No reduction is required.
" (4) Rs. 15.

*Mr. Haribhai Jhaverbhai Amin, Member, District Local Board,
Broach, Jhadeshwar.*

1. Yes.

2. No, never. I am not in favour of election by communities, because it would introduce a new element of discord and disunion amongst the people. In order to ignore distinctions of caste and creed the representations of any special communities or their interests should be discouraged. The number of members should be increased to not less than 24.

3. Certainly. It is advisable to have Presidents of the District and Taluka Boards elected non-officials.

4. The preparation of plans and the execution of public works should be done by the District Board themselves through their own Engineers and their staff to be employed by

them. By so doing expenses will be less and the savings shall be more from what the boards have to pay at present to the Public Works Department..

5. Yes. Taluka Local Boards should have full control over Taluka Boards' servants regarding their engagement, payment, etc., and should have full powers to pass their own budgets. This step will encourage the members of the boards to work with zeal.

6. Really. It is now time to hand over the management of primary schools to the District Boards provided a *special district educational board* is appointed to watch and manage the working, etc., of the schools in each district. I fully concur with the report of the Decentralization Commission, paragraphs 751 to 754.

7. Yes. It does require some alterations and modifications here and there at present, but the desirable changes in this section, 48 (b), depends on the solution of the above question No. 6.

8. No. Taluka Boards are never consulted. The budget is prepared by the Educational Inspector and sanctioned by the District Board and hence Taluka Boards have no means to ascertain the Educational receipts and expenditure pertaining to their respective talukas.

9. No. It is not necessary to increase the rate of one anna cess. The cess-payers are more than heavily burdenned in different ways and their burden requires to be reduced. Such a proposal requires most careful consideration, and I firmly say that such a step would be a most unpopular measure and would inflict and add great misery on the cess-payers.

(b) No. Local Boards should be relieved of the present burden of expenditure but I think such a measure as extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act would not make the desirable effect and hence the measure in question seems unnecessary.

(c) Yes. The Local Boards should be permitted to levy a special cess on—

(a) Income-tax.

(b) Abkari revenue, including Excise in general.

(c) Forest revenue.

(d) The provincial subventions should be increased so as to enable the boards to meet with their full requirements.

10. Yes. It is no doubt true that the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members is mainly due to two reasons :—

(1st) That the District Boards and specially Taluka Boards have hitherto not possessed free powers and responsibilities owing to want of funds and excessive control.

(2nd) Because officials do not freely mix with the non-officials and accept their salient views.

11. Yes. The additions to the qualifications of voters must be made as per section 12 of the Municipal Act.

12. No. I do not think it is necessary.

13. I am strongly of opinion that the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Taluka Boards should be invariably elected non-officials.

14. The present statutory minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 under Section 10 (a) should be reduced to Rs. 10.

15. It is most desirable in the best interests of Local Boards to divide the Provincial share of Land revenue and Income-tax between Provincial Government and Local Boards. The Local Boards' share should be at least 10 per cent. of the Provincial share of Provincial Land revenue and Income-tax.

16. Yes. It should be fixed by Law, that the proceeds of one anna cess should be divided half to half between Taluka and District Boards after deducting its Educational portion.

17. No. I do not think the Boards would at all suffer if they are constituted of elected members and nominated officials, the proportion of official members only being not more than one-sixth of elected members.

18. The following reductions I deem necessary under section 10 :—
Sub-clauses (1) Reduction of Rs. 48 to Rs. 10.

” (2) Do. of Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 2,500.

” (3) None.

” (4) Reduction from Rs. 50 to Rs. 10 per mensem.

Budget.

1. The preparation of the Taluka and District Local Board budgets should be entrusted to a Finance Committee (Select Committee) composed of 1/3 members of the General Board, but in the case of District Board the Committee will be represented by at least one member from each taluka of the District.

The Finance Committee shall prepare a general outline of the budget and submit the same before the General Board for discussion.

2. Every member of Taluka and District Local Board shall be provided with a copy of their final budget and also with a copy of the general outline of the new budget at least eight days before the General Board meets for its discussion.

Election and Nomination.

3. Some qualifying limits should be fixed by law for the candidates who stand for election or nomination.

Office and Staff.

4. (a) District and Taluka Local Boards should have a separate office of their own, apart from the Collector's or Mamlatdar's office, which is nowadays used for the purpose.

(b) The District Local Board should have two paid Secretaries, one for general execution of the works and the other to work under the *District Educational Board*, which would look after the education of its district, starting with Rs. 100 and rising upto Rs. 200 with some staff to help them in the matters.

(c) The Taluka Board should also have one paid Secretary for general execution of the works starting with Rs. 40 and rising upto Rs. 80.

Working of the Boards.

5. It should be fixed by law that not less than certain number of meetings shall be held by District and Taluka Boards every year and that the meetings shall be held in case of—

(a) *District Board*—at head-quarters and in different taluka towns and in some selected big villages by turn.

(b) *Taluka Board*—At head-quarters and in some selected big villages.

6. Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the District and the Taluka Boards should travel in the district and should take with them such member of the Board who is residing near their camp to inspect works and study the requirements of the people of surrounding villages.

7. The system of inviting votes by circulars should be discouraged and it should be made a law that Sub-Committees of the District and Taluka Local Boards shall at least meet twice a month and transact the work then. This will save postal charges and will create enthusiasm and give them a chance to freely exchange their views very often.

8. Village panchayats should be formed in every village for the administration of certain local affairs within the villages.

9. The District Local Boards should be empowered to levy pilgrim or fair tax of not more than one anna in their own Districts where such fairs are held or pilgrims meet and the boards shall have the like power to abolish such a tax when they deem it necessary. This will secure a substantial monetary help to the board and the general public won't grudge to pay the same.

Mr. Jivanji Limbji, Member, District Local Board, Ankleshvar.

1. I am of opinion that District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.

2. I am strongly opposed to election by communities. As it is members of different communities are properly represented and an enterprising member of any community may, if he chooses, easily get himself elected. In some Talukas a person belonging to the backward classes perhaps cannot succeed in securing votes. But in a proper case Government can, by nominating a member from amongst such classes, secure representation of those classes. I consider the present number of members sufficient; they should not be increased.

3. I think it inadvisable to have at this stage non-official Presidents of District and Taluka Boards. The people are not yet sufficiently educated and public spirited to conduct the business of boards without trained and experienced Presidents to lead them.

4. I beg to suggest in a general manner that the execution of public works should not be carried out by District and Taluka Boards. It is quite natural that the members cannot personally superintend the work done by the servants of the Boards. They cannot spare enough time to do so. Consequently everything is left to the Overseers, who feeling themselves free from responsibility are not, I am sorry to say, scrupulous enough to get the best quality of work done for the money spent. I would suggest that the execution of the public works should be entrusted to the Public Works Department. In the Public Works Department the Overseer is watched by his superiors who are generally well-paid officials of great respectability; and so the quality of work done is much superior to the work done under the Boards' supervision.

6. I am emphatically opposed to entrusting the management of Primary Schools to District Local Boards. The time is yet much far off when they can undertake such responsible task.

9. I am of opinion that to meet the increased expenditure of the Boards, they should be empowered to levy a cess on—

(a) Income-tax.

(b) Abkari revenue.

(c) Forest revenue.

Provincial subventions should also be increased. Government has been every year effecting a large saving from the Land revenue. Why should that source be not tapped and Government contribute towards this expenditure by paying 1 anna in the rupee on the Land revenue? The ryot pays as much; why should not the Government do so? But I am strongly opposed to empowering Local Boards to raise the Local Fund cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee. The poor ryot is already taxed beyond what he could comfortably bear. I should therefore always resist any attempt to increase the land tax. Nor can I approve of the idea of relieving Local Boards by establishing "Notified areas". Few District Municipalities could bear additional expenditure.

13. I do not see why the Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-official. Any fit person from amongst the members might be appointed. A trained and experienced official is in many cases better than a private gentleman.

14. It is necessary to vary the present figure of "Rs. 48." I should say it might be "Rs. 30." By extending the franchise thus a good many deserving "Khatedars" would be made to take an intelligent interest in their local politics and a new spirit would thereby be engendered.

15. I may repeat the suggestion made in paragraph 9. The Provincial Government should be made to give to Local Boards 1 anna in the rupee on the Land revenue collected.

16. I am of opinion that the District Board should have a free hand in determining what proportion of the proceeds from one anna cess should be assigned to each Taluka. The existing arrangement is good. Under it a more needy Taluka can be helped in various ways.

17. I am of opinion that the existing state of things is quite satisfactory. It need not be disturbed.

Sardar Naharsingji Eshvarsingji, Thakore of Amod.

1. Yes. If precautions are not taken to get in only the best available men the situation will not be bettered.

2. I am not in favour of creating special electorates so far as District and Taluka Local Boards are concerned. There the questions are such as can be satisfactorily looked after by men of all communities. Besides it is inadvisable to keep out capable men on the ground of their being members of particular communities, and fill their places by incompetent men. Those who claim to come forward must rest their case on fitness.

3. I think at present the Collector should remain the President of the District Local Board, and the Assistant or Deputy Collector the President of the Taluka Boards. There are obvious advantages in the arrangement. What is wanted is a capable body of members under a capable guiding and controlling agent.

4. It will effect considerable saving if the Local Boards can make their own constructions. This will necessitate the employment of an officer of superior grade to supervise the works under the direction of the Taluka Overseers, who may well be trusted to carry out works under a more vigilant supervision by the members of the Board.

5. Yes. The Taluka Boards may well be allowed subject to the approval of the District Board to appoint their servants and make their own budgets.

6. No. The question is not very clear. If it is meant to suggest that the costs of the inspecting staff, etc., should fall on the Boards, it is not a very commendable idea. If the idea is to leave the entire management of the primary education to the Boards, even then the time is yet not ripe for it. The question of education is a very complex one, and the proper way to deal with it is to supply local needs according to the general principles. A co-operation between the Board and the Educational authorities is essential and the present arrangement will do.

7 and 8. I am not inclined to give my opinion on these questions as they concern details and they may best be settled after certain definite amendments are made.

9. I am not in favour of any additional taxation on the agriculturists of the District. The amount realised should be quite sufficient for their needs.

I am not in favour of introducing the Municipal Act in villages under the guise of giving them notified areas, for that will bring in its train a number of charges for which the groups will have to find money and at every ten years new taxation will have to be devised.

It is undeniable that the wants of the villages are at present inadequately supplied; whether in matters of education, or of roads, or supply of good water, etc., the reasons are obvious. The funds at their disposal are not sufficient, and it is necessary that a greater portion of the local fund should be spent on the district from which it is levied and very substantial grants out of the Provincial revenue should be made towards the same end. There is no room for further taxation, and I am respectfully of opinion that the question of additional taxation ought not to be handled except after a very full and detailed inquiry, which could not be secured by the procedure adopted by the special committee.

10. Yes. The causes are: the required abilities are wanting in several cases; the members are not encouraged to be sufficiently useful; the officials have been very anxious to have everything to themselves and they have been always regarded as useless ornaments or

encumbrances. Even where there are members who do understand their business, being in the main purely agriculturists and dependent on the Revenue officers in a variety of ways, they have not the moral courage to make their voice heard.

Their remedies will be opportunities to get in men of education and independence, proper treatment of the members and assignment of adequate duties to them.

11. Pensioners might be allowed a freer scope to come and there should be a reduction in the qualifying test.

12. Yes. A group may be formed which can elect suitable members. The qualifications should however be considerably reduced.

13. Yes.

14. About Rs. 30.

15. My view is indicated above.

16. Every taluka should receive a share in proportion to its share of the cess paid by it, to be varied according to the difference in the requirements of the different talukas. Population should be taken into account. Backward talukas and talukas where the backward classes predominate should be treated liberally. The proportion cannot be fixed by statute; it should be left to be settled by the District Local Board with the approval of the Commissioner or the Government.

17. There ought always to be a certain number of members nominated by Government. I am not inclined to make much difference between a nominated official and a nominated non-official. It is always the nature of the appointments that matters.

However, if the non-official number is never larger than one-fourth of the whole body I should be satisfied.

18. It will be well if a larger number of voters could take part in the elections. I do not think lowering the limit of the qualifying tests would arouse greater interest in elections. Whatever the reasons these elections do not attract men of status, ability and independence. Only those who can manipulate, who can canvass from door to door, irrespective of merit or character, carry the election.

Mr. Bhasahib, Member, District Local Board, Broach.

What little experience I have of the working of the Local Board leads me to the conclusion that nothing hampers so much the upward progress which tends to widen the scope of Local Board works as the want of adequate funds.

Two conditions seem essential to any further development of such institutions which not only aim at usefulness of its scope but is intended to educate the public on the lines of Local Self-Government: (1) Realisation of their responsibilities by individual members; and (2) increased funds. Unless some means are devised by which our income can be increased and membership be made more attractive the educative effect of any measure is bound to fail. It is in this connection that I wish to offer my humble suggestion.

Press Note on this subject in reference to Government Resolution No. 6444, dated 18th August 1915, shows that Government intend amending the Act on the line suggested by the Decentralization Commission which will surely give freer scope and greater responsibility, so I will only venture to suggest means by which we can increase our income without increasing the burden of taxation on general tax-payers, and to achieve this end as one of means I propose the assumption of the management of all Liquor-shops by the District Local Board. In doing so we can easily convert the large profit which is being made by the semi-illiterate shop-keepers as an additional income, to the great advantage of the general tax-payers. No data are available to show the actual net earnings of these shop-keepers in this district, but presumably it ought to be enough to leave a large margin after meeting the expenses of running such shops including the expenses of paid shop-keepers whom I think we can get from Rs. 15 to Rs. 25. If this suggestion is found reasonable we will not only have additional income but the public will get back substantial return of consumers' money and at the same time diminish the chances of fraud which the greedy shop-keepers are too apt to practice upon illiterate consumers. It is certain that a paid salesman properly supervised will not have the same opportunity to make illicit gain as these shop-keepers have now, whose purse is benefited by such fraud. Besides, the head of the district, *i. e.*, the Collector, who is the virtual head of the Abkari Department for the District, will still remain the head with perhaps increased powers, as the President, District Local Board.

The discussion which followed the introduction of the resolution on this subject at the last meeting of the Legislative Council clearly shows that Government will not be reluctant to approve of a scheme by which we can increase our income without any fresh burden; and in view of such state of things an enquiry into the matter like this will be very useful. I would request the President to consult the officials concerned whether there would be any departmental objection in our stepping into the places of these shop-keepers and to collect data as to the earnings, etc., of these shops.

All I desire is this, that our Board should consider this suggestion after collection of such materials as seem necessary to the President.

Fulabhai Narsibhai Patel, Esq., Pleader, Borsad.

1. I am opinion that the District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. Now the time has come when such bodies should be placed entirely into the hands of the general public; keeping such control as might be necessary. At the time when the Act was passed it was necessary to make a provision that half the number of the board ought to consist of nominated members and the President ought to be one nominated by Government. The matter was in infancy then. The intention of the Legislature being to make such bodies quite independent of Government Departments, it is now desirable that the elective franchise should be extended and the constitution of the Boards should be placed on more liberal lines. I suggest that the Board should consist of three-fourths of elected members and one-fourth of nominated members, and in case of nominated members, half the number should be officials. This will put a stop to official pressure and undue domination; and the members will have full scope to vote freely.

2. (a) I am strongly against the election by communities. Such a system would not work well. Besides it would create bad feeling in the different communities, and would be a source of mischief in the working of the Act. In case a certain community is required to be favoured, the way is open to do so, by nominating a member from it. The district authorities would take this matter into consideration while recommending the names of members to be nominated. I do not think it is necessary to make any special provision in law in connection with this matter.

(b) The present number of members in the Boards is not sufficient. It requires to be increased. The Local Boards' work is not so simple as that of the Municipalities, having regard to the area over which their jurisdiction extends. The supervision by the members, of schools, works, etc., is not properly done and so it is desirable that the number should be increased having due regard to the Local position of each taluka and district.

3. It is not only advisable, but just and proper that the Presidents of Taluka and District Boards should be elected and non-officials. The official Presidents being generally the heads of the district and sub-divisions, the other members are very often guided by their views, even though they may be grossly erroneous, and they rather hesitate to go against their will. It is desirable that the boards should be placed on independent footings free from official trammels. The people now understand their responsibilities and they should be given free hand in such matters.

4. The Local Boards should be left to execute their public works by their own officers. They should have their own Engineering Department. It is not necessary to have any sort of control or interference of the Government Executive Engineer, and it is very costly to get plans prepared and work done through the Government Executive Department. I think the District Board would appoint one Engineer on a reasonable pay, under whose guidance work might be done.

5. It is desirable that the Taluka Local Boards should appoint their own servants. The Taluka Boards in this respect should be freed from the control of the District Boards and should be authorized to engage, pay, and dismiss their own servants. This will ensure the dignity of the Taluka Local Boards and will be a good check on the servants.

As regards sanction and revision of the Taluka Boards' budgets, I see no reason to propose any change.

6. I think it is now proper time to entrust the management of the Primary schools to the District Local Boards, in case the increased scope of their work would involve no increased responsibility in financial matters.

7. I cannot precisely say in what way the rules ought to be altered; but in case the Act is amended, the rules can be altered having due regard to the alterations made in law and with a view to carry out its object.

8. I cannot reply to this question, as it is a very general one and I have made no inquiries in connection with it. I was a member of the Taluka Local Board of Borsad for three years, and during my tenure the Borsad Taluka Board was never consulted.

9. (1) I am strongly against the increase of Local Fund Cess of one anna per rupee. The one anna tax is considered to be hard on the poor agriculturists, who have to pay it over and above the Land revenue. From the commencement this levy of tax is considered to be unjustifiable having regard to Bombay Act 19 of 1844, which abolishes all sorts of taxes and cesses not forming a part of Land revenue. *Prima facie* this tax of one anna would not be justifiable having regard to the spirit of this Act (19 of 1844), and it would not at all be justifiable to increase it. The rural public ought not to be made to pay more for education and such other things, which it is more a duty of Government to do. The present Land revenue is very high and it will entail much hardship if the cess of one anna be raised to two annas.

(2) I am against the extension of the scope of chapter 14 of the Bombay District Municipality Act. Creation of Notified areas as suggested will cause an increased

burden on the population. Besides having regard to the provisions of the chapter, it seems that very few such areas could be notified and so there would hardly be any palpable advantage. There would besides be inequity in putting burden upon a very few villages.

- (3) I am in favour of the proposed cess of one anna per rupee on, Income-Tax, Abkari revenue, and Forest revenue. This levy of tax will not be hard upon the class of people who will have to pay it. Besides the agriculturists who now pay one anna cess will consider it just and equitable.
- (4) The provincial subventions should also be increased. The expenditure of the Local Boards is increasing day by day and in order to keep pace with it, it is desirable that the Boards should be in possession of substantial funds, and unless the Provincial Government makes good and substantial grants, it will be very difficult for the Boards to stand.

10. It is true that the non-official members do not take sufficient interest in the Local Board affairs. The prevailing idea is that the Local Boards form a part of Government establishments; and that the members have simply to vote on certain matters. Really speaking the non-official members do not try to understand what their position under the Act is, and that is because they are under the official domination. The Collector, or the Deputy Collector, or the Assistant Collector, or in the absence of the Deputy Collector and the Assistant Collector, the Mamlatdar, being the head of the Board, the non-official members are not generally inclined to go against their wishes, and when they know that what they propose is not to be carried out, they never venture to propose before the Board. In practice to a great extent the voice of the head is carried out. These are the present state of things.

In order to make them understand their position and responsibilities; to make them free to express their views, and to make them earnest and sincere to take keen interest in the Boards' affairs, it is necessary to make the bodies as independent as possible, and free from any official domination and control. The financial resources also ought to be increased. It seems further desirable that the members going out to inspect the work or for any Local Board business ought to be paid conveyance allowances.

11. It seems desirable that the franchise to vote should be extended by making, those who have obtained the university degrees, those who have passed the university matriculation examination, and those who have passed the School Final Examination, qualified to stand as voters.

12. In order to make the Boards more efficient it is desirable that some members of the Board, should be from the classes mentioned in clauses 2 to 6 of section 10 of the Act. I think, at least one-third of the non-official members should be from such classes. As regards the means for forming separate groups of electors from these classes, I think separate lists might be prepared by the Boards.

13. It is necessary that the President of the Taluka Local Board should be an elected non-official member. However, if the franchise be not extended so far, it is highly desirable that the Vice-President should be from amongst the non-official members.

14. This question is replied in answer to question 13.

15. It is desirable to make the Provincial share of Land revenue and Income-Tax divisible between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards. The expenditure of Primary schools is going high day by day and it will still go higher; and it is likely that education might in future be given more freely and liberally. It is therefore necessary that the Local Boards should be given a substantial definite share out of the Provincial share. What that share ought to be cannot be said in the absence of proper material. What I propose is that a certain definite share ought to be fixed after taking all the surrounding facts into consideration.

16. I think the proportion should be fixed by law, and it should be half and half.

17. I do not think that the Administrative capacity of the Board is likely to suffer if the appointments of non-officials by nomination be abolished, and the Boards are constituted of elected members and nominated officials. In such a case the proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be one to seven.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits proscribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10. In clause 1 the limit ought to be reduced to Rs. 24 in clause 2; it ought to be reduced to Rs. 2,500 in clause 3; it ought to be reduced to Rs. 300; and in clause 4 it ought to be reduced to Rs. 25.

SURAT DISTRICT.

Mr W. F. Hudson, I C S, Collector of Surat.

As regards my replies, I ought perhaps to say that since I have had practically no experience of Gujarat, my views are necessarily based on my knowledge of the conditions in Sind. During the past 5 years I have been President of the District Local Boards of Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Thar and Parkar and the Upper Sind Frontier, and have therefore had rather exceptional opportunities of studying the conditions of that province as a whole: on the other hand, I have only been 5 months in Gujarat

If any of the replies seem to you to be careless or inadequate, I venture to point out with all respect that this may fairly be ascribed to lack of time and opportunity for full examination of the subject. For a proper consideration of these difficult and important questions, I should have liked to discuss them on tour with Mamlatdars, overseers and members of Boards all over the district. I should also have liked vernacular translations of the questions, since it is still the case that many of our most intelligent men (especially outside the towns) do not know English. But with less than a fortnight at my disposal (and that too the fortnight in which every Collector is occupied with his Administration report) none of this has been possible, and I have even had to draft my own replies without waiting to see the replies of the gentlemen I have consulted. It seems to me most regrettable that when such extremely important reforms are in contemplation district officers and the public should not be given ample time for reflection and discussion.

1 I see no objection. If anything, elected members at present take even less interest than nominated members in the affairs of the Boards, and I do not think there is any likelihood of an elected majority taking the bit between its teeth.

2 I have the strongest possible objection to election by communities. The only proper basis for a vote, and the only proper qualification for election, is a personal interest in local bridges, or roads or dispensaries, and this has nothing to do with communities as such. Apart from this it is impossible to devise a constitution which will combine fairness to all communities with the principle stated above, viz., that roads and bridges should be controlled by the people who are going to use them.

3 It is most inadvisable in every way. All the real work of the Board is done by the official Presidents in conjunction with the Executive Engineer, the Educational Inspector, the Huzur Deputy Collector (who supervises the extremely elaborate account system) and the Mamlatdars. None of these officers would care a rap for a non-official President and nothing would be done. If the whole system were changed, and the Boards maintained a complete executive agency of their own (as a Municipality does), it might be possible to have an unofficial President, if you could get one who was ready to give the necessary time. It is difficult, however, to imagine a non-official touring all over a district, and seeing what is required, as the Collector does. Yet without such a tour he would be a perfectly useless President. I am firmly convinced that, whatever other changes may be desirable in the present system, the appointment of a non-official President would be a retrograde step, for which there is at present no demand except from a few talkers.

4 I do not think the existing limitations on the preparation of plans and execution of public works can be removed at all or even modified unless and until the Local Boards are in a position to maintain a competent engineering staff. At present most of them have nothing but lazy or incompetent or corrupt overseers, and though the check and control of the Public Works Department is often nominal and seldom worth what the Board has to pay for it, it is at any rate better than nothing. But as I said in my Administration report this year, Local Boards will never do any good until they have their own properly qualified engineers, whole-time men, and responsible only to the Board. Under present conditions, if an Executive Engineer takes no interest in Local Board works, the Board is helpless. It can neither compel him to do the work nor remove him.

5 Section 38. Yes.

Section 55. Yes.

6 I doubt it very much. The reason why Bombay leads the way in India in educational matters is largely because the work is done by educational experts, and not by inexpert Committees. Under present conditions, if these schools were handed over to the District Board, the organization and control would devolve upon the Collector-President, who has neither the time nor the knowledge to do it properly. Members of the District Local Boards live all over the district and the Educational Committee

could only meet very occasionally and half their meetings would be adjourned for want of a quorum. The report of the Decentralization Commission (paragraph 754) says that the education of the people in local self-government is more important than departmental efficiency, and if departmental efficiency were the only thing at stake, any reasonable person would agree. But it is by no means so certain that the education of the people in local self-government is so important at this stage of India's development as a sound system of elementary education: and personally I have the strongest fear of tinkering with the latter for the sake of the former. If, however, it is thought advisable to make this change, it will be essential to have an officer corresponding to the Deputy Educational Inspector as a full-time servant of the Board and invested with very large executive powers. The District Local Board (or even a Committee thereof) cannot possibly deal with such matters as casual leave, or the price of copy books, or the hundred and one trivial details that crop up every week in connection with the management of over 300 schools.

8. No. And there is no record of any Taluka Board having raised any objection.

9. (1) I see no objection to the Local Board being *empowered* to raise the cess to 2 annas, but I do not believe any Board (or at any rate any Board with an elected majority) will ever do it. Twice in the last few years I have endeavoured to induce members of Local Boards to agree merely to the *principle* of fresh taxation—once in connection with the Mahomedan educational cess in Sind and once in connection with the railway cess in Surat; and from my experience in both these cases I am certain that any proposal to enhance the cess will meet with the strongest opposition. Generally speaking, the village bania and the rayat would rather go without conveniences than pay for them, at any rate by direct taxation.

(2) I entirely agree, but this will raise a considerable outcry.

(3) I am strongly in favour of a cess on the income-tax, but not on the Abkari and Forest revenue. A 2-anna cess on the income-tax in this district would provide Rs. 13,000.

(4) Provincial subventions should be very largely increased, and this is the key to the whole matter. The attempt to make bricks without straw is a hopeless job: and the present method of casual doles is quite unsatisfactory, from both the economic and the educational point of view. If the political progress of India is to advance on the right lines, i. e., to develop first of all a popular and reasonably efficient form of local self-government, the local bodies *must* be given financial resources of sufficient magnitude to make it worthwhile to exercise foresight, prudence and all the other economic virtues. A Taluka Local Board of a dozen members cannot be expected to devote much attention to the task of expending Rs. 4,000 in the year, or to learn much from doing so.

10. I do not admit for a moment the failure of the District and Taluka Boards, except perhaps as schools for the practice of "local self-government." If they have failed in efficiency it is chiefly due to lack of funds. It is true, however, that as a rule non-official members take but little interest in the affairs of the Board. This is mainly due to the intense parochialism of the rural dweller. A zamindar in Sind takes a good deal of interest in his own village, and no interest whatever in his taluka as such, this being a merely artificial unit, largely populated by his worst enemies. The only remedy is the advance of education.

11. Section 10 does not appear to make any mention of voters.

13. No. This would be impossible without a great deal of separate machinery. The Vice-President is in charge of the records and accounts, which are kept in the Huzur or Taluka kacheris. We cannot have non-official Vice-Presidents holding office in Government kacheris, and there is no accommodation for them. Of course, if the District Local Board had a Secretary to supervise all the correspondence and the account work, it might be feasible to have a non-official Vice-President, but it would be quite unnecessary extravagance to create such an appointment for this purpose only. As regards the Taluka Boards, I think it essential that the Mamlatdar should be Vice-President, as the President is frequently outside the taluka.

16. No. Circumstances vary from time to time, and legal restrictions will only be a nuisance.

17. I do not think it matters in the least as things stand at present. The "administrative efficiency" of the Board depends on its President and Vice-President and on the paid staff: not on the members at all. I think the nominated officials might be one-third of the whole Board. In Sind at any rate the official President will always be able to get a majority.

18. No.

General.

It has been suggested to me that the most suitable organization, at any rate in Gujarat and the Deccan, would be (1) a District Board, (2) Village Panchayats. It is

said that the Taluka Boards fulfil no useful function and could be perfectly well dispensed with. The area is too big for the members to take any interest in it, whereas the inhabitants of a village, like those of a Municipality, will be able to get up some little enthusiasm for the welfare thereof. Each village should be given a certain sum of money to spend, and future payment should be by results. A village which controlled its expenditure properly would be given more to spend, whereas a village that wasted its grant would have it relentlessly cut next year. Of course, the Local Fund auditor would have to be rigorously excluded from the village; no village staff could be expected to comply with the elaborate rules now in force. But the Assistant Collector and the Mamlatdar could easily see which village was wasting its money.

I do not know enough of the conditions to be able to form an opinion on this proposal, but I submit it for what it is worth. It seems to be generally agreed that the taluka is not a very satisfactory unit for local administration.

Mr. C. G. Henderson, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

1. I see no object in increasing the elected element. Already the elective members must be not less than half of the whole Board, and at least half the nominated members are non-officials.

2. I do not think so. Interests are mainly by localities and not by communities.

3. I think it would be inadvisable that the Presidents of the District or Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials. It would, of course, relieve the Collectors and Assistant Collectors of a great deal of work, but this would probably be at the cost of great loss of efficiency. I do not know that our experience of non-official Presidents in the case of Municipalities has so far been such as to encourage us to repeat the experiment with Local Boards. In the case of Municipalities there may have been some degree of popular demand for non-official Presidents; in the case of Local Boards there is absolutely none.

4. I am of opinion that they could altogether be removed, provided the Board could entertain an adequate staff of its own. I think it is almost everyone's experience that the execution of works by the Public Works Department is expensive. There would be no need for the restrictions at all, if each Board could entertain a well paid engineer of its own. At present, apart from the high cost of Public Works Department work, we have to pay highly for establishment charges. And in the case of the works carried out by the Board's own agency, they are often, for want of proper expert supervision, carried out badly and so expensively. The Boards are often grossly overcharged, because there is nobody with sufficient expert knowledge to check overseers' estimates, or to see that works are carried out in accordance with estimates. What the Boards would save on establishment charges of the Public Works Department, on overcharges of its own overseers and on badly executed works, would probably go a long way, if not the whole way, to pay for a properly qualified engineer. Another advantage would be that we should get our works carried out much more expeditiously.

5. I think the Taluka Local Boards should be competent to sanction their own budgets, and entertain their own officers and servants. It is rare that a Taluka Local Board wishes to engage a servant apart from the general District Local Board staff, but it should, in my opinion, be able to do so, if it so desires.

6. It is suggested by the Commissioner, S. D., in his note that the management of primary schools should be entrusted to an Educational Committee of the District Local Boards. Presumably this means that each District Local Board will have its own Educational Committee for the management of its schools. It is not stated whether the control of the Educational Department is to be withdrawn, or, if not, how it is still to be exercised. I think there would be considerable danger to the efficiency of education in the withdrawal or lessening of the control of the Department. If the control of the Department is to remain practically as it is at present, I do not see where the advantages of the reform lie.

7. I have no proposals to make.

8. Taluka Local Boards, so far as I am aware, are never consulted. I do not think that, as a matter of fact, the educational funds are allotted to expenditure in each taluka in exact proportion to the contribution of each taluka. It seems to me that it would be highly inadvisable that they should be. Strictly however, according to law, if they are not so allotted, the consent of the Taluka Boards is required, but I have never known it to be asked for.

9. (1) I should be strongly in favour of it. It would be a form of taxation which would press very lightly. If the maximum were levied, it would mean that land-owners would pay 1/17th more than at present. I do not think it will be contended that land revenue assessments have nearly kept pace with the enormous rise in prices that has taken place in the last

30 or 40 years. In fact, though the rise seems to have been almost continuous, there is an opportunity only every 30 years to adjust the assessments. The levy of an additional one-anna cess would be a method of taking a fraction of what must be due to the community from land-owners. Moreover, the cess would be largely returned to the land-owners themselves in the shape of improved communications, etc.

Instead of empowering Local Boards to raise the cess upto a maximum of 2 annas I should prefer to see the cess definitely raised to 2 annas under section 44.

(2) This seems to me to be highly desirable. There are many towns which are quite suitable to be made Notified Areas and relieve the Local Boards of expenditure, but the fatal provision that an area must be within a mile of the railway stands in the way. Under the present law, not even the head-quarters of a mahal is entitled to be constituted a Notified Area. As a consequence of the provisions of the Act, many a small town of several thousands of inhabitants has to be content with the institution of a Sanitary Committee, with its miserably inadequate powers of raising money.

(3) I should be in favour of this, especially in regard to (a).

I quite agree with what the Commissioner, C. D., says on the subject of a cess or income-tax. The tax is something like six pence in the pound. Apart from this light impost, traders are mostly exempt from all kinds of taxation, imperial or local, except in some cases the almost negligible municipal taxation. It is surely time that they contributed something towards local needs.

(4) If they could be increased, it would be all to the good, though it is a matter for the Local Government to decide how far increases are possible.

15. If this were done, it would presumably, to some extent at least, take the place of the present system of subventions. I am inclined to think it would be an advantage. The income of the Boards would probably be increased, and that would be justified by the fact that in modern times so much of the welfare of the people is dependent on the activities of local bodies, especially in regard to medicine, sanitation and education. The Boards' sphere of work would be widened, and that would be a considerable step in the direction of decentralization. It would make the Boards more independent in shaping their programmes and managing their finances and less inclined to look to Government for assistance, which also means more decentralization and possibly better administration.

16. No. I see no reason to restrict the discretion of the Board.

17. I do not think that it would suffer, though I see no particular reason for the alteration. The present provision of the law as to the proportion (1) of the elected and nominated members, (2) of official and non-officials amongst the nominated members, appears to work satisfactorily.

18. Until more popular interest is shown in the administration of the Boards, the present limits do not seem to require alteration.

Mr. D. N. Trivedi, Huzur Deputy Collector.

4. No removal or modification of the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works will result in giving better facility and safety to the Boards except perhaps in the shape of reduction of charges made. It is not likely that the Boards can themselves create a service of experts like the one that Government so kindly supply them with and with practically extremely moderate expense.

5. Taluka Local Boards here engage practically no servants. All the Taluka Local Board work is done either by servants paid from Provincial or the District Local Board revenue. The only charge incurred is the percentage charge made by the Executive Engineer for works executed by him. Taluka Local Boards pay also revision and audit charges. I think Government may remit these charges just as they bear other supervising establishment charges. Thus, there does not arise any question of control of establishment. Taluka Local Boards engage temporary mukadams and labourers and they have full control over them.

Section 55 requires District Local Board to sanction or send for revision Taluka Local Board budgets. I think it will be sufficient if the Taluka Local Boards merely send copies of their budgets for information only to the District Local Board. Section 55 may be amended accordingly. Practically it is the Collector who, as President, takes notice of these budgets. The Collector as such has ample powers under section 62 and any wilful misuse can be corrected without much difficulty.

8. No; i. e., no consent is asked for, but it is presumed to be given so long as no Taluka Local Board raises any objection. There has been no such objection raised here to my knowledge.

9. I do not think that we will really require additional Local Board establishment so long as Government have been so generously helping the Boards in that direction. I do not think that that will be the item requiring additional income, but there are other duties to discharge which the Boards are in sad need of increased funds. The Boards do require means of increasing their funds :—

- (1) A maximum of two annas in the rupee will affect adversely the distribution of net profits from lands between tenants and landlord, *i. e.*, Government. It must tend to indirectly lower the margin of cultivation with the margin of labour result to the tenants. Indirectly it will thus become a tax on Government and raise up a false cry among the cultivators. I do not take even the cess itself as an appropriate and independent source of revenue.
- (2) This remedy may be resorted to, but the relief afforded will not be very appreciable.
- (3) (a) The number of Income-tax assesses outside Municipal limits is not very large. The bulk of Income-tax comes from urban areas. The extension of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act proposed in (2) above will still further contract the scope. I do not think it worth our while to touch that source.
- (b) This source is very uneven and will give perhaps too much to certain districts and talukas only, while it will give practically no help to others. This source is therefore one on which I place no reliance as a measure to give general relief.
- (c) The same remarks apply to this source with much stronger force as there are many talukas and even districts where no Forest revenue is derived.
- (4) This may be resorted to. Resort to measures (1) and (3) will ultimately affect Government revenue. The distribution will have almost no proportion to the requirements of the Taluka and District but merely hap-hazard ; while this measure will use the same revenue direct but systematically distributed according to actual requirements.
- (5) I would adopt an independent means of subsidizing Taluka and District Local Boards in the shape of helping the Boards in gradually constructing and maintaining improved means of communications, such as Trams and Feeder Railways, which will go on increasing revenue as a particular locality goes on prospering and therefore goes on requiring larger expenditure.

16.—No. The circumstances of different talukas individually and of the district as a whole do not necessarily remain identical all the time. There may be certain developments which affect some portions more than others and *vice versa*. The present arrangement is I think the best to adjust the income with requirements. It is not the improper distribution that comes in the way so much as want of actual means, *viz.*, revenue to meet even obvious requirements.

Mr. E. J. Talyarkhan, District Deputy Collector.

1. No. I am not in favour of elected majorities. The present half-and-half arrangement of election and nomination is quite fair looking to the poor element we have on the Boards intellectually and otherwise.

2. There should be no election by communities. It is not necessary in the interests of the Boards. The present number of members is sufficient.

3. The President of the District Local Board should be an official (*i. e.*, the Collector) but the President, Taluka Board, may be a fit non-official nominated by Government.

4. Unless well-paid and qualified overseers are appointed I cannot suggest any change in the present arrangement with the Public Works Department.

5. The District Boards' control as regards the budgets and engagement and payment of Taluka Board servants (to wit, only the Local Fund Overseer here) is all right.

6. The management of primary schools should not be entrusted to District Local Boards. It will be simply tolling the death-knell of primary education long before it has reached its prime.

7. There should be no change.

8. No.
9. (1) It will be an excellent thing if the Taluka Board is empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess upto two annas in the rupee.
- (2) Yes; but "Notified areas" worth the name where people are both able and willing to finance the scheme will be very few indeed.
- (3) No.
- (4) Yes.
10. Lack of interest and active co-operation is a true connotation of the non-official members generally. The causes are (1) that the whole show is usually run by the official President and the members have very little voice, (2) want of patriotism, (3) want of any encouragement, such as pecuniary gain or a title distinguishing him from his fellows. The remedies are: (1) a non-official but nominated President of Taluka Boards; (2) a title if not fees for being a member. There will be keener competition and better men will come into the field.
11. No.
12. No.
13. Yes, if a competent non-official is forthcoming; but not as a rule. If there be a competent man in the field Government should not permit the Mamlatdar to be Vice-President.
14. The figure Rs. 48 should not be still reduced. There will be keener competition among worthless fellows of low substance and degree and big khatedars will hold back.
15. No.
16. The proportion should be fixed by law. After deducting 5 pies in the anna for education, the remaining 7 pies should be equally shared by the District and Taluka Boards.
17. The present arrangement need not be disturbed.
18. No.

Mr. Naranji K. Mehta, Mamlatdar of Mandvi.

1. I have been working for nearly 25 years in the various Taluka Local Boards of all the districts in the Northern Division but I am not aware of a single instance in which a proposal brought forward by an elected member was lost for want of sufficient majority of elected members. Generally all the questions and proposals are carried out unanimously after a little friendly and reasonable discussion for a short time. There are only a few occasions when regular votes are taken and the question is decided by a majority of voters, and even in such cases the elected members have never lost any proposition for want of majority of votes. Perhaps it may be argued that the elected member would not venture to bring forward a proposal at all under the impression that it would not find a sufficient number of supporters from among the nominated members, but I believe that no elected member had any such hesitation as far as I know. All the proposals of all the members were brought, discussed and adopted whenever it was considered suitable without any distinction of its being brought by an elected or nominated member.

2. The election need not be made by communities for the Taluka Local Boards. The present arrangement of election works fairly well. Even when the interest of Mahomedans and minor communities, poorer and depressed classes, are neglected by elected members coming from the group of the villages where the minor communities reside, they are carefully watched and upheld by official members who are generally respected by other members and whose upright and fair-minded recommendation is never opposed by other members. The present number of members is sufficient and it need not be increased.

3. It is advisable that the President of a District and Taluka Local Board should be non-official where impartial, efficient and influential gentlemen are available; but such cases are rare and in such rare cases they should be nominated. In all other cases the President should be an official.

4. The present limitation on the plans, estimates and execution of public works should be modified. The limits in section 57 (b) should be raised and doubled to Rs. 100 and Rs. 1,000, to give more freedom to the Local Boards. Large works costing more than Rs. 2,500 should be carried out by the Public Works Department, as the work will be better done.

5. Yes. The Taluka Local Boards could be freed from District Local Board control in the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants of an inferior kind drawing less than Rs. 10. Such servants are generally recommended for appointment,

dismissed, etc., by the Taluka Local Board and the recommendations are generally accepted, and so the District Local Boards need not be troubled in such matters. As regards superior servants, such as Overseers, the power of suspension, fine, etc., may be delegated to the Taluka Board; the appointment and dismissal should rest with the District Local Board. Similarly, the Taluka Local Board budget should be sanctioned and passed by itself and need not be sent to the District Local Board for approval, sanction and revision.

6. In regard to education the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to District Local Boards. The management of the schools in smaller Municipalities is entrusted to the School Committee in small towns, where the work is fairly well done. Some of the members of the District Local Board are likely to be able to take up the management with the aid of the Deputy Educational Inspector specially empowered by the District Local Board, and so the management should be entrusted to the District Local Board.

7. No remarks to offer.

8. No. The Taluka Local Board has never been consulted about the appropriation of revenue raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. (1) Yes. Local Boards should be empowered to raise the cess upto a maximum of two annas to make up the necessary fund in the altered circumstances.

(2) Yes.

(3) (a), (b) and (c). Yes.

10. Yes. It is true that the failure of the District and Taluka Local Board is due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. The cause may be their backward nature. The remedy should be that they may be given more chance and inducements to take interest in the Local Board matters.

11. The voters should be more independent and educated, and so under-graduates and trained teachers from Training Colleges, etc., should be given the voting power.

12. No reasons to be suggested.

13. The Vice-President should be non-official, but that the chairman of the managing committee at least should be an official to assist the Vice-President.

14. The minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 24.

15. There should be no such share.

16. The proportion should be fixed by the District Local Board. The ratio should be left to the discretion of the District Local Board.

17. The administration will not suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished; and if the Board is constituted of elected and nominated officials, the proportion of nominated officials should be at least half of the elected members.

18. No remarks.

Mr. H. Fleming, Mamlatdar of Chorasi.

1. Excluding the President and the Vice-President, who are officials, the Chorasi Taluka Local Board consists of 17 members, of whom 9 are elected and 8 are nominated members. I think that this goes quite far enough in the direction of "elected majorities", more especially if the President or Vice-President is a non-official (*vide* question 3 and question 13).

2. Election should not be by communities. Of 9 elected members 7 are Hindus, 1 is a Mahomedan and 1 a Parsi. Of 8 nominated members 5 are Hindus, 2 are Parsis, and 1 is a Mahomedan. The solitary elected Parsi was the candidate of the Mahomedans, who had it in their power to support a member of their own community. Of 7 elected Hindu members 3 are Anavla Brahmins, and there are 1 Koli, 1 Kunbi, 1 Rajput, 1 Nagar Brahmin. Of 5 nominated Hindu members, 3 are Anavla Brahmins, 1 is a Rajput, and 1 a Vani. I think the present number of members is sufficient.

3. It is not advisable that Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials. Where will they come from? Will they possess that knowledge of a taluka and its needs that an official President must perforce acquire, and refresh annually? Will they be better situated than an official President to acquire that knowledge? At the best they will be busy professional men, who will suffer inconvenience and pecuniary loss by the minimum amount of touring which they must do if they are to be efficient. During 1914-15 out of 4 professional men on the Chorasi Taluka Local Board none attended a single meeting of the Board. All four are possible Presidents. Taken from the City, from Taluka Head-quarters or from the remotest village in the taluka, I do not think that a non-official President has the opportunity, even granting that he has

the inclination, to be as good as an official President. Will non-official Presidents be paid travelling allowance on tour? Who will bear the cost?

I think that a non-official President ought to be elected. It is not necessary to prescribe that he must secure a certain number of votes.

4. I would free the Board altogether from the legal necessity for the Government Executive Engineer's approval or preparation entailed by section 57 (b). But at the same time I would give the Board discretion by rule to consult the Executive Engineer freely in any matter, paying for it. I would eliminate the Government Executive Engineer altogether from section 61, and make the Board concerned responsible, through the medium of the "group member" or a small special committee.

5. As regards engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants by the District Local Board, I can recall no instances of inconvenience. I do not think it out of place to mention here the matter of the Local Fund Overseer's status. He is a very important servant of the Taluka Local Board. Yet his pay is inadequate, and his prospects also, in Taluka Local Board service. I think that the time has come to make his service a graded one on a salary of Rs. 100 rising to Rs. 200 per mensem. I would make the division the unit for his appointment, which should of course be controlled by the Divisional Commissioner. Any arrangements made by individual Taluka Local Board would be precarious. I feel that the most ardent non-official President or Vice-President would agree with me after a little experience. I am now working with my third Local Fund Overseer.

I can recall no inconvenience resulting from the legal provision that the District Local Board should sanction and revise Taluka Local Board budgets. The question can be considered only from the view of the President, District Local Board Personally, I consider that there are administrative reasons why a President, District Local Board, should scrutinize the budgets of his several Taluka Local Boards.

6. The question of entrusting the management of primary schools to the District Local Board is one for the educational authorities. I may not understand the question, but it looks as if it were intended to transfer the responsibility for much inspection and control to the President, non-official or official, of the District Local Board. An expert (the role now played by the Deputy Educational Inspector and his assistants) will still be required. Will individual District Local Boards make better arrangements for the pay and careers of these men than are now in vogue? Please see my remarks about Local Fund Overseers (Question 5).

7. *Nil.*

8. *Nil.*

9. (1) I have always thought that the Local Fund Cess should be two annas in the rupee.

(3) Whether Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on (a) Income-tax, (b) Abkari revenue are questions which open a wide field for discussion on matters of principle. Practical difficulties might also arise. Income-tax is universally levied in the sense that Land revenue and Municipal cesses are not.

(2) I think that the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act, 1901, should be extended to include a larger number of important villages. In all humility I warmly approve the preference of the three Divisional Commissioners to turn the Local Bodies thus brought into being Village Panchayats rather than notified areas.

There are no notified areas in the Chorasī Taluka,

It would be an excellent thing to have a Village Panchayat in every village where possible.

There are several restrictions in Chapter XIV of the Bombay District Municipal Act which, I venture to think, ought to be removed. The first restriction is contained in the words "The Governor in Council". I would substitute "the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of the Taluka". He is the man on the spot and knows best. Then the application of this chapter is restricted to areas containing a Taluka Head-quarters town or which are within a distance of one mile from a Railway station. I would repeal this entirely. Some other minor alterations are necessary. I remember to have read in the Gazette the rules framed by some notified areas. Their length was appalling. No rules ought to be made about matters which are obvious, and such rules as are really required should be as brief and as simple in phrasing as possible.

I would move very cautiously in the matter of transgressing control of educational and medical expenditure to Village Panchayats. But in matters of purely village interest, such as sanitation, village-works, village communications, I would give Village Panchayats full control. They should also try rent-suits.

10. It is true that the failure of Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members *as a whole*. But this remark does not apply to individual non-official members. I recall the case of a non-official member who supervised a Local Board work at considerable personal inconvenience in a village far from his own to the advantage of the Local Board. In my opinion the chief reason is that the Taluka Local Board is a unit beyond the mental horizon of the average literate villager, a class from which our representatives are drawn and should, nevertheless, continue to be drawn. But this is no reason for closing down our Taluka Local Boards. Purely village questions are keenly taken up or questions directly benefitting the residents of the village even if they result in some measure of increased convenience to another village. People will readily subscribe to put a not quite necessary railing around a school-house, to construct a perhaps too elaborate approach road into the village, or main road through the village, to build a fine school-house in the village, but extra-village matters are not so keenly taken up. The village is the unit, and should, especially a large village, be made responsible for itself. But I recognize that there will be difficulties to be overcome. Lack of funds is another very strong reason for lack of interest in the work of Taluka Local Boards. Take roads and communications for example. Much money is expended, but the result is unsatisfactory. The material put down cannot resist the traffic passing over it, and is ground to powder every year in the whole length of the road, entailing repairs in the whole length of the road annually. Such repairs naturally partake of the nature of patch-work, to be done over and over again, year in and year out. Conservation of money and material is impossible; there is no progress, and when men see that strenuous effort has left them in a very little better position than if they had done nothing at all, lack of interest is very natural. In nearly every village I visited last year some little thing required doing, and I began to consider the advisability of reducing the expenditure on a road to the amount of the Local Fund cess contributed by the villages served thereby, and of proposing the installation of toll-bars at suitable places on my frontiers marching with foreign frontiers. Another reason for lack of interest in Local Board work is that it is difficult to appreciate such work by adequately rewarding it. The question is not an easy one, but I mention it. It is too long to discuss here.

11. I can think of no additions to be made to the qualifications of voters; but see section 10 (7) of the Act.

12. This question about the formation of separate group of electors for the benefit of classes (2) to (6) in section 10 of the Act requires explanation. I may be quite wrong, but to me it seems an attempt to differentiate between the "educated" and the "literate" sections of the electorate. Already the Surat City Municipality, the Rander Municipality and the inamdars return one member each to the Chorasi Taluka Local Board.

13. Whether non-official Vice-Presidents should be appointed where official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continue is a question for official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards. But *vide* my remarks about non-official Presidents in reply to question No. 3. Personally I favour official Vice-Presidents also.

14. I see no reason for reducing the minimum assessment of Rs. 48 under section 10 (1) of the Act. I do not know that "divisions of holdings" are "consequent on the introduction of the Record-of-rights." Such divisions are now-a-days recorded, whereas formerly they were unrecorded.

15. Nil.

16. Nil.

17. I cannot see that any particular administrative efficiency is likely to accrue to a Board composed of elected members and nominated officials. At present there are on the Chorasi Taluka Local Board two officials (President and Vice-President), 8 nominated and 9 elected members. This proportion must, in my opinion, be maintained. Then where are the 8 nominated officials to come from? Are they to be mostly Talatis? I doubt very much that the suggestion, if carried out, will result in increased efficiency.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 of section 10 of the Act.

—————
Mr. Rustamji J. Garda:

1. The time has now come when District and Taluka Local Boards may be given elected majorities.

This may be done in advanced districts and talukas as a tentative measure.

2. There should be no election by communities.

3. I am of opinion that the time has not yet come for appointing non-official Presidents of the Taluka and District Local Boards. But Vice-Presidents of District Local Boards may be elected from non-officials. Such Vice-Presidents can look after

routine work and would be a great help to the President who has so many other duties to attend to. Even when non-official Presidents are appointed, Presidents should always preside over Boards' meetings.

4. The present limitations on the preparations of plans and the execution of public works should not be removed. The Local Boards' staff is neither so efficient nor so well paid as to do all the works without the help of the Executive Engineer.

5. Taluka Local Boards should be empowered to prepare their own budgets, but they must be under an obligation to include in it such works as the District Local Board may desire them to undertake. As regards appointments they may be given independent powers upto Rs. 15.

6. Time has not yet come for entrusting the management of primary schools to District Local Boards. The experiment was tried in the Baroda State, but as it did not succeed, the powers given to the Local Boards had to be withdrawn.

7. No suggestion to make.

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. (1) I do not think any of the suggestions made above will require any additional establishment. Local Boards should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess upto two annas in the rupee. There is no necessity for it. It would be very hard to cultivators.

(2) No. These things should continue to be done by the Local Boards as at present.

(3) Not necessary.

(4) Not necessary.

15. The time has not come to do this.

16. After keeping to itself a certain amount necessary for administration and other charges, and for such major works as are to be constructed by the District Local Boards, the rest of the income should be distributed amongst the talukas in proportion to the total amount of local cess contributed by them.

17. I do not think that the administrative efficiency of the Local Boards will suffer if the provision for the appointment of the non-officials by nomination is abolished and the Board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. In that case the proportion of such nominated officials should be one to three.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits for voters and candidates now prescribed by the Act.

Mr. Ambelal Khandubhai of Eru, Taluka Jalalpur.

1. Yes. (A) The system of nomination of members by Government should be abolished. (B) Zilla and Taluka Government officers not below the ranks of Aval-Karkuns should be *ex officio* members.

2. The principle of election should be based on cess-paying, meaning those who pay the cess should have the right to elect members. If election be made communal it should be thoroughly so. No partial privileges are desirable. The present number of members is quite sufficient both in Taluka and District Boards.

3. It is not. The motive power of the Boards, both Taluka and District, should be supplied by official Presidents.

4. The present arrangement is ordinarily satisfactory.

5. I think the control at present exercised by District Boards over Taluka Boards is salutary and should not be removed.

6. No. The guidance and control of education should be only in the hands of expert officials.

8. They are not consulted as far as I know.

9. Should increased expenditure be found necessary, it should be met, in my humble opinion, by the suggestions made in sub-questions (3) and (4) of question No. 9.

10. It is true. The causes are non-existence of educational test in elections and limited powers of Local Boards.

11 and 12. I refer to my answer Nos. 1 and 12 above.

13. Yes. The minimum qualification of voters paying Government assessment may be Rs. 40.

15. I would leave the reply to this question to expert administrators.

16. It should be fixed by law and the proportion may be half and half between Taluka and District Boards.

17. If the system of nominating non-officials by Government is abolished, the desideratum of members should be filled in by an electorate or well educated persons akin to the General Wards in Municipal elections.

The proportion of officials to elected non-officials should be 1 to 3 in District Local Boards.

18. I would favour the qualifying limits of Government pensioners to Rs. 25 per mensem.

Mr. Chhotalal Dhirajram of Olpad.

1. Yes. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majority.

2. No. That can be secured by nomination ; on the whole, there should be elective majority and if that cannot be secured otherwise then the number of members should be increased.

3. The President of a Taluka Board should be a non-official and elected, and as regards the District Board the Collector of the district should be the President.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works can be modified as follows :—

(a) The work which will cost Rs. 2,500 and under—the plan and estimate for it should be prepared, approved and also executed by the Local Board.

(b) The work which will cost over Rs. 2,500 and upto Rs. 5,000—the plan and estimate for it should be prepared by the Local Board and approved by the Executive Engineer and executed by the Local Board.

(c) The work which will cost over Rs. 5,000—the plan and estimate should be prepared, approved and executed by the Executive Engineer.

Furthermore, in connection with the subject matter I suggest that the District Board should engage its own engineer. The sum paid yearly to the Public Works Department as plan estimate establishment and review charges by the Taluka and District Boards is quite sufficient for engaging an engineer by the Board.

5. As regards the first part of the question, my answer is that no change is necessary. As regards the second part of the question, my answer is that the Taluka Board should have full power to pass its budget ; and a copy of the same should be sent to the District Board for information only. The District Board should not interfere in the matter.

6. Yes.

7. In case if the management of the primary schools is entrusted to the District Board then many changes in the existing rules will be necessary ; at present rules 13 and 14 require some modification. The proper professional authority for approving the plan and estimate should be Government Executive Engineer or the Board's own engineer if engaged. Building sites should be approved by the Board itself or a Committee appointed by the Board.

8. No. The Taluka Board has never been consulted in the matter.

9. (1) No.

(2) No.

(3) (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. No. It is not proved. The funds at the disposal of the Taluka Boards are very limited and those are mostly spent in current repairs, special repairs and upkeep of roads and a very poor number of original works are provided for. The members propose good many things to be done but the proposals are dropped owing to the want of funds. Always the budget meeting should be interesting. But here that is not the case owing to the insufficient sum at their disposal. To some extent similar is the case of District Boards.

I suggest that the Taluka Board should have at its own disposal the whole of its Local Fund cess after deducting the educational portion.

11. Please *vide* answer to the question 18.

12. Without forming separate groups the present system is working well.

13. Yes. It is desirable that the Vice-Presidents of Taluka Boards should invariably be non-officials in the event of Presidents of those Boards continuing to be officials.

14. Rs. 30 should be adopted as statutory minimum of assessment in place of the present figure of Rs. 48.

15. The Provincial share of Land revenue and income-tax should be divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. Local Boards' share should be two annas in the rupee.

16. The proceeds of one-anna cess after deducting the educational portion from it, i. e., 4 pies; the remaining 8 pies should be divided between District and Taluka Local Boards equally, i. e., 4 pies each.

17. In no way the administrative efficiency will suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-official by nomination is abolished; the proportion of elected members and nominated officials should be three-fourths and one-fourth respectively.

18. Yes. I am in favour of reducing qualifying limits. I propose the following reduced limit :—

Clause 1	...	...	...	...	Rs. 30 per annum.
" 2	...	...	...	...	" 3,000.
" 3	...	...	...	...	" 400.
" 4	...	...	...	...	" 30 per mensem.

Mr. Janardan Virbhadra Pathekji (Surat).

1. No, if the constitution of the electorates continues as at present. Yes, if the constitution of the electorate be modified so that educated and independent men can come in as members.

2. No; the election should be general. The present number of members in the Taluka Local Board is sufficient and the number in the District Board may well be raised to 25.

3. No; they should be officials.

4. In section 57 (b), the limit of Rs. 50 per mile on an average may be raised to an average of Rs. 100 per mile; and with regard to any other work, the limit of Rs. 500 may be raised to Rs. 1,000; plans and estimates to be approved by the Government Executive Engineer. With regard to execution of public works, section 61 says: "Such of the works as the Governor in Council shall from time to time in a general or special order direct, shall be executed by the said Executive Engineer, etc." The Government resolutions in connection with this section are not with me; but the practice now obtaining is such that all works from Rs. 2,500 and upwards are executed by the Public Works Department. This limit of Rs. 2,500 may be raised to Rs. 3,500 or 4,000; of course, plans and estimates to be approved by the Executive Engineer. The Public Works Department agency is rather more costly.

5. Taluka Local Board must be given free control as to engagement and payment of dharamsala watermen and sweepers, as well as the taluka water-bearer. As to other Local Board servants, the engagement and payment to them cannot be met by the Taluka Local Board owing to its means being limited. And, therefore, it is the District Board who looks after these things.

6. No. If the management be entrusted to the District Local Board the efficiency would be impaired. The present system is working well.

7. Yes, the rules under section 48 (b) can be modified as under :—

Rule 2. Clause 4 may be modified; the whole clause should be eliminated and the following should be substituted in its place :—

"(4) Grant-in-aid to private schools should be determined by the District Local Board and be paid from its funds to aid primary schools."

Rule 4. Clause 6. The words "subject as aforesaid" should be eliminated.

Rule 5. The words "provided that said authority public instruction," should be eliminated.

Rule 7. A proviso as under should be added to this 7th rule :—

"Provided that the appointment, punishment and dismissal of teachers should also be effected at the recommendation of Taluka or District Local Board."

Rule 8. This rule might run as under :—

"The amount of the grant-in-aid shall be fixed by the District Local Board at the recommendation of the Government Educational Department."

Rule 9. The second paragraph of this rule should be modified as below :—

"Every member of the district the school is situated, should be present, if possible, at all such inspections or examinations."

Rule 13. This rule should run as under :—

“ No school building unless approved Government Educational Inspector, if the cost of the work is to exceed Rs. 1,000, or by the Director of Public Instruction, if the cost is to exceed Rs. 500.”

8. The Taluka Local Board is not being consulted as far as I know, because the Educational budget is framed by the District Local Board for the district as a whole.

9. (1) No. The cultivator should not be burdened any further.

(2) No. The establishment of Notified Area would not be successful at present.

(3) (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. No; may be to some extent. The *causes* are (1) ignorance, (2) want of moral courage and independence, (3) absence of proper education, and (4) nomination and election of mostly police and revenue patels.

The *remedies* are (1) to educate the people generally and (2) it must be ruled that no person can be a member of a Local Board unless he has a certain educational qualification, (3) the Government should make their selections for nominations on Local Boards from other classes than patels and the persons to be selected should have a certain educational qualification.

11. Besides the seven classes the following classes may be added :—

(8) Graduates of Universities.

(9) Under-graduates.

(10) Persons who have passed their Matriculation or School Final examination.

(11) Head-masters of Local Board schools.

12. Yes. By creating separate electorates as under :—

(1) A group of income-tax payers and of persons who pay Rs. 20 per year to Government in a different form other than land assessment, residing in the taluka.

(2) A group of pensioners whose pensions are not less than Rs. 20 per month and of persons having a certain educational qualification, residing in the taluka.

13. Not invariably; but if a person possessing capacity equal to that of a Mamlatdar be available, such a person may be a non-official Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board.

14. The minimum should be Rs. 24 only.

15. In order that the monetary condition of Local Boards be easy, it is desirable that a small share be given to Local Boards, and the Local Board's share may be at least one pice or a quarter of an anna per rupee.

16. It must not be fixed by law. District Local Boards should have the discretion, in order that the District Local Boards can spend the portion of their surplus balance in talukas where assistance is more needed.

17. The efficiency of a Board is likely to suffer.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits as under :—

(1) The limit may be reduced to Rs. 24.

(2) Do. do. „ 2,500.

(3) Do. do. „ 250.

(4) Do. do. „ 20 per mensem.

Rev. Robert Henderson, I. P. Mission, Surat.

1. I do not think that it is either necessary or desirable that District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities. In my opinion Local Boards and also small Municipalities should be constituted as follows :—

(1) Elective members—one-half.

(2) Nominated members—one-half, of whom at least one-half should be non-officials.

2. No. I think the best man should always be elected irrespective of his caste or creed. Provision can easily be made to secure the due representation of special communities or interest when the nominated members are being chosen.

3. I think not. After all, the official President is likely to know the district and its needs better than any non-official. The Vice-President ought, I think, to be elected from the non-official members as a general rule.

4. Checks are not a bad thing in this country or for that matter in any country. The checking of the budget estimates and re-appropriation statements by the Head Revenue Officer of the district is a good and desirable thing. Then again it is a desirable thing that the Executive Engineer should be responsible for the proper execution of works for which plans and estimates have been prepared by him. It is not, therefore, necessary in my opinion to remove or even modify to any considerable extent the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works.

5. For several reasons it is better for the District Board to have control of the engagement and payment of officers and servants. It is the central organization and there are always representatives in it of the Taluka Boards; it can fix a general scale of salaries and can transfer servants from one taluka to another. It seems to me that in the matter of the employment and transfer of servants central control is needed and is almost essential.

Then I think it is a desirable thing that the Taluka Local Board budgets should be revised and sanctioned by the District Board. Here, again, checks are a good thing. Then there ought to be, as far as possible, co-ordination in the matter of expenditure, and this can hardly be attained unless the budgets of the Taluka Boards can be overhauled and revised by the District Board.

6. I am sorry to say I have not in my possession a copy of the Report of the Decentralization Commission and am not, therefore, in a position to give any opinion on the Commission's suggestions.

7. The rules seem good and I have nothing fresh to suggest.

8.

9. (1) Yes. It is a good thing for people to have the pleasure of taxing themselves. For one thing it makes them think!

(2) Yes. The larger villages might in that case have heavier burdens to bear but they are, as a rule, able to bear heavier burdens than the smaller villages.

(3) No.

(4) Yes, if necessary.

10. My experience is somewhat limited as, though often asked to become a member of the District Board, I was unable to do so as owing to the distance from head-quarters I could not conveniently attend the meetings which were usually held in the evening. I was, however, for a number of years a member of a Taluka Board. Our Board was a good average Board, perhaps a little better than some and a little worse than others, but with a few honourable exceptions the non-official members took comparatively little interest in the business except it directly concerned their village or some village in the neighbourhood. Committees, such as the works committee, were appointed, but, as a rule, these committees did not do their work in a painstaking or businesslike way. What are the causes of this state of affairs? Well, they are hard to state. Want of training in the conduct of public affairs, want of responsibility, want of knowledge, want of regard for the public weal may be given as some of them. What are the remedies? The only two I know are:—(1) more responsibility, (2) more work. More responsibility should be thrown on the non-official members; more work should be given them to do. Responsibility and work always beget interest and interest leads to willing and efficient co-operation and service.

11 and 12. I do not exactly understand question 15. With regard to question 16, the best men should, I think, be elected, no matter who they are.

13. See my answer to question 3.

14. Rs. 30.

15 and 16. I have not considered these questions and am not, therefore, able to give an opinion.

17. See my answers to questions 1 and 2.

18. Yes. By reducing the qualifying limits the number of voters would be increased and that is a thing that should be aimed at.

I would suggest the following reduced limits:—

- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| (1) Rs. 30 | instead of Rs. 48 |
| (2) „ 4,000 | „ „ 5,000 |
| (3) „ 400 | „ „ 500 |
| (4) „ 35 | „ „ 50 |

*Messrs. Ishwardas J. Store, Thakorror Kapilram, Barjorji N. Vakil
and Rao Bahadur K. G. Desai.*

1. We unhesitatingly answer the question in the affirmative. The object aimed at by the Government, to turn the District and Taluka Local Boards into "living bodies," cannot otherwise be attained. When we come to deal with question No. 10, we shall point out the reasons why the District and Taluka Local Boards have failed to attract the interest they should have and how the elected majorities will prove one of the sovereign remedies to remove the apathy.

2. We are not in favour of election by communities. Looking to the matters which come up for consideration and disposal before these local bodies, we fail to see any in which there would be any possibility of any clash of interest between the different communities that go to make up the village population. It has been recognized that the village communities and village panchayats have been the basis of the Indian polity from times immemorial; and in their administration of their local affairs those bodies as a whole have never tried to supplant the interest of one community and better those of another. All the communities have lived amicably side by side. Even since the formation of Local Boards by statute, not a single instance to our knowledge has occurred which can be pointed to as one in which the interest of one community was either neglected, sacrificed or disregarded by the other. A change from the system at present prevailing for well nigh thirty years cannot lightly be resorted to without grave reasons for it; but more than that, the political aim of the British Government of creating a "United India" is likely to receive a serious check by a measure of the nature suggested while the consequences of such a measure by the introduction of the element of mutual racial jealousy are bound to bring in their train very disquieting problems.

In the light of our replies to the first part of the question, the second part does not require any reply; still we may say that we are not aware of any communities whose interests are so far in conflict with those of the others as to call for any special measure or provision. If, however, some are found, there is ample provision for such special cases in the power of the Government to nominate members from that community.

So far as the third part of the question is concerned, we must candidly confess that none of us are so very closely and intimately acquainted with the district and taluka affairs as to enable us to suggest the constitution.

From our reply to the first part of the question, even the fourth part does not survive for answer; but we can say that in our opinion the change ought to be gradual; we would like to see the experiment of elected majorities to be tried first, and if after sufficient experience that experiment proves successful, the expansion of the Boards may be tried; as at present situated there will be the difficulty of finding a sufficiently large number of suitable persons to undertake these public duties.

3. We are of opinion that it is very advisable that Presidents should be non-officials. But though we are in favour of replacing official Presidents by non-official ones, we are not in favour of having an elected non-official President. Our main ground is to ensure the ultimate success of the rural local self-government. A sudden change is bound to result in failures; so the members of the Local Boards must be gradually trained to work in a spirit of public decency and harmony. That training can only be acquired by the gradual removal of the official control, and the substitution of nominated non-official Presidents for official Presidents is better suited to attain the object aimed at; after the measure has a sufficient trial, and after the members have been habituated to work under a non-official nominated President, the measure of an elected non-official President can well be resorted to, but for the present the latter must wait. It may perhaps be argued that the system of non-official Presidents has not proved so successful elsewhere where it is tried as to command the confidence of the public or of the Government; but the plain answer to it is that the fault lay in the selection of individuals and not in the system.

4. The question resolves itself into certain bye-questions: 1st, the limitation as to the balance in every budget; if the resources of these Boards are to remain as at present, then there is certainly room for either lowering the limits placed by clause 1 of the section 57 or for giving a free hand to draw upon those statutory balances. But if the resources of these bodies are to be augmented, the limitation may well stand. We would suggest, however, that instead of a fixed amount, the section may be modified so as to make it provide for the balance to bear a fixed ratio or to a certain percentage of the entire estimated receipts. Liberty must be reserved to draw upon those balances in cases of proved necessity with the concurrence of some authority. We do not propose to go into further details of this side of the question and leave it here.

As to limitation on the value of works, original or repairs, the plans and estimates of which should be either prepared or approved by the Government Executive Engineer of the district, and the agency under whose supervision the construction of the works

should be carried, we are of opinion that no modification is called for, provided the scale of charges in percentages are materially altered. The charges are rather heavy and should be lowered if not abolished altogether. The Public Works agency is maintained from the public funds and it is but fair that its assistance to such bodies with extremely limited resources should be forthcoming on the cheapest and easiest terms possible. It is hardly fair that the Public Works Department should be allowed a percentage on the entire cost of two or three similar works when but one plan and estimate is made for one work and the only process that is gone through is the duplication or triplification of the plan and estimate.

5. So far as the entertainment of establishment is concerned, we think that for the present the District Local Boards may retain the power, as the provision tends to economy and equitable adjustment of charges according to the means of each Taluka Local Board.

The question of budgets rests altogether on a different footing. The present system is destructive of all spirit of initiative and constructive capacity at the lowest rung of the ladder; and it is extremely desirable that the spirit of dependence should be removed without any loss of time. The change will infuse in the Taluka Boards a sense of responsibility and is bound to give greater scope to the intelligent exercise of public judgment on their finances. The sooner the control over the Taluka Local Board budgets, either of sanction or of revision, is done away with, the better it will be for restoring life to these rural bodies.

6. It is not at present advisable to hand over the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards, but we are firmly of opinion that time has arrived when they should have a potent voice in the handling of primary education. The Government Educational authorities should be required to obtain the views of District Local Boards and act according to them in matters relating to the number and location of schools, the kind of education to be given them, i. e., rural standards or urban ones, the number of standards to be taught and the sort of training to be given thereat. The Government inspecting agency of the district cannot be expected to resist orders from higher authorities and consequently District Local Boards are best fitted to supply the necessary corrective when higher authorities from lack of first hand knowledge of local needs are apt to go astray. Further, the parents of the boys, through their accredited spokesmen, have an inherent right to have a determinative voice in matters like the above. It is they who have an interest in seeing that their sons are given education suited to their rural rank and dignity and needs and that the education given them in schools do not create in them a disregard for the dignity of manual labour.

7. We are of opinion that rules must be modified to give effect to the above suggestions.

8. So far as we are aware they are not.

9. Whether the changes suggested involve additional expenditure or not, irrespective of that consideration, we are clearly of opinion, in order that the people be induced to take more intelligent interest in the affairs of these Local Boards, it is absolutely essential that larger funds than are at present available should be at the disposal of these bodies. If sufficient funds are not placed at their disposal in spite of the elected majorities and a non-official President, these bodies are bound to fail to attract the right sort of people to take interest in their affairs and the present inert humdrum life will continue to be their lot; a state of things for which the people cannot be blamed. With larger funds they will gain a healthy and robust life.

Out of the four sources, suggested in the question, we cannot recommend the first, as the people cannot bear the increase of cent. per cent. in the cess which already is burdensome. The second remedy is no remedy at all so far as the people affected are concerned. As to the third, it is not clear what is intended by it; if the intention is to enable Local Boards to levy a cess on all payers of income-tax, Abkari revenue or Forest revenue, if it is additional impost beyond what they are already paying in the shape of income-tax, etc., we are not in favour of it; but if it is meant that a share out of either of these Imperial revenue sources is to be placed at the disposal of the Local Boards, we can have no objection. But we are informed that already a certain charge is levied by the Abkari Department for local purposes and if this amount which legitimately ought to be earmarked for local purposes and if this amount which legitimately administration, is put to legitimate use, there will hardly be any need to go in search of tapping other and additional sources to meet the new expenditure involved in carrying out the contemplated changes. We are also of opinion that Provincial subventions must be increased.

10. There is much truth in the statement that the Local Boards have to some extent failed; people do not take any interest and there is no active co-operation. The constitution itself has much to answer for the failure. It is so much officialized that no non-official has any the slightest chance of being heard. The method of work is

faulty and the Boards have to register the decision previously arrived at by the officers: sometimes *ex post facto* decisions have to be recorded. There is no deliberation in any of the proceedings.

The Boards' revenue is to a substantial extent earmarked for devotion to fixed objects and there is very little left for the exercise of their capacity for management. The presence of high Revenue officers of the district on whose good-will the members who are returned have to depend for their weal and for their reputation coupled with the presence of the revenue and police patels entirely take away the semblance of a representative deliberative body from these Boards.

The remedy for the state of affairs lies in the reduction of the official element and giving a freer hand to the Boards in the administration of their concerns; and attracting to it a class of people who can voice the real needs of the people. If the electors are left free to return non-residential people with sufficient intelligence, education and independence of character, the officialized atmosphere which has at present such a deadening effect will give place to a newer and healthier life.

It may perhaps be urged that the electoral franchise must not vest in those who do not contribute to the local rates, and if those who do not contribute to it are allowed to be returned, a great principle would be at stake. But our answer to the argument is this, that so long as those who contribute to the rates have not the power or courage to voice their views they should be allowed to do so through such representatives of theirs as can effectively do so. Again, the sanctity of the principle is not preserved at all in practice; surely those officials, who have the decisive voice in the disposal of local rates, are not the contributors of those rates, and if the principle is violated, so far as Government nominees are concerned, why should the poor voiceless rate-payers be pinned down to it to the entire sacrifice of their real interest and wants?

11. Yes. The educational qualification must be added. All those who are entitled to have their names entered in the list No. 1 under section 10 are more or less dependents of the Collector. Even the holder of immoveable property can have his name entered if his immoveable property is assessed at the statutory value by the Collector. It is said that the case for recognizing the right of the educated class was fought out and lost on the ground that there is considerable difference between Municipalities and Local Boards. Well, if that is so, we see the fruits of the policy adopted. It may be contended that the Government can nominate such persons of superior intelligence. Our reply is, it is one thing to be nominated and another thing to be elected.

12. We are in favour of grouping; but it is difficult to work it out in the abstract in a particular taluka there may not be the voters belonging to the proposed group sufficiently large to justify constituting them a separate electoral body; however, we suggest that property holders may be grouped together and the pensioners, Honorary Magistrates and patels can form a separate group. The question is rather vague, but we have ventured to reply to it in the sense in which we have understood it.

13. Yes.

14. Rs. 24 in lieu of Rs. 48.

15. It is desirable to divide the Provincial share of the land revenue and income-tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards, but we cannot state what the share of Local Boards should be. It would be preferable to keep it elastic to suit the wants of Government and Local Boards.

16. We do not see any object will be served by fixing the ratio by law. The conditions of different districts are not so uniform as to make the statutory intervention profitable; while on the other hand elasticity in such matters is more beneficial on the whole to the backward talukas.

17. Though we are convinced that the total abolition of nomination of non-officials will not affect the administrative efficiency, we are against total abolition on other grounds; we are for slow cautious change and not for revolutionary and sudden changes: we have ample faith in the slow growth evolving from one order to another instead of the bodily transplantation of systems of alien lands. Therefore it is that we have proposed in the first instance a non-official nominated President, and in the same way we would like to see a gradual supplantation of the nomination system and its reduction step by step. We, therefore, suggest that at present the ratio of nominated members be re-adjusted, and though we cannot propose a constitution for the Local Boards, of the whole Presidency, we can illustrate our view by an example. Assuming the whole Board consists of twenty-one members including the President, we would say that let there be 14 elected members, 4 nominated non-officials including the President, and 3 officials. Thus according to us there should be the ratio of $\frac{2}{3}$: $\frac{1}{3}$ between elected and nominated members, and among the $\frac{2}{3}$ nominations, exclusive of the President, the relative numbers of officials and non-officials must be equal.

18. We are of opinion that the limits must be reduced. The limit of land revenue must be Rs. 24. The immoveable property must be of the value of Rs. 1,000. In clause (3) the limit to be reduced to Rs. 250 and in (4) to Rs. 15 per mensem.

Mr. Chhotubhai Anupram Vakil.

1. I do think District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. I am not in favour of election by communities.
3. Presidents of District and Taluka Boards should be elected non-officials wherever available.
4. The limitation of the preparation of plans and the execution of public works, in so far as they are required to be prepared and approved by the Government Executive Engineer, should be removed and the execution of all works should be left entirely with the Local Boards.
5. Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of District Local Board in matters referred to in this question.
6. I do believe time has come for handing over the management of primary schools to District Local Board.
7. I could not get Cumming's Local Board Manual and I am not, therefore, in a position to answer this question.
8. I am not in a position to answer this question as I have never been myself a member of any Local Board.
9. In order to meet increased expenditure I would not recommend a general raising of the Local Fund cess as suggested in part 1 of this question on all holdings, but the Local Boards may be empowered to raise the cess upto a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee in all cases where land is not cultivated by the owner himself but is let to tenants. I am of opinion that Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters, but not in the manner suggested in part 2 of this question. This can be done, however, by levying of cess on income-tax, Abkari revenue, Forest revenue and by increment in Provincial subventions as suggested in parts 3 and 4 of the question.

10. I will not lay the blame at the doors of non-official members entirely; it is no doubt true that as the Boards are at present constituted and represented such non-official members as are on the Board are not in a position to take any active interest because :—

- (1) of the predominance of official majorities ;
- (2) lack of independence in the elected members due to the defect in the system of election which more often than not result in the return of a majority of members who are either wanting in independence or are not capable ;
- (3) the feeling of helplessness in carrying out views which are not approved of by Government officers.

The remedy lies in giving full scope to the principles of local self-government (1) by reducing the qualifications prescribed in section 10 (2) by raising the proportion of elected members and making the Boards truly representative, (3) by strictly enjoining the avowed policy of Government officials not directing or influencing the elections.

11. Yes. Resident graduates of Universities, resident pleaders, jurors and assessors may be included in the list of those qualified to vote.

12. Yes. In some of the Municipalities there is a separate body of electors popularly called general or intelligent ward, which send 2 or 3 members to the Corporation. I believe there are such separate electorates at Ahmednagar, Poona and Surat. The separate electorate in case of their Municipalities consist of graduates, jurors, assessors, Government pensioners earning a pension of not less than Rs. 15 a month, schoolmasters, and Government servants and employes in private firms and companies drawing not less than Rs. 30 a month. Some such electorate may be constituted for the Boards on some such principle.

13. If it is not possible to get a non-official President for Taluka Local Board it is certainly desirable that Vice-President should be invariably non-official.

14. I refer to my reply to question 18.

15. It is desirable to divide the Provincial share of the land revenue and income-tax between Provincial Government and Local Boards. Fixed proportions out of the Provincial share of progressive items of revenue, such as land revenue, excise, etc., should be assigned in the same manner as the Imperial Government assigns to Provincial Governments out of items of general revenue, instead of subventions of lump sums.

16. I am not in favour of fixing the proportion by law.

17. I do not think that the administrative efficiency of a Board will suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. I am not in favour of election by communities, but it may at times happen that on account of diverse causes and coincidences important interest in a taluka or a district may not be represented on the Boards; in such cases it is desirable that Government should have

the power to provide for the representation of such omitted interest, by nomination of non-official members to represent such interest. I would, therefore, suggest that the Board should consist of members of whom not less than two-thirds shall be elected and as to the remaining one-third they may consist of non-officials nominated as well as officials and *ex officio* members.

18. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 do require to be reduced :—

As to clause 1 of the section Rs. 48 should be reduced to an amount not exceeding Rs. 16.

As to sub-clause 2, Rs. 5000 should be reduced to an amount not exceeding Rs. 2,000.

As to sub-clause 3, Rs. 500 should be reduced to an amount not exceeding Rs. 200.

As to sub-clause 4, Rs. 50 should be reduced to an amount not exceeding Rs. 15 a month.

The Honorary Secretaries, Surat District Association.

We are directed by the Council of the District Association, Surat, to lay before you their views on the questions submitted by Government for your advice.

The need for extension of the principles of local self-government to District and Taluka Local Boards is overdue. It is now thirty years since the Local Boards Act was passed, and though the constitution of every Municipal Board has undergone a change, no change has been effected in Local Boards. They have been given the franchise to return one member to the Provincial Legislative Council, but nothing has been done to introduce greater popular element in their constitution.

The Presidents of Local Boards have always been the District Revenue authorities and consequently their affairs are looked upon as purely departmental doings in which people exercise little, if any, real voice. The first reform that should be introduced is the replacement of official Presidents by non-official ones on these Boards. The Council of the District Association desire to lay great stress on this step. They have no objection to non-officials being nominated in these positions, if Government find that election of Presidents in some cases will not be desirable; but the aim should be to have as many elected Presidents as possible, nominated Presidents being the exceptions, so far as District Local Boards are concerned; in the opinion of the Council there should be no difficulty in getting suitable men to be elected Presidents, as on the Boards there will be representatives of Municipalities some of whom at any rate should be capable enough to discharge the duties of the President efficiently.

The official element must also be simultaneously reduced as far as possible, and elected majorities must invariably be secured. There need be, the Council of the Association trust, no apprehension on score of administrative efficiency.

In the opinion of the Council the reform of the expansion of Local Boards is not so pressing and can well stand over for some time.

The most urgent reform that is called for is to place more funds at the disposal of Local Boards; and the Council of the Association are firmly of opinion that instead of permitting Local Boards to levy a cess either on income-tax or Forest or Excise revenue, the best course would be to hand over the entire revenue which is being raised by the levy of one anna by the Excise Department. The Provincial subventions may also be substantially increased.

It is not time for handing over the control and management of primary education to Local Boards, but it is the opinion of the Council that they should have some voice in the questions pertaining to the nature of education to be given, the standards to be taught and to the number and location of schools in each district.

Broadening of the basis of the franchise for voters is equally called for and the present limitations prescribed in section 10 of the Act require in their opinion to be materially reduced.

Educational qualification must be given a statutory recognition and the residential limitation must be dropped to ensure a proper and efficient representation of the real wants and needs of the rate-payers of the district. At present their representatives are revenue or police patels whose interest it is to give assent to every proposal emanating from district authorities. The presence of a body of men capable of critically examining every measure and proposal before the Board is essential to the healthy administration of local rural affairs and the lack of occasional criticism from a non-official point of view is largely responsible for the present state of affairs.

The control over budgets of Taluka Boards must be got rid of in order to infuse a spirit of corporal responsibility in the Boards; besides, its educative effect will be immense.

Generally the present statutory limitation charges on the funds of the Boards may be reduced and measures for giving the Boards a freed hand should be devised.

The question of communal representatives is before the public since the last eight years or so and it is discussed threadbare. The Council of the Association fail to see why that cleavage of races must be introduced at all. There are no measures which come up before these Boards in which a Hindu is more affected than a Mahomedan. There is no possibility of a conflict of interest in their rural concerns which would be entrusted to the charge of Local Boards; and if once the seed of dissensions is sown, the harvest of the problems that will be given birth to will be extremely embarrassing both to Government and the people.

Mr. D. K. Desai, President of a meeting of the land-holders of Katargam, M. ta Varachha, Singapore, Ved, Dabholi, Fulpada, Amroli, Utran and Kosad, convened on the 24th at the Jain Hall, Katargam.

1. Yes; the District and the Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. No; the election should not be by communities but the number of members in the Taluka Board should be increased by increasing the number of groups of villages arranged according to population and a proportionate increase in the number of the members of the District Board should be made.
3. Yes; they should be *non-officials*, and should be elected.
4. It should be left to the discretion of the Taluka and District Local Boards in what cases they should consult the Executive Engineer and get the plans and estimates prepared by him. There should be no restriction on their discretion and the present limitation should be removed.
5. Yes.
6. No.
7. There should be no change.
8. The provisions of section 48 (a) should be strictly complied with.
9. No in cases of (1), (2) and (3), but the Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. There is positive lack of interest but not of a desire for co-operation. The failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to the system of their constitution, which has the effect of nullifying popular voice. The remedy partly would be by not allowing any Government servant, including the *patel*, to be a candidate for election. Those worthy of filling the place may be nominated.
11. Those paying an assessment of Rs. 25 should be entitled to vote.
12. No.
13. Yes, but we desire the President also to be *non-official*.
14. *Vide* reply to question 11.
15. Yes, the proportion of the share should be so laid down as to ensure to the Local Board an amount equal to the present grant-in-aid *plus* $\frac{1}{8}$ of the Abkari, Forest and land revenues of the area within the Boards' jurisdiction.
16. No. Full effect should be given 48 (a).
17. The efficiency will not be affected. There should be at most three officials and the rest of the members should be at least four times as many.
18. *Vide* reply to question 11.

Rao Bahadur Narayan Laloobhai Desai, retired Deputy Collector.

1. No. The talukas have not as yet intellectually advanced and so do not realize the responsibilities. There is a great want of self-sacrificing disinterested men.
2. Election by communities is not necessary. Educated men of all races under the present rules have a chance of standing up for a membership. Election by communities will have a tendency to stir up racial animosity. If any necessity arises it might be met by nomination. The present number of members is sufficient. However, it may be raised in big talukas, so that each member can, without any detriment to his own work, go round his group and supervise the Board's work under execution.
3. It is not advisable that the Presidents of Districts and Taluka Local Boards should be *non-officials*. There are not as said above disinterested and self-sacrificing men, having the tact to exact work or the influence to command respect. Of course,

there might be some exceptions. But in talukas such men are rare. The rule may however be modified so as to read like "The President shall be nominated (official or non-official), elected or nominated" and one of the fittest may be tried. Here I may be excused if I respectfully say that the District and Sub-Divisional officers and Mamlatdars should freely mix with and be in touch with the people and find out the best and fittest man for nomination.

4. The present rules while making it obligatory to ask for the sanction of District Board to plans and budgets should be modified.

The Taluka Boards should have qualified sub-overseers and overseers only, that is, those who have passed the sub-overseers' examination; and plans and estimates prepared by such men and those old hands who have put in 10 years' services should be accepted. The Boards should never, as suggested by the Decentralization Commission have the right to call upon the Government Engineering staff to furnish advice and assistance in respect of the preparation of the estimates or otherwise whatever they think it desirable to ask for such aid.

Plans and estimates of roads running through several talukas may be made rather by the sub-overseers or overseers of these talukas in consultation with each other or the President, District Local Board, may, should he deem it necessary, get them prepared by the Public Works Department.

Similarly the execution of works under Rs. 2,500 should be entirely left to the sub-overseers and overseers of the Boards.

The local fund revenues of the taluka, after deducting the educational portion and that for the District Board, should be allowed to be expanded by the Board without any interference.

5. The Taluka Board should be allowed to nominate their establishment subject to the approval of the President, District Local Board, who alone is in a position to keep a general list of sub-overseers, overseers and clerks in the whole district in order to give scope of promotion to the sub-overseers to higher grades; and if such general list is preserved promotions and transfers of subordinates to other talukas would be possible.

As recommended by the Decentralization Commission the Taluka Board should have the full power to pass their budgets subject only to the maintenance of the prescribed minimum balance forwarding a copy thereof both to the Collector and President, Local Board.

6 and 7. No. The time for transferring the management of the primary schools to District Boards has not arrived. However it would be well if an educational Advisory Committee elected by the District Board would be constituted. It would be a referee on all educational matters such as fixing of standards, and school curricula, conduct of Local Board teachers and efficient making of schools.

What is at present required more is the grant of powers to the Taluka and District Boards as regards punishment of school masters, and the educational authorities should give effect to the recommendations of the Board.

8. No. The Taluka Local Boards are not consulted as to such appropriation, but this state of things should not be allowed. The direction of section 48 (a) should be strictly followed.

9. (1) The present local fund cess of one anna should not be raised to two annas. If needs be it should be raised at the most to one anna and six pies in the rupee provided the education is made free and that Government give up the following revenues to the Boards:—

- (i) Sale-proceeds of grass,
- (ii) Dead trees,
- (iii) Fruits

in waste land.

The above concession will cause no appreciable loss to Government, but on the other hand a well working Taluka Board is likely to increase it.

(2) The suggestion of declaring certain villages as "notified areas" and thus making them a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters will not work well as these villages cannot bear the burdens of municipal taxation over and above land revenue and local fund cess they have to pay. The instances of the abolition of municipalities from the towns of Muhar, Od, Kalol, Chikhli, Bardoli, Pardi, Olpad and Mandvi in the Northern division prove that the rural populations with its responsibilities for the payment of land revenue, local fund, takavi and private debts is not affluent enough to afford for Municipal Institutions. There might be and are such towns which may be exceptions, but the generality of such villages is in a state as above.

(3) One anna cess should be levied on

- (1) Abkari Revenue and
- (2) Forest Revenue.

There is no necessity to subject the Income Tax Revenue to such a levy as the Abkari and Forest Revenues are sufficiently large to yield a tolerably good amount if such a cess is levied on them.

(4) Provincial substitution may be increased if needs be.

15. If the suggestion to subject the Abkari and Forest revenues to a one anna cess is accepted there is no necessity, I think, to give a share to the Local Boards from the Land Revenue and Income Tax receipts. If however it is thought expedient or desirable to give such a share it need not exceed $\frac{1}{8}$ of each of them.

16. I think that the proportion in which the one anna cess after deducting the educational share is to be divided between the District and Taluka Local Boards should be fixed by law with a proviso that the preparation may be altered in special cases. The ratio may be 3 to 5.

17. The administrative efficiency of a Board is likely to suffer if the provision that at least half of the nominated members on a Local Board should be non-official is abolished.

I have in question 2 not advocated the election by communities. If the provision referred to above is abolished there will be no remedy for the representation of special communities or interest. Again the Board would look the services of competent men who would not like to undergo the trouble of canvassing votes.

18. Yes, I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act.

(1) I would have rupees thirty-five instead of forty-eight.

(2) I would substitute Rs. 3,000 instead of Rs. 5,000.

(3) Would leave it as it is.

(4) I would have rupees thirty instead of rupees fifty and would like to include all persons drawing salaries of rupees forty.

I would like to have the words "residing within the taluka" added in clauses 1 and 2.

The Local Fund money is idly lying in Government coffers. It may be invested with the Presidency banks.

In short I may say from my experience that if there were not official Taluka and District Local Board Presidents and other official members, the Boards would suffer most terribly, if not fail, as it is they alone who in fact run them.

THANA DISTRICT.

Mr. S. M. Bharucha, B.A., Acting Collector of Thana.

1. The majority of officers and gentlemen consulted are in favour of having elected majorities in the District and Taluka Local Boards and I agree with them. With elected majorities, the complaint sometimes heard of non-official members having no hearing or influence at the Boards' deliberations, will disappear.

2. Elections should not be by communities, but provision should be made to secure due representation of any special communities or interests.

Clause 2.—The present number is quite sufficient.

3. The time is not yet ripe for the Presidentship of a District Local Board to be transferred to a non-official. As regards Taluka Local Boards, Presidents should be elected, but he may be an official or non-official.

4. I agree with the opinion of Mr. Cowan that the limitation in the case of roads be extended to Rs. 200 per mile and in the case of other works the limitation should be Rs. 1,000 per unit. I am further of opinion that all the limitations mentioned in section 57 (b) of the Act should be removed in case of those District Local Boards who agree to maintain an efficient Public Works staff.

5. Taluka Local Boards should not be freed in the matter of engagement and payment of servants. The power to sanction and revise Taluka Local Board budgets should also continue with District Local Boards as at present if it is decided that the Presidents of Taluka Local Boards *should be* non-officials.

6. Time has not yet come.

7. The rules require no modifications.

8. The answer is in the negative. It is sometimes necessary to transfer part of a surplus from a rich taluka for the benefit of the backward and poor classes residing in a poor taluka and this power can be more beneficially exercised by a District Local Board than by a Taluka Local Board with its limited outlook.

9. (i) Power should be taken to raise Local Fund cess to a maximum of 2 annas.

(ii) There will not be so great a scope for extension of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act as to include a larger number of villages with a view to establish Notified Areas in them and the extension will not give much relief to the Local Boards' expenditure on educational and other matters. The proportionate Local Fund cess income, Government grants and school fees will have to be transferred to the Notified Areas and the resultant gain will be small. The Notified Areas Committees will scarcely be able to maintain an independent medical institution. However, the experiment is worth trying, as it will improve the sanitation of some villages, and may prepare the ground for the abolition of Taluka Local Boards altogether.

(iii) I agree with the view that cess should be levied on income-tax, Abkari and Forest revenue.

(iv) These naturally vary now and then, and I am not competent to give any useful opinion.

10. It is true, the reasons being given by the Hon'ble Mr. Lawrence in his note (paragraph 1), namely, limitation of powers and resources of boards. Non-official members will take more interest and will actively co-operate when with an elected majority their influence in the deliberations will increase and when there is enough money to spend on all local wants.

11. Do. *Vide* answer to question 18.

12. Do. I cannot suggest any feasible means, nor do I see any necessity for the same. It will be enough if while exercising the power of nomination regard is paid to this point.

13. Do. It is desirable to have non-official Vice-Presidents, but no fast rule need be made on the point.

14. Do. *Vide* answer to question 18.

15. I am not in favour of making the Provincial share of land revenue divisible between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards. If the idea of levying a cess on income-tax, Abkari and Forest revenue is not accepted, then there may be a division of the Provincial share of income-tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards, in the proportion of 9 : 1,

16. It is not desirable to fix the proportion by law.

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17. The efficiency of boards will not suffer by constituting them of elected members and nominated officials. Elected members may be $\frac{2}{3}$ rd and nominated members $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, of whom half may be non-officials, to secure due representation of special interests or communities that may have failed in the elections.

18. I am in favour, instead of reducing Rs. 48 in clause 1 of section 10, of increasing the amount to Rs. 100. In clause 3 the limit should be increased to Rs. 1,000. The provisions of section 12, clause (1) (b, c and d), of the District Municipal Act III of 1901 should also be incorporated in the Local Board Act with necessary modifications, so that it may have due proportion of the intelligent and educated elements of population represented.

Mr. G. H. Cowan, I. C. S., Assistant Collector.

1. I do not think it matters one way or the other. I presume the Collector and Prant Officers would be members of the District Board and Prant Officers and Mamlatdars members of the Taluka Boards.

2. Election should not be by communities in any way. I consider the present number of members amply sufficient. An increase might add considerably to the difficulty of ensuring a quorum.

3. It is not desirable nor is it really practicable to have any President of the District Local Board other than the Collector. He is the only person in the district who knows it as a whole. Districts are very large units and there is no connection as a rule between different parts of a district except administrative union. There neither are, nor as far as one can judge will there be in future, private individuals who have a working knowledge of the whole of their district.

The Mamlatdar should be either President or Vice-President of the Taluka Board. I do not consider it necessary that the Prant Officer should be anything more than a member. The practice of having the Prant Officer as *ex officio* President is attended with practical inconvenience. The necessity of corresponding through him wastes much time and creates some confusion in dealing with the Public Works Department and Educational authorities. There are at present some compensating advantages, which could, however, be otherwise secured if the executive staff of the Board was sufficiently strengthened.

4. I consider it very desirable that the number of plans and estimates which have to go to the Public Works Department should be greatly reduced. I think the limit in section 57 (b) might be extended at once to "two hundred rupees a mile" instead of "fifty rupees a mile" and to "Rs. 1,000" instead of "Rs. 500." A greater extension of the limit could be made with safety if a schedule of rates for different parts of the district were made out and laid down and efficient men were recruited as Local Board sub-overseers or overseers.

5. I consider it to the advantage of both taluka and district that the Local Board servants should belong to a district service. It facilitates the provision of pensions, promotion and transfers, and should make a bigger choice of candidates available. I consider it important that the District Board should not lose its power of sanctioning and revising taluka budgets; more especially if Taluka Boards are in future to have non-official Presidents.

6. I think control of finance should be in the hands of the District Board and that grants or subventions from Government should be made to the Board and it should fix fees subject to wide limits. The control of the staff and curriculum should be in the hands of a District Inspector of higher status than the Deputy Inspector, subject to the general control of the Education Department.

7. No; except that I would substitute District Inspector for the Divisional Inspector where he is mentioned in the rules.

8. I know of no case having arisen.

9. (1) I strongly support this proposal. I would point out that in paragraph 30 of the Government of India's Resolution, dated 28th April 1915, the Commission is quoted as recommending that District Boards should not be empowered to raise the land cess beyond one anna in the rupee on the rent value. In Bombay the cess is one anna in the rupee on the assessment which is only one-third or one-fourth of the rents; so the local cess falls short of the supposed limit by about 75 per cent. It is obvious that at the present time the amount of local taxation in rural areas is very low in proportion to Provincial taxation.

(2) I do not think it is any use multiplying Notified Areas unless there are people competent and willing to manage them. The lack of such people is the obstacle to extension. I do not think that Notified Areas should be required to maintain their own schools.

(3) (a) I think this suggestion trivial. I understand it is designed to meet the difficulty that banias get the education of their children paid for by people who can

afford to pay less well than the banias. But a cess on income-tax would only touch a small number of traders and shopkeepers. In my opinion the remedy is to raise school fees generally or in special schools subject to approved exemptions.

- (b) Abkari revenue. It might be a good thing to impose a four-anna cess on the auction price of all shops for the sale of liquor and toddy, if it tempered with discretion the zeal of the shop-closing reformers. In the case of Thana District the fact that the land revenue is a comparatively small part of the whole revenue of the district creates a special reason for a grant of this kind to Local Funds and such a grant is made. But in general there is no particular connection between the Abkari revenue and Local Fund expenditure and to establish such connection might hereafter hamper reform of the Abkari system.
- (c) I think there is a strong case for a road grant to Local Boards in proportion to the Forest revenue of a district. Timber traffic cuts up the roads very badly and expenditure on roads in forest areas by the District Board increases Forest revenue. I do not think permission to levy a cess is what is wanted. That would be more complicated than a direct proportionate grant.
- (4) In view of the tedious complications of the Grant-in-aid rules it would be an advantage to have much of what money Government has to spare given outright to District Boards instead of in the form of conditional doles for school buildings, school equipment, etc.

15. I do not feel competent to offer an opinion on this proposal.

16. The objection to fixing such a ratio by law is that important through roads are rightly maintained by the central authority. If there are several such roads in a taluka—I have a particular case in mind—the District Board has to spend a large sum in the taluka and cannot in addition leave a large part of the taluka revenue to the Taluka Board. I would leave the discretion to the District Board. The Taluka Board might be empowered to ask for accounts showing that at least three-fourths of the revenue raised in the taluka was being spent in it.

17. It would be a pity if a really useful member of the Board who refused to stand for election or failed to secure election should not be nominated. I think power to nominate two non-officials for Taluka Boards and five for the District Board would be sufficient.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits in question. The increase of wealth in the country and the raising of assessments have the result that the limits are really much lower than when the Act was passed.

Mr. J. B. Vachha, B.A., B.Sc., District Deputy Collector.

1. Please see reply to question No. 3. However, as there is no great possibility of elected members combining together to thwart real progress (as in the case of Municipalities), an elected majority will not matter much.

2. I believe election by communities will be a mistake. A Mahomedan of a village situated in one corner of a taluka can hardly have anything in common with his brother in a village in another corner of the taluka as far as the Local Board is concerned. There will be great difficulty in holding the elections, as people will have to be made to travel long distances so as to be at the place appointed for recording votes. Local Board elections must be by group of adjacent villages as at present. No special provision is needed at present as regards special communities and interests. The provision for nominating members in the Local Board Act are enough. I think the present number of Taluka Local Board members might with advantage be increased. According to the present arrangement, as far as group elections are concerned, about 50 villages combined have to elect one member. It is not possible for one man to represent efficiently such a large area. I think the constitution of the Taluka Local Boards might be so modified as to allow selection of one member for a group containing not more than 20 to 25 villages.

3. The question is really one of great difficulty from a practical point of view. The chief difficulty arises from the fact that the taluka and the district are created by Government for administrative purposes whereas villages and towns have been formed by the ancestors of those inhabiting them. The result is that, whereas we can find men who would take commendable zeal and interest in the welfare of a village or a town, we rarely find anyone who would take any real interest in the advancement of a taluka or a district as a whole. On Taluka Local Boards the non-official members, beyond pressing for schemes to benefit their own villages, seldom seem to take interest in, or even make an effort to understand, anything with which they are not immediately concerned. Where ordinary means of communications are so bad it is a matter of great difficulty for non-officials to move about actively so that they might acquire that intimate personal knowledge of the condition of the various parts of a taluka which alone would make them useful on the Board. The case of a city or a town is different.

Everyone inhabiting it has a natural feeling for its welfare. It is not very difficult to move about and have an intimate knowledge of the condition of its various parts. Expansion of popular representation on Municipal Boards has, on this account, not given rise to any complications. Arguments based on the success of experiments in that direction will not apply to District and Taluka Local Boards. I would, therefore, enjoin caution in moving very fast in the matter of withdrawing official representation in the administration of Local Boards. The Collector is the only person in the district who can be expected to know something about the whole district. The Prant Officers have opportunities of moving about whole talukas and ascertaining their needs which a savkar or a pleader having dealings in a few villages of a taluka seldom has. The non-official members still need many years for being ingrained with the principles of Local Board Administration before they can be trusted to take care of themselves and their neighbours.

The Mahim and the Vada Taluka Local Board have long had non-official Vice-Presidents but the experiment has not been an unqualified success. I am, therefore, strongly in favour of the existing practice of having official Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards.

4. With the present staff at the disposal of District and Taluka Local Boards I think the orders in force should continue as they are absolutely necessary, the available staff being both not very proficient and unreliable. The only modification that I can consider sound is to allow such of the Boards as have under them L.C.E.'s to approve plans and estimates for roads and for works costing up to Rs. 10,000 and to carry out themselves such works.

5. As regards the Taluka Local Board budgets, the District Local Board's sanction may with advantage be done away with. The sanction is as a rule a formal matter only.

6. I do not think the time has yet come to do this.

7. I have no alterations to propose.

8. As far as I know the Taluka Local Boards are not being consulted in this matter.

9. I can recommend an increase in the Provincial subventions only. All other courses proposed will cause more discontent amongst the people than can be removed by any extension of local self-government as proposed. Against an increase in the Local Fund cess there will be much opposition. The creation of Notified Areas will have to be limited to very few villages really. Most of our villages are so very small that Sanitary Boards or Committees are not as yet been introduced into them. A cess on income-tax will bring very little additional revenue in most districts. Instead of allowing the Local Boards to have anything to do with Abkari and Forest revenues I would rather increase the Provincial grant as stated above.

10. *Vide* reply to question No. 3.

11. I can suggest none.

12. I don't see any necessity to do this. The power to nominate might be utilized in cases where such a course seems advisable to equalise the representation of various classes on a Board.

13. Much will depend upon the suitability or otherwise of persons residing in the various talukas and any hard and fast rule making the appointment of a non-official Vice-President compulsory in all cases might be found unworkable, sometimes at least.

14. Rs. 48 is the total amount of land revenue payable by a man and the sub-divisions of survey numbers made on account of the introduction of the Record-of-rights have nothing to do with this. No change is necessary therefore, I submit.

15. There is no necessity to lay down that the Local Board should have a specific share. Government might determine their grants for every five years or so and that will suffice to let the Boards know what they can undertake without embarrassing their finances.

16. No. Better if the present practice is continued.

17. The provision for nomination of non-officials is very useful in equalising representations of the various classes and castes on Boards and should be retained.

18. No.

Rao Bahadur Appajee Ganesb Dandekar of Palghar.

I have read and perused the accompanying papers and submitted herewith separately my replies for every query.

I have been working in Municipality as well as in Taluka Local Board for nearly 30 years completely as a member and as the Chairman, Vice-President and as the President of the bodies in the intervals.

I have been elected myself by voters and also I have been nominated by Government in Municipality as well as in Taluka Local Boards and have been nominated by Government in District Local Board.

I have formed my opinion from my own experience that generally it is the case from my own experience that some non-officials always desire to be an elected member as well as the nominated councillors in Municipality as well as Taluka Local Boards and they show first and speak that they will be good-workers when they will be elected or nominated, but when such is really the case actually, they take very little interest in Municipality as well as in Local Boards and take very little care for both the works in question, and that therefore the present system of electing the councillors and of nominating the councillors by half in number (*viz.*, half nominated and half number of elected councillors) should be continued and that there should be no any change. The Local Board should have an official President just as at present. There should be no change in this system. I humbly consider if there will be a non-official President for the Taluka Local Board there will be much confusion in general for the checking of Local Boards' works as well as in money matters. The present system of selecting the Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board by majority of votes should be continued though he may be an official or non-official. By a majority of votes the selection of the Vice-President in Taluka Local Board should be in force as at present. There should be no any particular law on this subject.

From my own experience as the Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board, I consider that the President of the Taluka Local Board should be the Assistant Collector or the District Deputy Collector. There will be no check on Local Board works if the present system is changed for the official President of the Taluka Local Board. The Assistant Collector or the District Deputy Collector supervises and examines the Local Board works easily when he is on tour. At present Mamlatdar of a taluka is the *ex officio* Chairman of the Taluka Local Board. As the Mamlatdar is the subordinate of the Prant Officer, he examines the works very carefully and regularly and obediently. The Taluka Local Board works are likely to be delayed if the power of the Presidentship of the Prant Officer is given to the non-official gentlemen.

I humbly consider that there should be no non-official Presidents of the District Local Boards. The present system (*viz.*, the Collector of the district as the President of the District Local Board) should be continued. The Huzur Deputy Collector is the Vice-President of the District Local Board generally. When the Collector of the district is the President of the District Local Board, the Vice-President of the District Local Board (*viz.*, the Huzur Deputy Collector) examines the Budgets, Supplementary Budgets of the Boards very carefully. The Huzur Deputy Collector is not likely to take so much care just as at present when the Presidentship of the District Local Board is delegated to non-official gentlemen. There will be mismanagement in District Local Board works if this power is delegated to non-official gentlemen. When the Collector of the district is on his tour, he examines the works, supervises the works, and gets information for the Board's sake. This cannot be done when the non-official gentleman is the President of the District Local Board.

In conclusion, I beg most humbly and respectfully to bring to your kind notice that if the power of the Presidentship of the District Local Board and that of the Taluka Local Board is delegated to non-official gentlemen, disarrangement and disorder is likely to occur very soon in both the Boards' business (*viz.*, within two or three weeks).

- (1) There should be no elected majorities for the District and Taluka Local Boards.
- (2) The election must not be by communities. Those who get more votes at the time of election at the poll should be declared as an elected member. The present system of election should be in force and should not be changed.
The present number of members (both elected or nominated) is sufficient. It is not necessary to increase the number of members.
- (3) No non-official gentleman be appointed as the President, District Local Board or of Taluka Local Board. The present system is very reasonable, convenient and less expensive and systematic.
- (4) The present system of preparing plans and estimates should be continued. It is not necessary to modify it.
- (5) The Taluka Local Board must be under the control of the District Local Board. It must not have the privilege as referred to in the query.
- (6) The present management of primary schools should be continued.
- (7) It is not necessary to alter the rules under section 48 (b).
- (8) Sometimes the information is obtained.
- (9) Paragraphs (1), (2), (3) and (4).—There should be no change in any direction. The present system should be continued. All arrangements should be under the control of Government just as at present.
- (10) The answer is in affirmative. The Collector of the district or the Assistant Collector and the District Deputy Collector may kindly advise the non-official members to take interest.

- (11) No additions are necessary. Instead of Rs. 48, the limit of the qualification of a voter, it should be at Rs. 100.
- (12) The present arrangement is good. It should be continued.
- (13) The selection of the Vice-President, Taluka Local Board, should be made by a majority of votes just as at present.
- (14) The same reply as given in question No. 11.
- (15) The present arrangement is, in my humble opinion, good.
- (16) The present proportion for the proceeds of one anna cess is good. There should be no law particular on the point.
- (17) The present arrangement, viz., the half of the nominated members on a Local Board should be non-officials. There should be equal number of the elected members as well as the nominated.
- (18) In my humble opinion the present limit for the qualification of a voter is low, viz., instead of Rs. 48, it should be at Rs. 100 (one hundred). Those who pay one hundred rupees as the Government assessment should be considered as the voters.

Mr. Sakharam Ganesh Phadke.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The election need not be by communities.
- (3) The present number of members is sufficient.
- (3) Yes. The Presidents of Taluka Local Boards only should be non-officials and elected.
- (4) The limitation should be entirely removed. The preparation of plans on the execution of public works should be left to the Local Boards.
- (5) There should be no change in the present arrangements relating to Board's servants. The Taluka Local Boards may be authorised to sanction and revise their budget.
- (6) I do not think the time has yet come.
- (7) I see no necessity to alter the rules.
- (8) No; I do not think the Taluka Local Board is ever consulted.
- (9) I am afraid we are already highly taxed, and are unable to bear the burden of increased taxes; but I may be allowed to suggest that a part of the revenue referred to in clause 3 of the question, say 10 per cent., may be assigned to the Local Boards.
- (10) True. The failure is due to lack of interest and absence of co-operation. The cause is to be found in the limited revenues of the Local Boards on the scope of duties of the members. The members should be put in charge of certain duties in the area which elects them and they should be given travelling allowance, if necessary, in the discharge of their duties. The eligibility of a member should also be made dependent on the work performed previously.
- (11) No additions are necessary; but in sub-sections (2), (3) and (4) the words "one thousand", "one hundred" and "rupees ten" should be substituted for the words "five thousand", "five hundred" and "rupees fifty", respectively.
- (12) No, it is not possible.
- (13) Yes, it is.
- (14) The statutory minimum of Rs. 48 should be reduced to Rs. 25.
- (15) The Local Boards' share should be the $\frac{1}{3}$ th share.
- (16) No.
- (18) Answered in answers Nos. 11 and 14.

Mr. Rajaram Tukaram of Bandra.

1. I am of opinion that time has arrived when public should be made to take up more responsibility in the civic management of their affairs and for this purpose it is necessary that the franchise should be extended and the constitution of the District and Taluka Local Boards should be placed on more liberal lines. The Boards should, at least, contain $\frac{2}{3}$ ths of elected and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd nominated members, if it be not possible to have $\frac{3}{4}$ ths elected and $\frac{1}{4}$ th nominated. In case of nominated members not more than half should be officials, the rest being the representatives of minorities.

In advocating this reform I would humbly suggest that instead of starting at the Taluka Local Board a beginning be made by forming a Village Committee for each group of villages created for the purpose of election to Taluka Boards under section 6 (b). These Village Committees should be more or less on the lines of Village Panchayets and should be entrusted with the work of Village Sanitation and should act as Advisory Committees in the educational matters to the Taluka Local Boards.

In the case of District Local Boards the population qualification for municipalities should be lowered to 8,000 instead of 18,000 as at present.

2. (a) I am strongly against election by communities, since it will only help to accentuate the racial animosities and embitter the social amenities. Should any necessity arise for the representation of any minorities on the Board, the same could be achieved by nomination.

(b) The present number of members on the District Board, Thana, is 25. This should be increased to 39 in the least so as to allow the principle of $\frac{2}{3}$ rd and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd to be worked out and also with a view to extend the franchise to other electorates. In case of Taluka Board there should be some uniformity as regards the number according to the proportion of population of each taluka and the same principle of $\frac{2}{3}$ rd elected and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd nominated should be observed.

3. As regards non-official elected President it is argued that gentlemen with the knowledge of the district will not be available and since non-official President will not get as many opportunities of visiting the district as the official head of the Revenue Department, it is advocated that there should be an official President for the District and Taluka Local Boards and he should be nominated by Government. Whilst agreeing with the first part of these premises I am of opinion that the Presidentships of District Local Boards should be open to election to non-officials alone. And in order to remove the difficulty above referred to, arrangements should be made to enable the President to move about in the district by sanctioning travelling allowance. Moreover, it should be made incumbent on the President that he should be in the district a certain number of days in a year. There will be much educative value in such a course and the members will naturally feel inclined to take more active interest in the management of the affairs of their district. There has been a general charge that the non-official members show general apathy, but this is due to the handling of these Boards by the official Presidents who always try to rule and keep the members under leading strings. The Collector being empowered to control the working of the District Local Boards under Chapter VII of Bombay Act, 1884, he will have ample opportunities to set non-official Presidents right. In view of this section it appears anomalous that Collector should be the President of the District Local Boards.

In case of Taluka Local Boards the Presidents should be elected from amongst the body of non-official members only.

4. There is no necessity of removing or modifying the present limitations in the preparation of plans and the execution of public works unless the Board engages an independent Engineer of a higher grade of service with an adequate staff. In this case it would be better if a Work Committee is appointed just in case of municipalities to control this department.

5. No, this will entail hardship on the staff. The present system is all right and may be continued.

6—7. The funds at the disposal of the Local Boards are not sufficient to take up the entire management of primary schools. The Government should control the inspecting staff whilst the Local Boards should be allowed fullest liberty in the management of the schools as is the case with the municipalities. The teaching staff should be made directly responsible to the Taluka Local Boards, whilst, as stated by me in my answer to question 1, the Village Committees should act as advisory boards to the Taluka Boards in the matter of opening new schools in the talukas. It should be one of the obligatory duties of the Village Committees and the Taluka Local Boards.

The whole amount derived from the one anna cess should be spent on education without any deduction and this should be further augmented by *fixed* Government contributions or by one anna cess on Abkari income. I am, however, of opinion that the major part of the money derived from each taluka should be spent in that taluka alone and a policy of increasing the number of schools in each taluka should be steadily pursued so as to diffuse primary education as far as possible. I think the rules under 48 (c) will have to be modified so as to carry out the above suggestions.

8. Taluka Local Boards are never consulted as to appropriations of revenue raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas. The general practice is to set apart $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the local cess for education. I am of opinion that full amount of one anna cess should be set apart for education. 75 per cent. of the revenue should be allowed to each taluka for educational purposes in that taluka whilst 25 per cent. of this cess should be taken up by the District Local Boards for the purposes of apportionment to such areas or talukas as may be more backward or lacking in funds for the purposes of education. This will always place ample funds with the Government grants at the disposal of Taluka Local Boards for educational purposes.

9. The funds at the disposal of the Local Boards are always found insufficient and consequently the Boards are not able to undertake any works of utility. The executive machinery swallows nearly 30/40 per cent. of this income and the rest is divided between education and the maintenance of existing works. This leave hardly anything for the undertaking of new improvements unless subsidized by Government Grants. The present suggestions will necessarily require more money as apprehended by the Committee, and these funds will have to be supplemented by levy of cess on some of the heads proposed :—

- (1) From the very commencement this levy has been considered to be unjustified one by high Government officials. There is no doubt this presses harshly on the poor agriculturist, who is made to pay for his education, which is more a duty of the Government. The present land revenue is very high and it will act more harshly on the poor agriculturists if the present one anna cess is increased to two annas. The increase of cess on land revenue is therefore not commendable at all.
- (2) According to the Municipal Act the areas can only be notified if they contain a town which is the head-quarter of a taluka or if the area is within a mile from a railway Station. Very few such areas could be notified and consequently there will be hardly any relief as contemplated by the suggestion. Moreover, new taxes will have to be levied at least to cover the expenses of administration and such taxes will always operate more harshly on the inhabitants. It has been my experience that the general rate-payers do not get an adequate return for the taxes they pay under Notified Area Committees. It will be far better to have fully developed municipalities than these stop-gap institutions of notified areas which are nothing better than instruments for changing the nature of taxation. The creation of notified areas in rural districts will operate very harshly on the people who already pay local fund cess without their getting any relief whatsoever.
- (3) I am in favour of a cess of one anna per rupee on Income Tax, Abkari, Forest and Irrigation revenues. This will not act harshly. Moreover, the compensation which the Government allots from the Abkari revenue was settled 20 years back on conditions then prevailing. The levy of one anna cess on Abkari income will not act harshly on any class of people.
- (4) The Provincial grant given by Government for Thana District is not enough when we take into consideration the revenue derived by Government from various sources. Moreover, a portion of this revenue is due to Government's claim to "Unearned Increment" on non-agricultural assessments and it naturally follows that Government should spend a portion of this income on the improvement of the areas from which such revenue is derived. And the only channels through which such improvements can be made are Municipalities and Local Boards to which at least 33 per cent., if not whole, of this revenue should be allotted.

10. Unfortunately this charge against the non-official members that they do not take sufficient interest in the local affairs is too true. But I am afraid this apathy is due more to the purfunctory manner in which the business of the Board is transacted by the official President. Moreover, in the districts, officers are accustomed to quite different ways of procedure from the ways of Presidency towns. Any honest criticism is always misunderstood into hostile criticism and the outspoken members have to work under many disadvantages with the result that all zeal is curbed. Secondly, lack of sufficient funds also operates adversely and non-official members cannot often offer much constructive criticism on the scanty information placed at their disposal and that too at the meeting. Thirdly, more training in civic affairs is necessary to make the people from rural districts appreciate their responsibilities and this can only be done by the creation of Village Committees and thus throwing them in the working thereof.

11. The qualification of voters for Local Boards should be, in my opinion, brought *en par* to that of the municipalities. Graduates should be given franchise and so also co-operative societies be recognised.

12. I think much valuable assistance will be secured to the Boards if pensioners, educated classes, professions and co-operative societies are given separate electorates; for this purpose separate lists should be prepared both for the District and Taluka Local Boards. I am further of opinion that $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the local seats should be set apart for these electorates.

13. I am of opinion that Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials. But in case it is decided by the Committee to have an official President, the Vice-Presidents at least should be from amongst the non-official members.

14. It is necessary to have the statutory minimum reduced owing to the holdings having been divided under Record-of-Rights. In my opinion the minimum assessment should be brought down by half the present minimum, *i. e.*, Rs. 8.

15. I have already pointed out that 33 per cent. of the Provincial revenues should be reserved for the Municipalities and Local Boards. There should be some such ratio fixed for revenue on Income Tax.

16. I am of opinion that the proportion for dividing the proceeds from one anna cess after deducting its educational portion should be fixed, if it cannot be wholly devoted to education as suggested above. The taluka from which such a cess is derived should have the right of spending most of its income locally. Fifty per cent. of this money should be given to the taluka, whilst the remaining 50 per cent. should be taken by the District Local Board for expenditure on road and other public works.

17. The only objection that could be brought forward is that the minorities will have no chance of representation if non-official nominations are abolished and Boards are constituted of elected members and nominated officials. I have already pointed out in my reply to question 1 that the majority of nominations should be officials and the rest representatives from minorities. I do not think the administrative efficiency will be impaired in any way if this suggestion is carried out. The only difficulty will be, as pointed above, about the representations of minorities and for which I do not advocate separate electorates (*vide* my reply to question 2). The question of minority representation comes within practical politics only and only if the Boards are constructed of elected members and nominated officials as suggested in question 12. When, however, the Boards are constructed of $\frac{2}{3}$ ths or $\frac{2}{3}$ rds elected members and the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ th or $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of officials and non-officials, the question of minority representation disappears, inasmuch as power is left to the Government to make suitable provision by nomination of the minority members. The proportion of elected members as to nominated officials should be as 7 to 1.

18. The minimum under heads 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 should be reduced. The reduced limits under the above heads should be Rs. 8, Rs. 2,000, Rs. 200 and Rs. 10, respectively. Moreover, graduates should be entitled to vote.

In addition to what I have expressed in my replies to the various questions set above, I take this opportunity to place before the Committee the following few suggestions in connection with the working of the District Boards.

As far as the present constitution goes the scope for co-operation is very limited. Much will be gained if the working of the Board is put on the lines of District Municipalities by creating separate executive committees, such as Work Committee, Finance Committee and School Committee. These committees should be entrusted with respective works and be made responsible to General Body of the Board. I have already mentioned that the Presidents should be allowed travelling allowance for moving in the district. I further suggest that a special Board called the "Advisory Board" should be constituted from amongst the body of non-official members by election only. This Board should be consulted by the Collector and other Government officers in matters concerning the districts such as granting of tagai, remissions in taxes, measures as regards suppression of crimes, enforcement of forest laws or the management of fairs or melas and similar other questions. This Board will always act as a connecting link between the people and the Government, and will be thus the means of promoting right understanding.

I also advocate strongly the creation of Village Committees on the lines of the old Panchayats. These Committees should in the beginning be entrusted with smaller duties of educative value such as sanitation, agriculture and a part of education and these committees should be the corner stone of self-government. These committees should be the training ground for the people to qualify themselves for the higher qualifications—Taluka and District Local Boards. It should be laid down that unless a person has served so many years on a village committee he should not be eligible for election on Taluka or District Local Boards. This will act as an incentive to the villagers to serve on these committees and to take more interest in the local sanitation of his village, whilst Taluka and District Boards will be benefited by getting men with experience from amongst the rural classes instead of gaping ignoramuses who hardly understand what is going on at the Board meetings.

CENTRAL DIVISION.

EAST KHANDESH DISTRICT.

Mr. Otto Rothfeld, I.C.S., Collector of East Khandesh.

In regard to my own personal opinion, I venture to solicit attention to my letter No. LF/240 of 19th July 1915, forwarding the proceedings of a Special meeting of the District Local Board held on the 16th July. That letter and proceedings contain my opinion on several of the questions now in issue; and to save repetition I venture to request that they may kindly be attached to this report as part of it.

Letter No. LF/240 of 19th July 1915.

FROM

OTTO ROTHFELD, ESQUIRE, I.C.S.,
Collector of East Khandesh.

With reference to G. R. No. 3895 of 10th May 1915, I have the honour to send herewith a copy of the resolution of the District Local Board, East Khandesh, passed in a special meeting called for consideration of the Bill. The discussion was lengthy, detailed, and very interesting.

2. I do not think that it is necessary for me to add my own personal opinion, as distinguished from that of the Board. On all the more important points I agree with the views of the Board.

3. I may, however, briefly note the following points of difference:—

Section 11A.—In my opinion the words “at any time” are needed between “has” and “been guilty.” I put this before the meeting but the Board decided against my suggestion by 8 votes to 6.

Section 33A.—I do not altogether agree with the view of the Board, or at least would have expressed it differently. I do not, however, wish to dwell on this minor point.

Para 2G.—I do not at all agree here. In my opinion there should certainly be a rate of 2 annas per rupee on all income tax-payers and I consider the rate of 1 anna proposed by the Board to be too low.

Para 2J.—This refers to a proposal of my own, on which I thought it well to seize the opportunity to consult the Board and which I shall soon in my capacity of Collector do myself the honour of submitting to you.

Proceedings of the Special General Meeting of the District Local Board, East Khandesh District, held on 16th July 1915.

The following members are present:—

- (1) Mr. Sanders.
- (2) „ Hiremath.
- (3) „ Kelkar.
- (4) „ Gadgil.
- (5) Raosaheb Rupchand Motiram.
- (6) Khansaheb Itbarkhan Aimatkhan.
- (7) Sardar G. K. Deshmukh.
- (8) Khansaheb Vazir Hidayat.
- (9) Mr. Abdul Majid Dadamiya.
- (10) „ Alladin Somji.
- (11) „ Amrit Nilkanth Deshpande.
- (12) „ Anandrao Shripatrao.
- (13) „ Chaganlal Ramkaran.
- (14) „ Bahadarbhai Manekchand.
- (15) „ G. K. Dabir.
- (16) „ G. Y. Dixit.

Subject:—Consideration of G. R. No. 3895 of 10th May 1915, G.D.

After discussion the following resolution was passed, each item being separately considered and voted upon.

1. The District Local Board, East Khandesh, thanks Government for being consulted and humbly begs to express its concurrence in the proposed amendments subject to the following exceptions:—

4. *Section 33 A.*—In view of the facts (a) that Presidents have invariably been and must in future usually be officials and that Vice-Presidents are often officials and, where not, are usually rich men of position, (b) that if the President and Vice-President get allowances then logically the members of Works Committees must also get them and that this would cripple the Boards financially, and (c) that it is on general grounds undesirable that elected or nominated representative should be remunerated for public services, this Board resolves by a majority of 13 to 3 that Government should be requested to omit the proposed section.

6. *Section 44.*—While the Board approves of the proviso it thinks the suggested cess too small. In this connection the Board again ventures to call attention to its resolution of 22nd December 1913 (submitted with the President's letter L. F. 63 of 24th January 1914 to the Commissioner). Even on the instructions of the Government of India the Board thinks that the cess is smaller than is required. The Government of India suggested three pies in the rupee of annual net value. The Bill however provides only for three pies in the rupee of land assessment, which is a different matter. In this district the annual net letting value of land is usually six times the assessment; while the Board believe that there can be few districts in this Presidency in which it is not $2\frac{1}{2}$ times the assessment. Hence, even in strict compliance with the instructions of the Government of India the Board believes that in this section six pies could be inserted instead of three pies. There can be little doubt that three pies would be an addition too small to be of practical use.

The Board is of opinion that the other amendments are all necessary.

2. The Board however, venture to urge that the amendment suggested touch only a fringe of the subject and will accomplish only a limited number of the changes required to bring the Act into working efficiency. Since 1884 the circumstances of the Presidency have completely changed for the better; public feeling and thought has greatly advanced; and more valid views about taxation and Municipal trading have spread among publicists in India and England. The Board is therefore respectfully of opinion that many of the provisions of the existing Act (and also many of the provisions in the rules framed under the Act) require re-casting. The Board begs to suggest further consideration of the Act and rules by a Committee of the Legislative Council with power to take evidence before any amendment is put before that body. It fears that the amendments now proposed though necessary, may, if passed by themselves, tend to postpone the day when the whole Act and the rules will be re-considered. The following are the main points on which the Board as at present advised is prepared to lay stress:—

A.—Under the existing Act much is left to rules that are to be framed from time to time by Government. Such important points for instance as the electorate and constitution of the Boards are so dealt with. In the Boards' opinion the electorate is too limited and the numbers of members are too small. It would respectfully suggest that provisions in both subjects should, now, after 30 years' experience, be incorporated in the Bill; or else that the Boards should be consulted before any rules are introduced under the new Act. The Board is of opinion that efficiency and keenness can be fully secured only by having a large electorate and an enlarged membership. The Board thinks that the membership, for instance, should be exactly double of what it now is.

B.—The drafting of section 30 also seems to require revision in conformity with modern ideas. It imposes duties of expenditure but makes no provision for the recovery of cost. For instance, the inhabitants of this district have suffered in respect of water supply by its provisions. In some villages remunerative schemes of water-supply could have been drawn up. But the Board has no power, such as Municipalities possess, of imposing a water-rate. Hence, it has to drop such schemes and the villagers have to do without water. The Board ventures to suggest that it should be empowered to sell the water it supplies at fair rates. Provision for the supply of model dwellings on sale or lease should also be included; while there should be express provision for drainage schemes and where such a scheme is introduced, for conservancy rates.

C.—*Section 44.*—The Board is humbly of opinion that it should be entitled to invest its balances in "trustee funds."

D.—*Section 57 (b).*—This section has been very unpopular and has severely hampered the efficient development of the Boards. When it was passed, prices were half of what they are now, so that even to maintain the intention of the original framers the figures should be changed from Rs. 50 and Rs. 500 to Rs. 100 and Rs. 1,000. But in 1884 there were no competent engineers in India outside of the P. W. D. Now they are to be had on every hand. The Board considers that the question when the sanction of a P. W. D. officer (who should be the Superintending and not the Executive Engineer) is required should depend upon the class of work and not upon its cost. If, however, a cost basis be retained the Board considers it should be Rs. 1,000 a mile or any other work of which the total cost is to exceed Rs. 5,000.

E.—Section 61.—Similar modifications will also be needed in the rules promulgated under rule 61, though the Board would prefer to see the modifications made in rule 61 itself. The Board considers that under present circumstances instead of Rs. 2,500 (or, as its present equivalent would be Rs. 5,000) it should not be forced to get any work under Rs. 20,000 done by the P. W. D. In exchange for such an amendment the Board would be quite willing to engage an Assistant Engineer for its work, subject to the approval of Government. The Board ventures to point out that Municipalities, which are certainly not stronger administrative bodies, are allowed to do their own public works by their own agency.

F.—The Board also ventures to represent the present state of the law in regard to Loans. No provision for them exists in the Act, and they are dealt with under a separate Act called the Local Authorities's Loan Act—also an Act drafted a long time ago. Under that Act loans are invariably given by Government on condition of early repayment. Overhanging the practice is the conception of a public loan as if it were a loan taken by one man from another which of course constitutes a debt and has to be repaid. The Board respectfully represents that such an analogy has no application to a Local Board. A Local Board is the community. A loan taken by such a body is not in reality a debt but should be an investment made by the community in a certain work. There is no reason for any one to desire such an investment to be repaid. All that the investors, who will comprise the community in whole or part, can reasonably desire is careful management by its directorate—the members of the Local Boards—and equitable interest on the capital. In East Khandesh, the Board could easily and safely raise and pay the interest on a loan of 10 lakhs spent on wholly unremunerative work, while if it spent half on remunerative work, the figure could be raised to 20 lakhs. 10 lakhs so raised would solve the whole question of primary education for this district and so provide the investing community with an advantage which in ten years would be worth many times the original investment, even on a cash basis only. As things now are, when a Board raises a loan it is crippled by the need for repayment in a limited period; and has to neglect all manner of duties in order to secure repayment. The last loan raised by this Board for instance has to be repaid in the short period of 5 years; and so for 5 years the community has to submit to the inconvenience and inequitable corruption of tolls, whereas if the community had by law been allowed to find the money themselves, they would be actually deriving 4 per cent or 4½ per cent. safely on their investment instead of getting nothing from their savings and having to put up with this inconvenience. That the State Treasury must press for repayment of money taken from its own funds is of course obvious and the Board does not complain of this. But it ventures to submit that the time has come to throw open District Local Board for investment by members of the public instead of forcing Boards to borrow from the State Treasury. The amounts accepted and provision for interest should of course be open to the scrutiny of Government and subject to its approval.

G.—The Board also ventures to suggest that Local Funds should now be raised by imposing a cess of one anna on each rupee of income-tax. The Board is of opinion that provision for the direct taxation to Local rates of the trading classes is urgently required by equity as well as by financial needs.

H.—The Board is also humbly of opinion that it should by law be empowered to appoint village panchayats for the control and execution of local village works. Provision for this already exists in the East Khandesh, Kolaba and Broach codes; but the provision cannot be fully effective till it is made part of the law as such.

I.—The Board approves of the suggestion placed before it for opinion by the Collector, *viz.*, that Boards should be empowered to take over and conduct all the liquor shops in a Taluka or District as licensees in exactly the same relation to the Excise Department as ordinary licensees. The liquor trade is essentially one touching the whole community and it is equitable that its management (except for the necessary State supervision) and its profits should be with the community.

I give below my answers to the questions in connection with G. R. G. D. No. 6444, dated 18th August 1915.

1. Yes. The Boards should consist of two-thirds elected and one-third nominated members. There is no reason to differentiate between District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards. *But* the membership must be increased. In my opinion and that of my Board it should be double the present membership. If this is not done, then apart from inadequate representation, there would not be sufficient room for the necessary nominations of non-officials of a rank and class that may require representation and will not stand for election.

2. Election by communities is quite unnecessary in this Presidency and is in itself undesirable. The power of nomination gives a margin for redressing inequalities. As already stated the number of members should be doubled.

3. In my opinion Presidents of D. L. Boards certainly and Presidents of T. L. Boards probably should in principle be the officials responsible for the administration of the District or Taluka respectively. This is the French principle and appears to be indubitably correct in theory. Moreover, it is quite impossible as things are that any one except the Collector could be President of the D. L. B. and it is nearly impossible in practice that any one except the Prant Officer should be

President of the Taluka Local Boards. I, therefore, do not think that the President of the District Local Board should ever be any one except the Collector. In the case of Taluka Local Boards, I think a non-official President might be permitted in spite of the objections in principle if it is thought that the paper concession would be sufficiently popular to make it worthwhile. In that case his choice should certainly be by election (subject to the approval of Government) and not by nomination. Nomination would be a compromise of the worst kind, making Government responsible for the actions of the non-official President selected.

4. Please see the Proceedings of the D. L. B. East Khandesh of 16th July 1915 already referred to.

5. Section 38 is not of great importance. On principle power should be delegated to Taluka Local Boards. In practice it will not be very operative. But Dharmasala-keepers, patawalas and other menial staff should be appointed by the Taluka Local Boards. What is really needed is that power to delegate appointments should be granted to the District Local Board. Taluka Local Board Budgets are usually so badly drawn up and so greatly affect the balance of the District Local Board that it is desirable they should continue to be submitted to the D. L. B. at present.

6. Yes. But it must be done gradually; and it must be clearly understood on both sides that any negligence or disregard of the Inspecting officer's orders will be automatically punished by curtailments or total withdrawal of educational grants from Government.

7. In section 7, for "Government Educational Department" read "District Local Board's and Taluka Local Boards." Section 11 can be omitted. Other changes are probably necessary but proposals for them should be made by Educational Department and circulated separately for opinion.

8. No.

9. (1) Yes, with the proviso that this should be done under the Commissioner's sanction for specific purposes and periods.

(2) Yes.

(3) There should be a cess of two annas on Income-Tax. Cesses on Abkari and Forest Revenue are in my opinion undesirable. From Abkari consumption, profits should be derived by the Boards taking up the trade direct on behalf of the community.

(4) Whether provincial subventions can or cannot be increased is a question for the Finance Department of Government, and not for the Boards. But it is difficult to see how Government could guarantee an increase in subventions as Provincial and Imperial Taxation is still so low and so inadequate for the larger needs of the country.

10. The failure is due to four causes, (a) that an Act passed 30 years ago is obsolete in modern conditions, (b) that many officials, especially Vice-Presidents, have repressed non-official interest and even resent it, (c) that, except in Gujarat, where Sir Frederic Lely introduced and insisted on a correcter system, the District Local Boards have usually filched the Taluka Local Boards' funds and have not even allowed them to make budgets but only to submit proposals for expenditure. (d) that in most Districts non-officials are wanting in interest and desire to work. The last is partly due to nature and character, partly to the causes already stated, partly to the narrowness of the franchise. All Boards and all non-officials are not failures. I can point from my own experience to both Kolaba and Broach as conspicuous examples of good Boards on which the non-officials have done splendid work; and in most of the Gujarat Boards non-official members maintain a very satisfactory standard. In most of the Districts of the Central Division the people are backward and public feeling is at a low ebb; a very high standard is, therefore, not to be expected from District Local Board members even apart from the other contributory causes mentioned.

11. Yes. In my opinion the limit in clause (1) of section 10 should read "not less than Rs. 12 per year."

12. No. Patils will always come on the Board by election. Noblemen can be nominated. The other classes do not require special treatment.

13. It is desirable that Vice-Presidents should be non-official, but this cannot invariably be the case. The best Vice-Presidents I have known were non-official, but they were carefully selected men of great position. Since I have come to this district I have spent two years in trying to discover even one non-official suitable as Vice-President, but I have so far failed entirely.

14. "Rs 12."

15. The suggestion is not practicable.

16. It is desirable that the proportion should be fixed by law. The ideal proportion would be that out of the whole proceeds of the cess one-fourth should go to the Taluka Local Board and three-fourths to the District Local Board. In existing financial circumstances this is, however, impracticable as a rule. Hence, the rule should be that the annual allotment made to each Taluka Local Board under section 45 (5) shall not be less than one-seventh nor more than one-fourth of its income from the one anna cess and the allotments shall be distributed in the same proportion to income among all Taluka Local Boards. The Kolaba, Broach and East Khandesh Codes already contain provisions of this kind.

17. No; it is essential in the interests of the Board that there should be ample provision for the nomination of non-officials. Apart from the need of providing adequate representation to special classes, it is obvious that in India even more than most kingdoms, country gentlemen will not stand for election, while they are the one class whose membership is needed.

18. Already answered.

I venture to add here that I agree very strongly with Mr. Lawrence's suggestion that the Boards should be provided with a separate executive establishment. The want of a real consistent establishment headed by a Secretary is a serious hindrance to all District Local Board work.

I further venture to say that in my opinion the scramble for money among villages has been a valuable stimulus to local initiative and to interest in elections. At the same time I consider that money should as far as possible be spent *through* villages and village panchayats.

I venture also to submit to the Committee that the possibility of corporate trading has so far been overlooked and that no real provision for it exists in the Act. There are many instances in which such trading could be undertaken with advantage. Tramways and light railways, the provision and sale of water, the growing of plantations in Government waste lands are obvious instances, to which I would add the acceptance of the licences for liquor shops and sale of liquor. In Broach one Taluka Board has taken a sanad for a plantation of Babuls, but I know of no other instance. Such enterprises should be clearly provided for and should be encouraged.

I have the honour to state also that in my opinion Taluka Local Boards can be and often are successes even under the present conditions. When they are not, this is usually due to faults on the part of the District Local Board and its executive especially to the policy of (illegally) pilfering the Taluka Local Board's money and making it a dole instead, which lapses with the end of the year. When they are fairly dealt with, they are in my opinion more vital than District Local Boards.

Mr. J. H. Sanders, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, East Khandesh.

Letter L. S. G./1, dated 1st September 1915, from the Commissioner, C. D.

The scramble for money between villages.

The results of this are not satisfactory at present. The money goes to the villages with members on the District Local Board especially intelligent and energetic members. Many villages are unrepresented and starved. If all villages can have representatives in groups of, say, five villages (each group one member), the scramble will work out fairly well. The villages which have some one to fight for them are roused and improved.

Questions in connection with G. R. No. 6444.

1. Taluka Local Board should have elected majorities in order to meet real needs and satisfy felt wants.

I am inclined to be in favour of elected majorities for District Local Boards though I have less experience of them.

2. Election should certainly not be by communities. I do not think any one wants such representation and it is certainly bad in itself. Possibly something might be said for representation of the untouchable castes and other low castes who now depend largely on gaining the advocacy of Government Officers even for provision of their water supply and the like.

The number of members of Taluka Local Boards should be increased as suggested above. A taluka of 100 villages should have 20 members.

3. There is no objection to appointment of non-official elected Presidents for Taluka Local Boards if and where good men can be obtained.

5. *Taluka Local Board Budgets.*—I think the Taluka Local Board might have autonomy in this respect. At present the District Local Boards control at times is an excuse for spoliation.

9. (1) This will be useful and permissive power may be conferred.

(2) Some form of village committee is useful for village of, say, 2,000 people and upwards.

(3) Local Board cess should be invariably imposed on Income Tax and should be at a higher rate than the cess on ordinary land revenue.

Letter No. 3251 of Divisional Commissioners to Government.

Execution of Public Work by Local Board Agency.

At least the maximum may be raised. If only an adequate staff can be obtained it will be advantageous to the Local Boards to have an entirely free hand. This will have a material effect on the volume of works in the P. W. D., but this consideration as being a secondary one I do not consider beyond mere mention of it.

Further questions

13. Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards may be non-officials if good men are available. This should not be compulsory as often no good men are available.

G. R. No. 6444.

The indifference of Local Boards is in my opinion mainly due to the fact that they are now quite unrepresentative, specially in the case of Taluka Local Boards.

Financial weakness.

This is, I think, perhaps most apparent in the sphere of education: (1) most masters get less than a living wage, (2) a very large proportion of school buildings are very inadequate. These points are of course familiar and admitted.

Notified areas.

If the number of these is largely increased it would seem just to allow them to retain some part of the Local Fund Revenue; it also appears expedient to do so, as a medium sized village is not able to meet all its own needs.

Cess on Income Tax.

This should be so raised as to be a charge on the trader's income proportionally equal to the charge constituted by Local Fund Cess on the cultivator's income.

I regret the brevity of these remarks which is due to lack of time. Opinions are stated categorically for the same reason.

Mr. R. S. Hiremath, District Deputy Collector, East Khandesh.

1. It is necessary that the elective member should represent a marked majority in order to give the Local Boards some real independence. But this franchise should in the beginning be given only to some deserving Districts. It is no good to give this right to the Districts which are likely to get many sleeping elected members in it. Government should, however, have power to revoke this right if the Boards do not pull on satisfactorily with the majority of the elected members.

2. As the works of the Taluka and District Local Boards are usually of common interest there is not much advantage in making elections by communities. However, there appears to be more good than harm in making elections by communities. As the Local Board money is the output of local taxation the right of election ought to rest entirely with those that contribute to it. So also the number of members in each community ought to vary according to the number of voters in it. The figures given below would show the constitution of two Local Boards in my Division. The present disproportion of members in each community could well be seen after comparing the figures of population, voters and members in it:—

PACHORA.				CHALISGAON.			
Religion.	Popula- tion.	Voters.	Mem- bers.	Religion.	Popula- tion.	Voters.	Mem- bers.
Hindus ..	66,046	2,176	7	Hindus ..	91,114	1,238	10
Mahomedans..	8,819	93	4	Mahomedans..	6,771	24	1
Jains	772	Not available now	Nil	Jains	1,097	Not available now	Nil
Others.. ..	307	Do.	Nil	Others.. ..	253	1	Nil

Sometimes it so happens that the number of voters and consequently that of members in a particular community turns out to be too low in comparison with its population. In such case Government should have power to nominate members from such community.

3. It is not advisable to have non-official presidents to District and Taluka Local Boards. The official presidents are usually men of abilities and have good facilities to inspect and supervise works in their jurisdiction. The non-official presidents will never be in a position to pay proper heed to works that are usually irregularly distributed in different places of a Taluka or District.

The very fact that the president is likely to see the works leads to their speedy and proper execution. It will be often difficult to get suitable presidents out of the non-official members that usually come from the Muffasil and have in them little education of superior sort to work the big machinery of the Local Board. To give them a Local Board administrator would be in no way better than putting a sword in the hand of a mad person.

4. As the present class of Maistries is better than what it was at the time of framing the Local Boards Act, I think the plans and estimates should not be prepared by the Government Executive Engineer when the cost of a road does not exceed Rs. 300 per mile and that of any other work Rs. 3,000.

Local Boards should also have power to execute the work for which plan and estimate are prepared by Government Executive Engineer and of which the estimated cost does not exceed Rs. 5,000. If there be any special reason for the execution of such work by the P. W. Agency the Executive Engineer should certify to that effect.

The present sections 57 and 61 of the Local Boards Act have much limited the powers of the Local Boards. The plan and estimate of every petty work, when they exceed the prescribed limit, are required to be submitted to the scrutiny of the Executive Engineer though they could be conveniently prepared by the Local Board establishment.

5. For the sake of uniformity and better administration it is better to continue the existing practice.

6. It is better to have one managing agency as at present. If each District Local Board were to manage its own schools there is every possibility of variations in the schools of the Presidency according to the tendency of the controlling authorities. A separate establishment will have to be maintained for the examination and the executive control of these schools. The connection that exists at present between the primary and secondary schools is likely to break.

We cannot always expect educated members in the District Local Boards. Usually the majority of members in these Boards are men of more wealth than of education. The management under these men could in no way be equal to that of the Educational Department. Time is not still ripe to hand over the management of the primary schools to the District Local Boards.

7. The same rules to be continued.

8. Taluka Local Board is not usually consulted. Section 48 (a) appears to be almost a dead letter.

9. Even the present demands on the Local Boards could not be well satisfied. This is due to want of funds. In order to increase the resources of income of these Boards and to relieve them of some of their burdens it is necessary —

- (1) to raise Local Fund cess upto the limits of annas 2 in a rupee according to the circumstances of the District ;
- (2) to create more Notified Area Committees ;
- (3) to levy cess on (a) Income tax,
(b) Abkari revenue, and
(c) Forest revenue.
- (4) to increase the provincial subventions if the above noted measures could not adequately satisfy the needs.

The restriction of the Notified Area Committees to the Taluka Headquarters and villages within one mile from a Railway station should at once be removed. The number of houses and population in a village ought necessarily to be the basis for the formation of a Notified Area Committee. Some villages, though sufficiently big, are handicapped in the formation of Notified Area Committees on account of the present restrictions.

10. Yes. It is true. Majority of the tax-payers strive their best to be members only with the object of getting the opportunities of mixing with the high officers of Government and thus securing the respect of the people among whom they live. They are not inclined to go in for the work of inspection regularly as they will have to undergo some expense and trouble. Even if they care to go in for inspection lest they should incur the displeasure of the heads of the Taluka or District, they have not got proper capacities in them to appreciate what is done or not done. They have also no proper control over their Local Board establishment. More education is required among the local rate-payers before they could acquire real sense of duty and power of control.

11. The limit of Rs. 48 mentioned in section 10 (1) should I think be reduced to Rs. 24 in view of the increase of population and the consequent divisions of holdings.

12. Government should nominate members out of these classes of people when they think they are not duly represented instead of laying any hard and fast rules about forming the separate groups of electors.

13. It is not always desirable that the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials. There will be nothing but mismanagement when the Vice-Presidents turn out to be only men of means and not of education. The Vice-President in Nevasa, District Nagar, was a non-official. All the work of the Board was practically being done by the Mamlatdar. Though it is not sound to draw conclusions at a single instance still the conditions that exist at present make me to think so.

14. This is already replied in number 11.

15. It is not at all desirable to make the provincial share of Land Revenue and Income Tax divisible between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards. The allotment of money to the Local Boards out of the Provincial share should be left to the will of Government. If the Local Boards are given a permanent part in the Provincial share they are likely to grow more idle in increasing their income from other resources.

16. It should not be fixed. The District Local Board should be left to its discretion. Sometimes works of urgent importance might arise in a particular Taluka calling for the aid of the District Local Board. In such cases it will have to give some money to these works out of the collections from other Talukas.

17. Nomination should not be restricted to officials alone. Government should have power to nominate even non-officials who are found to be men of superior intelligence and education even though they may not possess qualifications as required by the property clauses of section 10.

18. Clauses 2 to 4 of section 10 might be allowed to remain as they are. In clause one the amount of Land Revenue should be reduced from Rs. 48 to 24 on account of the reasons already mentioned in number 11.

Mr. M. C. Kelkar, District Deputy Collector, East Khandesh.

As regards the particular question of having separate village organizations for important villages as notified areas or village panchaits, I think that the scope of Ch. XIV of the District Municipal Act, 1901, should be extended and such panchaits may be established in towns having a population of 3,000 or more. I am however of opinion that these bodies should not be burdened with expenses of medical relief and all the expenses on primary education. Even for Taluka Head Quarter Notified Area Committees now in existence, these burdens have become too difficult to bear. I would suggest that they may be made to look to their sanitation themselves, but as regards the primary education the expense should be borne in equal shares by the body, Government and the District Local Board. The Medical relief should be given by the District Local Boards with possible Government grants. In case of water projects, too, the District Local Board and Government must go to their assistance. By the bye, I may also suggest that these bodies should be made use of as real village panchaits in connection with petty village offences and village subscriptions, &c.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.

2. The election should not be by communities. Provision may be made to secure due representation of any special communities or interests. If it is found that a particular community or interest does not get proper representation on the Boards and a complaint is made, it may be allowed to have their special representation. The present number of members is insufficient and should be increased upto double.

3. For the present I do not think that all Taluka and District Boards should have non-official Presidents. But provision may be made to have them so in special selected cases, either by election or nomination as circumstances may permit.

4. The answer to this question will depend on what kind of Agency the Boards will be in a position to maintain considering their funds. Under the present circumstances the Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to have their buildings planned and executed upto the amount of Rs. 1,500 in each case. As for the construction and repair of new and old roads the limit of the cost may be put at Rs. 2,000 and 500 respectively per mile. Building works costing above Rs. 1,500 should have their estimates made or approved by the Government P. W. D., but works costing over Rs. 5,000 should be executed by that Department. As for the new road works, all which do not require any bridges may be done by the L. B. Agency and the work of bridges only should be done by the P. W. D.

If, however, it would be possible for the District Local Board to have their own P.W.D. Officers of rank of an Assistant Engineer of 5 years' standing, then I do not think there would be any necessity to have the use of the Government P. W. D. Agency either for plans and estimates or actual execution of works, except in special cases of special importance. Provision may then be made to allow the Boards to hand over those works only to that Agency through the Collector of the District at their discretion.

5. My answer is in the negative to the first question. But the Taluka Local Boards may be given power to appoint and dismiss menial servants.

The Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to have their own Budgets and reappropriations as regards works costing Rs. 500 or less in each case.

6. If the District Local Boards will be in a position to have more funds and if Government were prepared to lend the services of Deputy and Assistant Deputy Educational Inspectors, I do not see any objection to entrust them with the management of Primary schools (*vide* paras. 753 and 754 of the Report of the Decentralization Commission).

7. If the management of Primary schools be handed over to the District Local Boards as suggested in question No. 6 then these rules will have to be revised wholesale. Otherwise in the present circumstances very few changes will be necessary.

8. No. On the other hand I am of opinion that it is not practicable to do it under the system. I for one think that for management of Primary schools the Taluka should not be the unit. It is better that the District Local Board should have certain fixed proportion of the cess for educational purposes and they should be authorized to use the funds at their discretion in the District as a whole.

9. If all the above suggestions are carried out, it will be necessary for the District Board to have its own responsible executive officer and a good well-paid staff on the Educational and P. W. D. branches. This would necessarily require more funds and some ways and means should be found out for supplying them. I have therefore to make the following remarks on the suggestions in the question :—

- (1) The District Local Board may be authorised to levy an additional cess upto one anna on per rupee of the L. R. in the whole or portion of a District with the sanction of Government for a certain number of years according to the exigencies of their finances, only for the purposes of education, on the understanding that the amount would be earmarked for that purpose.
- (2) The Local Boards may be relieved of a part of their expenditure on Education, Sanitary and other matters in important villages having a population of 3,000 or upwards by establishing "Notified Areas" or Village Panchaits, on the understanding that they could get a grant of at least one-third of the expenditure on Education from the Local Boards and from Government separately. Expenditure on medical relief even in these villages, if any, should be borne by Local Boards and Government. I put these qualifications to the suggestion as I think that even in important big villages it would not be possible for these notified areas to collect necessary funds by taxation for meeting all the expenditure on Education and Medical relief.
- (3) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess of anna one per rupee of collections from
 - (a) Income Tax, and
 - (b) Abkari Revenue.

As for the question of levy of an additional cess upto one anna on forest and irrigation revenue (*vide* para. 3 of the Commissioner's joint letter No. 3251) I appreciate the suggested inequalities of the assistance that may be received in different Districts, but I think that Government can put all this cess in a provincial pool and distribute it according to some fixed scale or exigencies of the respective districts in the province. I do not see why other districts should not get help from the one anna cess that Government may levy on the forest and irrigation revenue in the Kanara, Poona, Nagar and Nasik Districts. Forests are Government property and the Irrigation works are also Government works and so Government have a right to levy any cess on these revenues for the whole province.

As for the Abkari and Income Tax revenues they are purely local revenue paid by the people themselves in each District separately and I think it would be but proper that the cess on those revenues should be at the disposal of the Boards of that District alone.

- 4) It is also now time when the Provincial subventions should be increased. It may be humbly suggested that as the Abkari revenue has increased to a large extent Government may with propriety give one anna in the rupee from this revenue for educating the classes which contribute most to this source of revenue. As the Provincial revenues increase it is but proper that Government should also subscribe part of that increase, in some fixed proportion to the Local Boards, which are relieving Government of some of their compulsory duties towards the people. The three Commissioners themselves have given their support to this suggestion. Our District Local Board has also suggested two other sources of income and I would like to place them before the Committee for their consideration. They are as follows :—

- (a) *Vide* Extract attached A.
- (b) *Vide* Extract attached B.

10. I honestly think that the failure of Taluka Local Boards is really mostly due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. I may, however, say that it is also due to some extent to the undesirable, unnecessary interference and centralisation of the powers by the District Local Boards and also to the unsympathetic and unencouraging attitude of some of the Mamlatdars and the District Officers. I know of instances in which the District Local Boards did not act up to the legal provisions about distribution of the funds to the Taluka Local Boards, which had to be satisfied with a few crumbs of bread that were given to them, notwithstanding the fact that under the law they were entitled to have a much larger part of the

L. F. cess and other incomes. Particularly in Khandesh where I have served mostly as a Mam atdar, I admit that most of the non-official members of Taluka Boards are not sufficiently educated and in a position to understand their duties and responsibilities in such matters and are generally apathetic and it is to be hoped that the spread of education will improve the situation by and by. However, I refuse to admit that there are none among the members, who will not be willing to supervise and carry out some small works in their circle, if they are entrusted with them. Whatever we may say of the people we officials also have our own faults and angularities. Confidence must beget confidence. If we were to behave with them properly and encourage the non-official members more persons would be induced to do the duty. There is also another reason I can think of. At present under the Local Board Act all the voters are qualified to be members of the Boards. I think that there should be higher tests or qualifications for one who wishes to be a member by election. If we get men of higher status and qualifications we can expect more sense of duty from them. In addition to the sympathetic and encouraging attitude on the part of the Government officials I would suggest also a penal remedy for what it is worth. There should be a provision in the Act of disqualifying a non-official member who fails to do his duty either by non-attendance at a particular number of meetings or by not inspecting a particular work entrusted to him by the Board for execution or supervision. I may also suggest that non-official members of proved merit and interest in the management of Local Board works may be at times rewarded in some form or the other by the District Officers in the District or Taluka Darbars.

11, 14 & 18. I would answer this question and No. 14 and No. 18 together.

The qualifications in Sec. 10 are for membership of a Taluka Board and persons having these qualifications and others to whom the Government will see fit to extend the franchise, are the present voters under section 18. I for one would like that the scope of qualifications for voters should be increased with a view to grant the franchise to a much larger number of people than at present and on the other hand I would like to have the scope of qualifications for members under section 10 contracted. I would like to have the following qualifications for membership :—

- (1) Land-holders paying Rs. 50 as land revenue in their own name in the Taluka.
- (2) Holders of house or other non-agricultural property worth Rs. 5,000 or more.
- (3) All Income Tax payers.
- (4) Pensioned Government servants in the Taluka whose pensions are not less than Rs. 15 a month.
- (5) Honorary Magistrates.
- (6) Selected Police and Revenue Patils who are literate.
- (7) Such other persons as, etc. (*vide* sec. 10, (7)), *e.g.*, men who have some fixed education test—Ver. Public Service and above.

The qualifications for voters in my opinion should be as under :—

- (1) Land-holders who hold land in the particular group paying Rs. 20 or more as L. R.
- (2) Persons who hold immoveable property other than land valued at Rs. 2,000 and more.
- (3) All shop-keepers and traders in the group.
- (4) Pensioned Government servants with a pension of Rs. 5 per month.
- (5) All Honorary Magistrates.
- (6) All Patils officiating in the group.
- (7) Such other persons, etc. (*vide* sec. 18 (2)).

12. Most of the voters are from class 1. I do not think it would be practicable to arrange for separate representation for voters under classes 2 to 6 for each group, unless some seats are reserved for these voters for the whole Taluka on principles of general elections.

13. If the Presidents of Taluka Boards are to be officials it is desirable that the Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials wherever possible.

15. It is not desirable to make the Provincial share of Land Revenue and Income Tax divisible between Provincial Government and Local Boards.

16. It is desirable that there should be a fixed proportion in which the one anna cess should be divided between the Taluka and District Local Boards after deducting its educational portion. But I do not think that this proportion could be fixed by statute. It should be left to be settled by the District Local Boards and the Taluka Local Boards in each case for certain fixed periods, say, of 3 years.

17. I do think that administrative efficiency is likely to suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. I think it would be many years before we can do that. If the number of members on the Taluka and District Boards is doubled as I have already suggested, it may be possible in some cases to have two-thirds of the number elected and one-third of nominated non-officials and officials.

*Extract from the Proceedings of the Special General Meeting of the District
Local Board held on 16th July 1915 [vide para 9 (4) (a)].*

2F. The Board also ventures to represent the present state of law in regard to Loans. No provision for them exist in the Act and they are dealt under a separate Act, called the Local Authorities' Loans Act, also an Act drafted a long time ago. Under this Act loans are invariably given by Government on condition of early repayment. Overhanging the practice is the conception of a public loan as if it were a loan taken by one man from another, which of course constitutes a debt and has to be repaid. The Board respectfully represents that such an analogy has no application to a Local Board. A Local Board is the community. A loan taken by such a body is not in reality a debt but should be an investment made by the community in a certain work. There is no reason for any one to desire such an investment to be repaid. All that the investor, who should comprise the community in whole or part, can reasonably desire, is careful management by their directorate—the members of the Local Board—and equitable interest on the capital. In East Khandesh the Board could easily and safely raise and pay the interest on a loan of 10 lakhs spent on wholly unremunerative work; while if it spent half on remunerative work, the figure could be raised to 20 lakhs. 10 lakhs so raised would solve the whole question of primary education for this District and so provide the investing community with an advantage which in 10 years would be worth many times the original investment, even on a cash basis only. As things now are, when a Board raises a loan, it is crippled by the need for repayment in a limited period; and has to neglect all manner of duties in order to secure repayment. The last loan raised by the Board, for instance, has to be repaid in the short period of 5 years: and so for 5 years the community has to submit to the inconvenience and inevitable corruption of tolls, whereas if the community had by law been allowed to find the money themselves, they would be actually deriving 4 or 4½ per cent. safely on their investment instead of getting nothing for their savings and having to put up with this inconvenience. That the State Treasury must press for repayment of money taken from its own funds is of course obvious and the Board does not complain of this. But it ventures to submit that the time has come to throw open District Local Board for investment by number of the public instead of forcing Boards to borrow from the State Treasury. The amount accepted and the provision for interest should of course be open to the scrutiny of Government and subject to its approval.

*Extract from the Proceedings of the Special General Meeting of the District
Local Board held on 16th July 1915 [vide para 9 (4) b].*

21. The Board approves of the suggestion placed before it for opinion by the Collector, viz., that the Boards should be empowered to take over and conduct all liquor shops in a Taluka or District as licensees in exactly the same relation to the Excise Department as ordinary licensees. The liquor trade is essentially one touching the whole community and it is equitable that its management (except for the necessary State supervision) and its profits should be with the community.

Mr. R. V. Gadgil, Huzur Deputy Collector, East Khandesh.

As regards village Panchayats I am of opinion that it is most desirable to constitute and develop village Panchayats for the administration of certain Local affairs within the villages. The system has to be gradually worked out. It should be a small body consisting of about five leading persons of the village having control over minor sanitation of the village and petty civil and criminal cases in it. The District Local Board East Khandesh have made certain rules regarding the discharge of some L. F. works, and so I have to say nothing more beyond those rules (*vide* please rules 71 to 74 of the East Khandesh L. B. Code) supplemented somewhat by rules as to the other branches of work proposed to be entrusted to them.

1. Yes.

2. No. There is no necessity for any provision on this account to be made to secure the due representation of any special communities or interests even as separate election by castes and creeds would probably tend to introduce an element of discord which is not desirable.

3. It is not at present advisable that the Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works (sec. 57) should be modified as proposed by the District Local Board E. K. in their meeting held on 16th July 1915 generally. But in case those limits are considered very high, they should at least be as under:—

Rs. 500 should be raised to Rs. 5,000 and the work to be done by Local Board Agency. In the case of roads the limit of Rs. 50 should be raised to Rs. 200 per mile whether original or repair so that at least no repair work will have to be entrusted to P. W. D. Agency.

5. No. As there is very little interference by the District Board in the works carried on by the T. L. B., this measure is not considered essential.

6. The management of primary schools should not be entrusted to the Committee of the D. L. B. at this stage, as I fear that it would lead to loss of efficiency as the District Local Boards are not yet strong enough to undertake the management. The present management in the hands of the Educational Department is the best one and produces a wholesome effect.

7. The rules under Sec. 48 (b) should be allowed to stand as they are.

8. There is no need to consult a Taluka Local Board as the one-third cess which is given to the Educational portion is always managed by the District Board through the Educational authorities in areas which are under the control of the District Board. The present system works very well and facilitates matters amicably.

9. (1) Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess upto a maximum of annas two in a rupee.

(2) The scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be extended so as to include villages of important sizes with a view to establishing "Notified areas" in them.

(3) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on

(a) Income Tax.

(b) Abkari Revenue.

(c) Forest revenue.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. Yes. The probable reason appears to be that since the official members are keen in carrying on the Local Board works, the non-officials consider themselves to be freed of the responsibility otherwise devolving upon them. If according to the scope of any non-official, by gradual degrees, any matters are entrusted specifically to any one of them there is hope of their taking some interest at least in what is entrusted to them.

11. Yes, as under :—

(1) The present limit of Rs. 48 should be reduced to Rs. 20 owing to the recent divisions of holdings whereby a greater number of voters is likely to be secured.

(2) Not less than Rs. 5,000 in-value should be changed to Rs. 2,000.

(3) No change is proposed.

(4) Rs. 50 per month should be reduced to Rs. 20 per month.

(5), (6) & (7) These may stand as they are.

Every graduate of University, every pleader, may be added in this section.

12. Instead of suggesting any means to form a separate group for election of persons falling under clauses 2 to 6 of section 10 of Local Board Act, I may suggest that the number of the present village groups in which a Taluka is divided for election, may be doubled so that a greater number of elected members may be secured to form the Taluka Board.

13. In my opinion it should not be made obligatory that the Vice-President of a T. L. B. should be a non-official when the President is official, as the appointment of the former is made by election, a non-official, if deserving, is competent equally to be elected and stands the chance of being elected.

14. Rs. 20 should be adopted in place of Rs. 48.

15. In question 9 (3) if a cess is proposed to be levied on the provincial revenues such as Income Tax, Abkari, Forest, &c., it does not sound fair for the Local Board to get a share in the said revenue in addition. But in case no such cess is permitted to be levied I am of opinion that the Local Board should get about one-sixteenth share of the Provincial revenue in addition to increased subventions.

16. The proportion should be fixed by law to secure a definite amount for the Taluka Local Board and for uniformity of funds. The District Local Board is responsible to maintain dispensaries, whole establishment, and all through roads and the giving of annual grants to sanitary committees, etc., in the District, and since the cess is the only income to fall back upon by the District Board it is essential that its share should be large enough to meet these growing demands. I suggest, therefore, that about one-sixth of the cess after deducting one-third share assigned to education portion may be assigned to T. L. B. who in addition to this income get other assigned revenues.

17. I think that the administrative efficiency of a Board is not likely to suffer if this provision is abolished and a Board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. The proportion of nominated officials should be one-third of the elected members of the Board excluding the President.

18. Yes. *Vide supra* 11.

Mr. D. G. Juvekar, President, Jalgaon Municipality.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities ; the number of elected members should be two-thirds of the total number.

2. (a) It is neither desirable nor necessary to have elections by communities. In the affairs of these Boards there is not likely to be any clash of interests of different communities. All have a common interest. Election by communities has a tendency to accentuate their differences which it should be the aim of everybody to remove.

(b) Whenever it is found that an important community is inadequately represented on any Board, the defect should be cured by nomination, such a step, although not necessary for the efficiency of the Board, will have an educative value. The commercial community being directly interested in the improvement of the means of communication, should be duly represented on these Boards. If their members fail to secure admission by election, the deficiency should be supplied by nomination.

(c) The present number of members should be increased.

3. The Presidents of District Boards should always be officials. The President of a Taluka Board should be either an official or a non-official according to local circumstances. Wherever a fit person among non-officials is available to fill the post, a non-official should be selected. The selection should be either by nomination or election according to local conditions. The Local Government should determine as to each Board the mode of choosing the President.

4. The Taluka Boards should have power of approving and sanctioning plans of works costing upto Rs. 1,500 and of executing them. The District Boards should have a like power as to plans, the cost of executing which does not exceed Rs. 10,000. This is of course on the assumption that the District Boards employ men with competent knowledge of Engineering. The preparation and execution of plans for the construction of bridges should be entrusted to the Public Works Department.

5. The Taluka Boards should be freed from the control of the District Boards as to the engagement and payment of their servants. And the sanction and revision of their budgets. Power of interference should, however, be reserved to the Collector in cases of extravagance or impropriety.

6. The District Boards may be entrusted with the management of primary schools including the appointment of teaching and inspecting staffs, the fixing of the curricula, and determining the number and localities of schools. The Educational Inspectors and the Director of Public Instruction should continue to supervise these schools and to bring to the notice of the Boards any defects that they may detect.

7. No opinion to offer.

8. I am informed that it is not the practice to consult the Taluka Boards in the matter in question ; and in many cases it would be inconvenient strictly to observe the rule laid down in section 48 (a). There are talukas with large revenues but a small number of schools, while there are others having large number of schools with small revenues.

9. (1) I am in favour of raising the Local Fund Cess upto the maximum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ annas, if not of 2 annas.

(2) The number of "Notified areas" may be increased. But with the resources at their command, it is doubtful they would be able to relieve the local Boards of the expenditure on education, sanitation, &c., to any appreciable degree.

(3) The Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess or a cess should be levied for their benefit on—

(a) Income Tax and (b) Abkari Revenue ; but not on the (c) Forest Revenue. A cess on Income Tax and Abkari Revenue will be paid by those who are likely to benefit by it. But such will not necessarily be the case with a cess on Forest Revenue.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. It cannot be denied that a lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of the members have resulted in a failure of the objects which these Boards were intended to achieve. As to the causes of such a state of things one can only speak with some diffidence. It is partly due to a defect in the character of the Indian races. A proper degree of sense of duty is wanting. These institutions are an innovation and an interest in them has not yet developed. It has not yet been found possible to secure the admission into these Boards of men who understand the principle on which they are worked or ought to be worked. A membership on them is generally looked upon more as a mark of distinction than as an acceptance of a duty. The true solution of the difficulty consists in a wider spread of education and development of national character. For these we must trust to time. In the meantime we must be content with providing an incentive to induce the members to work. Each of the members or at least some of them should be assigned a certain work, and a repeated failure to do it should entail a disqualification from continuing on the Board. Some members at least will be found who will take care to avoid such a consequence.

11. No additions to the qualifications given in section 10 are necessary.

12. I would suggest that electors falling under clauses 1 and 2 should be grouped together while those falling under clauses 3 to 7 should form another group. The seats should be equally divided between these two groups.

13. Where the President of a Taluka Board is an official, the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official. Such a step is calculated to have an educative effect.

14. The minimum figure should be Rs. 25. In districts in which the holdings, as a rule, are large the present limit may be maintained. It should be left to the discretion of the Local Government to fix the limit for each district.

15. I am not in favour of a division of the kind suggested. The present system of grants-in-aid is suitable enough. Under the existing system the Local Governments have an opportunity of looking to the pressure of local needs and of taking action accordingly.

16. I am inclined to the opinion that the proportion should not be fixed by law. There is no reason to suppose that the District Boards will act unfairly in this matter. As the Taluka Boards will continue to be represented on the District Boards their representatives will always have opportunities of pressing their claims and needs.

17. As already indicated in the answer to question 2 Government should have power to nominate one-third of the members. Half of these should be non-officials. Under this system Government will have an opportunity for securing the services of some of the fittest persons who do not like the bother of elections.

18. As to the limit of assessment, it has already been indicated in the answer to question 14. The pension limit should be reduced to Rs. 20.

*Rao Saheb Rupchand Motiram, Member of the District Local Board,
East Khandesh.*

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.

2. The election should not be by communities. If in due course it seems that a particular community or interest has not got any proper representation on the Boards provision may be made to have that representation. It is desirable to double the present number of members.

3. In my opinion time has not come to have non-official Presidents on all Taluka and District Boards. But the provision may be made to have such non-official Presidents in some special selected cases by nomination.

4. In my opinion the District Local Boards should have their own P. W. D. officers of rank of an Assistant Engineer of nearly five years' standing, so that there should be no necessity of the Government Public Works Department officers' assistance in preparing plans and estimates and even execution of works.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should be given power to appoint and dismiss menial servants only and the other officers and servants be employed by the District Local Boards.

The Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to have their own budgets and reappropriations as regards works costing 300 or less in each case.

6. In my opinion time has come to entrust the District Local Boards with the management of primary schools. But Government must be prepared to lend the services of Deputy Inspectors and Assistant Deputy Inspectors.

7. As suggested in answer No. 6, if the District Local Boards are entrusted with the management of primary education the rules will have to be revised wholesale.

8. No, and it is not practicable to do so under the present circumstances. In my opinion the District Local Boards should have certain fixed proportion of the cess for educational purposes and they should have the power to use the funds at their best judgment and discretion in the District as a whole.

9. There will be need for certain additional Local Boards establishments entailing extra expenditure if all the above suggestions are to be carried out; and to have all this done the Local Boards

(1) should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on education, sanitary and other matters in important villages having a population of 3,000 or upwards by establishing "Notified Areas."

(2) Should be permitted to levy a cess of one anna per rupee on collections from

(1) Income Tax.

(2) Abkari Revenue.

(3) It is also necessary that the provincial subventions be increased. It may be suggested that as the Abkari Revenue has increased to a large extent, the Government may give one anna in the rupee for the revenue for educating the classes which contribute most to this source of revenue.

(4) As for empowering the Local Boards to raise the Local Fund Cess I think it advisable to wait till the new reforms and suggestions are carried out and some experience is gained.

10. I honestly think that the failure of the Taluka Local Board is mostly due to lack of interest on the part of some of the non-official members.

It is also due to some extent to the unsympathetic and unencouraging attitude of some of the Mamlatdars and District officers. Most of the non-official members of the Taluka Local Boards are not sufficiently educated and in a position to understand their sense of duty and responsibility. By the by, education will improve the situation. However, there are some among the non-official members who are willing to supervise and carry out some small works in their circle if they are given an opportunity to do so. Whatever may be said of the people the officials also have their own faults. If the officials show that they have some confidence in the people and if they try to encourage the non-official members more persons in my opinion would be induced to do the duty.

11 & 14. I would like to suggest to add the following qualifications of the voters :—

(1) Land-holders who hold land in the particular group paying Rs 20 or more as Land Revenue.

(2) Persons who hold immoveable property other than land valued at Rs. 2,000 or more.

(3) All income tax payers and reputed shopkeepers and traders.

(4) Pensioned Government servants with a pension of Rs. 5 per month.

(5) All title holders.

(6) All patils officiating in the group.

13. Most of the voters are from class 1 in section 10. I do not think it practicable to arrange for separate representation for voters under clauses 2 and 6 for each group unless some seats are reserved on principle of general election for the whole Taluka.

14. If the Presidents of Taluka Boards are to be official it is desirable that Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-official wherever possible.

15. It is desirable to make the provincial share of Land Revenue and Income Tax divisible between Provincial Government and Local Boards.

The share should be fixed taking into consideration the grant which the Government used to give to the Local Boards.

16. I do not think that the proportion should be fixed by law. It should be left to be settled by the District Local Board and the Taluka Local Boards in each case for some certain period, say, of three years.

17. I do think that the administrative efficiency would suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished.

I think it would take many years to do that. If the number of members on the Taluka and District Local Boards is doubled as suggested, it may be possible in some cases where two-thirds of the number be elected and one-third of the non-officials and officials nominated.

18. No.

Mr. V. C. Vad, Pleader, Bhusawal.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities, if the principle of Local Self-government is to be extended so far as these Boards are concerned.

2. The election should not be by communities. Any communal representation on the Board is likely to create a feeling which is undesirable. There is every reason to suppose that interest of all the communities can be safe-guarded by having the best and capable men elected on the Board irrespective of caste or creed.

As the election by communities is not desirable there is no reason to make any change in the constitution and the number of members of this District and Taluka Local Boards.

3. It is not advisable that Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials.

4. Having regard to sections 57 and 61 and the orders thereunder, limitations on the preparation of plans, etc., and execution of public works are such that the Boards have very little left to their discretion. The plans and estimates of roads costing Rs. 50 a mile and plans of any other works costing Rs. 500 have to be prepared and approved by the Executive Engineer. The Boards should have the liberty of making their own plans in regard to roads upto Rs. 500 and in any other case upto

Rs. 2,000. As regards the execution of works the Boards should have even greater liberties. Only those works which the Boards would not be in a position to take up for want of an efficient staff should be entrusted to the Government Executive Engineer.

5. It is not desirable that the Taluka Local Boards should be free from the control of the District Local Boards in the matter of the engagement and payment of the Taluka Local Boards' servants and in the matter of sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets.

6. A question about the management of Primary Schools to be entrusted to the District Local Boards is very difficult to answer satisfactorily. Under the present arrangement the Board has to sanction a certain amount on education to be expended by Educational Department as they deem fit. That Department would be loth to any arrangement by which their control over these schools is minimised. If an attempt in that direction is made the Educational Department will try to enforce other conditions and this dual control is not likely to advance a better management than at present exists. With an apparent independence of the Municipalities over their educational institutions they find it hard to act independently on account of some control of the Educational Department. Perhaps the Board may have to experience the same difficulties if the management of the schools is entrusted to the Board. It is not desirable therefore to create such a contingency.

7. The rules under section 48 (b) should not be altered or modified for reasons stated above.

8. It is true that Taluka Local Boards have not been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by Talukas to be spent on education in other areas. This seems unnecessary as revenues collected belong to the District Local Boards who distribute the amounts for each Taluka according to their requirements. It cannot be said that this distribution by the District Local Board tends to spend any revenue outside the area. It would be undesirable to place any restriction on the District Local Boards, as to the expenditure of a revenue in proportion to the collection made by each Taluka.

9. To meet the increased expenditure the Boards may be empowered to raise their revenues as under :—

1. Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess upto a maximum of annas 2 in a rupee. This power may be exercised only when it is urgently necessary.
2. The Local Boards may be relieved of a part of their expenditure in important villages by establishing notified areas and by extending to them some of the powers of the Municipalities under the District Municipal Act.
3. Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess of one anna in a rupee on (a) Income-Tax, (b) Abkari-Revenue, (c) Forest Revenue.

These are necessary to meet the increased expenditure of the Boards.

4. Provincial subvention should be increased in proportion to the revenues collected from all sources, the contributions to the Boards are extremely small as compared with the provincial revenues collected from all sources with the contributions made to this District Local Board. The contribution should be sufficiently raised to make the Boards efficient. In this District while there is a large increase in the Land Revenue and Abkari collections the contribution to the Board has not undergone any change.

10. It is true that there is a lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non official members. It is difficult to find out the exact causes of this evil. Apparently the non-official members do not know what their duties and powers are and in what way they can be exercised. There is scope for honest and sincere work but the ways in which this can be done are sometimes out of the reach of non-official members. To remedy this evil non-official members should have sufficient scope to be acquainted with the working of the District and Taluka Local Boards and their views may be more freely consulted and considered before any definite action is generally taken.

11. There is scope to make additions to the qualifications of voters. Every Fellow and every Graduate of any University and every Pleader holding a Sanad from the High Court may be included in the list of voters.

12. If it is necessary to form separate groups of electors they may be made as under :—

1. Land-holders.
2. Persons who by their income are entitled to stand for election.
3. And others including Graduates and Pleaders.

13. In the event of the Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continuing to be officials the Vice-President should be non-official.

14. A statutory minimum of assessment should be Rs. 25 in place of Rs. 48.

15. The question of making the Provincial share of land revenue and income tax divisible between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards, is difficult to answer in the absence of any figures. It seems the share given to Local Boards out of Provincial Land Revenue in the form of grants to roads, etc., is insignificant. If the Provincial share of Land Revenue is divisible a Local Board's share should be such that it should be four times the contributions at present given to the Boards.

16. The discretion of District Local Boards in dividing the proceeds of one anna cess to Taluka Local Boards should be maintained as before. No limits on this discretion should be fixed by law.

17. The administrative efficiency of a Board is not likely to suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. Until however the election has become more popular there should be some non-officials by nominations. If all non-officials are to be elected and only officials nominated, the proportion should be 3 (non-officials) to 1 (official). If some non-officials are to be nominated the proportion of nominated officials and non-officials to elected non-officials should be 1 (nominated official or non-official) to 2 (elected).

18. Limits prescribed in clause 1 of section 10 should be Rs. 25 instead of Rs. 48 and in regard to clauses 2, 3, and 4 the qualifying limits as prescribed should be retained as they are.

Sardar K. J. Dixit, Member of the District Local Board, East Khandesh.

1. Yes. The number of elected members should be two-thirds of the whole.

2. No Not by communities. In Local Board matters the interest of all communities, or say the general public, is involved and any particular community has no particular interest in such matters.

As regards due representation of special interest, for instance commercial interest, my opinion is that if such interest is not represented by election it should be secured by nomination.

I do not think it is necessary to increase the number of members.

3. No.

4. The present limit as regards the plans and estimates should be modified and raised to Rs. 5,000 and as regards execution of works the limit should be Rs. 10,000.

5. I am in favour of the Taluka Local Boards engaging and paying their own servants and of removing the necessity for sanctioning and revising Taluka Local Board Budgets by the District Local Board.

6. So far as my knowledge of the district of East Khandesh goes I do not think that the time has yet come to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Board.

7. No opinion to offer.

8. Never.

9. (1) Yes. Subject to the condition that the rise should be passed by at least three-fourths of the members of the Board concerned and at a time when there is the necessity to take such a step.

(2) Yes.

(3) Local cess may be levied on (a) Income Tax and (b) Abkari revenues but not on Forest revenues, because those who have to pay the Forest revenues do or will have to contribute to the cess on Land Revenue, Income Tax or Abkari revenue.

(4) Yes.

10. It is true. The non-official members seek the membership of the Local Boards more for honour than for the good of the public. They do not care to study the questions for consideration. The people generally are backward in education and do not take any interest. This state will gradually improve with the spread of education.

11. No.

12. Classes 1 and 2 should form one group and classes 3 to 7 another.

13. Yes.

14. The minimum should be Rs. 20.

15. No opinion to offer.

16. I am of opinion that the distribution should be left as at present to the discretion of the District Local Board.

17. The present proportion of officials in the nominated members may not be disturbed provided that the number of nominated members does not exceed one-third of the whole body.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits in clauses 1, 2 and 4 of Section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

The minimum of Land Revenue in clause 1 should be Rs. 20.

The minimum value of immoveable property in clause 2 should be Rs. 3,000.

The minimum amount of pension in clause 4 should be Rs. 20.

WEST KHANDESH.

Mr. E. G. Turner, M.A., I.C.S., Collector, West Khandesh.

1. -As regards para 2 of Commissioner C. D.'s letter No. $\frac{LSG}{1}$ of 1st September 1915, I consider that just as the Local Fund revenue is divided between the District Local Boards and the Taluka Local Boards so the Taluka Local Board might allot a portion of its share amongst groups of villages in the Taluka for works within each group, and just as the balance to the credit of a Taluka Local Board at the end of each year does not lapse, so the balance to the credit of a group of villages should be carried on to its credit. This will ensure at least that the Local Fund money is more evenly spread over the Taluka. It was once suggested that a portion of the Local Fund collected in a village might be spent within the village itself to improve village sanitation, but until the Local Fund revenue is augmented I do not consider that this is feasible. What is necessary is to let the Taluka Local Boards know that their allotments will not lapse at the end of the financial year. In spite of the fact that it has been customary in this District to carry forward the balance of a Taluka Local Board to the next year I found the general impression prevailing that all balances lapsed, and in consequence work was rushed and no attempt made to save enough to carry out the more important projects for which a whole year's allotment did not suffice. If a certain amount had been saved each year for an important but expensive local project the Taluka Local Board would, in a few years, have been able to carry it out. If groups of villages are allotted a certain amount each year, and are assured that the amount does not lapse they will be able to arrange amongst themselves how best to expend it, and there will be less cause for scrambling if they decide what works to do with the money and the order in which they should be undertaken. I cannot but feel that such a course would do much to stop villagers' complaints that they get nothing in return for the one anna cess which they pay

1. No objection to the Taluka and District Board having elected majorities, but the majority should be a substantial one or not at all. I would suggest two-thirds elected, one-third nominated. If the majority allowed is a small one, say, of one member, then the nominated members might use their utmost endeavours to get one elected member on their side, and the contest will be looked upon as one between Government and the people. If, however, the elected majority is a substantial one, there will be no question of a contest between the nominated and official members, but if any parties are formed they will be other than Government people, and party feeling will not be for or against Government but for or against a particular member's party. I have personally experienced at Bandra the effects above stated in connection with the Municipal Act of 1901 where the elected members had a majority of one, and the happier results obtained when later the number of elected members was twice the number of nominated members.

2. Election should not be by communities. Any fairly large community not represented by election should have a nominated member. The following table shows the number of elected and nominated members on each Board in this district:—

BOARD.	Elected.	Nominated.	Total.
District Local Board ..	9	10	19
Dhulia Taluka Local Board	8	9	17
Sindkheda do. ..	8	8	16
Shurpur do. ..	7	8	15
Nandurbar do. ..	8	9	17
Taloda do. ..	6	7	13
Shahada do. ..	8	9	17
Sakri do. ..	5	7	12

The Boards have a sufficient number of members and any further addition would make them cumbrous.

3. It is not advisable to have non-official Presidents of either the District or Taluka Local Boards. The Collector, the Prant officers and the Mamlatdars know the relative urgency of people's wants in the various parts of their charges very much better than any non-official President could possibly know them. There must be some one at the head of each Board who is intimately acquainted with the varying conditions and changing requirements of the area under the Board's jurisdiction. Government officers tour annually in their respective charges and are therefore more in touch with the position of affairs than any non-official President is likely to be. Each villager will urge the requirements of his own particular village, but the order in which works should be carried out is best decided by one who is acquainted with the wants of all villages.

4. I agree generally with the views expressed by Rao Bahadur Bhangaonkar. Local Boards seem to be desirous of entertaining a proper Engineering staff of their own, and in my opinion they should be encouraged to do so as far as possible. The amount of control over estimates and execution of works depends upon the quality of the engineering staff employed by the Local Board, and will consequently vary for each District. The Executive Engineer and Collector could probably suggest the limitations that should be prescribed. In Salsette it happened that the Engineer, Salsette Building Sites, who was himself a Government Executive Engineer, could not carry out Taluka Board works unless his estimates, which exceeded Rs. 500, had been first checked by the Executive Engineer, Thana.

5. The Taluka Local Board peons and dharmshala servants are at present appointed by the Taluka Local Board with the sanction of the District Local Board. There appears no objection to dispensing with this sanction. The Taluka Local Board Karkuns and Maistries should continue to be appointed by the District Local Board as they have a larger choice of selection and are able to transfer such servants from one Board to another.

Full power may be given to the Taluka Boards to sanction and to revise their own budgets within the amount of their allotments. The District Local Boards' sanction to Taluka Local Board budgets is at present a mere formality.

6. I do not consider that any change is called for in the present system. The Boards have certain powers under the Rules and the District Local Board has the most important power of sanctioning the Educational Budget. As regards the power of appointment of teachers mentioned in para 753 (Decentralization Commission Report) the difficulty would be to obtain qualified men. At present there is a Government Training School at Dhaha providing teachers for three Districts, which is a distinctly superior arrangement to any that could be made by the District Local Board for the provision of teachers in West Khandesh alone.

7. No suggestions. Rules work well as they are.

8. I understand it has not been customary to consult Taluka Local Boards as to the appropriation of revenue raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas. I consider that the law should be more strictly enforced.

9 (1) The Local Fund could be raised to 2 annas without undue hardship as the land assessment is by no means too high.

(2) A larger number of villages should be capable of having notified areas established within them. It is not fair that amenities and comforts should be provided for shopkeepers and Savkars by the District Board at the expense mainly of agriculturists.

(3) (a) *Income Tax*.—This would obtain contributions from non-agriculturists and the present low rate can well be increased without hardship.

(b) *Abkari* } In theory the levy of a Local Fund cess on this revenue would produce
(c) *Forest* } lower bids in auctions, which yield the main portion of the Government Revenue. As regards Abkari Revenue, I do not think that in practice Government would be the losers. It seems to me only fair that some portions of these Revenues, which are obtained in a District should be used for the benefit of the District. As regards Abkari it may also be said that the revenue is derived from the pockets of the ryots resident in the District. If a cess be not levied, I consider that Government should assign to the District Local Board a portion of such revenues obtained from the District. The argument that some Districts would thereby get more than others applies equally to the land cess, and more especially to sand and quarry fees. In Salsette Taluka of the Thana District the revenue from quarry fees alone is some Rs. 80,000 a year, whereas in the whole of this District it amounts only to Rs. 2,000.

(4) Provincial subventions might be increased if the further revenue derived from the sources indicated is not sufficient, but the subventions should be fixed for a period of years and not spasmodic grants. It is impossible for Local Bodies to carry out systematically large schemes of road construction and other necessary works unless they know what funds they can rely upon. As regards roads I consider that the construction of a road should be looked upon as a business proposition and should be paid for by the persons using them by means of a toll. Once the road has been paid for, the toll can be abolished.

10. I do not consider that any failure of the District or Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest of non-official Members. It is due to lack of funds and the remedy is to provide more income.

11. No addition to suggest.

12. No means to suggest. The present rules in my opinion are suitable.

13. No objection to non-official Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards, but in that case the Mamlatdar and not the Prant Officer should be the President.

14. The present figure of Rs. 48 includes the influenza agriculturists in this District and there is no reason to reduce it.

15. This apparently connotes no further increase of cess on Land Revenue and no cess upon Income Tax. As both these sources of income for the Boards are capable of increase without hardship I see no reason why Government should forego a portion of its revenue from these sources.

16. I do not consider the proportion should be fixed by law. Conditions vary in different Districts. The liabilities of different District Boards are different, e.g., through roads are badly required in this District and it is the District Board's duty to see to them. In another District, it may be that local roads are more urgent in which case the Taluka Boards should be given a greater share of the cess. In this District and also in the Thana District it is customary to allot a definite proportion of revenue to each Taluka annually, and the balance at the end of the financial year is carried forward to the Taluka Board's credit in the next year. I do not see what else is necessary.

17. I would not abolish wholly the nomination of non-officials. Such nominations are required to ensure as far as possible that all important communities are represented. The proportion of two-thirds elected to one-third nominated seems reasonable.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in Section 10.

Mr. G. A. Hiremath, District Deputy Collector, West Khandesh.

1. There is no objection to allow the District and Taluka Boards to have elected majorities as has been done in the case of Municipalities. The elected members may form two-thirds the number.

2. Election need not be by communities. The minorities will be covered by nomination. Further, it is submitted that franchise may be extended to the associations and organisations approved by Government for this purpose, for example, the Anjume-Islam of Dhulia may return an elected member to the District Local Boards, so also the Maratha Educational Association of Dhulia may be conferred upon the right of sending a member to the District Board. The present nominated element should remain the same and the elected element be doubled.

3. I think that the President of our District Board might be a *non-official*. For, gentlemen like Rao Bahadur Bhangaonkar are available to be Presidents. The President should be elected by two-thirds majority and approved by the Commissioner. The members failing to elect the President by two-thirds majority, the Commissioner should nominate the President.

The Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should, however, continue to be officials nominated by Government, either the Prant officer or the Mamlatdar.

4. All estimates and plans of works costing Rs. 2,000 or in the case of roads Rs. 100 per mile might be prepared by the Local Board Agency. Works exceeding these amounts should be required to be prepared or approved by the Executive Engineer unless the District Local Board has appointed any officer of a rank not less than that of an Assistant Engineer. The Local Boards may execute their own works up to the above mentioned limit, i.e., Rupees two hundred.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should make their own budgets and sanction and revision of them by the District Boards may be dispensed with. The engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants should remain with the District Local Board as hitherto.

6. The management of primary schools may be entrusted to the District Local Boards with certain reservations as inspection and advice by the Educational Department. In view of the general cry for primary education, it seems advisable to make the public actually work at it.

7. The rules under sec. 48 (b) should be modified to the extent of allowing some interest to the Local Boards in the appropriation of the educational grants in their Talukas. The educational part of the budget should be placed before the Taluka Local Boards and its discussions should be invited before the same is finally approved.

8. The Taluka Local Boards are seldom consulted respecting the appropriations of the revenues to be spent on education in other areas or in their own areas. I think that they should be consulted.

9. (1) It seems inadvisable to allow the Local Boards to raise the one anna cess.

(2) Nil.

(3) Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on Income Tax and Abkari Revenue but not on Forest Revenue.

(4) I agree that provincial subventions should be increased. The provincial grants allowed hitherto to the District Boards should be settled on a permanent arrangement and the grants should further be increased as special allotments.

10. Nil.

11. No addition need be made to the qualifications of voters. Any qualifications that the voters must know to read and write and so forth, would result in a controversy and bring in troubles in practice.

12. There seems to be no necessity for forming separate groups of electors to secure men from classes 2 to 6 under sec. 10. We have already a good deal of this element on our Boards.

13. There is in my opinion no objections to allow the Vice-Presidentship of Taluka Local Boards to non-officials.

14. The statutory minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 should be reduced to two-thirds of that figure, *i.e.*, 32 rupees.

15. No such measure as sharing the Provincial Revenue and Income Tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards seems to be necessary. The present revenue, the additional cess of one anna on Income Tax and Abkari Revenue with quasi-permanent grants and special allotments from the Provincial Government will for the present meet with the increased demand of Local Boards.

16. The share of T. L. Board from its one anna cess should be fixed by law. The educational portion should be one-third. The District Local Board should take one-third and the remaining one-third should go to the Taluka Local Board. Not only the one anna cess on Land Revenue but all one anna cesses that may in future be levied may be so distributed.

17. Nominated non-officials seem to be necessary to meet with the requirements of minorities and special communities. It is therefore suggested that the nominated members should be one-third either officials or non-officials while the elected element will form two-thirds the whole number.

18. (i) The assessment limit of Rs. 48 should be reduced to Rs. 32.

(ii) The property limit value of Rs. 500 may remain the same.

(iii) The income limit should be raised from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 or, in view of the proposed one anna cess on Income Tax, the franchise should be confirmed upon the Income-tax payers.

(iv) No change is required in the pension limit.

Mr. N. N. Sathe, President, Taluka Local Boards, W. D., West Khandesh.

1. The time has now come to increase the proportion of elected Councillors and I am of opinion that the number of elected Councillors should be two-thirds.

2. In a Taluka it is not practicable to have election by communities. No doubt, any one community should not carry majority and Councillors should therefore be nominated in a way that no one community carries majority.

3. It is not advisable to have non-officials as Presidents of the Boards—Taluka or District. Please see reply to question No. 10.

4. If proper establishment is entertained, plans and estimates of the works costing below Rs. 1,000 can well be entrusted to the District Board and execution thereof to the Taluka Local Boards concerned, and those of works below Rs. 2,500 to the District Board and execution to the Boards concerned. As to works above Rs. 2,500 the present rules should continue to be in force.

5. The control referred to need not be removed so far as appointments of permanent hands are concerned, if these are above the status of a peon.

As to budgets the rules in force do not require a change. The checks provided seem necessary.

6. As to education the management should still continue to be with the Educational authorities, otherwise the necessary uniformity and supervision would not be secured in this important branch.

7. No alteration is necessary.

8. The Educational Department is the best judge in the matter, it is essential to consult Taluka Boards and no instances are noticed wherein any infringement of the general principles unnecessarily made.

9. (1) The Local Boards should be empowered to raise the land cess upto two annas in view of making the Boards carry on their work more efficiently.

(2) Yes. But much help in this direction will not be possible to get.

(3) The Land Revenue due on pieces of lands yielding crops of staple food grains and others are subjected to the cess and there appears no objection to subject the Abkari and Forest revenues to the cess on the same principle. The advantages of works and schools carried on by the Boards are enjoyed by cultivators as well as by those who get on by other dealings. Properly speaking every one of these and not only Income-tax payers should contribute his share to Board by way of cess on his net profits.

(4) The Provincial subventions should be increased for the help of Boards.

10. It is not that a non-official member takes less interest but his profession and mode of following it does not always enable him to know the requirements of the Board, nor enable him to render the help required of him. A Mamlatdar of the Taluka, on the other hand, knows them while he moves round the Taluka to perform his official duties. For the same reason a circle inspector is likely to know the state of his whole circle much better than any other influential or rich man in the circle.

11 & 12. Please see reply to question 18.

13. If Presidents be *ex-officio* it is desirable to have Vice-Presidents nominated from non-official Councillors.

14. The statutory minimum of assessment should be Rs. 25.

15. It is not desirable to make any limit in the matter of subventions. The Boards should at most expect a sum equal to its income.

16. There is no necessity to have the proportion fixed by law. Every District Board has now come to know what share should be assigned to the Taluka Boards in the District. One-eighth share should, however, be fixed as the minimum share if it is thought necessary to fix it by law.

17. (a) Non-officials must be nominated to secure representation of castes in minority.

(b) It is already recommended that the number of elected should be two-thirds.

18. (1) The limit should now be Rs. 25.

(2) No limit should be fixed.

(3) At Rs. 1,000.

(4) At Rs. 300, *i.e.*, Rs. 25 per mensem.

Rao Bahadur K. N. Bhangonkar.

1. I am of opinion that District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities

2. I do not think election should be by communities. The number of distinct communities in this country is so large that any attempt to give elective franchise to them separately would be impossible. Besides the only community which has asked for a separate electorate is the Mahomedans and their number in this District is 31,323 of a population of 580,723 or only 5 per cent. of the population. If, however, any community be not adequately represented by elected members the deficiency may be made good by nomination. I am of opinion that the existing number of members on the District and Taluka Local Boards should be increased on the District Local Board. There should be at least two elected members from each Taluka and the *ex-officio* and nominated Commissioners should not be more than one-third of the elected members.

3. Presidents of District Local Boards should be elected and non-official. There would probably be no difficulty in finding out a suitable man for the post in most District Head-quarters. Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be Prant officers as at present, but the Vice-Presidents should be elected non-officials.

4. The answer to this question depends upon what sort of engineering establishments Local Boards keep. If the Local Boards entertain an officer of their own of the rank of Senior Assistant Engineer or Senior Sub-Engineer with an adequate staff of subordinates for each Taluka then the limitations on the preparation of plans and estimates should be as under :—

COST OF WORK.	PLANS AND ESTIMATES.		Work by whom to be carried out.
	By whom to be prepared.	By whom to be approved.	
Rs. 2,500	Local Board. ...	Local Board ...	Local Board.
Over Rs. 2,500 and upto Rs. 10,000	Do. ..	Govt. Ex. Engineer.	Do.
Above Rs. 10,000 ..	Govt. Ex. Engineer.	Do.	Local Board. or Govt. Ex. Engineer.

I would, however, leave full powers to Government Engineers to inspect all Local Fund works executed in the District during construction or after completion and to communicate the remarks or suggestions to the President of the District Board, who should place all such communications before the Board for their final disposal.

If such an establishment is not entertained then I would propose no change in the existing rules.

5. Engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants should as at present rest with the District Local Boards as thereby a better class of servants would be procurable.

Power of preparation and sanction of the Original Revised Taluka Budgets may be delegated to Taluka Local Boards, but copies of such Budgets must forthwith be submitted to District Boards and any remarks the District Board may have to make on these Budgets should meet with the serious consideration of the Taluka Local Boards.

6. I am unable to record any opinion on this as I was unable to procure a copy of the Decentralization Commission.

7 & 8. I see no immediate necessity of changing the existing rules. But I find that the most important provisions (*vide* Rule 6 for instance) are not given effect to by the Educational Department. I recommend that orders should be issued that the provisions of para (u) of sec. 48 and rule 6, be strictly followed in future.

9. I answer all the sub-questions in this question in the affirmative, with the observation that the income of Local Boards should be increased in the following order, *viz.* :-

(1) Provincial subventions should be increased.

(2) Local Boards should be given one anna in the rupee on—

(1) Income Tax.

(2) Abkari Revenue.

(3) Forest Revenue.

(3) Local Boards should be empowered if their income still falls short of expenditure to raise the Local Fund cess up to a maximum of one anna and half in the rupee.

10. It is true that there is a lack of interest on the part of non-official members of Taluka and District Local Boards but this is due to the fact that practically no opportunity is given to them to initiate any measure, the official presidents placing every matter before them cut and dry.

11. I do not think it is necessary to make any additions to the qualifications of voters.

12. I think it is possible and desirable to have non-agricultural representatives of classes 2 to 6 given in Section 10 of the Act on the Boards by increasing the number of members. I would keep the number of wards for land holders as at present and would reserve one additional seat for each of the classes 2 to 6 of Section 10 of the Act. If a person falling under classes 2 to 6 is also a land holder he should have a choice as to under which class he wishes to be elected. The inclusion of pensioners, Honorary Magistrates and Non-agricultural men of means on the board would secure more intelligence and independence on the Board.

13. I have already answered this question in the affirmative.

14. I do not think it is necessary to reduce the statutory minimum of Rs. 48 of assessment.

15. I have already stated in my reply to question 9 (Clauses 3 and 4) that Provincial grants should be increased and that Local Fund should be given one anna in the Rupee of the Revenue from Income-tax, Abkari and Forest.

16. There is a general complaint of Taluka Local Boards that they are starved for funds. I think it is desirable to fix the proportion by Law. I would deduct the amounts which the District Local Boards are bound by Law to provide under Sections 46 to 49 from the Revenue derived under Clause (b) of Section 44 and divide the remainder equally between the Taluka and District Local Boards *Pro rata* to their income.

17. I have answered this question in my reply to question No. 1.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Section 10 of the Act except that I would reduce the amount of qualifying pension from Rs. 50 to 35 to enable retired Head Karkuns and School Masters to be eligible for election.

Vasudeo Mahadev Behere, Pleader, Nandurbar.

1. The principle of local self-government would, I think, include the administering the local general matters of the subject, by the representatives of the public. This representation would certainly be secured by election alone, and in expending the principle ways must be found, which would make a proper election on good principles.

It being thus the basis of local self-government I would answer the first question by saying that there ought to be elected majorities, both in the District and Taluka Local Boards.

2. I don't think election by communities is necessary or profitable. In administering a Government, I think only those persons, who would stand the test of education and practical.

learning, ought to have hands, and this can be secured by allowing the public to elect persons who would stand this test. It would not be beneficial to entrust Government in the hands of any members, because they are of a particular caste or creed.

3. On the same principle on which I answered question No. 1, I am of opinion that the Presidents of both the Boards should be elected.

In officials there are many competent persons whom the public will willingly elect as their Presidents and they should therefore be allowed to elect officials as their Presidents, but occasions would often come when pressure would require the election of an official whom the public do not think advisable to appoint, and therefore I would answer the question by saying that the Presidents of both the Boards should be elected and non-officials.

4. As regards the preparation of plans and estimates of work, I think the present limitation is hard and work is not speedily done. That limitation should be dropped and the Boards should have power to prepare plans and execute works in their jurisdiction by their own agency, subject to the following provisions :—

- (1) At present there is only one Maistry for a Taluka, if the Board is to have full power to prepare plans and estimates and to execute works, there should be one more officer of the grade of Sub-Overseer for a group of 3 or 4 Talukas and for a District there should be one officer of the grade of Supervisor. These officers should scrutinise the plans of important works and supervise works undertaken by the Boards.
- (2) The Boards should also have power to ask the Executive Engineer in any particular case to prepare plans of any work or that any particular work be executed by that officer.

Subject to these provisions the Boards should have power to do their own works.

5. The Taluka Boards should not altogether be freed from the District Board's control in the matter of engagement of servants, but in preparing the schedule of the staff of servants the consent of the Taluka Boards should be quite necessary. When with the consent of the Taluka Board a schedule is prepared, the Local Boards of Taluka should be allowed to appoint low-paid servants, but as regards clerks, maistries, &c, the engagement should be with the District Board. The payment of the Taluka Board's staff should be kept with the Taluka Board.

As regards budgets, I think they should entirely be in the hands of the Taluka Board. The wants of the Taluka are better known to the Taluka Board and they should be allowed to expend money on works they think proper.

6. As regards education I did not get the report of the Decentralisation Commission, and it is not clear from the question as to how far the question is to be extended.

The words "whether time has come when the management can be entrusted to the District Boards" may mean :—

- (1) Whether they have acquired capacity to manage the school affairs, or
- (2) Considering other means—as funds required for management—whether Boards have arrived at a position when they can manage the affairs.

As regards the first portion, I think the District Boards can supply competent persons who can manage educational matters, which can include questions as to—

- (1) What sort of education should be imparted, (2) by what agency should it be imparted, i.e., whence should the teachers' staff be supplied; (3) how should the various schools be managed as regards their disciplinary matters.

For deciding the first two questions, which are of general importance, the various District Boards can form a committee of themselves by selecting men of admitted learning and thus manage the affairs. The other matters of management can be managed by the various Boards themselves.

As regards the second I think the means as regards funds of the Boards are limited and unless they are increased to great extent, they cannot be in a position to take the management in their hands. As long as the first two matters regarding education are not entrusted to the Boards, it is not of much effect, whether the management is entrusted to the Boards or is with the Government Educational Department and I think under the present conditions, as they exist, it must be said that time has not come when the management can be entrusted to the District Boards.

7. As regards question 7, I cannot answer it in any way.

8. I do not remember Taluka Local Boards having ever been consulted as to the appropriation of revenue to be spent on education in other areas.

9. As regards expenditure for additional Local Board establishments, as suggested by me in my answers to questions Nos. 4 and 5, I think there would be nearly Rs. 6,000 for each District. Take, for instance, West Khandesh. In all the 7 Talukas three Overseers and one Supervisor with a little establishment under their hands will suffice to carry out the works suggested.

Taking the pay of Supervisor to be Rs. 150 and that of Overseer Rs. 50 per mensem, I would suggest the establishment as under :—

Rs.	150	Supervisor.
„	150	3 Overseers.
„	100	2 Clerks under the Supervisor and three under the Overseers
„	40	5 Peons on Rs. 8 per mensem.
„	60	Other expenses, allowances, stationery, etc.
Rs.	500	

Thus the yearly expenditure would be Rs. 6,000.

To meet this expenditure the District Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on the Abkari revenue.

If the whole of the educational matters as described by me in question No. 6 is to be entrusted to the Boards, then to meet the expenditure partly Government must increase their grant and partly the amount may be allowed to be raised by cess :—Firstly, on Abkari Revenue, and secondly, by increasing the local fund cess. Notified areas must also be established by extending the scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act.

I entirely agree with the view presupposed to exist in question No. 10 that there is failure in District and Taluka Boards and this can also be said to be due to lack of interest on the part of non-official members. I cannot exclude official members and can say that officials, except the Mamlatdar, who is generally the Vice-President, also rank with the non-officials in this respect.

The Mamlatdar, who has often to go out in Taluka and has often to see the Presidents of Taluka and District Boards, is as a matter of necessity required to look into the Board's affairs.

I can, without much objection, say that the head officer of the Board and paid servants only work in the Board and take interest, others are as if dead members.

The reasons for this may be said to be two-fold ; partly because—at least in Taluka Boards—a majority of members have not that standard of education which is generally required, and partly because the influence of the official members creates a certain sort of impression on the minds of other members, that even though they suggest anything the officials will carry their points.

I don't think there is absence of co-operation, but I think there is no desire or attempt to work, and consequently there is passive co-operation.

The remedies to cure this defect would be to select ways by which more educated men would come in the Board and keep aside official interference except by way of advice.

Also steps must be taken to impart higher education liberally. At present higher education is being imparted in colleges, through the medium of a language which is not accessible to all, but if arrangement be made to impart that education in vernacular language in schools that would raise the capacity of the general public and more educated men would come in the Board.

11. As regards question No. 11, I think section 10 of the Local Boards Act is much comprehensive and needs no addition.

12. To secure more men from clauses 2 to 6 of section 10, I think the present way of grouping must be changed. This can be done if groups are so arranged that residents of towns and centres of education come in in large numbers.

In Talukas, leaving aside Taluka towns and some other villages, the general public is illiterate. A large number of such villages should be taken in one or two groups and Taluka towns or such other villages, where there are more educated men, should each form a separate group.

A separate group should be given to pensioners and such other servants, who would be entitled as voters, honorary magistrates and patels. This would bring in educated men and the formation of the Board would be fair.

13. In view of the answers given by me to questions Nos. 1 and 3, I would say that it is quite desirable that Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials.

14. I don't think the statutory minimum of assessment need be changed from the figure 48.

15. I am not in a position to answer this question.

16. Under the Local Boards Act certain duties are cast upon the District Boards by certain sections, such as sections 46, 47, 48 and 49; they have to defray certain charges and make some expenses, for that I think the District Board must get the necessary portion from the income of the Taluka Board from the one anna cess.

Deducting this portion, the remaining amount should all be left at the disposal of the Taluka Board and that Board should, looking to its own works, decide what portion they should give to District Boards as contributions.

I do not think this portion can be fixed by law, but it would depend on the local conditions of a Taluka and the changing yearly needs of that Taluka. One year a Taluka may require for new works or repairs more money, the other year it may require less. Under these circumstances the ratio could not be fixed by law.

17. I have already in my answer to question 10 described what part the officials play in the Board, and how much influence they have on other members of the Board; in these circumstances it would not be good to increase the number of officials, by nominating officials more than what they are now.

18. I am in favour of reducing the limit of Rs. 50 prescribed in clause 4 of section 10 to Rs. 25. As regards other clauses I am not in favour of reducing the limits.

Mr. S. W. Joshi, President, Shirpur Municipality.

1. Time is now ripe when District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.

2. No special advantage in the matter of election should be given to any particular caste or creed. Provision, however, may with advantage be made for due representation of special interests, as commercial, agricultural, educational and municipal interests.

Taking into consideration the possibility of provision for the representation of several interests, the present number of members will be insufficient. The present number should be increased by 50 per cent.

3. Time is now ripe when the District and Taluka Local Boards may have a non-official President. He should be elected by a majority of not less than two-thirds and the election should be subject to confirmation by Commissioner of the Division.

4. The undersigned approves of the provisions of sections 57 and 61 of the Bombay Local Boards Act, except as regards the pecuniary limits, within which the Local Board may undertake works without the P. W. D. agency. That limit should be increased by double the present figures.

5. As regards the entertainment of Taluka Local Board establishment, the Taluka Board should be freed from the control of the District Board in matters of temporary establishment. As regards the permanent establishment, it is advisable that the District Board should have controlling power just for the sake of securing uniformity in the District. In the matter of temporary establishment also a certain pecuniary limit should be imposed upon within which the Taluka Boards may act without the consent of the District Board.

It is advisable that the District Board should have the power of sanctioning and revising Taluka Board budgets. That power should be however circumscribed by rules, mainly with the object that while the District Board may exercise healthy control, the Taluka Board may not be crippled in its action.

6. Time is ripe when the management of primary schools may well be handed over to the District Board. Such a system would facilitate the introduction of a curriculum of studies peculiarly suited to the District. Of course, the primary schools should be subject to the general supervision of the Government Educational Department, which, while exercising healthy supervision, should not tend to cripple the District Board.

7. It is not necessary for the present to alter or modify the present rules made under Section 48b.

8. As far as the knowledge of the undersigned goes, the Taluka Boards are not consulted in matters referred to in question No. 8.

9. (1) The Local Fund cess on Land Revenue should not be increased. It will work hardship on the poor ryot. The local cess proposed to be levied on irrigation and forest revenue will be indirectly paid by the agriculturists themselves.

(2) Local Boards may advantageously be relieved of a part of the expenditure on educational, medical and sanitary matters in villages where the population is 4,000 or upwards, by extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act.

(3) Local Fund cess of one anna should be levied on (a) Income-tax, (b) Abkari Revenue, (c) Forest Revenue, (d) Irrigation Revenue.

(4) Local Boards should be liberally aided by provincial grants. Government should grant a sum equal to the income of the Board. This grant should be fixed on an average income of the Board during the last 5 years. It should be revised every 5 years. The present provincial grant is inadequate. It is natural if the Local Board looks to and expects to get an increment in their grant proportionate to the general increase in the provincial revenues.

10. It is partly true that the failure of District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members.

The following are some of the causes as to why there is a lack of interest, etc., on the part of non-official members.

1. *Lack of education.*—The present members are, a majority of them, illiterate and have no conception as to the duties and responsibilities attending a membership of the Local Board.
2. *Official influence* —Under the present state of things, there is hardly any independence in votes. The official view predominates in every matter. Hence it happens that the progressive character of the Board entirely depends upon the personality of the District officer.
3. The general indifferent attitude of the Local Board establishment towards the non-official members. A Local Board maistry, for example, hardly cares for a non-official member and his views, so long as he remains under the good graces of the official. A non-official, with even an average sense of self-respect, is hardly expected to work under such circumstances.
4. Non-payment of travelling expenses by the Boards. The often repeated visits to the Local Board works during construction and repairs are absolutely necessary and it is but desirable that the non-official members should get travelling allowance.
5. Really, good merit is always shy and such persons always prefer to remain in the back ground when they find the election dominated by police and mulki Patels of the village. The Revenue and Police Patels have got an amount of undesirable influence over the villagers and when they stand as candidates, other unassuming but good persons have very little chance to succeed. These Patels, when they are elected, have really no independent votes, for they are always under the official influence. Such persons should not, therefore, be allowed to stand as candidates.
6. What is really wanted, if we want the Local Boards efficient, is that the members should be intelligent. The present system of nomination is defective. If under the present system of election, educated people can't come in, Government while nominating should mainly look in the direction of selecting good, moderate and intelligent people, irrespective of caste and creed. It may happen for some time to come that Government may not be able to find out a proportionate number of educated people from certain castes and creeds. The difficulty, however, will be only temporary as education is rapidly advancing among those classes also. In nomination, efficiency should in no case be sacrificed to secure due admixture of castes and creeds.
7. Self-respecting people often find it irksome to work when restrictions are too many and where there is hardly any scope for intelligent discretion. Taluka Boards should therefore be as independent of the District Boards as far as possible

The abovesaid reasons are some of the more important reasons why the present administration is stale. They should be removed and the Local Boards will be infused by fresh vigour and energy.

11. Such addition should be made as would secure the due representation of such interests as commercial, educational, municipal and agricultural interests.

12. In case we give the right of voting to graduates, to Government servants, to Municipal Councillors, it is very likely that they will send in an educated member to represent them at the Boards. In case of towns, they should be made a separate group.

13. Yes.

14. The statutory minimum should be reduced to Rs. 20 subject to a further reduction in cases of certain districts where the average holding is even less. For West Khandesh Rs. 20 would do.

15. There should be a certain proportion between the provincial revenue and Government grant to Local Boards. It is but right that Local Boards should share in the continued prosperity of the provincial revenues.

16. It is not desirable that Taluka Boards should be left to the mercy of the District Board in the matter of its share of revenue. It should be fixed by law. It should not be less than 40 per cent. District Board and 60 per cent. Taluka Boards.

17. For some time to come, the present arrangement should be maintained, provided Government in their nomination looks to education and merit alone, irrespective of caste and creed. If however, as the Hon. Mr. Sathe suggests, separate groups be made and if it be possible that the separate groups would return better educated people, then there may be only two classes of members; viz., elected non-officials and nominated officials. The proportion should not exceed 9 to 3.

18. *Vide* my answer to question No. 14.

The Secretaries, Khandesh Zilla Sabha, Dhulia, West Khandesh.

1. Yes. The District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. There should never be election by Communities as such.

However, in order to ensure the representation of the educated class, at least one-fourth the total number should be from those who have at least passed the Matriculation Examination of the University of Bombay or the Government S. F. It is clear from the Government reports that the non-official members take very little interest in the affairs of the Board; but this is mainly due to the fact that the majority of them are persons who unfortunately know very little of what they have to do; consequently, they are unable to take any active and intelligent part in the business. To remedy this, the special representation of the qualified literate class is absolutely necessary as a tentative measure till the present circumstances change. To effect this change the present number of members may be increased.

3. The Presidents of the District and Taluka Boards should be non-officials and elected.
4. Unless the Board by a majority of three-fourths thinks it absolutely necessary to have the Government help in the matter, District and Taluka Boards should be left to look to the planning and execution of their own public works.
5. The Taluka Boards should be freed from the control of the District Boards regarding the engagement and payment of their servants; however, their budget may be sanctioned and revised by the District Local Board.

6. Time has come when the management of Primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards, but this should be done without any additional financial burden upon their income.

7. From the rules framed under Section 48b of the Act, it appears that the Boards are bound hand and foot by the Government Educational Department in every detail concerning a Local Board school. They have practically no free choice. This is quite undesirable. The Boards must be taken to be better acquainted with their own surroundings and their own requirements and the way in which to help themselves. Now if a Board falls out with the Educational Department under the present rules the latter carries the day and the Boards are helpless. Such a state of things is unsuited to the present progressive times and expectations, and therefore, the Boards must be left to themselves to manage their own affairs in the best way they think. Their schools may, however, be inspected by the officers of the Government Educational Department, and the latter may make suggestions.

8. It appears that the Taluka Local Boards are not consulted at the present; but it is desirable that the Taluka Boards so concerned be consulted.

9. (1) Local Board Cess should under no circumstances be increased
- (2) Local Boards may be relieved in the manner suggested in this clause.
- (3) Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on the Abkari Revenue only.
- (4) Provincial subventions may be increased and fixed by law.

10. From the Administration reports, for the last four years, of the Government, it appears that the non-official members do not take much interest in the Board's affairs, but from the very same reports it is also clear that part of this indifference is due to the lack of whole-hearted and systematic efforts on behalf of the official members to arouse the interest and co-operation of the non-official members (*vide* para 13, page 5 of the Local Board Administration report for the year 1911-12). In the same reports we will find another cause for this apathy of the public and that is quoted at para 17, page 8 of the Local Board Administration report for the year 1913-14, also para 13 of the Local Board reports for the year 1910-11. It is this:—that the public have no control over the funds of the Board and they have no means to improve the Board's revenues.

A third cause may be given in the words of the Collector of Ratnagiri, whose remarks are quoted at page 4, para 13 of the Local Board Administration report for the year 1910-11. It is this: "Owing to the weakening of the village system, villagers have got into the habit of doing nothing for themselves and looking with folded hands to Government or the Local Board to do everything." Thus the principal causes are these:—

- (a) the members are generally from the illiterate class who are not expected to fully understand their responsibilities and to express their opinions freely in the face of Government officials.
- (b) the attitude of the official members is not so encouraging as to create confidence and independence in the non-official members.
- (c) that the control of the funds lies wholly in Government hands.
- (d) that the whole system of the Board is such as discourages any active interest in the affair.

The remedies are :—

- (a) the election or nomination must be so arranged as to give scope for enlightened persons to come in easily on the lines suggested in answer to question 2 of the Government.
- (b) the control of the funds should be with the Boards which should have due choice in the general management.

11. Before suggesting additions we first propose that the assessment limit be reduced to Rs. 25, the Rs. 5,000 limit be reduced to Rs. 3,000 and the pension limit be reduced to Rs. 20.

Instead of net earning of Rs. 500, the limit should be net earnings of Rs. 250.

We suggest the following additions :—

- (a) Every fellow and Graduate of any University.
- (b) Every pleader holding a Sanad from the High Court.
- (c) Every juror and assessor residing in the Taluka or District for not less than six months.

12. The spirit of this question is served by the remedy suggested in answer to question 2. General election wards as obtain in some of the Municipalities should be created for every District and Taluka Board so that men of position at the Headquarters of the District or Taluka would come in.

13. Yes. The Vice-Presidents must invariably be non-officials

14. It should be Rs. 20.

15. It is desirable that the Provincial share of Land Revenue and Income-tax should be divided between the Government and the Local Boards on a fixed basis.

16. To fix a ratio would be arbitrary, but it is not impossible to define principles and name the heads of the Local Board revenue for the purposes of extending the benefit of the policy of decentralization as between the District and Taluka Boards.

17. No. The administrative efficiency will not suffer. The elected members should be three-fourths and the official members one-fourth.

18. *Vide* answer to question XI.

AHMEDNAGAR DISTRICT.

P. J. Mead, Esquire, C.I.E., I.C.S., Collector of Ahmednagar.

It is of course impossible to formulate in the short time at my disposal a detailed scheme, but I have ascertained the views of all persons of importance in the District and I find we are in substantial agreement on the main points. I proceed to indicate briefly what I hold to be essentials and will then note shortly on the various questions forwarded by you.

We want more money. We want competent agencies for (a) distribution of funds, (b) execution of works. Questions of election and nomination are of very little importance indeed. They provide no panacea for our ills, and any ill-considered advance in this direction will very effectually make our Local Board administration even more of a sham than it is at present. We do not like shams in this District. We think that there is a certain body of Local Board work that the cess payers themselves can carry out more effectively perhaps than our present agencies do, and we think that we should even be prepared to run a little risk to give such village agencies a chance. Further, we believe that within certain limits all allotments for such village works should be made by the representatives of cess payers. The average cess payer will take a keen interest in his village, and none in the Taluka, our present unit of administration. You must find an intermediate unit of area. Lastly, you must give Local Bodies, composed of an effective blend of travelling officials and cess payers' representatives, powers of control, which they are competent to exercise in fact, and not worry them more than is necessary with matters which they can only imperfectly understand or over which for various reasons no real control can be permitted. There is no educative value in discussing matters which you cannot decide.

I proceed to analyse our budget and to comment on the main items. Government pays a very large share of the bill for education. We would like to build some small school houses with village agencies on sites selected and lined out by Government officials in accordance with sanitary ideals. Air and light space could be prescribed, but building grants should be given without inspection by P. W. D. officials. It is expected that these structures will not conform with the usual standards of permanence, but there is a considerable body of well-informed opinion that such buildings will be regarded as built by and belonging to the village and they will maintain them in good repair. We do not at present want to secure any further control over educational establishments. Hospitals, vaccine establishments, stallions, veterinary charges, buildings for educational, veterinary and medical purposes and the main metalled roads of the District are all matters which the bulk of our unofficial members consider should be left to official guidance, and they would prefer to contribute a lump sum if necessary and have nothing more to say to them. I do not think that this is feasible entirely, but I commend this idea to the notice of the Committee. I propose to discuss the matter more in detail with my colleagues and report later if permitted, but in the meantime we emphatically dissociate ourselves from any proposals to have our own engineering establishments and to play at controlling matters which Government can do more efficiently. I may note that, as regards roads, another 100 miles at the most of new roads would put the district communications on a sound basis and we desire to rely for the rest on cleared tracks which we can look after, and ask the Public Works Department to undertake any bad crossings such as ghat sections and deep nalas which occur on such tracks. We shall probably propose the complete disbandment of our reduced L. F. Overseers establishment and the increase of subdivisional officers under the Executive Engineer. We have already given the Executive Engineer one of our overseers who under his competent supervision is doing excellent work in his office and in the field. Rao Bahadur Joglekar was at first inclined to press for a separate engineer of our own but is now, I believe, convinced that we should make a very bad bargain and is not so certain that lay criticism of engineering work is very helpful. It is, I hold, absolutely certain that conditions in this respect will vary enormously between districts. Here we have a considerable mileage of metalled roads with numerous Irish and other bridges and our Executive Engineer spends about 5 lakhs a year of which L. F. works vary between 60,000 and a lakh.

Our present Budget System may be briefly explained. We are Rs 10,000 short of annual requirements for ordinary and maintenance charges. We have met all emergent expenditure from the special grant of Rs. 30,000 given us by Government, but this will be exhausted after 1916-17 and meanwhile we have had to reduce all expenditure to the minimum. We have therefore allowed each Taluka Local Board just the necessary funds to supplement the Government water works grant, pay the P. W. D. bill for any important Taluka roads in their charge, and meet maintenance charges to some extent on the few roads remaining under civil agency. In addition they receive a small percentage (10 per cent.) on the cess collected in their areas, and the small sums received by them independently from fees of various kinds. Of course luxuries like dharmshalas have had to be generally eschewed, chavdis have been seriously neglected and the allotments for water supply have not been too generous. In addition to the above the District Local Board has come to their relief by taking up certain bad crossings on Taluka roads not in charge of Public Works Department, and repaired them from our grant for special works. I think we have husbanded our resources successfully, but nothing has been left for the Taluka Boards to distribute on any but the strictest necessities.

We now come to the class of works which looms largest in the eyes of the real cess-payer and here a real advance in local unofficial administration is possible. Given their schools and main communications, villagers want wells and dharmshalas or chavdis to sit and sleep in and these they can construct themselves economically and estimate the cost with fair accuracy. Let

the rate-payers then distribute all funds for these works and see that they are carried out satisfactorily according to their own ideals. Reduce official control to a minimum and banish all blue prints and forms which they cannot understand. Judged by results as they do and give small areas a concrete return for the money subscribed. I have tried to estimate what sums are required for reasonable annual expenditure on these village works, but I can only give a rough guess at present. The agency we propose is a panchayat of five elected for a group of villages, having a common bazar town. The groups at present suggested vary from 12 to 30 villages and, to take some of the cases reported so far, expenditure has varied from 35 to 2,300 rupees in the last two years, while the expenditure suggested as reasonable for the next 3 years varies from 200 to 1,000 rupees, including one-fifth cost of the chavdis required. I hazard the estimate that, including chavdis to which Government should contribute fairly liberally, an average allotment of 1,000 rupees per group or 6,000 per Taluka for these village works including chavdis, dharmshalas, wells and the like should be sufficient. Additional sums should be provided for the smaller village schools which I have mentioned above. This 6,000 rupees should be distributed by the Taluka Local Board between the groups, half perhaps in proportion to the cess raised in any group area and half according to the comparative needs and on consideration of the use made of past allotments. The group Panchayats should make their allotments between villages for different purposes and get these works carried out by any village agency they please. If a village wastes its money it will not get another allotment easily. No accounts or plans or estimates to be submitted. A simple list of the village works showing allotment and date of completion of the work, will be kept and the efficiency of the agency will be judged solely by results. Each Panchayat will elect its own representative on the Taluka Local Board which should be constituted as follows:—President, the Prant Officer, Vice-President, the Mamlatdar or anybody else who may be elected. In any case the Mamlatdar should be on the Board. Add five or six group representatives and the usual Municipal and Inamdar's selections and four nominated members to cover any other useful members there may be available. Local self-government is not improved by large extensions of the elective franchise: it is improved by the selection of the best men, official or non-official, with real powers and a little cash in hand. The Board I have indicated should distribute the money well and exercise the necessary control, while the expenditure of the money should be freed from unnecessary restrictions and checks, and be judged solely by results. The District Local Board which distributes these funds to Talukas and deals with questions not intelligible to the small cess-payer might consist of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards one representative elected by the group representatives of each Taluka and one elected by the Taluka Local Board as a whole. The Collector, the Executive Engineer, Deputy Educational Inspector and Civil Surgeon are, I think, essential and the usual Municipal representatives should be included.

As regards the necessary provision of funds, we are all agreed that the cess must be raised and the general unofficial opinion seems to be that we should raise the full extra anna at once and not leave it to the people to decide the question of extra taxation. I think that the question should be left to the District Local Board to decide. I am against allotting too large sums at once to the groups. Only part of the money raised should be at the disposal of the District Local Board for general purposes, i.e., for distribution as required to or over several Talukas; part should certainly be earmarked for expenditure only in the Taluka within which the cess was raised (*vide* my answer to question 9 (4)).

1. District Local Board—no. Taluka Local Board—probably yes: not because there is any virtue in the elective principle at the present stage, but because the number of groups required to form suitable areas probably brings up the number of elected members to more than the six nominated members required.

2. No.

3. Both Presidents should be nominated officials for the sole reason that they as touring officers, know all conditions best, and make the most independent, impartial and efficient chairmen.

4. No change, except in so far as "village" works are concerned. (*vide* scheme).

5. Section 38, no change. Section 55, Taluka Local Boards can pass their own budgets with out control by District Local Board.

6. Not yet.

7. Not yet.

8. The question does not arise as education is mainly financed by Government.

9. Extra expenditure will be required for entirely different reasons. We have not enough money to carry out emergent works or even pay the annual maintenance charges and there are numerous schemes a District Local Board would like to assist if funds were available.

9 (1). Yes. District Local Board to decide for all areas on the understanding that a fixed proportion of such extra cess be earmarked for expenditure in the area in which such extra cess is raised.

9 (2). No. It may be taken as certain that a Notified Area will increase expenditure by the Local Boards in practically every case. In this district our Sanitary Committees cost Local Fund about Rs. 4,000 a year and I doubt the existence of many non-municipal areas anywhere (except possibly Salsette) where Notified Areas, if properly treated, will save Local Funds a single pie.

9 (3). We accept, but our only revenue of importance is from grazing in mulki forest, and those revenues are being drawn against for establishment, bonuses to village officers and experiments in improving grazing. No extra charges on graziers can be imposed to cover a Local Fund cess and no subventions to Local Fund from this source can be recommended at present.

9 (4). Grants for water supply, chavdis, building grants, special works, should all be pooled and assigned to District Local Boards, without conditions, except that as regards the larger school buildings, plans may be criticised as at present by Sanitary experts and completion certificates given by the Executive Engineer. Further, relief should be given by provincialising more roads *without* asking impoverished Local Fund for contributions, and if necessary taking over vaccine charges. Each District Local Board should be asked to make out a case for its urgent requirements in the shape of uninterrupted communications, dispensaries, medical and veterinary, important school buildings and the like showing

- (a) initial,
- (b) recurring expenditure required.

These could be distributed over a term of 30 years or so, and the additional annual income required worked out. Deduct estimated income, *including* the additional cesses now proposed and make up the difference, if any, plus a margin for our village works by giving relief in the manner indicated above. The measure of relief *must* vary in the case of each Local Board. *All* these charges are legitimate charges to throw on Local Fund: unfortunately many Local Boards cannot pay the bill, and when they have taxed themselves adequately Government should assist them in proportion to their necessities to remove scandalous deficiencies. The cost to Government should not be too heavy if it is remembered that in most districts there is a real limit to the amount that can be spent on construction in any given year. If desired I will submit the required statement.

- 10. *Vide* my report generally.
- 11. No.
- 12. Not necessary.
- 13. Certainly *not*.
- 14. Rs. 24.
- 15. No.
- 16. No.
- 17. Very unimportant and impossible to lay down rules that would be satisfactory in all cases.
- 18. 10 (4)—Rs. 25 pension.

I venture to submit a note on the important points of Local Board Administration now under inquiry. We appear to be aiming at two principal objects which are not entirely compatible, *viz.*: (a) increased efficiency and (b) increased responsibility and power for the cess payers' representatives, and there is some danger that in devising new machinery to give full play to (b), (a) will be entirely lost sight of. The importance of (b) rests on three main considerations,

- (1) how far will the substitution of permanent unofficial for shifting official administrators secure greater continuity of policy;
- (2) what advantages will be secured by relieving hard worked officials by unofficial gentlemen with more leisure;
- (3) the gain in perspective, if control is mainly in the hands of the cess payers' representatives.

If these advantages can be secured by any relaxation or transfer of official control, we should be prepared to hand over larger powers than are likely to be used with complete efficiency at first with a view to the education of our new agencies, but the limits within which such agency is likely *in the near future* to work successfully must be considered *for each district separately* and all mere loss of efficiency with no corresponding advantages must be avoided. Now (1) is a doubtful point in most districts. It will probably only be secured in cases where there is an able unofficial gentleman who can devote his time to administration and who holds and can retain the confidence of the public. Probably his services can best be obtained by nomination and *not* by election. (2) must vary with every district, but unofficial gentlemen *of ability with leisure* to travel over the district are practically not to be found, and the idea of substituting a non-official President for the Collector is the veriest moonshine. It might be possible, however, to substitute a separate Local Board Engineer for the Executive Engineer in some districts, and that point must be examined carefully *for each district separately*. I have attempted such an examination in some detail for this district with Mr Pipe's assistance, and I venture to deprecate all attempts to examine this question in less detail or without the professional advice of an experienced engineer. (3) is undoubtedly an important point. Our present District Local Boards are very fairly efficient. Administration is practically in the hands of an experienced official who has every opportunity of learning the needs of the tract, and has the valuable assistance of an experienced engineer with equal knowledge of the main problems affecting the district and various other advisers official and non-official who can and do offer suggestions of value. So far as the larger needs of the district are in question—and so far funds have been inadequate for much else in most districts,—the old system has worked well. But I grant that the distribution of funds for and the execution of smaller village works, which appeal most directly to the rural cess payer, leave room for improvement, and I should welcome any change of system which offered a chance of improvement in this direction. The existing system of Local Board Overseers, without pensions and with such inadequate supervision as revenue officers with a little professional advice on occasion can supply, stands condemned by experience in every district that I know. The system is expensive and inefficient. Much of the work carried out by this agency could be better done by the villagers themselves who not infrequently criticise the completed work effectively but are unable or unwilling to supervise the construction. Probably a Local Board Overseer is regarded as an 'official' and doubtless he resents all criticism and interference.

2. There seem to be two alternatives. (1) the panch system I have already suggested for all village works requiring no trained supervision, while the Public Works Department with a little extra establishment looks after the more difficult construction and repair work: (2) a separate Local Board establishment entirely. Now a glance at the attached map shows that (2) must *prima facie* involve an almost absurd waste of supervisory power. The Executive Engineer and his sub-divisional officers must travel miles over local fund roads and past local fund buildings to reach distant Government buildings which they have to inspect periodically and the same applies with still greater force to our Local Board Engineer and his staff. Yet neither can do any work *en-route*! Before condemning the scheme entirely Mr. Pipe and I have worked out comparative costs and I attach two statements A and B showing, on a basis of increased work which improved finances will make possible, what expenditure will be incurred in each case. In both cases of course the present Local Board Overseer establishment costing Rs. 4,380 per annum disappears. To B must be added the 10 per cent. we pay at present. The only possible conclusion is that we get our local board work done 'dirt cheap' at present, and I venture to protest most strongly against any proposal to saddle us with a less efficient and infinitely more expensive establishment for the sake of a mere idea. A little imagination will disclose unpleasing vistas of endless squabbles between the two rival establishments over carts, labour and the like.

3. I attach a statement C showing the reasonable requirements of the district during the next 20 years and the annual cost, including upkeep, distributed over them. We can easily spend more and should prefer to do so on works, education, medical relief, agricultural improvements, etc., etc., before we waste money on a separate establishment.

A

*Statement of Establishment required for separate District Local Board
Engineering Department, as regards the District of Ahmednagar.*

Serial No.	Number required.	DESIGNATION.	Average monthly Salary.	Total monthly expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1	1	District Local Board Engineer ...	400	400
2	5	Sub-Divisional Offices (Sub-Overseers) {	50	} 350
			T. A. 20	
3	10	Maistris	28	280
4	15	Karkuns	13	195
5	1	Draftsman	45	45
6	2	Tracers	20	40
7	1	Sub-Overseer attached to Drawing Office.	50	50
8	1	Head Storekeeper	35	35
9	5	Sub-Divisional Store Clerks	20	100
10	1	Head Clerk	50	50
11	1	Senior Accounts Clerk	50	50
12	5	Sub-Divisional Clerks	30	150
13	5	Assistant Clerks, audit and correspondence, etc.	23	115
14	10	Peons for Sub-Divisional Officers ..	9	90
15	3	Do. for District Local Board Engineer {	10	} 28
			9	
			9	
16	2	Do. for Head Office	9	18
17	2	Chowkidars for Office—day and night ..	10	20
18	1	Do. for Head Office	9	9
			Total Rs.	2,025

N.B.—Pension contribution must be added to the above, as Local Board establishment is too much for an effective cadre with adequate flow of promotion.

Extra monthly expenditure and establishment required by Executive Engineer, Ahmednagar District, if all the District Local Board roads, buildings, etc., be taken over by the P. W. D.

	Amount.	Rs.
3 District Local Board Sub-Divisional Allowances of Rs. 30 per mensem. These would be distributed by the Executive Engineer to Sub-Divisional officers in turn	90	
3 Sub-Overseers for Sub-Divisional work on Rs. 50 per mensem consolidated ..	150	
1 Sub-Overseer attached to Executive Engineer's Drawing office, Rs. 50 ..	50	
1 Tracer	15	
5 Maistris on Rs. 28	140	
1 Clerk on Rs. 25 in Executive Engineer's Head Office	25	
Contingencies	200	
	Rs. 490	
Total for one year ..		Rs. 5,880

Present charges for tools and establishment at 10 per cent. on the bill for the year. Rs. 10,000 odd was last year's figure, a high one.

The Committee appointed in 1911-12 recommended a loan of 3 lakhs to improve communications and in addition a programme of new roads costing over 7 lakhs was put up. The 3 lakhs is to be used to remove bad crossings and gradients. No new roads are to be made. I add to this three new roads, Pathardi-Kharwandi, Akola-Shamsherpur and Tisgaon-Miri, which must I think be made, three hospitals and four veterinary dispensaries and show the *extra* cost below. As a 20 years programme this is moderate enough.

	Initial. Rs.		Recurring. Rs.
3 Hospitals	1,03,095		4,644
4 Veterinary Dispensaries ..	28,776		3,000
Roads	3,00,000		4,000
	45,376	Pathardi-Kharwandi road	}
	5,000	Akola-Shamsherpur road	
	22,000	Tisgaon-Miri road.	
20 {	Rs. 5,04,247		Rs. 13,844
	Rs. 25,212		
	,, 13,844		

Rs. 39,056 per annum for 20 years.

The additional income from a 2nd anna cess is Rs. 1,16,000. We may deduct provisionally one-third for education (Rs. 38,666), as undoubtedly in addition to new school buildings (1½ lakhs initial and Rs. 3,000 recurring) we can spend all we get on better education, *including* agricultural and technical instruction. We should also deduct 6 pies of the extra cess for distribution by panchas in the Talukas on village works. This Rs. 58,000 is less than I originally proposed (Rs. 6,000 a Taluka), but we already give them Rs. 20,000 odd and can make up the Taluka amounts from this saving.

The balance available for extra District Local Board expenditure is—

	Rs.		Rs.
	58,000		1,16,000
	38,700		96,700
	Rs. 96,700		Rs. 20,000 in round figures

Annual deficit will be Rs. 19,000 odd.

To this we must add an extra Rs. 5,000 to cover increased contribution to P. W. D. for extra works. The extra establishment asked for by Mr. Pipe is nearly covered by our present charges for Local Board Overseer establishment and tools. The total is Rs. 24,000.

I suggest therefore that a grant of Rs. 24,000 a year should be made us *in lieu* of all grants-in-aid, other than the average sums paid us in past years. These I calculate to be—

Rs.	
1,18,000	Education
12,000	Do. works.
29,200	Special works communications.
3,000	Water-works.
2,000	Chavdis.
Rs. 1,64,200	

Estimate of monthly travelling allowances and contingent charges.

	Total Rs.
1 District Local Board Engineer Rs. 200	200
5 Sub-Divisional Officers over and above Rs. 20 already allowed " 10	50
1 District Local Board Engineer's Touring Clerk " 10	10
2 Engineer's peons " 4	8
5 Sub-Divisional peons.. .. . " 3-8-0	17-8-0
	Total .. Rs. 285-8-0

Contingent charges including stamps, stationery and occasional T. A. for accountant, clerks, etc.

Stationery Rs. 20	
Service stamps " 50	
Conveyance charges, treasure stores, etc. " 75	
Miscellaneous " 135	
	Rs. 180
Rent for Sub-Divisional Officers in Mamlatdar's kacheres.. Rs. 200	
Rents for buildings for stores, Rs. 5 per month per Sub-Division " 300	
	Rs. 500

Tools and Plant.

Annual estimate for new supply, repairs, etc. Rs. 3,000 per annum.

Initial Expenditure.

	Rs.
1. Head office new building including Record room, Drawing office, main room for clerks, District Local Board Engineer's office	10,000
2. Head stores	4,500
3. <i>Tools and plant</i> —	
Iron and stone rollers, 2 centrifugal pumps, 1 portable steam engine, 1 small oil engine, hand pumps, water carts, pick-axes, phowrahs, ghamelas, hammers, panters, 5 dumpy levels, staves, etc. Drilling machine, ratchet drills, smiths' tools, bellows, anvils, etc., office furniture, tope-sheets, books, drawing office equipments, tapes, chains, scales, etc.	25,500
	Total.. Rs. 40,000

Annual Total Expenditure.	Monthly Expenditure. Annual Expenditure	
	Rs.	Rs.
Establishment	2,025	24,300
T. A. Allowances	285	3,420
Contingent Charges	180	2,160
Rents for Sub-Divisional Offices, stores, etc. .. .. .	....	,500
Annual repairs to buildings .. .. .	....	220
	Total.. Rs. 30,600	

Tools and plant.

	Rs.
Annual estimate for new supply, repairs, etc.	3,000
Grand total of average annual recurring charges	33,600
Initial expenditure assuming only head office and stores are built	40,000

Of the above it may be argued that the special grant for communications might now cease, tolls (Rs. 15,000) are abolished, and the balance after compensation is pooled and more roads provincialised. I think there would be no objection, but each district must be treated fairly. On the other hand, chavdis will be kept now in some semblance of repair and new chavdis, urgently wanted in many villages, can be built. The Government grant under this head is distinctly parsimonious, if any real progress is effected. The panchas will certainly spend money on chavdis as many men in the Deccan sleep in the chavdi.

No account has been taken of Local Board expenditure on communications in the canal areas as these were not considered by the 1911-12 committee and similarly no account has been taken of the extra irrigation cess to be levied in this tract.

Mr. G. R. Takalkar, Vice-President, Taluka Local Board, Nevasa.

It is in my opinion desirable for the Taluka Local Boards to have elected majorities and it will not do to have a bare majority. What is wanted is to ensure a decided majority of elected members. It is more than thirty years since the establishment of Local Boards and there has been as yet no attempt at altering the constitution of the Local Boards so as to give the Board a greater proportion of self-government than what was allowed at the beginning. Besides, from the experience that I have got of the working of the Board I may be able to say that a non-elected majority means practically the preponderance of official opinion and control. It is often seen that a measure which is clearly sought to be introduced in the interest of official bodies higher or lower can seldom be thrown out even if all the elected members combined to oppose the measure. As the majority at present may be said to be official the executive work naturally devolves on the officials and they being very well accustomed to all sorts of executive work are likely to think of the elected minority as a dead-weight. Success cannot be expected from a representative body unless and until responsibility is completely thrown upon it and so long as there is not a decidedly elected majority no elected member can feel that he is really responsible.

2. Election need not be, in my opinion, by communities. Local Boards are constituted for the administration of the revenue gathered from Local cess and it may reasonably be said according to the broad principle stated by Mill that the right theoretically to administer and practically to vote must lie in the individuals paying the particular cess. Uptil now Local cess has been levied on Land Revenue alone and on no other tax and as there are no restrictions on any particular communities with regard to the holding of lands it stands to reason to expect that the scramble of communities *inter se* should not find a place in the administration of the Local Boards. If we look to the communities we may find communities actual or imaginary. Religion, commerce, higher education, professions, nay, every one of them, go to constitute a community. Can it ever be suggested that a representation of such communities, irrespective of their paying the Local cess, is desirable? I think it is certainly not. It may be said that without giving a franchise to the particular community if no member of the community is qualified under a property clause it would be contrary to the principle quoted above to give them a vote merely as representing the community and so to speak as a compliment to that particular community. If a Local Board should require the infusion of special communities Government can choose the nominated members from the special communities.

3. No changes in the administrative field should be sudden or spasmodic. In my opinion it is, therefore, time to have for Taluka Local Boards a non-official president. For some years, he should be from the nominated members and if experience proves that there is no harm, an elected member may attain presidentship.

4. I think the present system, of the preparation of plans and the execution of the public works, should be maintained.

5. The District Local Board should have control over Taluka Local Board in the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants. The present system of sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Boards by District Local Boards should be abolished. Now it is in the discretion of the District Local Board to allot a certain amount for the Taluka Local Board. This amount varies from year to year. The total income of the Taluka Local Board should be ascertained. One-third should be devoted to the Educational Department. One-third should be given to the District Local Board and the remaining one-third should be entirely in the hands of the Taluka Local Board. This one-third should be devoted solely for public works. The payment of Taluka Local Board servants and the District Local Board Roads should be maintained exclusively by District Local Board. The Taluka Local Boards should prepare their own budgets but they should not be required to be sanctioned or revised by District Local Board. It now happens that the amount placed at the disposal of Taluka Local Boards is quite insufficient even to carry out ordinary works. The budget is oftentimes revised by the District Local Board. The Taluka Local Boards are likely to know their wants. So there should be no interference by District Local Board in the matters of sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets.

In regard to education I do not consider that the time has come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. The management should be entrusted to the educational department as at present.

7. The time has not come when the entire management can be handed over to the Local Board. The rule, therefore, requires no modification at present.

8. The Taluka Local Board is not so far as I remember, consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. (1) I think Local Boards should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess upto a maximum of 2 annas in the Rupee. The present one anna tax should not be increased. The extra expenditure may be met by the additional income of Local Fund cess that might be derived in future when the assessment will be increased in the revision survey.

(2) Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters in important villages by extending the scope of Chapter XIV of District Municipal Act.

(3) I am of opinion that in order to meet the extra expenditure Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on (1) Income-tax, (2) Abkari Revenue and (3) Forest Revenue

10. The remark is true with regard to members who have not received any education. Non-official members who have received a good training take deep interest and actively co-operate with the officials. Uneducated non-officials do not take interest. But I think they can hardly be blamed. They must be taught their duties and rights whenever opportunities present themselves. People must come to realise that the Local Fund money is their money and they must see that money is spent on useful purposes. Spread of primary and secondary education seems the only remedy in this case.

11. I think the present section 10 is sufficiently exhaustive. So no additions can be made to the qualifications of voters.

13. It is now desirable that the Vice-President of the Taluka Local Boards should invariably be non-official. I have given full reasons in questions 1 and 2.

14. In my opinion the present minimum of Rs. 48 should be increased to Rs. 100. At any rate the present figure of Rs. 48 should not be reduced.

16. I have discussed this question in question No. 5. I am of opinion that the proportion should be fixed by law. The proportion should be 2 to 1.

17. I think that the administrative efficiency of the Board is not likely to suffer if this provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. The proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be 1 to 4.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10.

On the contrary the present minimum should be increased to Rs. 100.

I further think that clause 6 in section 10 should be removed, or at any rate, it should be settled that a revenue or police Patil, whose annual salary might be Rs. 100 or upwards, should come under this clause; others should be excluded.

Mr. P. B. Bhalerao, Pleader, Parner District.

Village wants can better be known by villagers only. I, therefore, suggest that groups should be formed (say 6 to 10) in each Taluka. These groups should have five members elected by the villagers. The Taluka Local Board should ascertain the wants of these groups and should have over such sums as may be available. Control should be exercised by the Taluka Local Board through the members of the Works Committee. Such members should visit the works at the expense of the Local Board and make report.

I would answer the questions in the following way :—

1. District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. Election should not be by communities, but through village groups as suggested above. In my humble opinion, the present number of members is sufficient.
3. It is advisable to have a non-official President.
4. Local Board should carry on its work through its own servants.
5. The Taluka Local Board should engage its own servants except the overseer whose appointment should rest with the District Board.
The Taluka Board must be independent to carry out its own programme.
6. The Government Educational Department should have the management.
7. I don't think that section 48 (b) should be amended in any way.
8. No, never to my knowledge.

9. (1) Looking to the state of agriculturists, I think there should be no increase in the cess ; but if any village requires any special aid and money be not available from other sources, in that case cess may be increased for that purpose only from the villagers.

(2) Local Boards should not be relieved of expenditure on education, medical, sanitary and other matters by establishing "Notified areas." Not to speak of villages, even Taluka towns have not advanced so far.

(3) Cess on Abkari revenue may be assessed.

10. Want of responsibility led to the failure of Local Boards.

The remedies, in my humble opinion, are that members must be made to understand that the management rests with them only and officials would help them. The members must be entrusted with such works as they can do without great personal and pecuniary inconvenience.

11. Every member of the Board must be literate.

12. If groups of villages be formed, then some members from classes 2 to 6 are sure to be elected.

13. Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials. Provision, however, must be made to pay him his travelling expenses.

14. The minimum of assessment should not be less than Rs. 30.

15. There should be division of land revenue and income-tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards.

16. In my humble opinion, the proportion should be fixed by law. Each Taluka must get according to the income derived from it; the District Board should keep some portion for general use.

17. In all, the nominated members should be one-third only.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits.

Rao Bahadur G. V. Joglekar, B.A., Huzur Deputy Collector, Ahmednagar.

Under present conditions and in view of the lack of public spirit generally evinced by the people in this connection, I am of opinion that it is a convenience to have the collector, an official, as President of the District Local Board. The scheme of having a non-official president for the Municipal Boards has been successful in large towns but in their case the area of their jurisdiction was quite compact and non-officials do find the necessary leisure to properly attend to Municipal duties being always at hand at the place itself. The jurisdiction of the District Local Board is vast in extent and few fit non-officials will be found to have sufficient leisure to exercise a proper supervision and control by touring throughout the District if necessary. If any such non-officials are found and do accept such office, I am sure that in many cases they will be public men having too many other public duties on their hands and they will be anxious to have the honour but will hardly have the leisure and time necessary to exercise a proper control by touring, even if they were paid travelling allowances as First Class Officers.

2. As regards Vice-Presidents of both the District and Taluka Local Boards, I think they should be non-officials and elective. To non-official Vice-Presidents of the District Boards I am of opinion some duty of supervision and control over a certain area or for certain portion of works should be assigned by legislature or rules under the Act and non-officials trained in the work of supervision and control. At present the Vice-Presidents of District Local Boards are in some few cases non-officials but no particular duty of control and supervision is assigned to them and they do no more important work than that of simply signing cheques or routine correspondence. No responsible duty is assigned to them and therefore there has been no occasion for them so far to show their merit, worth and ability, to efficiently discharge a portion of the President's duties. When such duties are assigned by legislature or rules framed under the Act, the Vice-Presidents of the District Boards will have the opportunity of showing their public spirit and interest in Local Board work, and in time such men might become fully trained to the duties of the President and will show their fitness and aptitude for being elected as President and doing duties of the office efficiently and satisfactorily. When Vice-Presidents become used and trained to the work in a decade or two, they can be appointed Presidents and then there will hardly be any risk of continuity of policy.

3. The advantages to be gained will be that non-officials will get a greater insight and experience of the efficient working and make themselves worthier to be able to transact Local Board business without official prestige and help. Efficient discharge of Local Board business in co-operation and co-ordination with officials will make the non-officials more self-reliant and more capable for Local self-government which has been the ultimate aim of the Local Self-Government scheme. It will educate them in the successful doing of administrative work.

4. The two main items of expenditure under the Local Boards' income are at present (1) Roads, (2) Primary Education. These two together take away more than 80 per cent. of the Local Board income including Government grants. The question for consideration is whether Local Boards should employ their own agency for these two branches.

Roads.

5. As regards roads, I see from the statistical information given that it will not be economical to have a separate agency, besides such an agency cannot be created at a start or by a stroke of the pen. For two decades at least we shall have to depend chiefly on the services of officers obtained on loan from Government; and when we have to depend on borrowed services there is a possibility of clashes and disputes and dissatisfaction amongst the Local Board Engineering officers and servants and the result will be the loss of smooth and efficient working.

6. In this connection I have one thing to observe that often owing to increasing expenditure on roads, either by the original estimates or supplementary ones on account of excess cost required, the Taluka Local Boards are starved in the matter of funds and being thus handicapped lose interest in the work. It will be more advisable in my opinion to decide that a certain fixed percentage or portion of the Local Board income should be earmarked for roads and any excess in their expenditure should not be allowed to make an inroad on the assignments to be made to Taluka Local Boards. At present the assignments made to Taluka Local Boards are too small to create any interest in Local Board work in any Taluka and unless the assignments are increased and maintained above a fixed amount, say about Rs. 8,000 or so, there is no likelihood of better interest being shown by the Local Board members.

7. As regards the Local Board Roads in charge of the P. W. D., I have one other point to notice, viz., that all the technical work of execution and supervision is done by the P. W. D. The majority of the District Local Board members have little expert or technical knowledge to exercise any salutary check on it. At present the members do as a rule in silence and without the least demur pass the budgets or estimates either original or supplementary without in the least looking into them. This farce should be done away with and the distribution of funds for separate works should be entirely taken away from the Board and arranged for and controlled by Government or the Collector as in the case of Provincial roads. Let there be some reality in the work being done by the Board and there will be greater interest and spirit created in the management. If everybody knows that the passing of roads budget is nominal, why should such nominal and unreal work be thrust on the Boards. A fixed assignment should be obtained by Government from the Boards for their construction and upkeep and the work got done by them through its own agency, viz., the P. W. D., for the public convenience. It will leave free the balance left with the District Local Board for smaller local works in which the rayats do take real interest.

Primary Education.

8. As regards education I may observe that there seems no use in being dissatisfied with the lack of interest. The schools are controlled and managed by the Educational Departments under departmental rules and orders and no deviation is permitted from them. I do not think there will be any objection to continuing the present system as Government is helping very liberally especially this District in the matter of funds for primary education.

The one point, however, which I should strongly urge is that annual grants for construction of school-houses should be assigned to District Local Boards and the distribution on schools in the District entirely left to the District Local Boards in consultation with the Educational Authorities of the District. At present there is much dissatisfaction growing as regards indefiniteness in obtaining and securing these grants. I am in favour of the construction of small school houses being entrusted entirely to village panchayats or village rayats.

Medical and Veterinary Dispensaries.

9. As regards these institutions I have to observe that the maintenance of them in a satisfactory and efficient state is a matter equally to be cared for by the District Local Board and Government. What, however, occurs at present is that Government fixes quinquennially an annual grant and hardly makes additions to it during the quinquennial period. Any addition on account of revision of establishment or increase in the salary of the establishment or additions and alterations to the buildings and smaller contingent charges falls wholly on the District Local Boards. If Government is equally a partner with the District Boards in their maintenance, Government should justly be prepared to provide proportionate funds for such purposes. I have in some instances marked that additional expenditure required to remove defects noted in these matters by the departmental supervising officers has to be solely borne by the Boards without demur and it gathers and grows little by little and every time proposals for such extra expenditure are sanctioned on the ground that they are small amounts although often no budget provision is made for them. To avoid pressure on the Boards in these matters, no doubt small, from time to time, it will be equitable to fix the proportions of cost which should be borne by the Boards and Government of the gross annual expenditure and then the present evil will disappear.

12. I am in favour of the panchayat system proposed in your letter under reply and hope that it will create real interest in Local Board work. But I must at the same time say that the allotments to create interest in their work.

*Mr. G. K. Chitale, B.A., LL.B., Member of the District
Local Board, Ahmednagar.*

I believe that the object of appointing a Committee to consider and report on the question of the extension of the principles of local self-government in regard to Local Boards is to bring up the present administration to a standard set by the Decentralization Commission in respect to the organization of these Local Boards on a popular basis and *their emancipation from official control*. If the latter object is the main spring which should actuate the improvement of the present methods of Local Boards administration I am not sure how that object can be achieved at all without non-official Presidents, for at least District Local Boards administration. Because it is hoped that if "a freer scope and greater responsibility" in the management of one's affairs be given there will be infused a more vital and real spirit into the principle of local self-government of District Local Boards. The power of initiative and general control is the real key to advance the efficiency and if the Collectors are to retain the main strings in their hands as hitherto I do not think that a step in advance would have been taken by simply giving an elected majority. I am sorry I am unable to agree with your view that "unofficial gentlemen of ability with leisure to travel over the District are practically not to be found and the idea of substituting a non-official President for the Collector is the veriest moonshine." I do remember almost the same observations when the questions of Municipalities were being considered, but we have lived to find that the experiment of having a non-official agency for Municipal Presidents has been eminently successful. No doubt the administration of Municipality and that of a District Local Board are a little different, but except for the fact that in the latter case you have a more diffused and wider area the problems of every day administration are not practically very different or difficult. Offices of non-official Presidents for Municipalities are affording an excellent training ground for the art of self-government and the same agency may be looked up to for guiding at least in the first instance Local Board administration. Of course the nature of administration itself will require a non-official President to travel in the District and I have therefore in my evidence before the Committee coupled this privilege with a condition that the non-official President if and when appointed will have to travel in the District for at least 75 to 100 days in a year so as to be in actual touch with the administrative units. And he should be paid travelling allowances as a First Class Officer. I am against nomination because if a proper and fit person be not nominated the experiment is likely to be a failure and it is likely to be put to the discredit of the popular movement. Of course there is not the said guarantee even in election, but in that case Government will not be to blame. I do not think that Taluka Local Boards should be given non-official Presidents *just yet* because I recognise the force of your observations and think that no such fit person is likely to be easily available. In regard to the proposal of substituting a separate Local Board Engineer and necessary establishment I am in entire accord with your view if my suggestions of handing over all Local Board roads to Government once for all be not considered feasible, because I adhere to my view of making the Local Board administration much simpler and that can only be done by handing over the roads to Government Public Works Departments. Of course I do recognise the force of arguments of having "one's own servants to look after one's own work," but this proposition has obvious limitations and as you have shown, the cost will be almost prohibitive, but I must say that the proposal of having a semi-official agency to assist the regular Public Works Department staff is not very desirable and it is therefore much better that the roads branch of the administration be handed over once for all to Government; on condition of paying a grant in aid from the Local Board funds, which is an average cost of annual maintenance, or some other equitable amount as may be fixed upon.

POONA DISTRICT.

G. W. Hatch, Esq., I.C.S., Poona.

On the general question concerning the extension of local self-government in regard to Local Boards I desire to offer the following remarks. Real local self-government must clearly be based on the existence of a sufficient number of citizens possessing intelligence and local knowledge, and willing to undertake public administrative work without remuneration. Such persons are to be found at the head-quarters of a district and in certain districts in some of the chief towns; but they are not found throughout the countryside, as is the case in England or in any other Western country in which local self-government is highly developed. Accordingly it is only in comparatively few towns in any district that it is possible to constitute a board of citizens capable of managing local affairs.

District Boards concern themselves with the affairs of very large areas (in this district 5,366 square miles and 1,205 villages) with the result that the only members of the Board who are acquainted with more than a fraction of this area or have visited more than an infinitesimal proportion of the villages are the Collector and his sub-divisional officers. In fact, local knowledge, which should be the basis of local self-government, is practically non-existent so far as the unofficial members of the District Board are concerned. Of course, each unofficial member is acquainted with the conditions of his own town or village, but it is rarely that he is acquainted with anything more. Even the Taluka Local Board, which administers perhaps 244 villages and an area of 876 square miles, is too large a unit for the local knowledge of the non-official member to be a useful asset. In fact, in the present state of rural development in India real local self-government is an impossibility for an area larger than the town or village or possibly a group of villages similarly situated. Accordingly, we are driven back to the Notified Area as the proper line of development for local self-government in rural areas.

As pointed out in Mr. Lawrence's Note the Notified Area has not been properly treated, its uses have been overlooked. Its unpopularity with those who desire to see local self-government extended is due to the fact that under the existing law its members may, and usually do, consist entirely of Government nominees. It is generally a small body on which Government officials are strongly represented. I see no reason why the law relating to Notified Areas should not be so amended as to permit of an elected majority, and an unofficial chairman, in suitable areas.

That the Taluka Local Board is capable of development I do not believe. It is because the average Taluka Board is so incompetent that the District Board finds it necessary to retain in its own hands most of the funds and all the power. In many Talukas men capable of managing affairs cannot be found outside the ranks of officials, and even when they can be found their local knowledge and influence seldom extends beyond their own village.

1. Elected majorities are not possible so long as the present form of administration, in which the power centres in the hands of the official President, *i.e.*, the Collector, is continued. For the reasons given in my letter I consider that the only satisfactory way of extending the power of the elected representatives of the people is to constitute small local authorities (*cf.* the English Parish), the members of which would have the advantage of intimate knowledge of local conditions. The present elected members of the District Board are *not* acquainted with the conditions of the District as a whole.

2. I am not in favour of election by communities. Due representation of special communities must be secured by nomination as at present.

3. As regards District Boards see reply to question No. 1. I do not consider that Taluka Local Boards fulfil a useful part in local self-government. They might be abolished altogether without any detriment to the extension of real local self-government, which can only flourish at present in a much smaller unit, *viz.*, a local authority having under its control an area with which its members are familiar. I would allow elected majorities and unofficial chairmen for such local authorities.

4. In a district like Poona I should like to see the District Local Board freed altogether from its connection with the District Executive Engineer, who is far too busy to attend to the Local Boards works. But I would make it compulsory on the Board to employ an Engineer from a list of men certified and passed by Government as competent.

5. See answer to (3). I consider that Taluka Boards are so incompetent as a rule that it should be unwise to extend their powers.

9. (1) I would give power to increase the Local Fund Cess beyond one anna in the rupee only where three-fourths of the members of the Local Board concerned voted for an increase.

(2) I am strongly in favour of extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act and recasting the law of 'notified areas' so as to make it the basis of a new system of popularly constituted local authorities, which should be permitted not only in single villages of large size, but in a group of homogeneous villages.

- (3) I see no objection to the levy of a cess on the Income Tax, beyond the objection (more or less theoretical) that a source of Imperial revenue is being interfered with. Certainly the non-agriculturist must be made to pay for local improvements, either by a tax on his income, or on his property.

Abkari Revenue I would like to see taxed for the benefit of local funds, if only because I believe that such a tax would have an excellent political effect. If Government must make a profit out of the sale of liquor it can certainly lessen the odium attaching to its doing so by returning a part of the profits to popularly constituted local authorities to be utilized in good works that will be seen and appreciated by the people. I believe one of the arguments against returning a portion of the liquor tax to local authorities is that the consumption of liquor might be encouraged or—stated differently—that the most drunken localities would get the largest subventions. But an arrangement by which the cess should be pooled over a large area, e.g., a Division, and redistributed in accordance with population or on some other equitable basis, presents no difficulties.

- (4) If a cess on Abkari Revenue were granted to local authorities this would in itself be a substantial provincial subvention. As regards additional subventions I am of opinion that they should preferably take the form of the provincialization of important communications and not of a lump sum addition to the District Board balances.

10. Lack of interest on the part of non-official members of District Local Board is largely due to lack of information regarding the matters that are put before them. The proper remedy for this is the circulation of agenda papers, accompanied by detailed notes and papers relating to the various items on the agenda.

I attach great importance to this, and have made it a practice to have the agenda papers of District Local Board of which I have been President printed and distributed a month before the date of the meeting, together with full details of the various matters to be discussed. I have found this action much appreciated by members. If it were generally adopted there would be less ground for the complaint of lack of interest on the part of non-official members.

Mr. E. J. Bolus, B.A., I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Poona.

1. I am not in favour of elected majorities for District and Taluka Local Boards. My reasons are as under :—

- (i) It is commonly found that elected members take less interest in the affairs of the Boards than nominated members, who usually do the lion's share of the work.
- (ii) An elected majority on a District Board will almost inevitably mean an influx of pleaders, more talk and slower despatch of business.
- (iii) In the case of Municipalities, the system of elective majorities has notoriously failed. It will hardly be more successful in the case of Local Boards.

2. Election should be by communities, the following being adequately represented :—
Brahmans, Marathas, Jains, Parsees, Anglo-Indians, Mahomedans, and the Depressed Classes.

For the District Local Board, Poona, I would suggest the following :—

	Elected.	Nominated.
Europeans .. .. .	..	3
Brahmans	3	2
Marathas.. .. .	2	2
Jains	1	..
Parsees	1	1
Mahomedans	2	2
Anglo-Indians	1	..
Indian Jews	1	..
	11	10

For the Sirur Taluka Local Board I propose :—

	Elected.	Nominated.
Brahmans	1	1
Marathas.. .. .	2	2
Gujars and Marwadis	2	..
Mahomedans	1	2
	6	5

In some instances it would be desirable to increase the membership, so as to ensure due representation of all communities. Each case will demand separate consideration.

3. If elected majorities are introduced, I think the President of the District Local Board should be a non-official elected by the Board. It hardly seems fair that an official should be made to preside over a body, the majority of whose members are likely to be in opposition to him. If the non-official President were nominated by Government, the principle of local autonomy would be incompletely carried out. But with an elected President, the majority will be able to blame nobody save themselves when the affairs of the Board go wrong, and supersession under Section 67 of the Act will be more readily effected.

4. The limits within which estimates may be approved by the Board without reference to the Executive Engineer (Section 57b of the Act) appear to have been framed in view of an inferior type of Local Fund Overseer. Now that Overseers are better qualified, the limits might be made Rs. 150 per mile for roads, and Rs. 1,000 in the case of other works. Works costing above Rs. 2,500 should continue to be carried out by the Executive Engineer.

5. I think the Taluka Local Board should be empowered to appoint its own servants, with the exception of Overseers. The latter can be better elected by the District Board.

The Taluka Budgets should continue to require the sanction of the District Local Board.

6. If the proposals of the Commissioner S. D. for the localisation of taxation be put into effect, there would perhaps be no objection to handing over the management of primary schools to the District Local Board, provided that—

- (i) No master is appointed or dismissed without the sanction of the Educational Inspector.
- (ii) The Educational Inspector or his Deputy continues to inspect all such schools.

7. I recommend no alteration of the rules under Section 48 (b) of the Act.

8. So far as I am aware, the Taluka Local Boards of the Eastern Division and Haveli are never consulted as to the spending of Taluka revenues on education in other areas.

9. (1) Local Boards should be empowered, in case of necessity, to raise the L. F. cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee.
- (2) The extension of notified areas is at present possible in the case of only a very few villages, since the most important possess Municipalities. The creation of a few notified areas will not greatly relieve Local Boards in the matter of expenditure.
- (3) Any cess on Income Tax at the present juncture, when the cost of living has enormously increased, would certainly be very unpopular among the class which is most capable of making its voice heard in the Councils of the State.

I see no objection to the proposed cess on Abkari revenue which will be drawn mainly from the drinking classes.

Forest Revenue stands (for the present purpose) on the same footing as Land Revenue and should be equally liable to a Local Fund Cess.

- (4) Provincial subventions might well be increased since the proposed cesses will scarcely suffice to meet increased expenditure.

10. The failure of District and Taluka Local Boards is perhaps chiefly due to the inherent anomaly of their position. A number of ill-assorted individuals are brought together in order to deal with business which could be more satisfactorily carried through by one man. Official members serve on Local Boards because they are compelled: unofficial members mostly serve for the sake of the attendant prestige and social distinction. Non-officials might, I think, be induced to take more interest in local affairs, if payment of actual travelling expenses were allowed to members visiting works or otherwise performing journeys for the business of the Board, including attendance, at meetings. In the case of Taluka Local Boards, I think that non-official members should as far as possible be recruited from among the largest landholders, since they are commonly the men best acquainted with local needs.

11. The question refers to voters, but the Section quoted refers to members. I consider the qualifications of voters, as at present laid down, represent the minimum that should be required.

12. The existing grouping of villages works tolerably well. In order to secure non-landholders it will probably be necessary to give undue representation to the head-quarters town of the District and the Taluka; whereas the rural rather than urban element needs be attracted.

13. If a non-official of exceptional ability is forthcoming, he might be appointed Vice-President, otherwise official Vice-Presidents are better.

14. The limit might perhaps be reduced to Rs. 30.

15. I am in favour of the proposed division. The Local Boards' share might be one-twelfth part of the whole.

16. I consider the balance of the proceeds from one anna cess should be divided between the District Local Board and the Taluka Local Board in the proportion of 1 : 2, and that the ratio should be fixed by law. At the same time, the ratio does not greatly matter, since the more the Taluka Local Board receives the smaller will be the assistance obtained for particular schemes from the District Local Board, and *vice versa*.

17. I see no objection to abolishing the proviso regarding non-official nominees. The remainder of this question has been answered in my previous report.

18. Section 10 (1). The qualifying limit appears low enough, since only substantial landholders are needed on the Boards.

Section 10 (2). The limit might be reduced to Rs. 3,000.

Section 10 (3 and 4). No change is desirable.

Mr. Joseph Rodgers, District Deputy Collector, Poona.

I am of opinion that the Panchayat system cannot be introduced in all villages as a matter of course. In most villages there are factions and to introduce the Panchayat system in such villages would be most harmful. I would not hesitate to introduce the Panchayat system in a village where there is no party feelings and where men of sound common sense, agreeable to co-operate with the Government officials, are available. If such Panchayats are formed, I have no doubt much good can be achieved in the working of the local village organization. The local Board money which is at present spent, will not only be carefully spent but to the utmost possible advantage. It would create feelings of enthusiasm and teach the rayats to share the burden of the Local Self-Administration more extensively than at present. But all this cannot be done without legislation and the form in which the legislation should be made will require close consideration. However, I see no objection to such Panchayats being formed and money placed at their disposal for conduct of local improvements whether in respect of sanitation, water supply, or whatsoever objects as a tentative measure under the direct supervision of the Prant officer.

1. Elected members as a rule are most indifferent, apathetic and factious. They get themselves elected owing to party feeling, being Sawkars, or having influence among certain sections of the inhabitants. Then again, the most detracting factor is that the elected members as a body do not understand the ordinary principles of sanitation and hygiene and consequently cannot be released from the guidance of the official control. Hence in this condition of the elective element, I strongly deprecate the idea of an elective majority. I have no objection to the non-official element of the nominated members being strictly restricted to not less than two-thirds of the number of nominated members (*cf.* Section 5, Local Board Act I of 1884) so as to get more non-official nominated members. This is all what is required in the present state of the Local Self-government.

2. Elections should not be made by communities. The representation of predominating communities should be restricted so as to secure as far as possible a due representation of all communities and the Collector should have power to select the member of one community in preference to any other communities irrespective of the majority of votes if more than two members from the same community have been elected and there are capable members in other communities, in proportion to the population of each community. I consider the present number of members quite sufficient.

3. I do not consider it advisable that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Boards should be non-officials, whether nominated or elected.

4. I am of opinion that the control of the Government Executive Engineer should be entirely eliminated. He cannot find time to supervise the Local Board works and to know anything of them except through his subordinates. We want first-hand supervision of a skilled supervising officer. In my opinion the District Local Board should employ its own Engineer on Rs. 300 to Rs. 500 and he should advise the District Local Board and render every assistance to the Taluka Local Boards in preparing and examining plans and estimates and inspecting works in progress. At present plans and estimates are prepared by the Overseers and the works are carried out by them and there is no check of an Engineering Officer over the works executed by them.

5. I am of opinion that the power to appoint all servants on a pay of Rs. 30 and under should be exercised by the Taluka Local Board, and that the Taluka Local Board should have power to sanction and revise its own Budget without reference to the District Local Board. At present the power of Taluka Local Board is much fettered and in some cases the District Local Board is not aware of the condition of the Taluka Local Board and hence any improvement which a Taluka Local Board can effect is hampered by transfer and curtailment of funds.

6. I consider that the time has come when the full control of all Primary Schools should be entrusted to the District Local Board; and that Government should depute one Deputy Educational Inspector to each District Local Board under the Collector. The curriculum should be prescribed by Government and the Government Deputy Educational Inspector should inspect the schools and report on the progress to the Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards, through the Local Board Deputy Educational Inspector.

7. If a Deputy Educational Inspector is appointed under the District Local Board, he will be responsible for the proper maintenance of the Schools and control over the masters. He will grant leave and promotion to the masters and carry out all the duties which are at present done by the Government Deputy Educational Inspector. The Rules under Section 48 (b) will have to be modified to the above extent. As the control of the Director of Public Instruction will be removed, the District Local Board will exercise the control wherever necessary. All plans and estimates for schools will be prepared by the Local Board Engineer instead of the Government Executive Engineer and approved by the District Local Board.

8. To my knowledge the Taluka Local Board has never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka Local Board to be spent on education in other areas. In fact, the control over the Educational Section by the District Local Board has been nominal and the Deputy Educational Inspector has at present too much power.

9. If the suggestions which I have made above are adopted there will, no doubt, be some educational expenditure, but the increased expenditure will be more than met by the improvement in the Local Board administration and in the curtailment of recurring expenditure on certain objects. Of course, to meet the additional cost additional income will have to be raised.

- (1) I see no objection why the Local Fund cess should not be raised to two annas in the rupee. At present there are several big and prosperous villages in the Western Division which pay nothing beyond the L. F. cess as in a poor Koli village and derive all the advantages, viz., a boys' school teaching upto VII Standard, a girls' school, a good dharmashalla, several wells and the like. Whereas in Koli villages there is not even a well much less a school or a dharmashalla. Hence, for these advantages these big villages should be taxed and I would certainly hail the establishment of Notified Areas in them.
- (2) I would therefore strongly recommend the extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act to the villages referred to above in the light of my above remarks.
- (3) I see no objection to the levy of the cess on Abkari and Forest Revenues and Income-Tax at the rate of two annas in the rupee.
- (4) Owing to immense relief which the Government Executive Engineer will be afforded by the appointment of the Local Board Engineer, I would strongly urge that the Provincial subventions should be increased by liberal grants to the Local Boards. The increases in the Forest and Abkari revenues have been considerable and each District Local Board can urge for a reasonable proportion of the total realisations as a Provincial subvention.

10. So far as the elected members are concerned, they do not take any active interest or co-operate in the working of the District and Taluka Local Boards. Their failure is mainly due to want of education, time and knowledge of the details relating to the subjects. There are a few non-official members who take real interest but these are the rare exceptions. But in some cases they do so from personal motives. I would not enlarge the elective franchise. I would reduce the number of nominated official members and give preference to non-officials as stated in para 1 above so as to secure as many non-officials as possible. If an elected member is found to take no interest and not to have attended the District or Taluka Local Board meeting for three consecutive meetings in any six months, he should be disqualified and another member should be appointed in his place from the results of the last election, the power being given to select the best possible man without any regard to the number of votes secured by him.

11. I am of opinion that the standard of the qualifications is too high to attract men of medium means to be elected. I would substitute in Section 10 in clause—

- (1) "Rs. 24" for "Rs. 48."
- (2) "Rs. 300" for "Rs. 500."
- (3) "Rs. 250" for "Rs. 500."
- (4) "Rs. 30" for "Rs. 50."

And would add a new clause—

- (7) All persons who have passed any educational test not below that of the Vernacular Vith Standard; and retain the old clause (7) as clause (8).

12. If my suggestion in para 11 is adopted, I see no reason for forming separate groups.

13. I do not consider that it would be desirable that the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official if the President is an official member unless he is an experienced and educated man taking keen interest and able to spare at least 3 hours a day for in-door and out-door work and has served on the Board for at least five consecutive years.

14. I would suggest Rs. 24 as the statutory minimum of assessment in Section 10 (1) L. B. Act.

15. I am not in favour at all of the division of the Provincial share of Land Revenue and Income-tax if the Provincial subventions are liberally made. This is all what a Local Board can reasonably claim.

16. I am not of opinion that a proportion should be fixed by law. The money should be placed at the disposal of each Taluka Local Board according to its needs. It sometimes happens that a small Taluka Local Board has more needs than a big Taluka Local Board which has already met its wants previously and has no scope for further expenditure and if a proportion is fixed, the money will never be utilised or utilised to the detriment of a Taluka Local Board which has most pressing needs for money.

17. I do think that the efficiency of a Local Board would be impaired if the nomination of the non-official members is abolished and the Board is constituted mainly of elected members and nominated officials.

18. I have already discussed this point in para 11 above.

Mr. G. H. Anjangankar, Huzur Deputy Collector, Poona.

1. Yes, with the admitted progress in general culture and education synchronous with the British rule in India and the resultant growth of a high sense of public duties and responsibilities, a freer hand in the management of local affairs is a condition of further progress. The degree of progress is, no doubt, varying, but surely it is not so negligible or so very small that setting up of new conditions of progress would prove quite premature.

2. No. I am humbly of opinion that the interest of special communities or minorities will be best guarded by nominated official members on the Board. If, however, a demand for a separate representation of any special communities or interests be made, it may be met by reducing the number of groups and thus widening the electoral field according to the circumstances of the locality concerned.

The present number of members is sufficient.

3. It must be admitted that some official control is still necessary, and the District and Taluka Local Boards should, therefore, have officials as Presidents. As a step towards further progress, however, the Vice-Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be elected non-officials.

4. The limitations should be entirely removed, provided Government reserve the right of inspection by their own agency, the results of inspection being communicated to the Presidents of the Boards for perusal and action, where necessary. The Boards on the other hand might be empowered to call for services of the Public Works Department free of charge so far as inspection of any special work is concerned.

5. Yes. Taluka Local Boards should be entirely freed from the control of the District Local Board in the matters referred to.

6. Yes. I am humbly of opinion that the management of primary schools should be entirely entrusted to the District Local Board.

7. The rules referred to should be entirely altered in so far as the present connection of the District Local Board with the Educational Department in regard to primary education is concerned. Under the amended rules the District Local Board should have the perfect control of primary education, Government reserving the right of inspection of the schools through the Educational Department. The Taluka Local Boards, however, under the new rules should bear the same relation towards the District Local Board as they do at present towards the Government Educational Department.

8. I am not aware of any instance of the kind in point.

9. (1 & 3) Generally speaking there is no need for levy of an additional cess. In this respect I respectfully agree with the recommendations and conclusions of the Decentralization Commission. If, however, a contingency should arise for additional taxation, the Boards may be empowered to levy fees and rates at their discretion with the sanction of Government (please see remarks of the Decentralization Commission in paras 773 to 775 of their report.)

9. (2) Yes.

9. (4) Yes, as proposed by the Decentralization Commission in para 775 of their report.

10. If the Boards were allowed a freer hand in the management of their affairs as proposed above, it is probable that the present apparent lack of interest on the part of non-official members will soon disappear.

11. No.

12. There appears no necessity for forming separate groups of electors.

13. Yes. *Vide* remarks against question 3.

14. Rs 20

15. If the present 25 per cent. Government contribution be increased there will be no need for fixing any such share as is referred to.

16. It does not appear necessary that the proportion should be fixed by law. The District Local Board should have a free hand in the matter.

17. I think the proportion should be two-thirds elected and one-third nominated officials.

18. Except in the case of landholders, there appears no necessity for reducing the qualifying limits. In their case it should be fixed at Rs. 20 assessment.

Rao Bahadur Ichharam Bhagvandas.

1. I am of opinion that the elective principle should now advance for Local Boards on the line of Municipalities. The Board should consist of two-thirds of elected members and one-third of nominated members and of the latter, not more than one-half should be salaried officers of Government and the remainder should include representatives of minorities.

With the increase of elected members it will be necessary to modify and extend the scope of the elective groups or representations under Sections 6 and 7; and this may be arranged for the Taluka Boards by allowing certain Municipalities and large villages with sanitary village boards to elect their special representatives; and in the case of District Local Boards the same concession may be extended to all Municipalities having a population of say 8,000 to 10,000 and above (instead of 18,000 as at present).

2. I am strongly against any separate election by communities, as it tends to keep alive and enhance the feeling of racial animosity and embitterment among the different communities. It seems advantageous, on the whole, for general Indian interests if it is left to Government to set right any deficiency regarding representation of minorities, by selecting suitable candidates under its privilege of nomination of one-third members.

3. I agree in the recommendation of the Commission that it is still desirable that the President of District and Taluka Local Boards ought to be a salaried officer of Government and invariably the Collector of the District, and the Assistant Collector respectively as at present, but the election of the Vice-President may now be restricted to non-official members under Section 27, and he might be given more extensive definite powers of the President under Section 29 (b).

4. It is distinctly advisable that the present limitations respecting the preparation of plans and the execution of public works should continue as at present, under Sections 57 and 61; but I am of opinion that the Board should now employ an independent Engineer of its own for such public works, of the grade of a Supervisor on a salary ranging from Rs 200 to Rs 400. He might also act as a General Secretary to the Board.

5. The present arrangements might continue.

6 & 7. As the funds of the Local Boards are barely sufficient and they cannot employ an independent inspecting staff, the direct management of Education work and establishment should, I think, continue as at present, mainly under Government Departmental control, but in respect of increase or diminution in the total number and location of schools, as also in altering the grading of schools from upper primary to rural primary course and *vice-versa*, the voice of the Local Board should be freely consulted and ought to prevail. No change in this respect should be effected, unless their consent is previously obtained to the altered course. I know that a good deal of local discontent was recently caused in the Surat District by the proposal to lower down the existing standard in a considerable number of schools in large flourishing villages from upper primary class teaching upto VI standard to rural primary class teaching upto only III standard.

8. The Taluka Local Board is ordinarily not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas under Section 48 (a). The general practice is, I believe, to set apart one-third (or 4 pies) of the local cess revenue for provision of education in one lump for the district as a whole. This practice might continue with advantage.

9 (1) At the outset I wish to make a few general remarks bearing on this important question. Of late, I have devoted considerable attention to the study of this question, and so I would ask permission to express a detailed opinion regarding it.

(2) In the Government of India Resolution of 28th April 1915, dealing with recommendations of the Decentralization Commission, "the smallness and inelasticity of local revenues and the difficulty of devising further forms of taxation" are prominently mentioned among "the causes which cannot but impede the free and full development of local self-government" in the various provinces of India.

(3) In the *Times of India* dated 30th April 1915, while commenting on the Resolution of the Bombay Government on the working of the District and Taluka Local Boards for the past year, the following pertinent remarks have been made in reference to the Bombay Presidency:—"We think that there is a good deal of force in the observation in the Government Resolution that the prevailing non-official apathy is accounted for, to a great extent, by the fact that a considerable proportion of the funds of the Local Boards is absorbed by such objects as Education which is largely under Departmental control, establishments and the upkeep of existing works, while the openings for improving their revenues are extremely restricted. Provincial Governments have, after a long struggle, obtained a certain measure of independence, and it behoves them to extend the same consideration to Local bodies as they claim from the Imperial Government."

(4) I am in entire agreement with the remarks noted above as to the urgent need of materially improving, in the first instance, the financial position of the District Local Boards. And with this object in view, during the past two years, in connection with the proposal made at the Agricultural Conference to allow the District Local Boards to raise an additional voluntary rate of one pie per rupee of land revenue for carrying on agricultural improvement, I have, from time to time, submitted and brought to the notice of Government, District Officers and District Local Boards, and other interested persons some important facts and suggestions in printed correspondence for due consideration; and I consider it convenient and desirable to summarize them below, in so far as they bear directly on the present enquiry.

(5) I have suggested that the proposed agricultural rate of one pie per rupee for the District Local Boards may be levied on the Abkari instead of land revenue.

(6) I have further advocated that it is very desirable for the Bombay Presidency that the District Local Boards should be allowed to levy *as before* a cess at one anna per rupee on the Abkari revenue, so as to enable them to cope successfully with their expanded duties in connection with rural sanitation, education and agricultural improvement.

(7) I have invited reference to paras 773 and 774 of the Report, in which the Royal Commission on Decentralization have observed that the present Government grants to the District Local Boards should be made of a permanent nature in some fixed proportion and should not be subject to periodical revision, and that it should be *inadvisable to raise the present one anna cess on the land revenue*. In

view of this recommendation of the Royal Commission, I have remarked that my suggestion to allow the District Local Boards to supplement their present revenue by an additional cess of one anna per rupee on the Abkari or Excise revenue would be very appropriate for the Bombay Presidency and that it would further be in harmony with the old precedent of the District Local Boards.

(8) I have pointed out that the levy of such a rate from Excise revenue on behalf of the District Local Boards is already authorized by the existing law, and that considerable revenue is consequently assigned to the District Local Boards as a contribution from Government "in lieu of one anna cess on Excise revenue." Thus, Section 6 of the Bombay District Local Funds Act of 1869 authorizes that "it shall be lawful for Government to levy for the purposes of this Act a cess not exceeding one anna on every rupee assessable to the land revenue, or on every rupee that is payable by every farmer of land or *sayer* revenue in respect of such farm." The *sayer* revenue here referred to, according to its recognized customary interpretation, means and includes excise revenue. It appears from the annual administration report of the District Local Boards for the year 1911-12 that Government gave for that year to the District Local Boards of the Presidency proper a total contribution of Rs. 88,323, "in lieu of one anna cess on Excise revenue," and that some districts received considerable sums on that account, viz., Surat Rs. 13,865, Thana Rs. 20,784, and Dharwar Rs. 15,657. These contributions, however, appear to have been fixed permanently on the basis of the Excise revenue, which the District Local Boards used to receive at some old date; and thus the District Local Boards have been excluded from receiving a due share at one anna cess from the large expansion of the Excise revenue which has occurred during late years. The gist of my contention, therefore, is that in view of the many pressing demands which the District Local Boards are now called upon to meet for a large expenditure on village sanitation, and on expansion of primary and agricultural education and agricultural improvement in rural areas, it is very desirable that they should be allowed the increased revenue to the full extent which may be due by levy of one anna cess on every rupee of the present Excise revenue. Reference to the Excise administration report of the year 1911-12 will show that the total Excise revenue of the Presidency (exclusive of Sind) amounted to Rs. 180 lakhs in that year, and a cess on it at one anna per rupee would provide a large sum of Rs. 11½ lakhs to the District Local Boards, instead of Rs. 80,000 which is now given as a contribution by Government on that account. The additional revenue from this source would be equal to fully 50 per cent. of the revenue (Rs. 20½ lakhs) which is at present derived by the one anna cess on the land revenue, and it would be of great help to the District Local Boards in meeting their growing demands for village sanitation and rural education.

(9) It should also be noted in this connection that "Excise" is a very delicate head of Government revenue and its growing revenue is, in some influential quarters, looked down with considerable suspicion. It will, therefore, I think, be an administrative measure of considerable utility and prudence as a counterpart, if one anna per rupee of this Excise revenue is set apart definitely for the District Local Boards to carry out local improvements in rural sanitation, education and agriculture. It is also desirable that a certain definite portion of this revenue should be devoted to providing special educational facilities for such backward classes as the Kohls, Bhils, Dhondias, Dublas, &c, who are addicted to excessive drink by inveterate habits of many generations, and who are consequently substantial contributors to the Excise revenue.

(10) Reference to the Proceedings of the Legislative Council (published at pages 839-854 of Part VII of the *Bombay Government Gazette*, dated 25th November 1912) on the debate raised on the Resolution moved by the Honourable Mr. R. P. Karandikar during the autumn session of 1912 will show that most of the prominent elected Members of Council were in favour of the Resolution that the District Local Boards are rightly entitled to the revenue accruing from the levy of one anna cess on Abkari under Section 6 of the District Local Funds Act and that they accordingly voted at the debate in its favour. This view was also upheld by the late Honourable Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade, and the matter was brought up by him before the Council for a similar discussion. I have held and advocated the same opinion as shown in para (8) above. In the reply received to my memorial, however, Government have stated that "the Government of India adhere to the decision arrived at in 1873 that the levy of the local fund cess on Excise receipts has not been provided by law, and that the existing contribution in lieu of that cess is purely an act of grace, as the local funds had enjoyed the income derived from the cess for a long time prior to its withdrawal." I have, thereupon, submitted further that my proposal would be in consonance with the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission; and I have suggested that in case it is held by Government that the proposal cannot be acted up now legally in all districts, Government may be pleased to take steps to effect the necessary modification in the wording of Section 6 of the Bombay Local Funds Act, after consulting the District officers and District Local Boards concerned. I submit that this suggestion may be considered adequately in reference to the present enquiry which is being made on the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission.

(11) In connection with my printed correspondence, I have been able to elicit a considerable body of intelligent public opinion which is quite in favour of the proposal to levy one anna cess on the Abkari revenue for the District Local Boards. Thus, from among some replies which I have received from the Collectors and Presidents of District Local Boards, I may quote below the Resolution which the District Local Board of Ahmedabad has recently adopted at its general meeting held on the 18th June 1915:—

"Resolution IV:—Resolved that although the Board does not propose itself to move Government in the matter, no additional taxation to that already levied on the basis of agricultural land commends itself to it, but that the proposal to restore the one anna cess on the Abkari revenue has its support."

The Collector and President, District Local Board, Panch Mahals, has intimated that the District Local Board of that district has not passed any resolution on the subject, but it may be taken that it agrees with the District Local Board of Ahmedabad. I expect to receive replies of other District Local Boards later on, when the matter is considered and passed at their next meeting. I understand further that in the reports made to Government by Collectors in this connection, Surat, Thana and some others have suggested the levy of a cess on the Abkari revenue. At the Provincial Conference held at Satara in April 1914, a Resolution was passed that in giving effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on decentralization, Government should supplement the revenue of the District Local Boards by an allotment of a portion of the Abkari revenue to the extent of one anna cess. The Native papers, such as the *Dnyan Prakash*, the *Kesari*, the *Gujarati*, the *Mahratta*, &c., while commenting on my printed correspondence, as well as many other prominent gentlemen, have also recorded their opinion in favour of the proposal.

(12) It seems desirable to mention that in the Proceedings of the Legislative Council of 1912 referred to in para (12) above, an objection has been urged on behalf of Government to the proposal that the levy of one anna cess on Excise would give a very unequal amount of revenue to the Local Boards of various districts. This is no doubt true to a certain extent; but the objection does not appear to be valid and irremediable; for it would apply equally to the present revenue derived from the one anna cess on land revenue. An examination of the various district figures will show that the amount received from one anna cess on land revenue itself varies very considerably from district to district. Thus, in Gujarat it amounts to only Rs. 40,000 in Ahmedabad and to Rs. 64,000 in Kaira, whereas in Surat and Broach it is as large as Rs. 170,000 and Rs. 180,000 respectively, in the Deccan it is about Rs. 85,000 in Sholapur, while Satara has as much as Rs. 178,000; in the Karnatak it is Rs. 110,000 in Bijapur, and Rs. 166,000 in Dharwar; and in the Konkan it is Rs. 60,000 in Kanara, while Kolaba gets as much as Rs. 98,000. Cases of marked inequalities can be properly met by certain desirable adjustments. As I have shown in para (9) above, a substantial portion of the Excise revenue is of necessity paid by such backward classes as Kohis, Bhils, Dublas, Dhondias, &c, and this is especially the case with districts of large Excise revenue, such as Surat, Thana and Khandesh, &c. In such districts, by way of adjustment, I would suggest that the surplus portion of the revenue derived from the one anna cess on Excise (say from one-half to one-third) may be very properly devoted by Local Boards to providing special educational facilities and other forms of social amusements in substitution for drink for the backward classes and other intemperate communities, so that they can be gradually weaned out from their vicious inveterate habits of drink of many generations. It is by making an effort for providing such special educational facility, and not by merely enhancing periodically the Excise rates, that we may hope to be able to achieve any material progress in checking the evil habit of excessive drink among the lower classes.

(13) Now turning directly to the four sub-heads of question (9), I may state briefly that—

As to clause (1) :—I am against any enhancement of the one anna cess on land revenue. The present assessment charged on land is already high enough, and any addition to it by enhancement of the one anna cess will be deeply felt as a burden by the agricultural classes. Again, the Decentralization Commission has, after a thorough detailed enquiry, recorded a definite opinion that it should be inadvisable to enhance the present one anna cess on land revenue, and consideration of any proposal to increase the land revenue cess beyond one anna will be to stultify the very recommendation made by the Commission in this respect.

As to clause (2) :—I would invite attention to restrictions imposed by Section 107, Clause (3) under which no area shall be made a notified area, unless it

- (i) contains a town which is the head-quarter of a taluka, or
- (ii) is within a distance of one mile from a railway station.

Under the above restrictions the scope of extension of notified areas is very limited, and no appreciable relief is expected to be given to the revenue of District Local Boards. Moreover, such villages will be mainly rural villages in their general capacity and any additional *Municipal* taxes under the notified areas will chiefly fall as an additional burden on the agricultural classes who already pay a substantial local fund cess.

As to clause (3) :—As explained fully in paras (1-12) above, I am strongly in favour of a cess of one anna per rupee on the Abkari revenue, and I think we might stop for the present with the acquisition of an additional revenue from this source. If more funds are considered necessary, I would extend the one anna cess to the Forest and Income Tax heads. I may add that the one anna cess on Abkari will be considered as a very innocent measure, inasmuch as it will not be felt as a burden by any classes of people, or even by Government; and this cess will include taxation from agricultural as well as non-agricultural artizan classes such as masons, carpenters and the like who have been paying no local taxes.

As to clause (4) :—I think there will be no need for the present to increase the Provincial subvention, if the proposal to raise one anna cess on Abkari is accepted, as suggested in clause (3) above. If this proposal is negatived, it would be well to increase the Provincial subvention to the extent of one anna of land revenue, so that the special contribution rendered to Local Boards by Government in 1905 may be raised to be equal to the revenue derived from one anna cess, instead of one-fourth (or 25 per cent) of the revenue from such cess.

10. It is true to a great extent that as compared with Municipalities, there is a good deal of lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members of the District and Taluka Local Boards. The causes are mainly the insufficiency and want of independent

funds for management as explained in paras (1) and (2) of my answer to question 9. The extension of elective franchise as proposed in answer to question 1 and the supply of additional funds as proposed in answer to question 9 will contribute additional stimulus in this respect.

11. It is desirable to extend the scope of voters, in correspondence with Municipal franchise. I would add under Section 10, Clause (7), the class of graduates, pleaders, titleholders and Sardars.

12. Following the precedent of Municipalities, it is desirable to have a separate representation of educated classes and professions by conferring the privilege of separate election on voters classed under clauses (1) (2), (3), (6) and (7) with the addition as proposed in answer to question 11.

13. Yes. The President of the Taluka Local Board being an official, the Vice-President should be an elected non-official (*vide* similar suggestion also for the District Local Boards under answer to question 3).

14. The statutory minimum of assessment may be reduced by one-half, *viz.*, from Rs. 48 to Rs. 24.

15. As shown in para (7) to my answer to question 9, the Royal Commission have observed that the Government grants to the Local Boards should be made of a permanent nature in some fixed proportion and should not be subject to periodical revision. I agree in these remarks. It would I think confer a distinct advantage and stimulus, if all Government contributions are done away and the Local Boards are assigned a definite share under some main heads of Provincial revenue which may vary for the present for various districts to suit local conditions. This share may begin with 2 annas each under the heads of land revenue and excise. It should be carefully understood, however, that the Provincial Government can ill-spare such shared revenue to District Local Boards, unless a corresponding increase is made in the taxable scales of revenue under the Provincial heads. It may be expedient, therefore, in lieu of a divided share under the Provincial heads, the levy of a separate cess at one anna per rupee be provided by law for the District Local Boards, under all the main heads of Provincial revenue. These cesses may at present be restricted to heads of land revenue, excise, irrigation, forests, and income tax, but later on, as the local calls for more funds increase, the cesses may be extended even to other Provincial heads, such as Salt, Registration, Stamps, &c.

16. After deducting one-third (or 4 pies) of the cess revenue for Education, the District Local Board distributes the remainder of its revenue for general requirements of the District and Taluka Local Boards under roads and other heads. It is inconvenient to make separate allotment under each head for District and various Taluka Local Boards: but I am aware that in the Surat district the practice is that one pie of the cess revenue derived for each Taluka is definitely set apart to each Taluka Local Board to be expended by it absolutely at its own discretion. It may be enjoined that some such minimum should be prescribed under the Rules for each District.

17. For reasons explained in my answer to question 2, it is desirable to retain to Government the privilege of nomination of non-officials to the extent of one-sixth members, so as to provide for due inclusion of minorities by nomination, instead of by separate election by communities.

18. I am in favour of a reduction of the qualifying limits, with a view to secure extended interest, stimulus and activity both among the voters and members. This reduction may be made as under:—From Rs 48 to Rs. 24 in clause (1) of Section 10; from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 3,000 in clause (2); from Rs 500 to Rs. 300 in clause (3); and from Rs 50 to Rs. 15 in clause (4).

Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Editor, "Kesari" and "Maharatta."

1. Yes, at least as 2 to 1.

2. No. Representation of special Communities or interest should be left to Government who will necessarily have a few nominations reserved in their hands.

The actual number of members for each District Board may vary with the number of Talukas, as the number of those for each Taluka Board may vary with the villages therein.

The District Local Board should consist of—

1. Twice as many elected members as there are Talukas in the District.

2. One member elected by the biggest Municipality in the District.

3. Nominated members not exceeding one-third of the total of (1) and (2) of whom officials should not be more than half.

3. The Presidents of District and Taluka Boards should be elected non-officials.

4. As in the case of Municipalities, District Local Boards should have a free hand in planning and executing their own Public Works.

The Taluka Works should be planned and designed by the Taluka Boards subject to approval by District Boards.

The District Boards, regard being had to their income and status, should be able to employ an Executive Officer of their own of the rank of an L. C. E. or experienced Sub-Overseer. The savings made by removing the control and supervision of the Government P. W. D. will be an appreciable contribution towards the new Staff to be engaged.

5. Subject to certain limitations the Taluka Boards should have power to make their own budgets. The absolute power now given to District Boards to interfere with Taluka Boards at any time and to any extent ought to be taken away.

It should be left to the option and choice of Taluka Boards to enter into any arrangements with District Boards by which they could make any use of the Agency employed by the District Boards and to make pecuniary contributions in consideration thereof.

6. I am opposed to hand over the management of Primary Schools to the Local Boards, *if this is to be a prelude to transferring larger financial burdens to their heads in course of time without adequate corresponding addition to their resources.* The experience of Municipalities in this respect has been most unpleasant. Primary education as a purpose of Municipal expenditure was transferred to Municipalities in the eighties, and as consideration therefor they were relieved of a nearly equal expenditure on Police which they had been previously incurring. An understanding was also given that Government would give a one-half contribution to the Primary education expenses. Municipalities in the first flush of amateurish enthusiasm raised the scale of their educational expenses to a high degree. But Government contribution never kept pace with the expenditure. Revision of the grant was periodical, uncertain and illiberal. The result is that the Municipalities now repent of having succumbed to the temptation of the honour and the pleasure of keeping education in their own hands.

Again, I cannot conscientiously say that Municipal supervision of education has been a conspicuous or unmixed success. The time for exclusive non-official control of education in rural areas will come after that control has been proved a decided success in urban areas.

7. I have no particular suggestions to make.

8. I have not much experience of the working of a Taluka Board. But I have heard lots of complaints that Taluka Boards are most shabbily and unfairly treated in this respect.

9. (1) I am strongly opposed to raising the Local Fund cess. The agricultural classes can be subjected to a second round of taxation only after all other classes have been made to contribute to the Local Board Funds their fair share of taxation.

(2) The proposal is deserving of consideration. Selected large villages which contain over 3,000 population and which have a large proportion of non-agricultural residents (*i.e.*, artisans, traders, middlemen, shop-keepers) may be given notified area committees. Care has to be taken that the agricultural classes may not be taxed twice for the same purpose by Local Boards on the ground that they have assessed holdings in the rural areas, and by N. A. Committees on the ground that they reside in urban areas.

(3) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on the Abkari Revenue. The Income tax may be taken only after the Abkari cess is fully realised and found insufficient for the purpose.

I cannot conscientiously object to an income-tax cess. The levy would be legitimate, but in the first place it can come only after the Abkari cess. Again, there are two objections to it:—(1) It is a direct tax and would be unpopular. (2) It will after all yield very little revenue so that the game would not be worth the candle.

(4) Forest Revenue, in part, comes from very poor people and I should be opposed to a levy of a cess thereon to that extent.

I would for instance agree to a cess on the Forest Revenue derived from the sale of timber, but not on that derived from the sale of firewood and charcoal and from the grant of grazing or grass-cutting licenses. I can't say, however, whether such a discrimination would be practicable.

(5) Provincial subventions should not only be greatly increased but also be fixed by law. Government have at times made very liberal grants. But uncertain windfalls are not healthy. It may legitimately be asked whether Provincial Governments have passed on to the Local Boards the same measure of liberal help which they have received lately from the Government of India. The inquiry would be particularly pertinent if it related to the period during which the Abkari and Forest Revenue has been wholly provincialised.

I cannot hazard at this moment a suggestion as to what particular proportion of what particular heads of revenue should be fixed as a permanent contribution from the provincial to the Local Treasury. But I would like it to be fixed with reference to the Land Revenue, *e.g.*, the Government subvention should be, say, one-half of the total amount of the land cess.

10. Private gentlemen cannot be expected to take an active interest in the Local Boards so long as the Boards remain what they are, *viz.*, official-ridden. I was on the Local Board for a term of three years, but I found the atmosphere there chill and discouraging. The meetings were very rare. No information about the work done or to be done was given. No proceedings were written and confirmed. Amidst the awe-inspiring circle of the Collector, Deputy Collectors and District officials, independent criticism had no chance. The Taluka representatives alone could make useful constructive criticism; but their comparatively humble position did not give them strength enough to speak out, much less to insist upon things being done in a particular way. Ready-made things, brought up for formal sanction, was the vogue. Unless there be a non-official in the chair, whether in the District or the Taluka Boards, it would be useless, even unfair, to expect members to take a real or living interest in the proceedings of the Boards.

11. In my opinion qualifications for voters must be revised.

12. The rate-paying limit and the property-holding limit must both be brought down by about 50 per cent.

13. In my opinion, non-official Presidents should be the rule and official Presidents should be a special exception for Taluka Boards, Vice-Presidents should be non-officials without exception.

14. The schedule of qualifications for voters in the District Municipal Act should be adopted for the Local Boards *mutatis mutandis*.

General election wards, as obtain in some of the Municipalities, should be created for every District and Taluka Board, so that men of position at the Head-Quarters of the District and the Taluka could come in through election by the voters of a corresponding position.

15. I am in favour of the principle but cannot hazard to name a particular proportion. In fact I would like to see the whole schedule of the heads of provincial revenue subjected to a scrutiny with a view to see whether a scheme can be made of permanent apportionment, between provincial and local, of the revenue under those heads, on the analogy of the apportionment between Imperial and Provincial Governments.

16. To fix a ratio would in my opinion be too arbitrary. But it should not be impossible to define principles and name the heads of Local Board Revenue for the purpose of extending the benefits of the policy of decentralization as between District and Taluka Boards.

17. I think nominated non-officials are useful. It would be unwise to leave no choice or half-way house between officials on the one hand and elected members on the other. I can imagine, why I have before my eyes, a class of gentlemen who may no longer be *officials* and who may be justly too proud to enter canvassing for election, and yet who, if nominated, will render very good service to the Local Boards on which they may be appointed. Nominated non-officials will after all be a small fraction of the whole body. And my belief is that they may more often side with the non-officials than officials.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. S. Shrinivas Shastri.

I must acknowledge at the outset that my experience of this province is very slight and I have no personal knowledge of the working of the Local Boards Act in any part of it. I am competent to answer only a few of the questions, and the answers must be taken as those of one who writes only from a general acquaintance with local opinion and from the degree of resemblance which may be presumed to exist between the different parts of the country.

I am in sympathy with the view that the Taluka Local Board should be the unit of local self-government, as it is only within the area of an average Taluka that members can have the personal knowledge on which the success of self-government depends. To shift the centre of gravity, as it were, of the self-government system, I would favour a plan by which power and responsibility should be gradually transferred from the district to the Taluka Local Board.

Another general principle I would enunciate is that there should be no more nomination of non-officials or election of officials. In other words, if officials be required, they should be appointed by Government, while the character of representatives of the people should be borne only by those whom they *freely* elect and this is only possible where the candidates are non-officials.

The time is come when the people of the country should have some institutions where the Government is entirely theirs and where the only control comes from outside. The full responsibility of self-government cannot be realised under any other system.

In the interests dealt with by local bodies I do not see any which can be described as purely communal. No separate representation of communities seems called for. Besides, the recognition by Government of such differences among the people in elections or nominations to local bodies is calculated to perpetuate and aggravate them.

Answers to Question.

1. Taluka Boards should be wholly elected.

To District Local Boards the Collector, the Executive Engineer, the Educational Inspector and the Medical Officer of the District may be appointed *ex-officio*.

2. No.

3. The President must in every case be an elected non-official.

6. Yes. The curriculum and staff may continue to be under the control of the department of education.

9. It must be taken as a settled fact that land cannot bear any more taxation, direct or indirect. This is the finding. Not only of the Decentralization Commission, but of many able officers of Government. It would therefore be wrong to allow by law even a wholly elected local body to enhance the burden on land.

A share of the excise revenue seems the most appropriate way of adding to the resources of local bodies.

It may be difficult to do away with provincial subventions altogether, unless the alternative plan of giving a share to increase with the increasing needs of local bodies, of the excise revenue, be frankly adopted. This consummation, however, is possible only if a thorough revision be made of the financial position of the provincial Governments.

13. Yes : and the non-official must be elected.

16. In view of the general principle that the Taluka Board should be the unit of self-government, I would give the whole of the cess proceeds to that body, after the educational third is deducted.

Mohammad Salahuddin, Member of D. L. B., Poona.

1. Yes

2. Yes.

In my opinion it is absolutely necessary for the Mohammedan Community to have communal election because otherwise no Mohammedan will ever be returned by the general election. I am a nominated member of both the Poona District Local Board and the Poona Municipality where not a single Mohammedan has ever found seat by election.

With regard to the second part of the question I beg to be allowed to send my scheme in a subsequent communication as I have received the question on the 19th and I am required to send answers by the 20th.

3. No.

4. The limitation may be extended to Rs 5,000.

5. The Taluka Local Board may be freed from the control of the District Local Board in matters of payment and engagement of servants.

6. I am of opinion that it would be most harmful to hand over the management of the Primary Schools to the District Local Boards. The control of the Educational Department is absolutely necessary for some time to come. I am speaking with some experience because I have been a Chairman of the School Board of the Ahmednagar Municipality and I am at present a member of the School Board of Poona Municipality and I am satisfied that it is a mistake to conduct the management of these Schools by Committees.

8. In practice they are not consulted but no harm arises by this omission

9. (1) No.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. Yes. The causes are want of ability, public spirit and in some cases opportunities.

11. Yes.

13. No. No harm arises by official Vice-Presidents and is not likely to arise if there is a non-official majority. Provided that elected members understand and perform their duties rightly.

14. The minimum should be Rs. 25.

15. No.

17. No. But in that case the Mohammedan minority should be allowed to elect their own members and not be left to the mercy of Hindus. If this cannot be provided I am in favour of the continuance of the present system.

Mr. Shridharrao Vithal Natu, Member, District Local Board, Poona.

1. In my opinion the time has not yet come when the Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities, as the majority of them are not sufficiently educated and there are very few who will take real interest in the working. I am however of opinion that a trial may be given to the District Boards by having elected majorities.

2. Election by communities is not at all desirable.

3. The President should be a nominated official, while the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official, either elected or nominated.

4. The Engineering staff now available being more expert than it was when the Local Board's Act was framed, I think some modifications are necessary to section 57, clause (b) and section 61 of the said Act.

5. Control of District Local Board over Taluka Local Board ought not to be dispensed with in the items referred to.

6. Yes, except in the inspection of Schools by the Educational Departmental authorities.

7. No change or modification is advocated.

8. No, the District Local Board manages all these things.

9. (1) No.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes, as regard Abkari revenue only.

(4) Yes.

10. Yes, the draw-back will be remedied if more scope is given for active work to non-official members.

11. Subsection (1) of section 10 of the "Bombay Local" Boards Act of 1884 might be amended so as to recognize a person paying Rs. 24 as assessment per annum, eligible for a vote.

12. No means can be suggested.

13. Yes, *vide* my reply to question 3 above.

14. *Vide* my reply to question 11 *ante*.

15. No need of effect is given to my suggestion, referred in reply to clause (3) and (4) of question No. 9.

16. Not necessary to fix the proportion by any enactment.

17. *Vide* answer to questions Nos. 1 and 3, the number of officials should be as hitherto.

18. *Vide* my reply to question No. 11.

The Secretary, Sarvajanic Sabha, Poona.

1. Yes. The Boards should consist of two-thirds of elected members.

2. No. The Sabha is strongly against any system which favours election by communities. No provision is required to be made for any special communities or interests. Government nominations would set right any deficiency caused by election. The present number of members is not sufficient. It should be increased by one-half.

3. The Presidents of both District and Local Boards should be non-officials. They should also be elected.

4. The plans and estimates should, in the first instance, be prepared in the Vernacular of the District. The Boards should appoint their own Engineer who should do the work for them; Taluka and District Local Boards should each have their hands free in the planning and executing their own respective works. The Taluka Local Boards should have a definite portion of the funds collected in their Talukas exclusively at their disposal to execute the works in their own areas and to defray other expenses.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should have a free hand in preparing their budgets. They should be allowed to engage and pay their own servants.

6. The District Local Boards should control the primary schools in conjunction with the Educational Department.

7. The Sabha has no suggestions to make in this respect.

8. Taluka Local Boards are generally not consulted in the matter.

9. (1) There should be absolutely no increase in the Local Fund Cess.

(2) The notified areas would necessarily be few in number. The increase of taxation which naturally results in those areas would be an additional burden on the agricultural classes; which is very undesirable. Besides Local Boards would not be materially relieved by such a change. The experiment tried at Manchar, a village in Khed Taluka, is an instance in point.

(3) The Sabha strongly urges that Local Boards should be permitted to levy a tax of one anna in a rupee on the Abkari Revenue collected in Local Board areas.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. This is true. Non-officials do not show active interest; firstly, because the official members don't care to co-operate with them, the non-officials being in many cases their inferiors in position. The areas are wide and no travelling allowances are provided for non-official members. Village officers should not be treated as non-officials and no officiating Patil or Kulkarni should be allowed to sit on the Boards as a non-official. Patils and Kulkarnis are not at all expected to evince any interest independently of the higher officials. The non-official members should at least be literate persons. The insufficiency of funds and want of effective control are largely responsible for producing a sort of indifference on the part of non-official members.

11 & 12. Certain changes are necessary.

In clause 1 the minimum should be fixed at Rs. 20. In clauses 2 and 3 amounts may be reduced by one-half. A separate representation should be given to educated classes. It should be extended to all servants and pensioners drawing not less than Rs. 10 per month and to all those who have passed a definite but low education test.

13. Yes. The Vice-President should also be non-official and elected.

14. Please see answer to 11.

15. The share of the Local Boards should be one anna in the rupee.

16. Four pies go to the District Local Board for education. Of the remaining eight pies two pies should form the contribution to the District Local Board for general expenses. The six pies that still remain should be solely at the disposal of the Taluka Local Boards.

17. The Sabha has nothing further to add than what is stated in answer to the question No. 11

18. The Sabha is certainly in favour of reducing the qualifying limits. The reduced limits are set forth in the answer to questions 11 and 12.

The Honorary Secretaries, The Deccan Sabha, Poona.

1 & 2. The Sabha thinks that District Taluka Boards should, as a rule, have elected majorities. The District Board should be constituted as under. Each Board should have the following Government officials as *ex-officio* members, *viz.*, the Senior Assistant Collector, the Executive Engineer, the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner, the Civil Surgeon, and Deputy Educational Inspector. Each Taluka should send two representatives elected by the Taluka Local Board; one member for each Municipal District containing not less than 10,000 inhabitants, elected by the Councillors from among themselves and one member elected by entire alienated villages.

As regards the Taluka Boards, each should have as *ex-officio* members the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of the Taluka and the Mamlatdar. Each of the several groups into which the Taluka may be divided by Government for purposes of election should have the right to elect two representatives. One member should be returned by each Municipal District within the Taluka and one by the holders of entire alienated villages.

The Sabha is not in favour of having the principle of communal representation introduced inasmuch as it does not feel that there are any interests special to communities in any District, which call for a departure from the existing system.

With due deference to the opinion expressed by the Decentralization Commission in this respect, the Sabha thinks that the time has arrived when the District Local Boards should be given power to elect their own non-official Presidents. The Sabha sees no reason why the Collector should cease to take interest in matters such as roads, sanitation, education, etc., simply because he ceases to be President of the Board. On the contrary, it will be noticed that the Commission itself has referred to such a practice prevailing in the Central Provinces (*vide* para 795 of the Report of the Decentralization Commission). As regards Taluka Boards also the Sabha thinks that the Presidents should be non-officials elected by the members. In this way alone can the people be induced to take interest in local affairs and whatever temporary inconvenience or loss of efficiency may be caused will be made good by the promotion of real local self-government.

4. The Sabha thinks that the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of Public Works should be removed and the Boards should be empowered to entertain a trained staff to frame estimates and execute works sanctioned by them (*vide* para 749 of the Report of the Decentralization Commission).

5. Taluka Local Boards should have the power of preparing their own budgets within the sanctioned allotments which should be fixed and sufficiently liberal and the District Boards should not have power to revise and alter those budgets.

6. The Sabha thinks the time has come when the management of primary schools should be entrusted to Local Boards who should entertain their own teaching and inspecting staff.

7. In view of the suggestion made above, the Sabha is of opinion that the rules under section 48 (b) of the Local Boards Act will have to be modified. But the consideration of this question can be more conveniently taken up when the proposed change is accepted.

9. These suggestions will result in increased expenditure and the Sabha offers the following remarks on the proposals contained in question under reply. (1) The raising of the present one anna cess will cause dissatisfaction among the masses and the Sabha therefore is not in favour of a change in this direction. (2) The Sabha does not think it advisable to have Notified Area Committees created within the limits of the Taluka Boards. (3) The Sabha deprecates any addition to the burden of taxation on the shoulders of the Rayats, and cess on either the Income Tax or Forest Revenue is, besides, not likely to be very productive. The Sabha would strongly favour the levy of cess of one anna on Abkari Revenue which will, besides giving a sufficiently large yield, be in consonance with Government's policy of discouraging drink. The one anna cess was formerly levied on a portion of the Excise Revenue, even to-day a contribution is made from Provincial Revenues in lieu of that cess to District Local Boards.

As observed above, it will not be advisable to raise the existing one anna cess on Land Revenue and the Sabha would urge that to provide the Local Board with an adequate and permanent income, Government should contribute to those bodies one anna in the rupee on the Land Revenue they receive from the Rayat, who already contributes one anna in the form of the Local Fund cess.

11. As regards the qualifications of voters, the following changes may be made in Section 10 of the Local Boards Act (1) The land-holder's qualification should be reduced from Rs. 48 to Rs. 20. (2) The scale of the property should be reduced from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 2,000. (3) The limit of the annual net earnings should be reduced to Rs. 3,000. (4) The limit of the amount of the pension should be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15 per mensem

The Hon. Diwan Bahadur K. R. Godbole, Member, District Local Board.

1. I am of opinion that the elective principle should now advance for Local Boards on the line of Municipalities. The Board should consist of two-thirds of elected members and one-third of nominated members; and of the latter, not more than one-half should be salaried officers of Government and the remainder should include representatives of minorities.

With the increase of elected members it will be necessary to modify and extend the scope of the elective groups or representations under Sections 6 and 7; and this may be arranged for the Taluka Boards by allowing certain Municipalities and large villages with sanitary village boards to elect their special representatives; and in the case of District Local Boards the same concession may be extended to all Municipalities having a population of, say, 8,000 to 10,000 and above (instead of 18,000 as at present).

2. I am strongly against any separate election by communities, as it tends to keep alive and enhance the feeling of racial animosity and embitterment among the different communities. It seems advantageous, on the whole, for general Indian interests, if it is left to Government to set right any deficiency regarding representation of minorities, by selecting suitable candidates under its privilege of nomination of one-third members.

3. Generally speaking it is desirable that the President of District and Taluka Local Boards ought to be the Collector of the District, and the Assistant Collector respectively as at present. If suitable non-official gentlemen are available, preference should however be given to them in making appointments of Presidents. The election of the Vice-President may now be restricted to non-official members under Section 27, and he might be given more extensive definite powers of the President under Section 29 (b).

4. It is distinctly advisable that the present limitations respecting the preparation of plan and the execution of public works should continue as at present, under Sections 57 and 61; but I am of opinion that the Board should now employ an independent Engineer of its own for such public works, of the grade of a Supervisor on a salary ranging from Rs. 200 to Rs. 400. He might also act as a General Secretary to the Board.

5. The present arrangements might continue.

6 & 7. As the funds of the Local Boards are barely sufficient and they cannot employ an independent inspecting staff, the direct management of education work and establishment should, I think, continue as at present, mainly under Government Departmental control; but in respect of schools from upper primary to rural primary course and *vice versa*, the voice of the Local Boards should be freely consulted and ought to prevail. No change in this respect should be effected, unless their consent is previously obtained to the altered course. I know that a good deal of local discontent was recently caused in the Surat District by the proposal to lower down the existing standard in a considerable number of schools in large flourishing villages from upper primary class teaching upto VI standard to rural primary class teaching upto only III standard.

8. The Taluka Local Board is ordinarily not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas under section 48 (a). The general practice is, I believe, to set apart one-third or four pies of the local cess revenue for provision of education in one lump for the district as a whole. This practice might continue with advantage.

9. *As to clause (1)*: I am against any enhancement of the one anna cess on land revenue. The present assessment charged on land is already high enough, and any addition to it by enhancement of the one anna cess will be deeply felt as a burden by the agricultural classes. Again, the Decentralization Commission has, after a thorough detailed enquiry, recorded a definite opinion that it should be inadvisable to enhance the present one anna cess on land revenue, and consideration of any proposal to increase the land revenue cess beyond one anna will be to stultify the recommendation made by the Commission in this respect.

As to clause (2): I would invite attention to restrictions imposed by Section 107, Clause (3), under which no area shall be made a notified area, unless it

- (i) contains a town which is the head-quarter of a taluka, or
- (ii) is within a distance of one mile from a railway station.

Under the above restrictions the scope of extensions of notified areas is very limited, and no appreciable relief is expected to be given to the revenue of District Local Boards. Moreover, such villages will be mainly *rural* villages in their general capacity and any additional *Municipal* taxes under the notified area will chiefly fall as an additional burden on the agricultural classes who already pay a substantial local fund cess.

As to clause (3): I am strongly in favour of a cess of one anna per rupee on the Abkari revenue, and I think we might stop for the present with the acquisition of an additional revenue from this source. If more funds are considered necessary, I would extend the one anna cess to the Forest and Income Tax heads. I may add that the one anna cess on Abkari will be considered as a very innocent measure, inasmuch as it will not be felt as a burden by any class of people, or even by Government, and this cess will include taxation from agricultural as well as non-agricultural artisan classes such as masons, carpenters and the like who have been paying no local taxes.

As to clause (4): I think there will be no need for the present to increase the Provincial subvention, if the proposal to raise one anna cess on Abkari is accepted, as suggested in clause (3) above. If this proposal is negatived, it would be well to increase the Provincial subvention to the extent of one anna of land revenue, so that the special contribution rendered to Local Boards by Government in 1905 may be raised to be equal to the revenue derived from one anna cess, instead of one-fourth (or 25 per cent) of the revenue from such cess

10. It is true to a great extent that as compared with Municipalities there is a good deal of lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members of the District and Taluka Local Boards. The causes are mainly of the insufficiency and want of independent funds for management. The extension of elective franchise as proposed in answer to question 1 and the supply of additional funds as proposed in answer to question 9 will contribute additional stimulus in this respect.

11. It is desirable to extend the scope of voters, in correspondence with Municipal franchise. I would add under Section 10, Clause (7), the class of graduates pleaders, titles-holders and Sardars.

12. Following the precedent of Municipalities, it is desirable to have a separate representation of educated classes and professions by conferring the privilege of separate election on voters classed under clauses (1) (2), (3), (6) and (7) with the addition as proposed in answer to question 11

13. Yes. The President of the Taluka Local Board being an official, the Vice-President should be an elected non-official (*vide* similar suggestion also for the District Local Boards under answer to question 3).

14. The statutory minimum of assessment may be reduced by one-half, *viz*, from Rs. 43 to Rs. 24.

15. As shown in para (7) to my answer to question 9, the Royal Commission have observed that the Government grants to the Local Boards should be made of a permanent nature in some fixed proportion and should not be subject to periodical revision. I agree in these remarks. It would I think confer a distinct advantage and stimulus, if all Government contributions are done away and the Local Boards are assigned a definite share under some main heads of Provincial Revenue which may vary for the present for various districts to suit local conditions. This share may begin with 2 annas each under the heads of land revenue and excise.

16. After deducting one-third (or 4 pies) of the cess revenue for education, the District Local Board distributes the remainder of its revenue for general requirements of the District and Taluka Local Boards under roads and other heads. It is inconvenient to make separate allotment under each head for District and various Taluka Local Boards, but I am aware that in the Surat district the practice is that one pie of the cess revenue derived for each Taluka is definitely set apart to each Taluka Local Board to be expended by it absolutely at its own discretion. It may be enjoined that some such minimum should be prescribed under the Rules for each District.

17. For reasons explained in my answer to question 2, it is desirable to retain to Government the privilege of nomination of non-officials to the extent of one-sixth members, so as to provide for due inclusion of minorities by nomination, instead of by separate election by Communities

18. I am in favour of a reduction of the qualifying limits, with a view to secure extended interest, stimulus and activity both among the voters and members. This reduction may be made as under:—From Rs. 48 to Rs. 24 in clause (1) of Section 10, from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 3,000 in clause (2); from Rs. 500 to Rs. 300 in clause (3), and from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15 in clause (4).

Mr. M. R. Tarkondæ.

Elections :—

1. Yes.

*Reasons :—*The object should be and now is not merely the administration of local funds, but also the promotion of education in public matters. Official interference, therefore, may only come in when exceptional circumstances call for it.

2. No.

Provision for securing the due representation of special interests may be made, but its application should only be allowed when it is expressly sought and its need substantiated.

The present number of members is not sufficient.

Reasons :—

Public measures ought to be uniform in their character and application, and provisions for special advantages only tend to weaken those for whose benefit they are intended.

The present formation of groups does not disclose the exercise of sufficient care and attention to distances and other conditions of proper representation. The meetings are, in consequence, irregular and not well attended, much work having to be done by circulars. Supervision and inspection of works suffer on the same account.

3. Yes ; elected.

Reasons :—

This provision is necessary in view of men of intelligence and public spirit being now available in district towns. Paucity of such men may be felt in Taluka towns, but elected non-officials may, it is thought, receive some training in the art of management of local affairs and impart it to the benefit of all concerned. Of course, this power should be liable to withdrawal if want of zeal and public sense or abuse or misuse of powers should call for it.

4. Works and supervision.

Such removal or modification is only possible in cases where the plans and estimates could be intelligently followed and their execution directed by the Boards. Local constructions of wells and other buildings of a minor nature may, however, be left to be planned out and executed by Taluka Boards.

Construction and repairs of roads from village to village had better be left to the Public Works Department. What agency should most efficiently carry out these works is a question too difficult for me to answer.

No work should be left to be planned out and executed by the Taluka Boards that may not be in a position to control their Sub-Overseer.

The stringency regarding the approval of Budget estimates may be removed.

Reasons :—

What measure of success has hitherto been attained in this direction is due to the discharge by the Mamlatdars and Sub-Overseers, of duties which they could not avoid and which to many were not unwelcome. The members of Taluka Boards have yet much to learn in this direction.

5. Taluka Local Boards should have liberty to engage and pay their servants

They should be allowed to sanction and revise their own estimates.

Reasons :—

Servants may only respect and obey those to whom they owe their appointment and from whom they derive their pays.

They should be able to adjust their wants to their finances.

Education :—

6. Yes.

Reasons :—

According to the opinion of the Decentralization Commission, even the Taluka Local Board should be at liberty to manage middle vernacular as well as primary schools—para 751 of Vol. III of their report. At present they are merely to pay for the upkeep of schools which go by the name of Local Board Schools. I agree with the report—para 753—when it says that, with the restrictions now placed upon them, their management can be little more than nominal. They should have the latitude recommended in that paragraph, and that departmental agency must here give way to the education of the people in local self-government—para 754. Even the evolution of primary education, which would require its character to be adapted to the needs of the rural population, should be left to the Taluka Boards. The capability of District Boards should thus be out of question.

7. The question involves many details and may properly form the subject of a separate reference. I am unable to do justice to the question now.

I could not get a copy of the Manual, but have had the advantage of reading the resolution published in *Bombay Government Gazette*, 1884, Part I, page 1043 and the following ones. Some changes would have to be made in the light of my answer No. 13 to question 6.

8. No, so far as I have come to know.

9. (1) Local Boards, as they at present stand constituted, should not be empowered to raise the tax as proposed in the question. If my suggestions detailed in answer 1 (question 10) be approved, Panchayats may be empowered as suggested in 'Remedies, para 4 (g)' above.

Reasons—Landholders do not reap adequate income from their lands. Lands are not yet being cultivated on business lines, and in many cases they are economic failures. Moreover, the experience of a local cess distributed by outside agency, which substantially these Boards are, is not happy.

(2) Yes. The scope of notified area as given in sec. 187 (3) of the District Municipal Act of 1901 is, however, too much restricted. The area should embrace most of the places described as a Municipal district under sec 7 of the Act

The work in a village or town can be done more efficiently than that in scattered areas. In addition to an economic relief, it would yield better work

(3) (a) Yes

(b) Yes.

(c) No

Reasons :—

(a) Income tax is collected from people who are getting decent income. It is generally the outcome of special skill exercised against the simple and ignorant. It is the interest of such men to keep the latter going. Let a small portion be cheerfully paid to aid those who feed them.

(b) This is a tax on ignorance and morbid pleasure or relaxation that people seek. Let some portion go back.

(c) I can't understand its efficacy. Forest Revenue may be reduced, but a cess on this revenue is not very congenial.

(4) Yes

For the maintenance of big roads and dispensaries and especially the promotion of primary education, Provincial subventions ought to bear a substantial ratio

10. (1) It is to a certain extent true that the failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest and active co-operation on the part of non-official members

The causes and remedies, however, cannot be ascertained unless the objects of Bombay Act I of 1884 and the means provided for their attainment by the Act and the rules made under it are carefully considered in co-ordination with the capacities of the people and the conditions under which they have had to work.

First, as regards the Taluka Boards :—

The object of the Act, as its headnote and preamble suggest, is to make better provision for the administration of Local Funds provided by the Local Funds Act III of 1869, for expenditure on objects of public local utility and improvement or for local works of public utility and convenience and to make better provision for education and sanitary improvements—heading and preamble of Act III of 1869.

The legislators of the Act of 1884 proceed to attain the object by providing for the constitution of Taluka and District Boards—secs. 4 to 29 ; imposing certain duties on them and investing them with certain discretionary powers—sec. 30 ; by providing for their funds and the manner and conditions in and under which they are to be used—secs. 44 to 61 ; and by providing for their conduct of business, their control and other matters.

The obligatory duties set forth in sec. 30 of the Act relate mainly to the construction and repair of roads and buildings—(a) to (c), education—(d), sanitation—(e), comfortable sides along the roads—(f), and preservation of properties vested in them—(g). The discretionary powers are enumerated in clauses (h) to (k) of the same section.

I have detailed the prominent features of the Act that they might, in some measure, help on the determination as to the correctness of the view I take below of the matter.

With due deference, I am of opinion that the Act was not happily conceived or more happily carried out, so far at least as the education of the people in matters of local self-government is concerned.

Causes :—

(1) Subjective or moral weakness of the people.

No proper note seems to have been taken of the fitness of the people to carry out the directions of the Legislature and the chief object seems to have been rather the administration of local funds, already in existence, for certain local purposes than the education of the people in the art of managing their own local affairs. The obligatory duties mentioned in sec. 30 are scarcely such as could be entrusted to men the streets in whose villages are not worth the name—(a) to (c); who are themselves almost illiterate—(d); and whose houses are most insanitary and unclean (e). As to their ideas of beauty and public comforts, these have yet to be cultivated among the masses. This subjective incapacity of the people, which should have been quite apparent about the year 1883, could not hold forth the hope that the people would do the things expected of them better by the simple fact of their coming together at stated periods.

People, elected or nominated, coming out of the same stock cannot present better material. Mostly they come in only to appear and have no greater competency or public sense than the people they claim to represent.

(2) Intellectual incapacity.

The rural population is mostly ignorant and they cannot be expected to direct the local affairs. It can scarcely be imagined that they can exact work from the Sub-Overseer or carry influence with the Mamlatdar, who usually is the Chairman or Vice-President. Their relative positions forbid the idea.

(3) Inadequacy of the means to the end as disclosed by the Act.

- (a) The fabric of local self-government has been commenced from a wrong point. The vision of the country people has, even now, scarcely gone beyond their village. Taluka Boards are unnatural, it being difficult, almost impossible, at the present stage of development of the rural population, to secure community of interest and co-operation which their duties demand. The basis of operation should have been the village.
- (b) The funds at the disposal of the Taluka Boards are not being provided on a definite and on adequate scale.
- (c) The guiding they require has taken the shape of control.
- (d) The chief objects were the education and sanitation for which monies had been provided; other matters of a subordinate interest were preferred at their expense.
- (e) Absence of any provision for travelling allowance of members attending meetings held at distant places. For the same reason, inspection of works seems to have been neglected.

Remedies :—

- (1) The subjective strength of the people should be built up by greater attention being paid to education and sanitation.
- (2) They should be educated in a way which may not render them discontented and unfit to live a country life—of course by changes being made in the curricula.
- (3) The Act of 1884 may be repealed.
- (4) (a) The task of educating the people in matters of local self-government must be commenced anew, and the village should be the starting unit.
(b) Local committees which may be called पंचायती Panchayats should be formed in villages with a population of 1,000 or more, groups being allowed in the case of villages situate within a distance of two miles.
(c) Their duties should be—
 - (1) to start, manage and supervise primary and secondary schools under the guidance and with the help of Taluka Boards;
 - (2) construction and repair of village streets and Dharmshalas;
 - (3) the maintenance of sanitation in the village and its surroundings; construction of roads extending beyond the limits of their village and the maintenance of dispensaries should not be left to them;
 - (4) to try boundary disputes and money suits the value of the subject matter of which does not exceed 50 rupees; to try cases of simple hurt, assault, insults and petty theft and mischief arising in the village;
 - (5) duties in connection with other matters of a purely local interest.

- (d) Taluka Local Boards should be formed and to it each पंचायत Panchayat should be allowed to send one representative. The Taluka Local Board should only be a Board of Inspection, advice and help, *e. g.*, providing teachers, sub-overseers, information regarding agriculture, co-operation, sanitation.
- (e) The controlling authority should invariably be the Collector or other member of the Indian Civil Service.
- (f) पंचायती Panchayats should be provided with not less than half the amount of local funds, realized in their village under the Local Funds Act with such subventions as they may from time to time require and can properly utilize. One-fourth should go to Taluka Boards and one-fourth to the Provincial Government for general supervision.
- (g) पंचायती Panchayats may be empowered to levy a small local rate in case the funds so placed in their hands should be found insufficient.
- (h) The District Local Boards should be abolished.

The same remarks apply to the District Local Boards, but the reasons for their failure are to be sought also in the members being rather in easy circumstances and out of touch with the local conditions. Of course, this remark applies to the majority.

The observations that I have made above make it clear that I am not for continuance of the Act. I am not of opinion that (1) provision for elected majorities—be they non-official—(2) freedom from interference on the part of District Local Boards and loosening the control of the Collectors, (3) removal of limitations on qualifications to vote, and (4) elective presidentship would go any substantial length in giving a healthy tone or providing the necessary education to the country people in the art of local self-government. Even if free scope in educational matters were extended to the District Local Boards, the progress would be slow.

Let the country people, therefore, first deserve by raising themselves and bettering their immediate surroundings before they are saddled with duties which they can neither understand nor properly discharge. Motion imparted from above would only tend to create false notions and ambitions and lead to a still lower standard of living. There is not yet the desire to serve, and others, who can have spare hours, cannot represent them to better advantage.

Since, however, questions have been set, I should think it my duty to answer.

I should be permitted to select my own order of questions to be answered.

11. Yes.

Persons, residing within the taluqa, who have passed any examination of any of the Indian Universities.

Reason :—Men of intelligence may be encouraged.

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12. Cannot answer. The question is also not properly understood.

13. Yes

Reason :—Vice-Presidents are generally the Mamlatdars who, of all others, are least fitted to sympathise with and promote local self-government.

14. Rs. 30.

Reason :—The amount of assessment has not been affected by the introduction of the Record of Rights, but the amount may be reduced with a view to release the qualifying limit.

15. No. 1 : 4. Reason.—Efficiency is always promoted by the members giving their opinions freely. This cannot be expected of nominated members in the majority of cases.

16. Yes. The ratio I cannot fix.

Reasons :—Discretion wherever it is allowed by law comes generally to be exercised against the weaker party. Local needs ought to have a stronger claim. Nay, it is always better that right to disburse should be with or nearest the hands that pay.

17. I cannot answer.

18. Please *vide* as to (1), answers (6), to question 14.

(2) The amount referred to in clause 2 of sec. 10 may be reduced to Rs. 3,000.

(3) No.

(4) The amount of pension prescribed may be reduced to Rs. 25.

Reasons :—

(2) More persons may vote.

(4) Men of intelligence, which pensioners generally are, may be encouraged.

Mr. L. M. Deshpande, Retired Huzur Deputy Collector, Poona.

Before I proceed to record categorically my answers to the questions forwarded to me by the Collector of Poona I propose to give a very short history of local self-government in this Presidency the stages through which it passed before it was evolved into the present shape. The history is so well known that it would be presumptuous on my part to give a *resume* of it, but as I feel that my remarks would be more intelligible than they would otherwise be I respectfully venture with your permission to undertake that task.

Local self-government has to be reviewed in its three aspects—the constitution, the finance, and the control; and I shall briefly state what the aspects were in all the stages.

In the early period of British rule in India and for centuries before it, the country had its village Panchaits, which in addition to civil administrative powers exercised large functions regarding works of local utility. They looked to their wants and supplied them in most cases from village funds. The Panchait was a council of elders nominated by the general suffrage of the villagers. The institution worked very well, the communal interest was very strong and there was unity and cohesiveness in the village life. That has now gone. And when gradually the administrative powers were withdrawn or fell into disuse the Panchait as an agency for supplying local wants also dwindled down. In early sixties small works of public utility attracted the attention of the district officers and an informal cess of one anna in the rupee payable as land revenue was imposed and ungrudgingly paid, because it was authoritatively declared that the cess called Local Fund cess would be administered as the property of those by whom it was contributed and Government by an executive order laid down as a cardinal principle that the "tax-payers should have an influential voice in the disposal of the funds." *Vide* G. R. No. 3115 dated 16th September 1863. The scheme was initiated by the district officers who felt the necessity of it. Soon after, the Local Funds Act of 1869 was passed providing for the constitution, finance and control. Taluka and District Local Fund Committees came into existence. Funds were collected largely subsidised by village contributions, and with the help and concurrence of the representatives of the people not elected as now but nominated by the District Officers, allotments were made to local committees, which usefully employed them, and in course of time petty works of local utility sprang up all over the districts. This little unpretentious self-government was in the zenith. People had large powers to select their works and to suggest them. They prepared their budgets and provided funds. They felt a real interest in their affairs. The non-official members worked in harmony with their district officers because they knew their wants fully and carried out their wishes sympathetically and ungrudgingly. No official dictation cramped their field of action and the freedom of their choice was left unimpaired. And when year after year they saw series of works growing all round they felt that they had the unmistakable proof that local self-government was a reality.

This state of things continued as long as "it was the fixed policy of Government that local wants of the people should be attended to in the expenditure of the one anna cess before projects for general development of the resources are taken in hand" (*vide* G. R. No. 5878 dated 18th October 1876).

Then came a change in the policy of local fund administration. The talukwar system of expenditure was abandoned; and with this the taluka committee began rapidly to fade away. The district local fund committee then became the unit of local fund administration and in course of time the wants of the taluka committee practically remained unheeded. The fate of the district board was no better in any sense. They were not free bodies in as much as their action was fettered by orders of the Divisional Commissioners and Government and they had no option left but to spend money towards large undertakings for the development of the country. Seven years' budget system came into existence and though the budgets were passed by them they were virtually settled by the Government Secretariat. The result was that local funds came to be saddled with construction and maintenance of large works, the cost of which in justice should have been debited to Provincial Revenues. Thus the local funds were in great measure diverted from works of purely local utility for which they were originally intended and the misapplication of the funds had so steadily increased from year to year since the passing of the Local Fund Act that both the President and the local fund committees became helpless and were practically reduced to nonentities.

The effect of this policy was that both the taluka and district committees suffered. They lost their prestige, their power of usefulness was gone, and their functions almost entirely superseded by Public Works Department. And the local self-government received a sharp set-back.

The fault was mainly with the *Control Highly Centralised*. This is the second stage of local self-government.

Then came the famous Resolution of the Government of India in 1882 directing a complete change in the manner and method of local self-government. The Government of India declared that the old taluka system should be restored making the taluka the unit of administration. The Local Boards Act was passed and under it came into existence the elective franchise extended in a manner to reach the rural population of rate-payers. The Taluka and District Boards were accordingly constituted with members half-elected and half-nominated. Funds were allotted to the taluka to be budgetted against and small local works were provided for but the control remained very naturally in the hands of the district officers. The non-official members had no free hand in the disposal of money nor was there anything to attract them to co-operate with the official members in the conduct of business. Their position remained more or less the same as before. They attended the meetings not so much to help in the deliberations as to see resolutions recorded by the presiding officer. The elections, moreover, did not bring in the right sort of men nor did the

nominations. The nominations instead of curing the defects and shortcomings of the elections merely helped to defeat the intentions of the elective system. Enough money was not given to the taluka and the tendency to saddle expenditure of provincial nature on the local funds was keen none the less. The district board was no better. It was merely a disbursing agency in respect of certain specialised departments under the control of Government.

It must not be supposed that I am wanting in my sense of appreciation of the magnificent and noble services which the district officers have rendered to the Local Fund branch of the general administration. Every taluka and every village of some importance bears an eloquent testimony to the great solicitude and unflinching care which the district officers have bestowed on works of public utility connected with health, sanitation, and safety and it must be acknowledged with gratitude that Local Funds as a branch of the general administration of the country has been very efficiently managed alike to the credit of Government and the traditions of the governing class. But whatever the credit on the ground of efficiency of the administration, because of the predominance of official control the existing system of local self-government as an instrument of educating the people of this country, is, I respectfully submit, a complete failure. This is the third and the present stage of local self-government.

If as was claimed in 1882 that the Presidency had been ahead of all other parts of India in the matter of self-government and if as was then expected, the liberal scheme organised under the Local Boards Act, cautiously introduced under proper official guidance, would be productive of great good in no distant future, how is it, one may ask, that the educating effect of this grand experiment, extending over thirty-two years, should have been so barren of results on the capacity of the people to govern their affairs under relaxation of official control? And if the time has not come to admit the people to greater independence of action, then surely I submit a new departure must be made. And it will lie in the direction of control. What is wanted at present is not so much the improvement of the constitution, nor even so much of the finance, as the revision or relaxation of official control. Why have the municipalities prospered? Not because there is something inherent in the constitution or the quality of their members, but because they have been freed from rigid control of officials and left to themselves to govern their affairs subject only to official control exercised from without. This freedom from control has put into them a new spirit of self-reliance and awakened in them a sense of civic duty which they owe to their countrymen. The education, intelligence and capacity for work of the rural boardmen are quite on a level with their brethren on the municipal board, and there is no reason why, if left to themselves, they will not achieve the success which the urban boards have done.

In this behalf the remarks of the Government of India in para 18 of their resolution are very pertinent and I respectfully invite the attention of your Committee to them.

Mr. Erskine so far back as 1882 has described the situation so graphically and precisely that his observations still hold good, and I quote the relevant portion from his report. He says: "I have seen so much good work done by these entirely independent committees (the village Panchait) that I certainly have never been able to understand the oft-repeated cry that natives of this country have no capacity for self-government. It is only when their own Panchaits are Europeanised and converted into municipal committee that natives cease to take an interest in municipal matters. Nor is this to be wondered at for members of the municipal committees find themselves smothered in Acts and rules, Budgets and Bye-laws till they cannot venture to do anything while at the same time they have no real authority to compensate for this, for they cannot punish, neither can they tax. Moreover, in the case of the greater number of small municipalities the whole system is a sort of parody of self-government. A number of wealthy and respectable gentlemen are appointed or elected on account of their position and are asked to meet in solemn conclave to decide what is to be done in the course of the year with some petty sum like £50 or £100, which after fixed charges have been arranged for, is all that is left for disposal and then we express wonder that the members show little interest in the proceedings. When, however, the question is asked how can existing faults be remedied and how can native members be induced to take interest in municipal and local fund proceedings I feel the question is one that I am unable to answer in a satisfactory manner. It is not the composition of the board that is so much in fault as the procedure, but still many gentlemen of a class that would be extremely useful on boards now object to be nominated because they feel that their position without any real authority is anything but an inviting one. But it may be asked, how comes it that they have no real power when everywhere they exceed in number the official element? There are several reasons for it, but one is quite enough to give—namely, that out of the non-official elements a large portion in the nature of things must side with officials and that anything like independent action becomes difficult and places the actor in an invidious position. The more interest a Collector takes in his district, the more anxious he is to carry on improvements, and therefore the more he feels opposition to his scheme. Overworked as he almost invariably is, he grudges time wasted (as he thinks) in useless discussion and therefore generally checks it as much as possible."

I have already said that the excessive control should be relaxed. No amount of petty changes would make any perceptible improvement. There is a great romance in power, and when people know that they are entrusted with large powers and have the confidence of Government and their officers they will come forward to do their duty to the public in a manner to claim admiration alike from their countrymen and the Government. In my humble opinion the time has come for a certain number of important districts like Poona, Sholapur, Ahmednagar, Surat, Broach, Dharwar, Belgaum, Karachi, Hyderabad, to be emancipated entirely from official control, so far as any rate as the administration of the district local board is concerned. The Collector may continue to be the President but he shall have no vote. He should delegate all his powers to the non-official Vice-President. I shall leave the taluka for the present to have its official President as now.

I shall now proceed to answer the questions :—

1. It is time to extend the elective franchise at least in the case of all district local boards and all the Taluka Local Boards at the district head-quarters and a few more important taluka boards. Two-thirds of the board should be elected and the rest nominated.

2. I am not in favour of election by communities. There are so many castes in the country that it would be difficult to treat each class adequately. Such distinctive representations would give rise to undesirable jealousies and animosities. For similar reasons no special communities should have their representatives. The numbers may be increased so as to give rural population greater share in the administration of the local cess to which they largely contribute. The Taluka Local Board may have 21 members while the district board may have 30 members.

3. For the present the District and Sub-Divisional Officers may continue as Presidents of the Local Boards except in cases of districts above mentioned in which they should be non-official and elected by the non-official members.

4. I think the powers of the Local Boards should be raised in this respect by substituting in Section 57b of the Local Boards Act Rs. 500 and Rs. 2,500 for Rs. 50 and Rs. 500 respectively. This would increase the field for the exercise of Boards' powers which under the present restrictions are too far narrowed down for I can hardly conceive of a road the cost of which can be Rs. 50 per mile even for repairs. Assistant Engineers will have to be appointed to give the Board their professional advice.

5. I think the present arrangements should continue.

6. The management of primary schools should generally be entrusted to the District Board and funds placed at its disposal. It is the desire of the Decentralisation Committee that even the Taluka Board should have the charge of such education within its limits. But it can await the result of the experiment in that direction by the District Board. The policy of education should be enunciated by Government and when that is done the execution of that policy should be handed over to the District Board. The supervision should as now be left to Government Educational Department, but the administration and financial control should be entirely in the hands of the District Board. The Board may have its own officers or Government may place their officers at the disposal of the Board.

7. This question is answered under question 6.

8. No never.

9. Yes. Extra establishment will be needed and additional funds required. The District Board in the first place should husband its resources, and money that is at present spent on provincial objects should be withdrawn. But I submit it is not necessary to tax the rayat anew. To raise the local cess to annas two would entail hardship on the agriculturists and they would dislike the additional burden especially when for their one anna cess they have got no adequate return.

(2) I do not think that any great relief can be obtained from the adoption of the suggestion. Moreover, the Government of India and the Decentralization Committee require that the unit of local administration should be the Taluka until the village Panchaits are organised in suitable forms. If it is in contemplation to have the village Panchait organised, the notified area will be merged into the village scheme. We had better wait to see what is being done in that behalf before we extend the "notified areas."

(3) I believe that in view of the excise revenue having been placed entirely at the disposal of the provincial Government, and in view of abnormal increases in the excise revenue during the last twenty years, it is but proper that substantial contributions should be made to the Local Funds. I therefore respectfully suggest that while the tax on trees and the import and still head duties should remain with Government, the revenue derived from license fees for retail sale of spirituous liquors should be handed over to the local funds. If this cannot be done then only would I recommend that a cess of one anna on the Abkari revenue be levied.

(4) Government subventions may be increased to meet the growing demands of the Local Boards.

10. I think the complaint is true, but the fault is not with the people but with the system, as I have already pointed out in my general remarks on the administration of the Local Boards. The remedies, briefly, are—the control should be slackened, more funds placed at the disposal of the Taluka Boards, people should be more trusted and encouraged to take up their work as in the days of the early sixties. And finally, more educated people should be associated in the administration.

11. I think Government may be moved to recognise the right of educated men to form a separate constituency with a right to elect a certain number from amongst them to represent them on the boards. The concession is necessary in the interest of local self-government itself. Moreover, having regard to the fact that the Government of India desire that local bodies should have the financial and administrative control of primary education it becomes the more necessary to allow the educated classes an independent voice in the administration. The Justices of Peace in Bombay return their representative on the Municipal Corporation and Universities are also represented on the Legislative Councils. These are the precedents for the concession asked for and I submit that Graduates, Vakils, Jurors and Honorary Magistrates may constitute a separate electorate.

12. I do not know, but an experiment may be tried by directing that a certain number, which shall not be less than half the number of group elections, should be from classes 2 to 6 mentioned in Section 10.

13. Yes.

14. The limit may be reduced to Rs. 25 as a qualification for a seat, but a lower limit, say Rs. 15, for a voter would be desirable.

15. I cannot lay down any definite proportion, as the financial requirements of the Boards under enlarged powers cannot be estimated at this stage.

16. As far as I know the whole of one-third of the educational portion of the local cess is reserved by the District Board for payment direct on education, and out of the remaining two-thirds of the cess charges mentioned in sections 48 and 49 are met direct and the balance is generally transferred to the Taluka Local Board, although sometimes the District Boards do reserve some money for special work. But it may be directed that under any circumstances the Taluka Board shall have not less than half an anna in the rupee paid as land revenue.

17. I do not think that the proposal would be an improvement on the present system of nomination. And if Government nominate their non-officials to represent minorities not returned in the elections, we secure what is wanted.

18. Yes, I am I would reduce the qualifying limits in clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 of section 10 to Rs. 25 as a seat qualification and to Rs. 15 as a vote qualification, to Rs. 4,000 in clause 2, to Rs. 400 in clause 3, and to Rs. 20 per month in clause 4.

The Hon. Mr. W. H. Sharp, M.A., Director of Public Instruction, Poona.

6. All the educational officers consulted are of opinion that this would be a retrograde step, calculated to lead to impaired efficiency in the schools, dissatisfaction on the part of the teachers (especially the women teachers), and constant friction between the Government inspecting staff and the local educational authority.

My attention has been drawn to several occasions on which the Government of India has complimented the Bombay Presidency on its handling of primary education; from which it may be inferred that it is not on the score of inefficiency in the present administration that a change is proposed. In paragraph 19 of the Resolution on Indian Educational Policy issued by the Governor General in Council on March 11, 1904, occur the words.—

“The administration of primary schools by local bodies is already everywhere subject to the general supervision of the Education Department as regards tutorial matters; but the degree of control differs in different provinces, and where it is most complete primary education is most advanced.”

The Decentralization Commission, however, were of opinion that there were occasions when “departmental efficiency must give way to the education of the people in local self-government.” This view was criticized by the Government of Bombay in their letter to the Government of India, No. 845, Educational Department, dated May 6, 1910. In paragraph 2 of this they say :—

“In dealing with the subject of primary education it is not mere departmental efficiency that has to be considered. Government are concerned with the education of the people as a whole and with their efficiency. This is essentially a function for the central government, which local bodies are not capable of discharging. To impose upon local boards duties which essentially pertain to the central government will not tend to foster local self-government. On the contrary it would inevitably lead to a breakdown in the whole system.”

Of the particular scheme advocated by the Commission it is said that “such a system would not be tolerated in any civilized country, and can certainly not be adopted in India, where educational problems are little understood even amongst the more advanced sections of the community.”

For myself I am disposed to agree with the Commission that departmental efficiency is not the only consideration and must on occasion give way to the education of the people in local self-government. My only doubt is as to how far the arrangements proposed are going to develop local self-government in any genuine sense. There are already parts of India where primary education is supposed to be administered by local boards; but there is reason to suppose that in practice this means by the Collector, or other members of the Revenue Department. If the proposed change only results in transferring the administration from the Educational Department (which has nothing else to attend to) to the Revenue Department (which has a hundred other things to attend to), I do not see what is going to be gained in respect either of efficiency or of local self-government.

Supposing this to be avoided, then will the actual management rest with the Education Committee meeting once a month? or will all the power and patronage tend to drift into the hands of the Secretary? Where Municipal schools are well run, I think that it will be found that they are run by one man, the Chairman or the Chief Officer, who gives his personal attention to them. If

this is what is meant by local self-government I have no objection to raise to it. But I also have some experience of a debating committee which meets once a month to manage a very small section of educational affairs, with practically no *personnel* to administer, and I do not think very much of the results even in so simple a case.

The present situation in Bombay City corresponds more or less to the arrangement which is proposed to be set up. In this case the Corporation through its Schools Committee has entire control of primary education, whilst Government maintain an inspecting staff. The Schools Committee has also certain officers, now I believe three in number, who are practically its own inspecting staff. The Schools Committee has its own vernacular standards, which are inferior to those prescribed by Government for the mofussil. It is a common complaint that the members of the Committee do not visit the schools or know anything about them, and that they are almost completely in the hands of their Secretary. The Educational Department has absolutely no influence; it never seeks to interfere in any way, and the smallest inadvertence immediately sets up friction.

On the subject of the control of the inspecting staff I wish to draw attention to paragraph 82 of the Quinquennial Review of the Progress of Education in India, 1907-12, which shows that elsewhere in India the recent tendency has been to transfer such officers from the local to the central body. The words are:—

“In some provinces the subordinate inspecting staff had not the status or privileges of government servants. The period under review has seen the transfer of sub-inspectors in Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam and of supervisors of elementary schools in Madras; also the retransfer to the department of deputy and sub-inspectors in the United Provinces. Previously these officers were the servants of local bodies.”

On the subject of women teachers I have to say that it is well known that their position in municipal service is often extremely unfortunate, so much so that many women are exceedingly unwilling to enter municipal service.

I find that the Government of India, in a letter printed as an accompaniment to Government Resolution No 410 of February 25, 1902, actually ordered that the control of girls' schools should not be placed under a municipality or district local board, unless it wished to have it, on the ground that it was impossible to rely on the efforts of local boards or municipalities to popularize female education. Whilst I am not prepared to subscribe to the reason given as applying to this presidency generally, still in the last few years educational officers have repeatedly recommended that the control of girls' schools should be taken away from municipalities in the interests of the women teachers. I have not been able, however, to support this proposal, as it seemed to me too much opposed to the general principle of the development of local self-government.

It is possible that even in this presidency the reason given by the Government of India may sometimes apply in the case of girls' schools. There are also other classes of schools about which a similar complaint is sometimes made. These are schools for Mahomedans and schools for the depressed classes. It is often complained that where there is a decided Hindu or orthodox majority in control, it is difficult to get anything done for these two classes. In this connection the Committee will no doubt bear in mind the peculiar position of the Mahomedans in Sind.

The general conclusion to which I come is that, while I am prepared to see some sacrifice of efficiency in the interests of self-government, yet I think that the experiment might well be tried first under conditions which make it reasonably likely that the cause of self-government will really benefit, *i. e.*, where there are likely to be persons of sufficient knowledge and interest to give their personal attention, with due regard to the interests of the teachers and of minorities such as girls, Mahomedans, and the depressed classes.

7. If the present system is to be continued it is thought that the rules do not require to be altered, if the present system is to be altered it is thought that the nature of the change must first be defined (*e.g.*, whether the District or the Taluka Board is to be the unit) before changes in the rules can be discussed profitably.

8. When the Provincial grant is taken into account far more is spent on education in any one Taluka than is raised therein, so that the case contemplated by the question scarcely arises. When a school has to be closed for want of attendance, the Taluka Board is invariably asked to suggest a place within the same Taluka to which the school may be transferred; and it is only when the Board is unable to suggest any place, and with the consent of the Board, that the school is transferred out of the Taluka.

Mr. H. N. Apte, Poona.

I sincerely think that the creation of a Provincial Board of Primary education would give the Local Boards, and thus the people, a real voice in the management of one of the most vital departments of Local Self-Government. Generally I am opposed to communal representation, but in the case of the formation of this Board, I have purposely suggested that the Mahomedan community should have the privilege of electing three representatives to represent and take care of the educational interests of that community.

I do not know very intimately the practically working of the Taluka Local Boards and so I have refrained from replying to questions regarding them.

(2) I do not think election should be by communities. But in order to give facilities to some special communities, the territorial extension of electorates should be widened, so that the voting strength of a special community may have an opportunity to combine and elect representatives from that community. The present number is sufficient.

(3) It is advisable as a progressive step that the Presidents of the District Boards should be non-official and elected. The Taluka Local Boards I do not think are ripe enough to be granted this right. However, in no case should the Revenue Officer, who is also a Magistrate in charge of a Taluka or District, should be the President or the Vice-President of a District or Taluka Board. His position precludes all chances of free discussion and free voting in the meetings of such Boards.

(6) & (7). I think the time has arrived when the management of primary schools should be entrusted to the Local Boards. By the word 'management', I understand the teaching, discipline and direction of schools, and the appointment, remuneration, promotion, punishment and dismissal of the schoolmasters and the inspecting staff. I do not, however, think that complete control over these things should be handed over to the District Local Boards. Education must be conducted according to a general policy and consequently it would not be desirable that each District Local Board should be considered as an independent unit in itself, so far as education is concerned. To keep up a general uniformity and, at the same time, to give the people a definite voice in their own education, I suggest the creation of a Provincial Primary Education Board, consisting of members (i) elected by the several District Boards and (ii) nominated by Government. The President of this Board should be the Director of Public Instruction.

In my opinion, it is ultimately desirable that each District Board in the Presidency should be given the power of sending one representative to this Provincial Board, but, for the present, I should suggest that the District Boards in a Division should be given the right of sending three representatives only. The Mahomedan community being given the privilege of sending three representatives in addition to the above. Thus the Provincial Primary Education Board should consist of —

9	Representatives of the District Local Boards by election
3	Representatives of the Mahomedan community by election
12	Nominated by Government
1	President—The Director of Public Instruction
<hr/>	
Total	25

In addition to the above, there should be a highly paid official of the rank of a senior Educational Inspector as Secretary and Executive Officer of the Board.

I think a Board of 25 members would not be found cumbersome. This Board should not be merely a consultative or advisory body. Its resolutions should be considered as final, except in certain cases where Government sanction should be necessary. This body should practically take the place of the Education Department, so far as Primary education is concerned, i.e., it should be handed over complete control over the teaching, discipline, management and direction of Primary schools in the Presidency. It should also have complete control over the teaching and the inspecting staff. Management of teachers' training colleges also should be entrusted to this Board for obvious reasons.

The relation of the several District Local Boards to this Provincial Board should be exactly the relation now existing between the several Municipalities and the Educational Department, so far as Primary schools are concerned.

The expenses of the maintenance of this Board should be met partly from contributions from the School Funds of the several District Local Boards and partly from Government. In this connection, I also recommend that in order to meet the extra expenditure entailed for the maintenance of this Board and additional Local Board expenditure, Government should endow the Board with an annual grant equal to the amount that is spent by the Educational Department at present.

If this scheme is approved, it would not be difficult to settle the details necessary to put it in working order and to modify and alter the rules under Section 48 (6).

NASIK DISTRICT.

C. M. Baker, Esquire, B.A., I.C.S., Collector of Nasik.

I do not think it matters much if a few more Local Board Members are elected. Most of the present elected members have too little knowledge of and interest in the business to be obstructive.

I am strongly of opinion that the Boards should have power to raise the cess. The reason why people in other countries take so much interest in local board work and Indians take so little is that the former can raise or lower the rates whereas Indians cannot. I think some increases of the elective element ought to accompany this reform.

To me at least the handing over of school management to a Local Board Committee of any kind is simply unthinkable. I cannot understand how any officer with experience of Local Boards could consider it desirable.

I am in favour of the increase of Notified Areas and have already given effect to my opinion in one case. It is not fair that the cultivators should pay for the town shopkeepers.

I am not in favour under present circumstances of giving more work to the Board's own staff instead of the Executive Engineer. Our dependence on the Public Works Department is extremely irksome, but the sort of Local Board staff which we at present have is not competent without expert supervision. Really each District Local Board ought to have an Executive Engineer of its own. This would be expensive but I believe it would pay in the end. But what I propose for the present is that an Assistant Engineer of the Public Works Department should be appointed to each district at the expense of the District Local Board solely for Local Fund work. I think this is the only remedy for the existing state of things which is thoroughly unsatisfactory. At present owing to the insufficiency of the Public Works Department staff the Boards simply cannot get work done and large sums lapse every year.

I regret that I have not been able to work out this proposal more carefully but owing to Departmental Examinations, Administration Reports and Volunteer Training, it is all I can do to write any answer at all.

Mr. R. G. Pradhan, B.A., LL.B., Member, District Local Board, Nasik.

1. Yes, they should have elected majorities.

2. So far as I can see, in matters with which Local Boards have to deal, there are no special interests which require special representation. However, if need be, the due representation of any special communities or interests may be secured by nomination.

I do not approve of election by communities.

3. The Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards may be the Collector and the Assistant Collectors respectively, as at present, but the Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials and be elected. I would further suggest in this connection that the provision in clause (b) of Section 29 of the Local Boards Act should be more generously acted on by Presidents. The President should exercise a general supervision over the work of the Local Boards, but the actual work of administration should be left almost entirely in the hands of the Vice-President and the members.

4. I am not in favour of entire removal of all limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works as provided for in sections 57 and 61 of the Act.

However, I think the limit of Rs. 500 may well be raised to Rs. 1,000. Similarly, the limits of Rs. 50 per mile may also be raised.

Until the resources of the Local Boards are so increased that every District Board is in a position to maintain its own Executive Engineer of adequate qualifications, I would not do away with such expert help and execution as is available at present. However, I would suggest that some reduction in the charges of the Public Works Department for preparing plans, estimates, &c., may be made.

5. The Taluka Local Board may be freed from District Local Board's control in the matter of engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants, but *not* in the matter of sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets.

6. I agree entirely in the views expressed in paragraphs 751-54 of the report of the Decentralization Commission, and am strongly of opinion that the time has come when the management of Local Boards Schools should be entrusted to the District Local Board. At present the District Local Board simply pays the money, but all management rests entirely with the Educational Department. This is a great anomaly which should be removed as early as possible. It means that local self-government, so far as Local Board are concerned, is deprived of one of its most important and elevating functions.

7. In case the Committee thinks that the time has not come for entrusting the management of primary schools to the District Local Board, I would suggest the following alterations in the rules under Section 48 (b) of the Act :—

- (a) Provision should be made for the payment of the travelling expenses of those members of the Local Boards who may be deputed by the Boards to inspect the schools. At present school committees are appointed by the Taluka Local Boards, but the members of the Committees have to pay the travelling expenses out of their own pockets. This does not act as an incentive to the members to visit the schools. My own view is that every School Committee should have a chairman of good educational qualifications and that it should be his duty to inspect the Local Board Schools at least once a year. I think the rules should provide that it shall be the duty of the Chairman of the School Committee to conduct such inspection once a year, and to submit a report thereon, through the Taluka Local Boards, to the District Local Board.

A bill has already been drafted for the amendment of the Bombay Local Boards Act in which it is proposed, *inter alia*, to amend section 30 of the Act so as to provide for the payment to the President or Vice-President, in cases where he is not a salaried servant of the Government, of expenses incurred in travelling for the purpose of the business of the Board. When the District Local Board, Nasik, considered this provision proposed to be added to Section 30, I suggested that it should also provide for the payment of the travelling expenses of members of the Local Boards when specially deputed for the business of the Board, and my suggestion was accepted by the Board. If the proposed clause (j) to Section 30 of the Act in the amending Bill will be modified accordingly, it would provide for the payment of the travelling expenses of the Chairman of the School Committee when he goes out to inspect the Local Board schools.

- (b) Even if the management of the schools cannot be entirely trusted to the District Local Board, it should be entrusted with the administration of the schools at least as regards the appointment, punishment and dismissal of the masters, the fixing and payment of the master's salaries, allowances and pension contributions, and the grant of leave of absence to the masters ; and rule 7 should be amended accordingly.

In carrying on the administration of the schools in these matters, the District Local Boards should, of course, give due consideration to the proposals, suggestions, etc., that may be invited from, or made by, the Government Deputy Educational Inspector.

I may state that, in my opinion, the Deputy Educational Inspector should be an *ex-officio* member of the District Local Board. In that case, there will be no difficulty in consulting him in the matter of administering the Local Board Schools. I have not the least doubt that the District Local Board will give the fullest consideration to his views, proposals, suggestions, &c., and that, consequently, there will be very few chances, if any, of conflict arising between the Educational Department and the District Local Board.

- (c) I think rule 13 should be done away with. The District Local Board should have perfect latitude in the matter of constructing or extending a school-building. Of course when the Deputy Educational Inspector is an *ex-officio* member of the District Local Board, he will necessarily be consulted in the matter.

- (d) Rule 14 should also be done away with.

8. No, as far as I am aware.

9. (1) Yes. But at first it should be raised only to 1½ annas in the rupee.

(2) No, I am not in favour of the scheme of notified areas.

(3) Yes, by all means.

(4) Yes.

10. The proposition that "the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members" is not true.

In the first place, the alleged failure of the District and Taluka Boards is itself open to question. Considering that the administration of the Boards is subject to many limitations, I think that, on the whole, they have been doing good work and are a fair success. The point is not that they have proved a failure, but what measures should be adopted to improve them as institutions of local self-government.

Again, it is not fair to non-official members to say that they evince no interest in the work of the Local Boards and do not actively co-operative with the officials in carrying it on.

My experience of the District Local Board, Nasik, during the last five years is as follows :—

- (1) The meetings of the District Local Board are, on the whole, well attended, members coming from great distances and cheerfully undergoing all the necessary trouble and expense for doing so.

- (2) The Standing Committee of the District Local Board consists of five members, two officials and three non-officials. All of the latter take great interest and have always actually co-operated with the officials. They express their views freely, after carefully going through the papers, though, of course, it is a pleasure to note they have seldom had to differ from the officials.

Much depends upon the kind of members you have. If the elected and nominated members are men of fair education and public spirit, they will not fail to take active interest in the work of the Local Boards.

Another important factor in this connection is that the official Presidents of the Boards should cultivate the right attitude to be maintained towards the Boards. They should not merely look to despatch of business, not even merely to ideal efficiency, but always bear in mind that the Boards are institutions for the education of the people in local self-government. Hence, they should always invite frank discussions and criticisms, give them a patient hearing, explain to the members all matters placed before them, fully and clearly, so that they might be able to follow them, and, in general, encourage them in every possible way to take an intelligent and active interest in the work of the Boards. If the official Presidents will act on these lines and make the members feel that they have in them sympathetic guides and friends rather than mere officials—the less educated and public-spirited members, both elected and nominated, will be more alive to their duties and feel a keener incentive for taking active interest in the work of the local Boards.

quite agree in the view of the Decentralization Commission that the want of success of the existing system is partly due to the fact that the Boards and especially the sub-district Boards have hitherto not possessed real powers and responsibilities owing to want of funds and excessive control.

Reform must, therefore, lie in the direction of increasing the resources of the Boards and freeing them from excessive official control.

On the other hand, it is no less true that the average level of public spirit among the people is not sufficiently high. This level cannot, however, fail to be raised by wider diffusion of education, by the residence of University graduates in taluka towns for professional or other business (a phenomenon that has already begun) and by the consciousness that work in connection with the Local Boards means genuine opportunities for developing village life and rendering real and substantial services to the people.

In this connection, I would also suggest that an annual conference of the members of the Taluka and District Boards should be held under the presidency of the member of the Executive Council in charge of Local Boards, in which papers on questions of local self-government should be read and discussions take place thereon.

11. At present the qualifications for voters and candidates for election are the same except that in the case of the former there are certain additional qualifications as provided for in Section 18 (1) of the Act.

I think this is wrong in principle. The qualifications for candidates for election should be higher than those for voters.

The qualifications for being elected a member of a Taluka Local Board should be extended as in Section 12 of the District Municipal Act.

12. I am not in favour of having such separate groups of electors.

13. Yes, certainly.

14. For electors it should be Rs. 16 and for candidates Rs. 24.

15. I see no objection to such division but I am unable to say what the Local Board's share should be, as the point seems to me to demand greater consideration than I have been able to give it.

16. The present arrangement seems to me quite satisfactory.

17. I do not think that the administrative efficiency of a Board will suffer if it is constituted only of elected members and nominated officials.

The proportion of nominated officials should be one-fourth, and of elected members three-fourths, of the total number of members.

I think the Deputy Educational Inspector of a District should be an *ex-officio* member of the District Local Board.

I see no reason for having the Huzur Deputy Collector on the District Local Board. He might well give place to the Deputy Educational Inspector.

18. As regards clause (1) *vide* my reply to question 14.

As regards (2) the limit might be reduced to Rs. 3,000.

As regards (3) the limit should *not* be reduced.

As regards (4) it should be reduced to Rs. 25 per mensem.

It would be desirable to have retired third class Magistrates (Head Karkuns), Assistant Masters, &c., resident in a village on a Taluka Local Board, but at present unless they have property qualifications they cannot be elected, as generally their pension is less than Rs. 50 per mensem.

I may add that clause (6) should be dropped altogether from the list of eligible candidates. Officiating revenue or Police Patils should not, I think, be allowed to stand as candidates for election. They are, after all, Government servants, and should not, therefore, be eligible for election.

I would further suggest that literacy should be made a necessary qualification for *membership*, besides the necessary property qualification; and that every adult who is literate should be qualified to be a voter irrespective of any property qualifications.

Rao Bahadur Vinayak Appaji Gupte, District Deputy Collector, Nasik.

The points referred to by the Committee are:—

- (1) Increase of the revenue of these Boards.
- (2) Some relief to the Boards by constituting big villages, as "Notified areas."
- (3) Special establishment of its own for the management of Primary education, and for the execution of the public works.

The present revenue of the Boards is quite inadequate to meet the local needs; and the necessity of increasing it is apparent and also urgent. The complaints about the inadequacy and the insufficiency of roads are serious. Although these Boards are now in existence for nearly 50 years, it cannot be said that every village and hamlet has got a supply of good drinking water. The question of levying this cess on the Irrigation revenue is already before Government. The Income tax payer has long escaped his liability for payment for local works, from which he derives benefit. The Excise revenue of the District comes from the residents of the District and it is not asking too much to say that part of it should be utilized for the moral and material improvement of the people themselves. The Forest Department uses the Local Board roads for carrying its produce. It even wants new roads made for the purpose. It is therefore quite reasonable that that Department should contribute towards the funds of the Board.

There is no objection to increase the legal maximum limit of the cess leviable to two annas in the rupee. But I submit it should not be enforced now. The Survey Settlements are being revised in many Districts and it may be fairly assumed that they will bring in an increase of from 10 to 15 per cent. The Local Fund cess will then proportionately increase. To increase the cess still further by increasing the rate, would be hard upon the cultivator.

I think the present section 187 of the District Municipal Act, 1901, should be modified so as to permit of more villages being constituted as "Notified areas." I have already so stated in my last Administration Report. The present Sanitary Committees are far from a success. Many of them are in villages big enough to be Notified area, but cannot be so constituted on account of the restrictions in clause 3 of the section. The modification of this section is necessary not only in the interests of the Local Boards but also, and much more, in that of the villages themselves.

The question of the entertainment, by District Local Board, of a well paid agency of its own has to be considered chiefly from a financial point of view. It should first be ascertained what it is now paying under this head and what will be the cost of an agency of its own. But one point must be borne in mind, *viz.*, that of effective supervision. The work of the District Board is not the same as that of the Municipality, however large. It extends over a large area and is carried on in a number of places distant from one another. Frequent and strict supervision is absolutely necessary in such cases. Experience has also shown that no agency, however well paid, will do its work, unless there is a regular and graded supervision over it. Such an agency, in this country, especially in the lower grades, soon develops an official 'hauteur' and forgets its responsibility. For Deputy Educational Inspector; and in the Public Works Branch, of an Assistant Engineer or Sub-high Government officers. One may well be excused for observing that the supervision and control of the Boards whether Municipal or Local is not always very efficient.

1. No. No necessity for such a course has yet arisen.
2. No. Not necessary.
3. No. The working of the Local Boards is quite different from that of the Municipalities. The former requires not only thorough knowledge of the District or the Taluka, but also frequent visits to the different parts of it, to keep that knowledge upto date, and to find out the requirements of the people.

4. I do not think the present restrictions should be removed. My reason is that the Local Boards have not a competent staff to scrutinize such estimates or to carry out big works. The proposal can only be considered after a competent staff is employed.

5. No. I do not.

- (a) The resources of a Taluka Board are limited, and if such a Board has a staff of its own, the staff would not have sufficient scope for promotion or transfer.
- (b) Sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets by the District Board is good. Generally the Taluka Board's proposals are sanctioned but the necessity of sanction serves as a check over the work of the Taluka Boards.

6. The present figures of expenditure on primary education show that the District Board pays a very small proportion of the total expenditure. The figures for the year 1914-15 are Rs. 42,411 from the Local Boards and Rs. 1,11,381 from Government.

It is doubtful whether under the circumstances the District Board should take upon itself the entire management of the primary schools and thus be responsible for the total increasing expenditure.

Again, the taking over the management of the primary schools means the employment under the Board of a sufficient staff to supervise the schools. Any staff employed must be paid adequately so as to ensure reliable work. No subordinate staff, however numerous or well paid, will do its work well unless it is subjected to regular and strict supervision. Such a supervising officer will have to be of the grade of a Senior Deputy Educational Inspector with a sufficient number of Assistants. It is therefore a question of finances and should be considered from that point of view.

7. In view of the answer given to question 6 I do not think any change necessary.

8. There are no recent cases of such consultation. I think the need for such consultations does not often arise.

9. It is necessary to increase the revenue of the Local Boards not only to meet the increased expenditure on education but also to enable it to meet the other requirements of the people. I would therefore answer the question as under:—

- (1) No. I think the increase in the one anna cess due to increase in Land Revenue demand, owing to Revision Settlements, will be considerable.
- (2) Yes. But the relief is not likely to be considerable.
- (3) Yes, on all three.
- (4) I am not sure about this, considering the proportionately large amount Government are already spending on Primary education.

10. I think the contention is true. The members, elected and nominated, are either (a) pleaders or traders or money-lenders or (b) Kunbis, &c. The former do not know the needs of the villagers and have not the time, even if they have the inclination, to visit the villages, and understand the needs of the villages. On the other hand, the latter are satisfied to leave everything to the official and beyond making known the wants of their village, will do nothing.

Efforts should be made to secure as members persons who are in touch with the villagers and have the leisure (and also the means) to move about and aid in the execution and supervision of the Local Boards.

11. None appear necessary. Money limits in clauses (1) to (4) may be considerably reduced.

12. No. It is not a question of competition between certain classes of persons. The fact seems to be that men of the right stamp do not come forward. In many groups there is only one candidate.

13. Not invariably. When any non-official gentleman is available for election as Vice-President he may be elected. There should be no rigid rule in such cases.

14. I think it should be Rs. 10.

15. No. I would prefer an additional cess being levied from the Income Tax payers for the Local Board purposes.

16. I think so. The ratio should be that which the total of receipts from one anna cess and from sand and quarries of the Taluka Boards bears to the total receipts of the District under these heads.

17. It will not be well to abolish altogether the system of nomination. There is always a certain number of persons of standing and intelligence who make useful members of Boards but do not like to undergo the trouble and worry of an election and therefore keep away from it. Such persons can come in only by nomination. Such persons are more useful than some Government officials who are nominated as a matter of course, but take no interest in the work.

18. Yes. I think the limits should be reduced to—

- (1) Rs. 10.
- (2) Rs. 2,000.
- (3) Rs. 250.
- (4) Rs. 25 a month

Mr. L. N. Joglekar, Huzur Deputy Collector, Nasik.

1. I am not in favour of giving elected majority either to the District Local Board or Taluka Local Board. On some occasions it so happens that the unintelligent members fall victims to the inducements of a few busybodies and the whole of them continue with the sole object of out-voting the nominated and official members in regard to a particular proposition simply because they are inclined to take a perverse view of it. It is, therefore, necessary that such state of things should be avoided as much as possible.

2. It is not necessary that election should be made by communities. It would secure no practical advantages and the difficulties of such an election would comparatively be great. The present arrangement may continue.

3. The President should not be a non-official but the Vice-President should, and be elected.

4. The limit of Rs. 500 may be raised to Rs. 1,000 and that of Rs. 50 per mile of road may also be raised to Rs. 100.

5. Taluka Local Board may be freed as regards engagements and payments only of menials, but not of employees in superior service nor in respect of Budgets. The employees in superior service will expect promotion in due course and to secure it there ought to be one District List under control of the District Local Board.

6. Yes, I think the views of the Commission may be given effect to and the work of management of primary schools including that of the appointments and transfers of the schoolmasters may be entrusted to the President, District Local Board, who might delegate the same to his Vice-President, the Educational authorities being of course consulted as to the selection of new masters from amongst trained men.

7. The Deputy Educational Inspector should be an *ex-officio* member and should be consulted in respect of appointments, &c., of masters. This modification will cause the expungement of rules 13 and 14 of the rules under section 48 (b).

8. No.

9. (1) Yes, but the limit of 1½ anna should be first tried on revision of the Local Fund Act.

(2) Yes; where possible notified area committees may be appointed.

(3) No. There are separate purposes already assigned to these items.

(4) Yes.

10. It is true that a majority of non-official members, who are very active at the time of appointment, do not subsequently show that zeal and activity in the actual working of the Board's business. Some persons only desire to be members for the sake of name only whereas some do not like to spend even the required cart hire to go to inspect works in progress. I know of instances in which the workmen had to be taken to the member's residence in another village to witness payment of wages. It is hoped that the payment of bhatta and expenses of journey if sanctioned of such members will induce them to show greater interest.

11. Section 10 of the Local Boards Act may be revised and placed on the same footing as that mentioned in section 12 of the District Municipal Act. This will include graduates and men of position and education.

12. I am not in favour of forming separate groups of electors.

13. Yes. *Vide* answer to query 3 above.

14. The limit of Rs. 48 may be reduced to Rs. 30.

15. I am not in favour of the division referred to.

16. The present arrangement seems satisfactory.

17. I think no change need be made in the existing mode of the constitution of a District or Taluka Local Board. There ought to be some provision by which capable non-official persons, who would be otherwise excluded by party feelings, could be brought on the Board. The efficiency members.

18. For clause 1 the limit should be reduced to Rs. 30 as suggested against answer No. 14 above.

For clause No. 2—No change.

„ „ No. 3—No reduction.

„ „ No. 4—Should be reduced to Rs. 25 to allow retired Taluka Head Karkuns being admitted to the Board.

Mr. C. G. Marathe, Mamlatdar of Malegaon.

1. I answer in the affirmative; the majority may be small or large, according to the condition of each District; it should in no case exceed two-thirds of the total number of seats.

2. Election by "communities" is neither desirable, nor practicable: it would be impossible to satisfactorily define "communities" which are so varied in this Presidency; the duties of the Local Boards are extremely general. The nominations should be made with the object of due representation of minorities and interests. Fixed provisions in the law on this question will cause awkward difficulties in the constitution and working of the Boards. The Collectors will be able to arrange for the representation of special communities, where necessary.

3. It is not advisable that the President of the District Local Board should be a non-official; similarly in the case of the Taluka Boards; but wherever practicable, the Vice-President should be an elected non-official, who is elected by two-thirds of the members; failing election, a nomination of a Vice-President may be made by the Commissioners from the elected or nominated members, preference being given to efficient non-officials.

4. I would beg to propose that "Rs. 200" be substituted for the words "Rs. 50" in clause 57 (b)

The other questions are answered in the following table:—

Cost of work.	PLANS AND ESTIMATES.		Work by whom to be executed.
	By whom to be prepared.	By whom to be approved.	
Rs. 1,000 and under ..	Local Board.	Local Board.	Local Board.
Over Rs. 1,000 and upto Rs. 5,000	Do.	Ex. Engineer.	Do.
Over Rs. 5,000 but upto Rs. 10,000	Ex. Engineer.	Do.	Do.
Over Rs. 10,000.. ..	Do.	Do.	Ex. Engineer.

The Boards must be compelled to maintain an adequate staff of qualified overseers, sub-overseers, and, where funds permit, a Sub-Engineer or Assistant Engineer lent from the Government P. W. Department.

5. Taluka Boards should be free to employ temporary servants, *e.g.*, sub-overseers, chowkidars, peons, dharmashalla keepers, and subject to the approval of the District Boards, temporary overseers. Taluka Board Budgets, original and supplementary, need no detailed sanction from the District Local Board: in practice, the District Board has no local knowledge and never declines to pass the Budgets. The District Board may, however, be given the power to veto any items in the Taluka Board Budget, if the Collector concurs in the reasons which lead the District Board to veto any item. Reappropriations of Budget grants should similarly be in the entire control of the Taluka Boards.

6. For want of the inspecting staff, the District Boards cannot be entrusted with the management of Primary Schools: but where the Board can maintain an adequate staff, and shows its earnestness in the question by adding an educational cess of *one anna*, the transfer would be desirable: Government contributing a fair percentage of their present expenditure on the inspecting staff, as an extra grant. Where the needs of education are not felt so keenly by the District Boards, present arrangements may continue.

7. Should the inspecting staff be provided by the District Boards, the appointment, punishment, dismissal of masters, etc., should be in the hands of a School Board, of which the Deputy Educational Inspector (or the highest of the inspecting staff) should be the Secretary or advisor; the question of pension contributions being reserved in the hands of the Educational Department. The inspection and examination shall be done by the inspecting staff (the inspecting staff should be lent from the Educational Department, the staff if confined to a district will be not the best; it will cause stagnation and discontent and will deteriorate). The plans and estimates for school buildings costing over Rs. 5,000 should require the previous approval of the Educational Inspector. With standard plans and detailed lists of suggestions about school buildings, this limit should not cause any buildings to be erected which will be found unsuitable in the end. The Director of Public Instruction need not be approached for small buildings accommodating about 25 pupils as at present. Approval of sites for school houses costing not more than Rs. 5,000 may safely be left to the Chairman of the School Board and the Deputy Inspector.

8. From what I have been able to ascertain, I answer the question in the negative.

9. (1) Local Fund cess should be raised to 2 annas in the rupee, only if the extra revenue is to be spent on Educational objects, not otherwise.

- (2) There are very few large villages in each Taluka, which if constituted "notified areas," will afford "relief" to the District Board Revenues. If the extra one anna cess is levied in the District, the District Board must make a grant of the whole of the extra cess collected in the village, in addition to one-third of the old cess. The District Board should not disassociate itself with the questions of education, medical relief, etc., but keep up its interest by grants for various purposes. The scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act will have to be enlarged.
- (3) Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on both (a) Income-tax and (b) Abkari Revenue; but not on Forest Revenue, which taps a source already paying taxation for Local Board purposes.
- (4) By far the greatest relief to every District Local Board must come from Provincial subventions. The Boards require liberal assistance; the distribution among the Boards should be in proportion to the additional revenue the Board collects, Government reserving the power of granting extra assistance to poorer Boards on the merits of each case.

10. The partial failure of the District and Taluka Boards is not entirely due to the causes referred to in the question. The Local Board can nowhere compare with a Municipal District, because the areas under the Boards are vast, the representation is poor, the resources so limited: the standard of intelligence, learning, personal and local interest, the inter-communication between members and the constituents are all quite poor as compared with those in the Municipal District. The services demanded of the members have to be performed at inconvenient distances from the homes of members. The number of elected members must be raised.

11. In my humble opinion, the qualifying minimum should be reduced to Rs. 20. Life has undergone changes during the last 30 years; large agricultural holdings and big khatas have now been replaced by a number of small holders; the "qualified" under the present law are undesirably few and their common voice becomes the feeble voice of a very few and is never heard. With the new system of recognising small partitions in the Record of Rights which are the basis of the Revenue accounts, the present law needs amendment. Probably in many Municipalities which are compact areas, and the ratepayers in which get the benefits of self-government and taxation far better, the qualifying limit is Rs. 3, and sometimes even less. Though section 10 (1) is undoubtedly permissive in the matter, no lower limit has in fact been ever adopted, and the many cess payers do not know what is done with the taxes they pay. The power of reducing the limit of Rs. 48 may with advantage be delegated by Government to the Collector or the Commissioner, who know the areas far better.

For reasons like the above, the limit in clause (2) should, I submit, be reduced to Rs. 2,000; in clause (3) Rs. 300 may be substituted for Rs. 500; in clause (4) Rs. 12-8 or 15 may safely be substituted for Rs. 50; a pensioner who drew Rs. 25 or more per month when in service, should certainly have a voice, when a revenue patil drawing about half the same is given a right to vote. With the franchise thus extended, the basis of local self-government will be widened, and many persons of intelligence and desire to serve their brethren for honour will be forthcoming. The chance of a repetition of the charges against the present condition of the Boards will be minimised, with such a measure coupled with an increase in the number of elective seats.

12. I am not in favour of "separate groups" of electors referred to in clauses 2 and 6 of section 10. Men from these classes are undoubtedly useful, but they should not be allowed to represent their own class but the villages in general; for the success of any elective system, the elected must be required to gain the support of a large number of voters.

13. A hard and fast rule like the one suggested may probably bring some Taluka Boards into a deadlock. Executive instructions as to the necessity of carrying out the spirit of the law should suffice to achieve the end in view, wherever the necessary material exists or is likely to be made up.

14. This has been already answered above, *vide* question 11.

15. Though in favour of a division in the Land Revenue and Income-tax, I am unable to suggest a proportion. The question will have to be answered with the other suggestions about the strengthening of the Board's resources.

16. A proportion of division of the proceeds of one anna cess may with advantage be fixed by law: this will give assurance to the Taluka Boards that they may safely calculate upon a definite share of the taxes paid returning to them for being expended on works of local utility; I would suggest that one-tenth or one-eighth of the net proceeds of the anna cess after deducting the Educational portion be fixed. Some margin must be left for the District Board to provide extra funds for poorer Taluka Boards, with urgent wants.

17. Nomination of non-officials is necessary for the representation of minorities, backward classes, and special interests; nomination of intelligent and reliable workers for honour should not be made impossible. The official members of each Taluka Board, who can devote sufficient time and energy to the concerns of local interest, are too few to make it possible to constitute a Board of purely elected members and nominated officials. The nominated members should not ordinarily exceed one-third of the total number, and not more than half of the nominated members may be officials. This will bring the constitution of the Local Boards on a level with that of the Municipal Boards.

18. Already answered above (question 11).

Mr. G. M. Vinchurkar, Vice-President, District Local Board, Nasik.

1. I am of opinion that with the exception of the following officials who should be appointed as nominated members, all the members of the District and the Taluka Local Boards should be elected :—

District Local Board—Members to be nominated by Government.

- (1) The Collector (to be the President).
- (2) The Civil Surgeon.
- (3) The Deputy Sanitary Commissioner.

Taluka Local Board—Members to be nominated by Government.

- (1) The Assistant or the Deputy Collector in charge of the Taluka (to be the President of the Board).
- (2) The Mamlatdar.

This will mean an increase in the number of the elected members both in the District and the Taluka Local Boards. In the case of the District Boards each Taluka should be given the right of electing two members instead of one as at present. The right of electing members now being exercised by the holders of entire alienated villages and by Municipalities should remain as it is. I would, however, recommend in the case of the latter the reduction of the population standard from 18 to 10 thousands.

2. I am opposed to giving representation to communities inasmuch as the interest of a particular community is not likely to conflict with that of the other, the works provided for in the Budget being of general utility. A question is likely to be raised as to whether in a Taluka, where the Hindu population preponderates, the Hindu members will not object to the opening of Urdu schools for Mahomedans wherever such institutions are considered by that community to be necessary. My own experience is that other communities have jointly worked with the Mahomedans in ensuring for them the opening of such institutions. The good feeling that at present exists in the various communities is likely to suffer if they were to be given separate representations and in my opinion it will be in the interest of Government not to give any room for creating differences and heart-burnings in these communities.

3. This question has been answered in my reply to question 1.

4. I think the present limitation on the preparation of plans and estimates and the execution of public works imposed by sections 57 and 61 of the District Local Board Act should be entirely removed, the Boards appointing their own trained staff for preparing plans and estimates for the works provided for in the budget and executing them.

5. I think the Taluka Local Board should be permitted to sanction their original and revised budgets and reappropriations within the allotments made by the District Boards after meeting their statutory obligations. It will not be desirable in my opinion to permit Taluka Boards to appoint the establishments required by them inasmuch as their efficiency will not be maintained. At present the members of the clerical department are transferred to the Boards by the Collector under existing Government orders. This ensures their prospects. There will be no scope for the members of such establishments for bettering their pecuniary status if each Taluka Local Board were to appoint its own Karkuns.

6. I do think that the time has arrived for handing over to the District Boards the management of primary schools. For this purpose these Boards should appoint their teaching and the inspecting staff. The management of primary schools by the Boards will enable them to set their own curricula in tracts where the present standards laid down by the Educational Department are unsuitable.

7. If the above proposal were to be sanctioned, the present grant-in-code rules will require modifications. What those modifications should be can best be settled by Government in consultation with the Boards.

8. No such instance as is referred to in this question has come to my knowledge.

9. The proposals made above will necessarily entail an additional expenditure on the Boards for increasing their income. Four suggestions have been made in this question. The following is my opinion on each of them :—

- (1) I strongly deprecate the idea of raising the one anna local fund cess for the principal reason that it will give rise to disaffection amongst the Rayat.
- (2) Under chapter 14 of the District Municipal Act notified area committees can only be established at the Taluka Headquarters or in villages within a radius of a mile from the railway. Consequently, villages in the interior and those lying on the extreme borders of the Taluka will not come under the scope of that chapter. Then again, a number of villages in a Taluka which can be classed as important will not, I think, from my knowledge of the District, be able to bear the charge that will be thrown on them.

- (3) & (4) I think it would be inadvisable to levy any cess on Income-Tax, Abkari and Forest Revenues as it will ultimately fall on the consumer. I would recommend that Government should supplement the Boards' income by granting them annually certain fixed proportions of these revenues.

10 to 18. Most of the questions set by two members of the Committee appointed by Government in their Resolution No. 6444 dated 18th August 1915 have been answered above. The only question on which I consider myself called upon to express my views is question 18. I would propose—

- (1) that the limit of Rs. 48 assessment fixed by clause 1, section 10 of the Act should be reduced to Rs. 20;
- (2) that the value of the immoveable property should be reduced from 5 to 2 thousands;
- (3) that the amount of pension fixed in clause 4 of the section be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15;
- (4) that the net annual earnings fixed at Rs. 500 by clause 3 of the section should be reduced to Rs. 300.

Mr. H. F. Knight, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Malegaon Division.

1. For administrative efficiency and arousal of interest among members, elected majorities would effect no improvement. In my opinion too often persons stand for election, not with a desire to do public work for the community, but to secure the honour of election and a seat on the board. Nomination, if used properly, secures persons more anxious to do service, in addition to providing representation of minorities.

2. Election by communities is unsuited to District and Taluka Local Boards owing to the size of the District and Talukas and would usually mean election of the communities of the District and Taluka Headquarter towns only.

3. It is undesirable that Presidents of District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should be unofficials, for

- (i) Unofficial individuals of requisite standing, education, impartiality and knowledge of the whole of a District or Taluka would be difficult to find.
- (ii) With increased establishment and income a President of administrative experience is needed.

4. The present system leads to great delay. A Board Engineer is the only solution. Taluka Local Boards have not the necessary staff to do large works unaided and unchecked.

5. Sanction and revision of budgets by District Local Board is unnecessary. Engagements, etc., of Taluka Local Board servants by District Local Board is necessary to secure a cadre large enough for reasonable prospects of advancement.

6. The present condition of schools is unsatisfactory. The District Local Board is capable of taking them over.

7. No suggestion.

8. I know of no instance.

9. I agree with Mr. Lawrence's note, and would point out that a cess on Abkari and Forest Revenues which are commercial would in the result probably be equivalent to a circuitous method of giving a Provincial grant.

10. The failure of Local Boards is very largely due to the lack of interest on the part of non-official members.

Causes :—

- (i) The idea that membership is merely an honour involving no liabilities.
- (ii) The stay at home disposition of most inhabitants of the mofussil which prevents their having knowledge of, or interest in, any area except of a few miles round their own village.
- (iii) Ignorance of how to take an interest or supervise works.
- (iv) The relatively small sums available for discretionary disposal, which makes much of the work to be routine and most uninteresting.
- (v) Absence of a leisured class with traditions of gratuitous service.
- (vi) Lack of communications which make frequent attendance at head-quarters burdensome.

Remedies :—For (i) (ii) (v) the slow growth of public spirit is the only remedy.

For (iv) An increase in the income of the boards will provide more opportunities for enthusiasm. Practically the solution in my opinion is the delegation of all petty and local works to much smaller bodies in which local public spirit would really exist, *e.g.*, village or *saza* boards—while granting the District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards larger and more unfettered powers in matters which need centralization.

11. No opinion.

12. There is nothing to prevent representatives of classes 2 to 6 of section 10 being, and such often are, elected.

13. Whether the Vice-President of a Taluka Local Board should be a non-official must depend on whether in any Taluka there is any unofficial sufficiently influential, leisured and energetic to undertake unpaid work involving much time and much travelling. No hard and fast rule is possible.

14. Statutory minimum of assessment should depend on local condition.

15. Not desirable.

16. Division of cess between District Local Board and Taluka Local Board must depend on the circumstances of the District, one District may need nothing so much as petty village wells, another may need main communications in roads and bridges.

17. Abolition of nomination of unofficial members is undesirable from administrative point of view, in that—

(i) Where there are two well qualified persons in an area returning one member, nomination secures the services of both instead of one.

(ii) Many capable and influential gentlemen will not expose themselves to the hazard of election. (Further nomination is required for representation of minorities)

18. Qualification under section 10 (1) should be reduced according to local circumstances. Those under sections 10 (2) (3) (4) should not be reduced until these qualifications involve greater contribution to the Local Fund than at present.

SATARA DISTRICT.

B. A. Brendon, Esquire, I.C.S., Collector of Satara.

With reference to para 2 of your letter, I entirely agree with you that the Taluka Board is not a success. Nor can I suggest any practical means by which it can be galvanized into life. I am aware that the Decentralization Commission reported in favour of Taluka Boards, but I differ from the views of the Commission on this point in so far as this Presidency is concerned. If, as I hope, village panchayats are established with the functions described below, I cannot see what will remain to Taluka Boards of functions which cannot be discharged at least equally well and certainly with more economy by the District Board. The executive staff of the District Board will undoubtedly require strengthening, but this step is necessary in any case to infuse more life into the District Board. The Decentralization Commission thought education could not safely be left to panchayats and must be controlled by Taluka Boards but I cannot see why it should be necessary to establish an intermediate authority between the District Board and the panchayats. The latter clearly cannot be entrusted with the administrative side of education, for this must be controlled by some central authority, nor with the curriculum, for this must be controlled by the Department. In my opinion the central authority should be the District Board and not the Taluka Board.

There is one educational function which I would allow to panchayats. In the event of the District Board being unable to open a school in a village I would allow the panchayat to open a school and staff and control it subject to inspection by the Department. In this case the panchayat would have to finance the school out of its own resources.

To enable the District Board better to control expenditure and to perform its functions I would appoint all Mamlatdars and Mahalkaris executive officers of the Board without becoming members. The Board's surveyors would be their subordinates.

The Act of course will require amendment to provide for direct election to the District Board. Whether the election should be by the panchayats or direct is a matter for consideration but I am inclined to think election should be by the panchayats from among their members.

I would give village panchayats control of conservancy, lighting, village roads, water supply, etc., in fact, all Municipal functions except education. I would abolish Sanitary Committees and Boards and even Notified Areas and merge the functions of these bodies in those of village panchayats. I would allow two or more villages within a certain radius to establish a common panchayat, which would thus be enabled to keep in order a village road serving more than one village up to its junction with the main road. The jurisdiction of village panchayats should extend to the limits of the village lands. The panchayats should have powers of taxation and should receive surplus receipts of cattle-pounds and sand and quarry fees.

It will I fear be necessary to make the establishment of panchayats compulsory under the law, for the people will not spontaneously agree to tax themselves for services which they have been accustomed either to do without or to look to the Local Board to perform. But the taxation will be solely for the benefit of the area in which it is raised and will not be open to the same objection as an additional Local Fund cess.

The panchayats should consist of a nominated Sar Panch, 2 nominated and 2 elected members.

I have no objection provided that some means are secured by which the rate payers shall retain financial control and that the persons mentioned in clauses 2 to 5 of section 10 of the Act shall not be able to secure practical control of the Board's administration and expenditure. The assistance of these classes is welcome but only so long as it is *assistance*. In this respect Local Boards are on a totally different footing from Municipalities, where the area is small, public opinion exists and the administration and expenditure are under the immediate view of the voters. An amendment of clauses 2 to 5 is necessary to secure that the representation of these classes on the Boards is limited to a certain proportion.

In the case of election by communities can you suggest the constitution of your District and of one of your Taluka Boards? Do you think the present number of members sufficient or should it be increased?

No. The only community entitled to consideration from the point of view of Local Boards is the agricultural community; and its interests will be properly secured by the amendment suggested above of clauses 2 to 5 of section 10 of the Act.

The present number of members is sufficient.

I am of opinion that the Presidents of Local Boards should continue to be the highest administrative officers in the area. It is not at present possible that the Board's business should be efficiently conducted by non-official gentlemen.

My reasons for this opinion are :—

1. The Boards have generally no offices of their own; and it would be unreasonable to expect Collectors, Assistant Collectors and Mamlatdars to vacate their offices whenever a non-official President desired to hold a meeting.

2. No single non-official member of a District Board is so well acquainted with the diverse conditions and needs of the different parts of the District as the Collector.

3. The revenue and expenditure of a District Board are on a scale unknown in Municipalities and the complexity and diversity of the questions are also much greater.

4. The Local Board is bound to be in close contact with other Departments with whom friction might be set up, were the administration conducted by a non-official gentleman.

Provided a Board has a competent and qualified professional man at the head of its staff and a competent staff under him for the execution of works, it should certainly be allowed to prepare plans and estimates for and execute works costing up to Rs. 2,500 instead of Rs. 500—the present limit.

As for roads the limit may be raised from Rs. 50 to Rs. 150 per mile. Working steam rollers and keeping them in order under a competent staff will probably for some time to come be beyond the means of a Local Board.

5. I have already said above that the Taluka Local Boards are perfectly useless and should be replaced by village panchayats.

6. I think that education should be controlled on the administrative side by the District Local Board and in so far as the curriculum goes by the Department. I differ from the views of the Royal Commission. The exception to this is case of schools opened and staffed by village panchayats and financed out of their own resources.

7. *Vide* reply to question 6.

8. No.

9. (1) No. The measure would be unpopular. It might also be felt an unnecessary and inequitable burden by remote areas, unless it be provided that the additional revenue shall be spent within the area in which it was raised.

(2) I approve of the idea but the relief thus afforded would be inconsiderable. Please see my proposal to abolish 'Notified Areas' and constitute village panchayats in their stead.

(3) (a) *Income Tax*—

I have no objection on principle, but the revenue would be small and perhaps not worth the trouble involved in securing the necessary amendment of an India Act.

(3) (b) *Abkari Revenue*—

I approve of the suggestion

(3) (c) *Forest Revenue*—

The difficulty will be how to recover the cess, which must it would appear operate to reduce Forest Revenue.

If Government agree that the Forest Department should levy a cess and pay the proceeds to the Local Boards like Land Revenue, there is no objection.

(4) In this connection I suggest that some contribution be obtained from Irrigation Revenue. To equalize the benefit charges for water might be slightly raised all round and the proceeds of the additional charges divided among all Boards in a fair proportion as a Government subvention.

10. I do not admit that District Boards have been a failure though I admit that the supervision of works by non-official members has been a failure. This is due partly to the system by which all important works are executed by the Public Works Department and partly to want of education and public spirit. Moreover, ordinary education will not befit a man to supervise the execution of works. This fact must be recognized and we must not expect the impossible. The Board's staff requires to be increased.

As for Taluka Boards I admit they have been a total failure and I would abolish them. The causes of their failure are that they are exotics and do not fit into the indigenous system. They should be replaced by panchayats working under one central authority—the District Board.

11. I see no need for any addition to the qualifications. On the contrary I consider some restriction necessary on the representation of the classes enumerated in clauses 2 to 5 of sec. 10. In my opinion the elected members of the District Board should be elected by the panchayats.

12. Please see answer to question 11.

13. No hard and fast rule is desirable. In all cases the best men should be secured.

14. The figure might be reduced to, say, Rs. 24. But as stated above I consider election to the District Board should be by panchayats.

15. Government is the only authority which can answer this question which entirely depends on how much Government can spare

16. No. The splitting up of revenue in this manner between several bodies causes waste and this is one of the principal reasons for my opinion that Taluka Boards should be superseded

17. I do not object to elected majorities provided the representation of classes enumerated in clauses 2 to 5 of section 10 is strictly limited and that the rate payers have real financial control.

18. The limitation under (f) might be reduced to Rs 24. The other limitations should certainly not be reduced. The representation of these classes requires to be strictly limited; see answers above, *passim*.

Mr. J. R. Hood, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Satara.

1. Yes.

2. I am not in favour of election by communities, nor do I think any special communities or interests suffer from lack of representation under the present system. The present number of members is sufficient.

3. No.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works should apply to works estimated to cost Rs 1,000 instead of, as now, Rs 500, or the limit might be raised still higher. This implies the maintenance of a more efficient engineering staff by the District Local Board.

5. The Taluka Local Board should be free from the District Local Board's control in regard to engagement and payment of all Taluka Local Board servants whose pay does not exceed Rs. 15 per mensem. I have actually seen the time of the District Local Board wasted in sanctioning the engagement by a Taluka Local Board of a Dharmashala-keeper at 8 annas a month.

The control of the Taluka Local Board budget should be left to the Board itself.

6. No, unless the Inspecting staff at present employed by the Educational Department is to be largely transferred to the District Local Board, and I see no gain in this.

7. No alterations seem necessary

8. No

9. (1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. So far as the Boards are a failure, no doubt the failure is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation by non-official members. The causes are lack of education and public spirit, and the limited powers enjoyed by the Boards. The remedies must be the gradual spread of education and growth of public spirit: the last will only be attained as wider powers and responsibilities are enjoyed by the Boards. It has been suggested to me that non-official members should receive travelling allowance for expenses incurred by them as members. I am not in favour of this proposal which appears to me to show a complete lack of appreciation of what is meant by public spirit.

11. The qualification for voters should be reduced as follows, *vide* section 10:—

(1) Rs. 24.

(2) Rs. 2,500

(3) Rs. 360.

(4) Rs. 20.

12. *Vide* answer to 11. I see no necessity for adopting further means.

13. It is not invariably desirable.

14. Rs. 24.

15. I am not in favour of such division.

16. I am not in favour of fixing the proportion by law.

17. I do not think the administrative efficiency of a Board is likely to suffer if the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. The proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be 1 to 3.

18. Yes, as stated in answer to question 11.

Mr. N. C. Pethe, Huzur Deputy Collector, Satara.

1. If we look to the history of the Local Funds we find that from entire control of Government officials we have come up step by step to half the number of members being elected and one half again of the nominated members being non-officials. The next step is majority of elected members. We have had ample experience of the present system, people have got sufficient training and have begun to take interest in communal work, liberal ideas are gradually permeating the society and the example of other nations has been engendering aspirations to have a part in the administration. For some years past people have been demanding representation and Government have most nobly granted it in the case of Legislative Councils of India and Bombay. Elected majorities have been recognized in the Provincial Council and also in several Municipalities. It is only in the District and Taluka Boards where the system has not yet been introduced. The time to do it has arrived and it may be seized and elected majorities introduced.

2. There seems to be no necessity of electing by communities. The duties of Local Boards pertain to tracts and villages and all communities in the particular tract or village will derive equal advantages from everything done by the Local Board. Roads, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Markets, Dharmshalas, tanks, wells constructed and maintained by the Board will be for common use. The schools and training colleges opened and maintained by the Boards will be open to all alike. The same will be the case in Vaccination, Sanitary works. In the case of schools and training colleges it may be said that Mahomedans require Urdu Schools and the East-Indian English schools. But there is no reason whatever to suppose that members of other communities will grudge to make provision for them. Besides where the population of a community is large enough to require a school, there is also the probability of some of them being elected as members. And above all Government will have the power to intervene which will be a sufficient safe-guard against undue partiality. The object should be to teach our people to make common cause in all matters and to undermine religious differences in secular affairs.

The principle of communal representation when once recognized will lead to endless troubles. We have already the example of Parsees and East Indians demanding separate electorate seeing that the Mahomedans have got it in the case of election for Legislative Councils. If it be carried further, each caste among Hindus will demand separate representation and the result will be innumerable troubles. It is better to leave no room for it from the very beginning.

For the same reasons I am of opinion that no special provision need be made for special communities or interests.

3. If the Boards are to come to the standard of real local self-government, the Presidents of both the District and Taluka Boards must be non-officials and those too elected. It must, however, be seen whether it is possible to secure persons fit to occupy the posts. As far as Taluka Boards are concerned, there will be no difficulty in the matter. In each Taluka there are several persons who are fit to discharge the duties and who have personally seen the whole of the Taluka and one can be elected. In the case of District Boards, however, it will be difficult to find out a non-official who has seen the whole of the District. And without being personally acquainted with the whole of the District it is not possible to discharge the duties of the President of the District Board. He must know what roads are in bad condition, what tracts are not yet opened by good roads, what villages have no supply of good drinking water, which of them requires a school, and so on. It is only with full knowledge of the situation that he can appreciate the propriety of a proposal, I therefore think that the President of a District Board should be a nominated non-official if available and if not the Collector should be the President. The Collector will see whether such a non-official is available or undertake the duties himself.

4. This would depend upon the staff employed by the District Board. If there be an officer at the head of the Board's agency of the status of an Executive Engineer there would be no objection to give the Boards full power without any limitation. But there are no Boards able to employ such a highly-paid officer. At most they can engage a man of the Assistant Engineer's class, some will even not be able to engage an officer higher than a supervisor's class. It would therefore be preferable to allow Boards to prepare their own plans and estimates and approve of them and execute all works costing not more than Rs 15,000 where they have in their staff a man of the Assistant Engineer's rank and costing not more than Rs 5,000 in other cases.

5. The staff required by the Taluka Local Boards is generally the following:—

1. Maistry or Sub-Overseer.
2. Taluka Local Board Karkun.
3. Peons to the Karkun and to the Maistry.
4. Dharmshala-keepers.
5. Nursery Mali.
6. Temporary Mukadams.

There is no objection to give the Taluka Local Boards full authority to appoint, grant leave, punish, suspend or dismiss any of these, subject to appeal to the District Local Board.

Similarly, there is no objection to authorize the Taluka Local Boards to sanction their own budget within their own income.

6. The first question will be whether the Boards if given full control of primary schools will be able to finance it. During 1914-15 the expenditure on account of primary education amounted to Rs. 2,03,722. The expenditure was met as follows :—

1/3rd of the cess on land	Rs. 55,884
1/3rd of cess on Excise Revenue	„ 660
School fees	„ 11,776
Miscellaneous receipts	„ 116
Government grant	„ 1,49,809
	Rs 2,18,245

the excess of receipts over expenditure having gone to increase the closing balance

It will thus be seen that more than two-thirds of the present expenditure is borne by Government. If full control is transferred to the Local Board it will have to pay for the District Inspecting staff which I understand will come to Rs 25,000 per year. This expenditure of the Inspecting staff is at present borne by Government. The same amount will have to be transferred to the Board and added to the grant. Thus the Board will be able to finance the control of primary education if Government continues to pay the existing grant and the amount annually spent by them on the Inspection staff.

If this difficulty of finance is thus disposed of, I see no objection to transfer the full control of primary education to the Board. The schools and the teachers will remain as they are under the control of the Deputy Educational Inspector, who on his part will be a paid executive officer subordinate to the District Local Board. He may be given full authority to appoint, transfer, punish, suspend or dismiss any teacher or peon of a school subject to appeal to the District Local Board. The power of the opening of new schools, the closing of existing schools, the increase of teachers or peon's staff, increase of pay, and sanction of plans and estimates of original works costing more than Rs. 500 and the framing of general rules of management be reserved by the District Local Board entrusting some of the less important of these duties to a Sub-Committee of the Board. In this way I think primary education can be managed by the Boards.

7. If the management of primary schools is to remain with the Educational Department, no modification appears necessary.

If however the management is transferred to the Local Board, there will be no necessity of any rule, as the whole will be Local Board concern and the Local Board might frame rules for the management of the Department.

8. So far as I know the Taluka Local Board has never been consulted. The reason seems to be that the amount raised in a Taluka is generally spent in it and there is no occasion to consult them.

9. Of the 4 remedies proposed to enhance the revenues of the Local Boards the first, viz., to increase the cess to 2 annas, should not be resorted to at all. For the poverty of the agriculturists has become too well-known to require proof. In comparison with most other professions agriculture is the least remunerative so much so that those who follow it prefer to be even peons on Rs 7 or 8 a month and we can see in the villages agriculturists, men and women, clad in rags and having no money to purchase sugar and jaggeery even on holidays. I am therefore entirely against increasing the rate of this cess.

As regards the 2nd item, there will be very few villages large enough and coming within the conditions of clause 3 of section 187 of the District Municipal Act and the relief afforded would be inappreciable. There is no objection however to do it and it would certainly be more or less advantageous.

The 3rd item is the one which can be resorted to at once. The one anna cess can be levied on every rupee paid as Income-tax, Abkari Revenue and Forest. The assessment of the cess on the two latter will be hailed by all, but that on Income-tax will rather be unpopular as Income-tax itself has been, but that unpopularity has no sound reason for justification.

As regards Provincial subventions, Government have already been contributing liberally. Whether to increase the support or not entirely depends upon the financial condition of the Provincial Government. Leaving aside the difficulties caused by the war, the finances of the Bombay Government appear to be prosperous and they will, I think, afford to increase their contribution. But instead of annually paying substantial contributions it would be far better if one or more Revenue heads be assigned as cattle pounds, ferries and sand and quarries and poison have been. By doing this Government will be freed from the responsibility of paying annual contributions and the Boards without expecting anything more from Government will have to see their own way to make up the deficit.

10. I do not think so. One reason of the failure is the shortage of funds. The Act places too many responsibilities on the Boards and it goes hard with them to make the two ends meet even by discharging the ordinary duties. There is no scope whatever for carrying out improvements.

Another reason is the want of Inspecting staff. We cannot, I think, expect Honorary members to go from place to place at their own expense to supervise the different works in the District. They

are merely a consultative body and the execution must be carried out by a paid staff, from a Mukadam upwards to an Engineer or Secretary who must be held responsible for proper execution. To expect the members of the Board both to advise and to execute is hoping too much.

The third reason of the failure is the official control. The officials manage the whole thing and the non-officials therefore have no incentive to take interest and have nothing to do but to nod their heads in favour of official proposals.

Give therefore sufficient funds, a good staff and full control to non-officials and non-officials will be able to wield it creditably.

11. The principle is that the electoral franchise should vest in those who contribute to the funds of that body.

The funds at present consist of—

- (1) The net proceeds of the one anna cess.
- (2) The net proceeds of ferries.
- (3) The net proceeds of tolls (since abolished).
- (4) Fees, fines and penalties under the Poisons Act.
- (5) Local Land Revenue
- (6) Cattle-pound receipts.

The receipts under the different heads in the Satara District were as follows during 1914-15 :—

	Rs.
One anna cess	1,67,651
Ferries	3,524
Tolls	7,605
Poisons	Nil
Local land revenue	268
Cattle-pounds	5,993

It will thus be seen that 91 per cent. of the revenue is derived from cess-payers. But considering that the cess is paid from the produce of the labour of agricultural tenants, and that they also contribute their quota to the ferry and cattle-pounds and toll receipts I think tenants of land paying rent equivalent to Rs. 48 a year may be included.

12. I think if any means suggests itself it will be too elaborate

13. Yes. The principle is to give prominence to non-officials so far as is compatible with efficiency. It is therefore highly desirable that Presidents themselves should be non-officials, but if for efficiency's sake it is not possible, Vice-Presidents at least may be non-officials.

14. I am not in a position to make actual calculations and see for myself what change in the number of voters eligible on account of this qualification has been wrought by the Record of Rights. But generally speaking I think that although some men might lose the franchise on account of the entry of sharers, others who were not registered occupants might get it and the difference would not be material. If experience shows that that number has materially decreased, Government have the power to reduce the minimum.

15. The total income of the Satara District Board excluding Government grants was Rs. 1,88,720 and the expenditure Rs. 3,74,524. The deficit of Rs. 2,04,938 was covered by Provincial grants. If again the whole of the management of the schools be entrusted to the Board Rs. 25,000 more will be required. Further, with the present income the Board finds itself unable to make much improvement. In all I think the Board must have an income of Rs. 5,00,000 to be enabled to discharge all its duties satisfactorily. Leaving out about Rs. 2,00,000 which is approximately the legitimate income of the Board, a contribution of Rs. 3,00,000 in some shape or other is necessary. Instead of contributing this sum annually it would be far better to assign a portion of Revenue to the District Board.

The total income in the Satara District from Land Revenue during 1914-15 was Rs. 20,28,363 and from Income-tax Rs. 29,194. Taking half of it as Provincial share, the Provincial receipts from Land Revenue would amount to Rs. 1,014,182. If one-fourth of this be assigned to the Board, the trouble of granting annual contributions will be saved and the finances of the Board will attain stability.

The receipt from Income Tax is too small and no portion of it need be assigned.

If one anna cess be levied on Abkari, Income Tax, Forest this proportion would be reduced.

16. The total one-anna cess receipts of the District during 1914-15 were .. Rs. 1,67,651

Deducting—

The portion under section 48	55,884
Charges under section 46	17,702
Total	Rs. 73,586
Remainder	94,065

there remained a balance of Rs. 94,065 of which Rs. 30,000 were distributed among the several Taluka Local Boards. Apparently this amount seems to be small. But the reason is that the District Local Board has taken upon itself many duties which according to section 49 can devolve on Taluka Boards, e.g., Dharmashalas, roads useful within the area of one Taluka such as Koregaon Rahimatpur road, Khandala, Lonand road, Leth-Shirala Arala road, Satara Yewteshwar road, etc. Thus the only difference is that instead of the Taluka Board, the District Board spends it. If we strictly adhere to the principle and throw the responsibility of constructing and repairing all roads within the area of Taluka and constructing and repairing Dharmashalas and also of Medical dispensaries as there is now a dispensary in each Taluka, the ratio can be increased in favour of the Taluka Local Board. But I do not think any legal provision is necessary for it. It is only a matter of convenience and the family dispute can be amicably settled within the family itself.

17. The main principle is that there should be as many intelligent members as possible. And in countries where there are people of different nationalities some caution is required in safe-guarding the interests of minorities. But in India that caution does not seem to be necessary. For the so-called minorities, the Mahomedans, the Parsis, the Jews, the Jains, the East-Indians, Native Christians are all naturalized in it and have been residing peacefully as neighbours. On the contrary it seems necessary to foster a feeling of a single nationality and therefore refrain from giving prominence or special recognition to the difference

We may therefore stick to the main principle of intelligence alone. If therefore election can be relied upon in ensuring the return of intelligent persons there is no objection to abolish nomination for non-officials. But unfortunately experience shows that voters are not mindful of this and prove themselves the victims of irregular practices and give preference to a man inferior in all respects. I can quote instances in which an honourable member of a Legislative Council and a common Marwadi trader were candidates but the honourable member was defeated. In another case a prominent pleader and an owner of hackney tonga were the candidates and the palm was shared by the hackney tonga man. To avert the management falling into unworthy hands it is necessary to empower Government to nominate suitable persons. I therefore think that nomination of non-officials cannot be entirely dispensed with

18. In the answer to question No. 11 I have suggested that tenants paying Rs 48 as rent may have the franchise. This will swell the number of voters and no reduction in the minimum will then be necessary.

R. G. Apte, Esquire, B.A., Deputy Educational Inspector, Satara.

4. At present Local Boards are not allowed to undertake the construction of buildings costing over Rs. 2,500 and plans and estimates of works costing over Rs. 500 have to be checked by the Public Works Department. It is clear that these limitations are imposed because the Local Board agency is neither adequate nor sufficiently qualified to frame correct plans and estimates or to undertake the construction of costly works. The result is that for every work costing more than Rs. 500 the Boards have to seek the expert assistance of the Public Works Department. These limitations thus come in the way of speedy execution of buildings. Many of the Local Board Schools are badly housed and with the expansion of primary education the question of providing buildings—preferably of a cheaper type—has become very urgent. For the last two years Government have been offering free building grants, but the District Board has not been able to claim them as the Public Works Department is not able, for want of sufficient establishment, to construct school houses within a short time. The result is that although the Board has decided upon the construction of some school houses, the execution has been delayed not for want of funds but because the Public Works Department is not able to cope with the work—the energies of the Department being over-taxed. If the District Local Board has an expert agency of its own, the construction of buildings can be carried out within a much shorter time. Another thing that I may point out is that buildings of the standard type of the Public Works Department cost nowadays between Rs. 45 and Rs. 50 for the accommodation of pupils per head. A school-house for 100 boys thus costs about Rs. 5,000 and a village school building for 40 scholars about Rs. 1,800. These figures are certainly too high for Local Board Schools, considering the resources of the Board, and the necessity of devising a cheaper form of school building has thus become urgent. If the Board has an efficient agency of its own, it would find a free scope to devise and carry out cheaper forms of buildings and its buildings could be erected within a much shorter time. If the Boards engaged the services of a man of the status and experience of an Assistant Engineer and some experienced overseers under him, I think there would be no objection to do away with the present limitations imposed by Section 57. The cost of a pucca school house for 300 children, (the biggest that may have to be erected in this District) of the Public Works Department standard type, would not exceed Rs. 15,000 and with an efficient agency there appears to be no objection to increasing the limit from Rs. 2,500 to even Rs. 15,000.

6. Primary schools in Local Board areas are called Local Board Schools, but beyond the mere honour of the name the Local Board has practically nothing to do with their administration. They are managed almost entirely by the Government Educational Department, the Boards only formally passing the Budgets and fixing upon the villages where schools should be opened or closed. Government management is, no doubt, justified by the fact that nearly two-thirds of the recurring expenditure is met from the Provincial grants made to the Boards by Government (the Provincial grant to the Satara District Local Board during 1915-16 is Rs. 1,38,314, while one-third of the local cess is Rs. 56,105). But the question of primary education is becoming wider, the people are awakening to the need of having their children taught to read and write, as can be seen from the increased demand for schools from villages and the popular support given to the Bill of Compulsory Education introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council; and there are other indications that the subject of

primary education would assume great dimensions in the near future. To grapple with the growing demand successfully, the assistance and co-operation of the people themselves would be required. Government, too, appear eager to give greater opportunities to the people of learning the lessons of Local Self-Government. Considering all these things I think the time has come when the experiment of entrusting the management of primary schools to the District Local Board may be tried. If the Boards are given a free hand in the administration of their schools they are likely to take greater interest in the expansion of primary education and of devising such modifications as the needs and requirements of particular areas may require.

The experiment will, of course, have to be closely watched by Government as the work of administration will be quite new to the Boards. It will be necessary for Government to lend to the Boards the services of expert educational officers and to maintain a supervising agency of their own to guide, inspect and check the work of the Board officers.

Indigenous schools in Local Board area are at present aided direct by Government with grants made from Provincial funds. Last year the grants made to such schools in the Satara District came to about Rs 3,200. The inspection and the grant-in-aid of these schools may also, I think, be entrusted to the Boards.

7. The rules framed under Section 48 (b) determine the relations between the Local Boards and the Educational Department. When the control and management of Local Board Schools are entrusted to the Boards they will employ their own Inspecting Officers and frame, with the approval of Government, the necessary rules specifying their duties and powers. The District Local Board will also frame new rules defining the duties and powers of the Taluka Local Board in matters educational and the present rules, framed under the section, will have to be altered almost wholly.

As submitted under answer to question No. 6, the management of schools by the officers of the District Local Board will have to be watched and checked by Government. These Government officers will visit the schools and see whether they are properly managed and advise the Boards on the defects noticed by them and also report to the Government Educational Department the defects brought to the notice of the Boards and the action taken on them by the Boards. Rules defining the powers of the Government Inspectors will also be required to be framed.

8. The Taluka Local Boards are not consulted in the matter for the following reasons. The Educational Budget is framed for the District as a whole and not by Talukas. The expenditure on the primary schools in a Taluka is not covered by the portion of the local cess contributed by it; it is far in excess of the local cess and the deficit is met from the provincial grant which is made not to Taluka Local Boards separately but to the District Local Board. The question of expending a portion of the revenue raised by a Taluka in other areas, does not, therefore, arise.

9. The transfer of the management of primary schools and taking over construction of buildings will largely add to the expenditure to be incurred by the Boards. It will be necessary for the Boards to employ a sufficient and efficient agency—Inspectors of Schools, Engineers, Secretaries, etc. The indirect expenditure on schools which Government at present incurs on the inspection and the administration of schools will have to be incurred by the Board. The questions of improving the pays of untrained teachers, of increasing the proportion of trained teachers and of the cost of school buildings and equipment will have to be faced in the near future. To meet this enormous and increasing expenditure is, under the present resources of the Boards, beyond their power and the question of increasing the revenues of the Boards in the ways suggested under (1), (2), (3) and (4) of the question will have to be considered. As, however, opposition is likely to be raised to the course suggested under (1), (2) and (3) liberal provincial subventions will have mainly to be relied on.

Mr. V. D. Kelkar, Mamlatdar of Patan.

1. Yes. The time has come when the management of both the Boards can be entrusted to elected majorities.

2. Election by communities is not desirable at all. It tends to create ill-feeling among the different communities. The reservation of certain places to certain communities will kill out all healthy competition. Further the local fund money comes from the pocket of the agriculturists and it is not only desirable but just that its control should be in the hands of the agriculturists as far as possible. There appears to be no necessity to secure the due representation of special communities, but special interests should be protected where the interests are sufficiently considerable to need protection.

The present number of members is sufficient in the present state of electorate, but if the present number of voters be increased the number of members may be proportionately increased up to a maximum of 20.

3. If the Board is sufficiently advanced the members may be allowed to elect their own President, but if the Board is backward and no suitable person is available for the post, the official President may be nominated to assist the Board by his advice.

4. The control of Local Board works, such as Dharmshalas, Schools, wells (in a particular locality) of standard type, may be safely entrusted to the Board, but if the works be special in their character and if the cost thereof exceeds one thousand rupees in each case the plans and estimates may be scrutinised by the Public Works Department.

5. One-third to 40 per cent. of the total Local Fund cess of the whole Taluka, may be given out to the District Local Board and the balance should be left entirely at the disposal of the Taluka Local Board. The Taluka Local Board budgets should be solely under the control of the Board itself

6 & 7. No. The time has not come when the management of the primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board, as the Board is not in a position to meet the whole expenditure. Further the Board has not yet secured persons of the proper stamp who are fit and willing to assume the responsibility. For the present there appears to be no necessity of altering or modifying the rules under Section 48 (b).

8. No. Not to my knowledge.

9 (1) To raise the Local Fund cess to a maximum of two annas in the Rupee would be imposing a great burden upon the rayats.

(2) There are no villages in the Taluka which can be recommended for the introduction of the "notified area" or the village sanitary Board. Patan, Chafal and Tarle are important villages in the Taluka but they are dumala villages

(3 & 4) The Board, however, may be permitted to levy a cess of one anna in the rupee on—

(a) Income-tax.

(b) Abkari revenues and the provincial subventions may also be increased

10. Yes. Lack of education and the lack of development of the sense of public duty are among others the principal causes. There are subsidiary causes also. No important work is done by the Board and no liveliness is evinced in the meetings. Thus there is no special attraction for good men to serve upon the Board. Those few that try to come find no scope for their talents. Further they labour under a misapprehension that they do not enjoy as much confidence of the Government officers as they deserve. A liberal and a more sympathetic treatment and the placing of greater confidence are the only remedies.

11 and 14. The clauses 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 of Section 10 should be amended so as to make the franchise accessible to a large class of people

The old khata system has been abolished and by the introduction of the Record of Rights the Kabjedar has been made personally responsible for the payment of the assessment of his holdings. Thus in every village the number of persons paying assessment of Rs. 48 and above has been greatly reduced. In view of these facts the minimum of Rs 48 prescribed long ago is quite unsuitable and should be reduced to Rs. 24. I would also suggest that the value of the immovable property in clause 2 should be reduced to Rs 2,000; that the income in clause 3 should be reduced to Rs. 400, that the pensions in clause 4 should be reduced to Rs. 15 to 20 so as to include pensioned School-masters, police jamadars, sub-assistant surgeons, vaccinators and the like, and that powers in clause 7 should be exercised by the Collector to make their application more elastic

12. If the amendments suggested above be accepted, the object aimed at in question No. 12 will be secured.

13. If the Board is sufficiently advanced it may be freely allowed to elect its own Vice-President. But if the Board is in a backward state and if no suitable man is available it is desirable in the interests of the Board itself that the Vice-President should be a Government official.

15. Instead of making the share of land revenue and the income-tax divisible between Provincial Governments and the Local Board, I humbly suggest that the least burdened revenue, I mean the Abkari Revenue, be made to pay one anna in the rupee to the Local Board

16. Yes. I am in favour of the amendments. Please *vide* answers to question No. 5.

17. I think the administrative efficiency will in no way suffer if the Board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials in the proportion of two-thirds to one-third.

18. Please *vide* answers given to question No. 10.

Mr. T. C. Ghaisas, Mamlatdar of Karad.

1. Yes.

2. Elections by communities are impracticable in the case of Taluka Local Boards. No complaint that any community or any interests has or have not been sufficiently represented on Taluka Local Boards has been made up to now. The same reasoning applies to the constitution of District Local Boards. The present number of members is sufficient

3. The Presidents should not be non-officials.

4. I am of opinion that the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of works should not be relaxed at all so far as original buildings or repairs to buildings costing more than Rs. 2,500 and the works of laying out important new roads are concerned. I should, however,

consider that time has now come when the Taluka Local Boards should be allowed to carry out original buildings or repairs to buildings costing not more than Rs 1,000 and also works of current and ordinary and special repairs to roads up to any limit. Previous approval of the Executive Engineer to the plans and estimates for such works should also be dispensed with.

5. (1) Taluka Local Boards should not be freed from the control of the District Local Board in the matter of engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants by the District Local Board.

(2) Taluka Local Board should be freed from the control of the District Boards in the case of sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets.

6. No.

7. No alterations or modifications are required.

8. Never

9. As I am not in favour of handing over management of primary schools to the District Local Board no separate answers are necessary on any of the questions under this head.

10. Yes, to a certain extent. The main cause is that the non-official members have not a free hand in the management of the affairs of Taluka Local Boards. The remedy is to allow them a freer hand.

11. None.

12. None.

13. Yes. It is desirable that Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials when the Presidents are officials.

14. Yes. Rs 24 should be the limit instead of the present limit of Rs 48.

15. I am not in favour of such a division.

16. As the District Local Board undertakes expenditure on projects which are beyond the means of Taluka Local Boards I am not in favour of limiting their discretion by hard and fast rules.

17. I am of opinion that the administrative efficiency of a Board will in no way suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished and a Board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. In such a case the proportion of nominated officials should be not less than half the number of elected members.

*Rao Bahadur V. N. Pathak, M.A., Vice-President of the
District Local Board, Satara.*

1. Yes. Similar to those in the Municipalities. The step is calculated to advance the cause of Local Self-Government, and to awaken more interest and greater sense of responsibility among the Members of Local Boards.

2. No. The interests of all communities in the administration of Local Board Funds are absolutely common and identical, especially as the matter of education is left practically in the hands of the Government Department of Education. If any community is unrepresented on the Board, Government would nominate its representative. The multiplicity and number of communities and races make their separate representation almost impossible.

The present number of members both of the Taluka and District Boards should be increased 33 per cent, to allow of the nomination of officials and the representatives of minorities. This can be easily done by allowing the richer and more advanced Talukas to elect two members to the District Board under Section 7 (a), and increasing the number of groups under Section 6 (b).

3. For the reasons given by the Decentralization Commission, and the Government of India (*vide* para 28 of their Resolution No. 55-77 (Department of Education, Municipalities) dated 28th April 1915), it is not advisable for the present to grant to all District and Taluka Boards the privilege of electing their own Presidents. But an advance may be made by selecting one or two advanced Districts, where competent gentlemen of experience and standing are available, and allowing the Boards there to elect their Presidents, as an experimental measure. The Government of India have no objection to such a course. Moreover, the Official Presidents should be empowered by law to delegate some of their powers to the Vice-Presidents, who should be elected non-officials. This is the only practical way to train Vice-Presidents and fit them for the duties of Presidents.

4. I think the limits given in Section 57 (b) may now safely be raised to Rs. 500 per mile in the case of roads, and Rs 2,500 in the case of other works. These figures stood in the original draft Bill, and now after a lapse of 30 years, surely some distinct advance is necessary in the devolution of powers, in the case of those Boards, who have a competent engineering staff to carry out such works.

5. In the matter of engagement of servants and establishments by the Taluka Local Boards the power under Section 38 given to the District Board is salutary, and works in the direction of economy. If Taluka Boards are freed from this control, there will be temptation to entertain large establishments without adequate work, and there will be a waste of money. Besides, the District Board is likely to get better Overseers for the Taluka Boards than these will be able to secure.

In the case of Budgets, the Taluka Boards may safely be left to prepare their own Budgets within the limits of the funds allotted to them. But they should be required by law to send copies of their Budgets and revised Budgets to the District Board.

6. In my opinion the time has not yet come for transferring the entire management of Primary Schools to District and Taluka Boards, as they possess no such competent and expert agency as the Government Department of Education commands. But the Educational Budget should be framed after full consultation with the Taluka Boards, and sent to the Members of the District Boards for their remarks and suggestions some time before it is brought for the approval of the Board. Moreover, the District Board should be given power to open classes in their own Schools, for giving special instruction, suitable to sons of agriculturists and artisans, in consultation with the Director of Public Instruction.

7. I have no modifications to suggest in the said Rules.

8. No. Section 48 (a) requires to be amended. The restriction therein placed is not necessary, as the needs of all the Talukas in educational matters are carefully looked after by the Educational Authorities, and no complaints have hitherto arisen. The District Board and the Educational Department of Government can be trusted with the proper allocation of funds set apart for educational purposes to the several Talukas.

9. (1) No. The Decentralization Commission and the Government of India have both pronounced against this proposal.

(2) No. The expedient proposed would be very vexatious, and will only add unnecessarily to the burdens of the villages concerned.

(3) Yes. Formerly the Local Boards were allowed to levy one anna cess on Abkari Revenue and the entire proceeds were made over to them. This was afterwards compounded on the basis of the then Abkari Revenue, and a fixed sum was paid. But since then the Abkari Revenue has grown enormously, and the Local Boards are fairly entitled to a proportionate share of the increase. This should now be restored.

People who pay Income-tax mostly reside in Municipal and not Local Board areas.

As regards Forest Revenue, instead of empowering Local Boards to levy a cess on it, it is far better that Government should assign a small portion of it, say 6 per cent. to Local Boards for educational and communication purposes.

(4) Yes.

10. This is quite true, and the causes are many. Among them are (1) the large and extensive area to be administered by the Boards, (2) the centralization of power in the hands of officials, and (3) the comparative low standard of education and public spirit of the Taluka members of the Board. Till education and public spirit spread more widely this state of things will remain to a large extent. Some of the remedies are:—(1) to give greater representation to educated people on the Boards, to increase the number of elected members to two-thirds of the total, (3) to empower by law the official President to delegate some of his powers to a non-official Vice-President, (4) to empower the Board to pay the travelling expenses of members, both when they have to travel to attend Meetings of the District Board at the Head Quarter Town, and when they are deputed to inspect Boards' work, Schools, and on other Boards' duties.

11 & 12. I would suggest that under Section 10 of the Local Boards Act the following groups be added:—

(1) Persons possessing the qualifications of Municipal electors described in Section 12 of the Bombay District Municipal Act, and residing in the Taluka.

(2) All Income-tax payers residing in the Taluka.

(3) Government contemplate the early establishment of village Panchayats, and it should be considered how far they would be suitable as electorates for the Taluka Boards.

13. Yes. Vice-Presidents should be non-officials and elected by the Boards.

14. The present figure of Rs. 48 is pitched too high. A suitable minimum, under the circumstances indicated in the question, will be Rs. 10.

15. *Vide* reply to question No. 9 (3) and (4).

16. In practice, about one-fourth of the total cess revenue, after deducting the "educational" portion, is divided among the Taluka Boards; the District Board reserving to itself the remaining three-fourths for expenditure on Public Works, communications, medical dispensaries and all other purposes tending to benefit the whole District. There is no objection to fix one-fourth of the proceeds of the one anna cess, after deducting the "educational" portion, as the share of a Taluka Board.

17. I am of opinion that the administrative efficiency of Local Boards—District and Taluka—will not suffer by enlarging the proportion of elected members to two-thirds of the total number. It will not be advisable to restrict the nomination to officials only, unless you are prepared to grant communal representation which, looking to the vast number of different communities and races, it will almost be impossible to grant. So one-third of the total number of members has to be left for the nomination of officials, and unrepresented minorities. Moreover, the present number of members both of the Taluka and District Boards should be increased by 33 per cent., to allow of these nominations. At present there are seven officials on the District Board including the Collector—President

18. In my opinion it is highly desirable to reduce the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses (1), (2), (3) and (4) of Section 10, which are pitched too high. They should be as follows :—

- (1) Rs. 10.
- (2) Rs. 1,000.
- (3) Rs. 300.
- (4) Rs. 20.

19. In conclusion, I beg to make the following suggestions for the due consideration of the Committee. They are calculated to advance the cause of Local Self-Government in rural areas :—

- (1) The Inamdars of entire alienated villages should be allowed to send 2 representatives to the District Boards, chosen from among their own number, in place of one as at present (*vide* Section 7 (c))
- (2) The population limit of 18,000, in section 7(b) be reduced to 7,000 and it should be added that a Municipal District, which has a population of more than 7,000 souls, should return one member for each 7,000, or a fraction thereof.
- (3) That the Board should be empowered by law to pay the travelling expenses of members, deputed to inspect Board Works in progress, or the Schools belonging to and aided by the Board. Nowhere in the present Act this needful provision has been made.

(1) Inamdars of entire alienated villages are men of great position in the District, and if they are educated and of high character, they command great influence and respect. These men have leisure, and it is most desirable in the public interest that such men should be encouraged to take up public duties. An educated Inamdar of high character, and having plenty of leisure will be an ideal President of a District Board.

(2) That as education and public spirit are found in a greater degree in men, living in the larger Municipal Towns than in the rural people, it is necessary to give a scope to the public spirit of these men in the administration of Local Boards, by increasing their representation on the Board.

(3) If you desire that people should take an interest in Local Boards administration, it is necessary to pay travelling allowance to Local Board Members, travelling on Board duty. The money thus spent is very well spent, and the return is tenfold greater. A man may be willing to give his time and intelligence to the service of the Boards *gratis*, but it is hardly fair to expect him to give his money also into the bargain. I should also recommend that members of the District Board, coming from Taluka towns and villages to attend Board Meetings at the Sudder station, be paid their actual travelling expenses to, and back. The amount will be inconsiderable, as there are not more than 4 Board Meetings in a year, and the number of such members will be between 15 and 20 only.

—————
Mr. R. P. Karandikar, Pleader, Satara.

The Resolutions adopted at the Bombay Legislative Council Meeting held on 14th July 1915, recommended that the Governor in Council may be pleased to consider :—

- (a) Whether the number of elective members (on such of the Taluka and District Local Boards as the Governor-in-Council may think fit) shall be not less than two-thirds of the whole Board.
- (b) The desirability of directing that the Presidents (of such of the Taluka and District Local Boards as the Governor-in-Council may think fit) be elected by such Boards.

The question now asked is simply “should the Taluka District Local Boards have elected majorities?” Mere affirmative answer may perhaps be not sufficient as the majority may perhaps be less than two-thirds though the elected members will be more than half. It is thus absolutely necessary to support the recommendation that the majority *shall be not less than two-thirds* and if it is the object of His Excellency to ascertain public opinion to enable him to say which Taluka and District Local Boards may have such majority—I wish to say that all Taluka and District Local Boards should have such majority. The Local Self-Government scheme has been working for more than thirty years. The propriety of dispensing with the condition to which the increase of the proportion of elective Councillors to two-thirds has hitherto been subject (in the case of Municipalities), namely, the election of a Government servant to be chief executive officer has been under the consideration of Government. It is hoped that Government will not impose the condition—no real interest, work, or education on practical lines can then be the result.

2. In a country like India election by communities will tend to foster racial differences and not racial fusion. The one-third number at the disposal of Government affords sufficient scope for guarding the interests of the minorities.

The present number of members is not sufficient and should be increased in order to secure a greater measure of progress in the development of this form of Local Self-Government.

The recommendation is that, taken as whole, there should be one member for every 3,000 souls. The total population of the 3 divisions excluding Sindh is 151 lacs, but there are only 1,307 elected representatives or one for every 11 thousand persons.

3. The Presidents should be elected in the case of all Local Boards, especially Taluka and District Boards. In District Local Boards unless delegation of powers in a large measure is made to the President, the President should be non-official. At meetings of the District Local Boards the Vice-President who must always be an elected member, should be the President for the meeting for the time being.

4. The present limitation should be removed and at least the proposal in the original draft (before it was in the Select Committee's cut down) should be restored and adopted.

5. The answer is 'yes' on both heads.

6. The answer on the whole is in the affirmative. Of course some special safeguards will have to be devised in respect of the several departments of the management of Primary Schools, namely,

- (1) Appointment of staff and transfers.
- (2) Inspection.
- (3) Budget.
- (4) Location and number of schools.
- (5) Curriculum.

8. I understand it has never been so consulted.

9. There will certainly be need for readjustment as also extra expenditure entailing on the Boards, and the answer categorically to:—

- (1) Is No.
- (2) Is No.

Is subpart . (a) Income Tax
(b) Abkari
(c) Forest

require different treatment. The question contemplates additional imposition of extra cess. In the case of Income Tax the cess will be a direct tax on individuals in addition to the calculation of the assessing officer. If that is so that cannot be recommended. But if the question means that the annual realisation from the Income Tax as from the Forest and from the Abkari is to contribute towards the Local Boards Income, that is a different question. There can be no direct cess on the Abkari and the Forest Revenues. But the question of the Abkari Revenue being liable to the extent of one anna in the Rupee has been agitated and re-agitated and must receive serious consideration. The Forest Revenue was one of the Revenues likely to be called upon to pay one anna in the Rupee. As regards the Abkari I beg to append a copy of my reasons I urged in the Legislative Council in supporting the proposition on the point. I am strongly of opinion that the Boards have a right to a share (one-sixteenth) in the Abkari Revenue and the Forest Revenue too.

10. Some lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of non-officials is explained by the fact that the Taluka and District Local Boards are officially ridden bodies and have not got in them sufficient inducement for really public spirited and educated people.

While in the Council I put in interpellations and the answers disclosed a state of affairs that requires prompt attention. I append a copy of questions and answers.

11. Qualifications for Municipal elections such as have not been present now in the Local Boards elections may be added.

13. By all means Vice-President should invariably be not only non-official but as far as possible should be an elected member.

14. That land should come to be divided into such small portions that Rs. 48, test will practically exclude many Khatedars is, in one sense, not satisfactory. The situation disclosed by the proceedings of the Record of Rights contributes towards making the election regarding the District and Taluka Local Boards more broad based and hence popular. The statutory limit must be reduced to Rs. 10 assessment.

15. The share available to Bombay Provincial Government, out of the Land Revenue and Income Tax, should, it is desired, be divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. What is the legitimate return to the people for land tax is an intricate question but the Income Tax

presents no such difficulty. It began its life for a particular purpose and has since been diverted to other purposes. Having regard to the percentage of non-agricultural population receiving education under the District Local Boards which is 23 : or very nearly one-fourth, it is not easy to see why the agricultural should principally bear the burden of educating children of non-agriculturists.

As regards Land Revenue too, the primary duty of protection and education must be discharged by it. Especially primary education has a claim upon the Land Revenue and the Local cess was merely a supplement as private donations are with reference to famine expenditure.

Fixing the proportion is a difficult question but in any case it may not be less than one anna in the Rupee. Experiment sympathetically tried can early determine a satisfactory share.

16. The answer to this question so far the proportion is concerned depends upon the sources of revenue and the sphere of works, but speaking generally it may not be less than one-fourth.

17. But for the question of representation of minorities or special interests the answer is easy enough and should be that there is no fear of the administrative efficiency suffering owing to abolition of non-official nomination. For the present to give no room for complaint on the grounds of want of representation of minorities which may possibly lead to election by communities in some cases, it is desirable that the proportion of elected to nominated may be two-thirds. But speaking only about nominated officials they may even be less than one-third.

18. Yes. Qualifying limits should be reduced, chiefly for making the institution broad based and popular. The land Tax limit

Rupees Ten (10) minimum,
Pension Rs. 15 per month,
House property Rs. 1,000,
and Income Rs 200.

BOMBAY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS FOR 1912.

(Accompaniment to Mr. Karandikar's replies).

QUESTION.

25 (a) Did any of the District Local Boards of the Central Division hold more than the statutory minimum of two meetings per annum, say during the last three years?

ANSWER

25 (a) The District Local Board, Poona, held three meetings in each of the years 1908-1909 and 1910-1911, and four meetings in the year 1909-1910. The District Local Board Ahmednagar held three meetings in each of the years 1909-1910 and 1910-1911. The District Local Boards of East Khandesh, West Khandesh, Nasik and Sholapur held three meetings each in the year 1909-1910.

QUESTION.

25 (b) Did the Vice-President of the Satara District Local Board preside over any of the District Boards meetings during the last three years? Were any powers delegated to the Vice-President of the Satara District Local Board under Sec 29 of the Act or as directed by the Government Resolution No. 2833 of 7th May 1897, Revenue Department? What powers does he in fact exercise?

ANSWER.

25 (b). Inquiry is being made.

QUESTION

25 (c). Is it a fact that almost all the public works of the District Local Boards are suggested by the Government officers planned and carried out by the Public Works Department and that all the educational matters are suggested and carried out by the Educational Department?

ANSWER

25 (c) The Honourable Member is referred to— (i) Sec. 61 of the Bombay Local Boards Act, 1884, which regulates the planning and execution of the works of District Local Boards, and (ii) to section 48(b) of the Act and the rules thereunder, by which educational expenditure is regulated. Necessarily the officers concerned take a predominant part in proposing such works and expenditure, but unofficial members have the fullest opportunity of submitting their own proposals for the consideration of the Boards.

QUESTION.

25 (d). Are the Annual reports of the several District Local Boards in the Central Division circulated among members of the Boards and passed or printed and published?

ANSWER.

25 (d). The Annual reports of the District Local Boards are embodied in the yearly report of the Revenue Commissioners on the administration of the Boards in their respective divisions. From these reports a consolidated report for the whole Presidency is prepared and copies of it are sent to every District and Taluka Local Board.

QUESTION.

25 (e). Are papers relating to the questions to come before the District Local Boards in the Central Division circulated among the members or are copies or précis of the same supplied to them?

ANSWER.

25 (e). Inquiry is being made.

QUESTION.

25 (f). What facilities are allowed to the members of the said Boards to form an intelligent opinion on the question before them in touch with the works of the Boards ?

QUESTION.

25 (g). Will Government be pleased to say whether they propose to take such steps as may be necessary in order to bring the powers of the District Local Boards in respect of construction or guarantee of District Railways in a line with those of the Boards in Bengal and Madras ?

QUESTION.

43. 4. Were Chairman appointed or elected to the Works Committees of the District Local Boards of the Central Division during the year 1910-11 ?

QUESTION.

44. 5. How many meetings have the Works Committees each held during the same year ?

QUESTION.

45. 6. Is it a fact that the Works Committee of the Satara District Local Board has never met and not a single work was inspected during the year ? If so, since when is that practice ?

QUESTION.

46. 7. Whose duty is it to call meetings of the Works Committees ?

QUESTION.

47. 8. Did the Executive Engineer in the District of Satara arrange, in communication with the District Local Board of Satara, the time when the execution of each shall be commenced and the rate at which the same shall be proceeded with as required by Sec. 56 of the District Local Board Rules ?

QUESTION.

48. 9. Were the times and rates of progress communicated to the District Local Board Works Committees in the Satara and other districts of the Central Division during the year ?

ANSWER.

25 (f). The facilities are those obtaining under the Local Boards Act and its rules to which the Honourable member is referred.

ANSWER.

25 (g). The question of empowering the District Local Boards to guarantee the interest on capital expended on railways or tramways cases where direct construction is impracticable or undesirable is under consideration of the Government.

ANSWER.

4. Only in the case of Ahmednagar District was the Chairman of the Works Committee appointed by the District Local Board. In the Nasik District the President of the Board is on the Works Committee.

ANSWER.

5. No meetings were held, but the work of a Works Committee consists mainly in the inspection of works by individual members.

ANSWER.

6. Yes. No meeting is reported to have taken place during the last 15 years ?

ANSWER.

7. It is the Chairman's duty to call such meetings.

ANSWER.

8. The Executive Engineer did not address any specific communications to the District Local Board on these points, but when the estimate for any work sent by the office to the President of the Board with an application for funds it is generally stated in the application that the work will be commenced on the receipt of the same while the proposed rate of progress can be ascertained by a comparison of the figures of the estimate with that of the allotment.

The Board is thus made cognizant of the procedure proposed by the Executive Engineer and is in a position to urge any objections it may entertain thereto.

In 1909, the Executive Engineer, Satara District, was requested to communicate the date of commencement, etc., of Works Committee, direct, and he agreed to do so.

ANSWER.

9. This was done only in the respects of the works in the Nasik District executed by civil agency

In Satara a monthly schedule showing the works in progress with the expenditure on them and also exhibiting the works commenced during the past month is forwarded to the District Local Board through the Huzar Deputy Collector for information. By a comparison of any schedule with the preceding one the rate of progress can be ascertained.

THE SAYER REVENUE.

Speeches delivered by the Hon. Mr. R. P. Karandikar on the subject at the Bombay Legislative Council, on the 27th and 28th September 1912.

(Accompaniment to Mr. Karandikar's replies.)

The Honourable Mr. Karandikar :—Your Excellency,—The resolution which I have the honour to present to this Council is in almost identical terms with the one of which my Honourable friend Mr. Garud has given notice. Perhaps it would suit the convenience of the Council if I were to move my resolution first and if my honourable friend has no objection he may second it. The resolution which I propose is "that this Council recommends that Government may be pleased to reconsider the arrangement whereunder only Rs 1,55,000 come annually to be allotted to District Local Boards as compensation in lieu of one anna cess in every rupee of the excise revenue." The Honourable Mr. Garud's resolution is a mere variation. It runs as follows :—"That this Council recommends that the Government of India be requested to revise the fixed contribution to the

District Local Board in lieu of the one anna in the rupee Abkari Cess and to permit a payment of their dues from the Abkari Revenues." Thus the Council will see that in spirit both the resolutions are the same. But they proceed on two different considerations which I will try to develop in the course of the few remarks which I beg to offer for the consideration of the Council. The compensation referred to in the above resolution has a short story about it and can be summarised in a few words. It was in the year 1869 that an enactment was passed by the Bombay Government. It is important to mention the date because it may have some bearing on the question of the subsequent Acts passed in the matter. To be accurate, the legislation was undertaken by the Government of Bombay in February 1869 and the Act obtained the assent of the Viceroy in April 1869. Before this Act was passed, another enactment of 1865 was passed in reference to Sind, and consequently I will have to remind the honourable members here that it is possible that the honourable members representing Sind may not feel that interest in this question which we in the Presidency proper feel. Again, there are honourable members representing the City of Bombay who may perhaps not have an interest in common with us on this resolution, because of the fact that under section 66 of the Abkari Act of 1878 a revenue of Rs. 1,46,000 has been permanently settled by the Bombay Municipality in lieu of its claim on the excise revenue. But looking to the literature on the point I find that when this amount of Rs. 1,46,000 was fixed for Bombay, a question was asked by an honourable member. I do not know whether he represented the Bombay Corporation on that occasion as to whether the Bombay Municipality had been consulted in reference to this matter. The answer given was that the amount was settled in reference to the figures obtained from the Municipality. It is not clear to me whether the answer conveys the idea that the consent of the Corporation was obtained. I find that there is nothing in the proceedings of the Council to show that the Municipal Corporation had agreed to the amount. For this reason honourable members for the City of Bombay perhaps may not be quite with us on this resolution, because their interest has been already settled according to law, whether with their consent or otherwise. But the case for the Bombay Presidency is quite different. In 1869 when this Act was passed, it was connected by section 6 that it shall be lawful for Government to charge one anna cess on every rupee of land revenue, as also from the Sayer revenue. That was in 1869. Accordingly the tax came to be collected and it went on up to a certain time when circumstances developed into some relations between the Local Committee on the one hand and the Government on the other—relations which are quite clear. But under the scheme of 1870 the Government of India handed over certain revenues to the Government of Bombay for disposal and out of this certain items were assigned to Local Committees under the Act of 1869. From 1869 to 1873 there does not appear to be much discussion on this question of a cess of one anna in every rupee of excise revenue. But in those days the excise revenue used to be farmed as now and according to the Act that was leviable from farmers. The years 1872 and 1873 brought about a considerable change in the situation by the Government of India, possibly owing to some representations having been made by the Government of Bombay, but about which I am not in a position to make a definite statement. Probably I may hear something more on the subject during the discussion on this resolution. A commentator on the Local Board's Act summarises the Government resolutions on the point by observing that it was the Government of India that took objection to this one-sixteenth of the excise revenue going from their hands into those of the local committees in consequence of a resolution passed by the Local Council. Now, of course, in those days the Government of Bombay stood towards the Government of India in the same relationship in which the Local Boards now stand to the Bombay Government. Possibly they may have protested against the orders of the Government of India, but at last had bowed to the decision of that Government. Later on came up the Abkari Act in 1868, and it was about that time that the dispute between the Bombay Government and the Bombay Corporation arose and was eventually settled, as I have already stated, by Government making a grant of Rs. 1,45,000 to the Corporation.

Now this question did not attract public attention so far, because of the circumstances which was subsequently explained by the Honourable Mr. Trevor in reply to certain criticism passed by the Honourable Mr. Ranade in 1893. In explaining why the financial statement had not been presented to the Bombay Government prior to 1893 the Honourable Mr. Trevor explained that the orders of the Government of India were explicit on the point and consequently they did not consider it necessary to present a financial statement to the Bombay Legislative Council prior to that year. So up to 1893 the public had shown no interest in the question. But directly the financial statement was presented in 1893 the Honourable Mr. Ranade was the first gentleman who spoke on the point. I will only read what occurred on that occasion. Mr. Ranade thus observed in 1893:—"The Local Government has only been able to allot Rs. 2,500 to improve Village Sanitation and a lakh and a half for improving water supply. This lakh and a half is intended to supplement the Local Funds in cases where the District Boards in charge of these funds are prepared to contribute double the amount. The Village Sanitation Act passed 3 years ago remains virtually inoperative on account of want of funds and it appears to me that but for Railway expenditure these funds could be largely spared. It is true Government contributed about 4 lakhs in 1889, 5 lakhs in 1890, 6 lakhs in 1891 and 1892, about 7 lakhs to the Local Funds, 5 lakhs for schools and about 2 lakhs for water supply and Sanitation. These funds have however a claim upon Government which is not adequately met by these contributions, large as they no doubt are. The Local Funds Act of 1869, Section 6, legalises the levy of one anna in the rupee on Land revenue, and one anna on Sayer revenue of which latter head the Abkari Farm Revenue is the most important. The compensation paid by Government to the Local Funds for the one anna cess on the Abkari Revenue was fixed at 1½ lakhs about 1873, which may have been a fair proportion at that time. Since then the Abkari Revenue has increased nearly four-fold, and it is nearly a crore and the amount of this compensation continues to be what it was 20 years ago. At the present rate the Local Funds have a claim upon Government to receive about 5 lakhs more from the Abkari Receipts. The Local Boards Act of 1884 has not repealed Section 6 of Act III of 1869 and as long as the provision continues on the Statute Book this claim is one which the Government is bound to recognize. If this contribution were made to the Local Funds, the difficulties at present felt in the way of promoting useful Civil works, Education, Sanitation and Medical relief would to a great extent be minimized."

What Mr. Ranade says is that the amount was fixed at Rs. 1½ lakhs about 1873, and this is corroborated by a certain Government resolution about which I hope to hear more in the course of discussion on this motion. As to when it was fixed, and on what consideration, and why, are things which the public possibly may not know adequately. But the Honourable Mr. Trevor in reply to what has fallen from Mr. Ranade said :—“ The only remaining point that I need notice is that raised by Mr. Ranade in regard to the claim of the Local Funds to a much larger Revenue, calculated on Abkari receipts, which Mr. Ranade assumes to be an item of Sayer revenue than they at present receive. That is a matter, which I think, it will be desirable to reserve for further consideration. But I may mention now that “ Sayer ” Revenue consists of miscellaneous items of land revenue and it has been specifically ruled that the Local Fund Cess is not leviable on Abkari contracts. The lump payment referred to by the amount of tax on toddy trees then levied under the name of *Baddene* as an item of Land Revenue, and the point for consideration will be how far the legality or sufficiency of the payment is affected by the altered circumstances now obtaining.”

That was said in 1893. Now, this matter was further referred to in the subsequent meetings of the Council and that you will find in the Council's proceedings of 1894, 1895 and 1896. But the discussion in 1896 was very much interesting and probably the remarks offered for consideration of the Council by the Honourable Mr. Kirkham and the Honourable Sir Pherozeshaw Mehta. The discussion was interesting because as doctors differ so do the lawyers, but the attitude taken up by the Honourable Mr. Kirkham was that though it may be lawful for Government to levy the tax it was not necessary that Government must levy it. Another argument that was advanced was that Government had a right to levy a tax which was lawful if they so chose to do.

However, the matter was permitted to rest on the ground that nothing further could be gained by prolonging the discussion. In those days members of the Council had not the right of submitting resolutions to the Council for acceptance of Government. It is only the right of interpellation that has developed the idea of resolution. A resolution if allowed by Government or favoured by Government may enable them to take action thereon or may lead to legislation on the point. My present object in wording this resolution is to draw the attention of the honourable members to the necessity of considering the matter from this point of view when the District Local Boards Act comes up for amendment sooner or later. But the present Act does not do away with either section 6 or some other section bearing on the point of the Act of 1869, and if there is any doubt about it, I am anxious that an opportunity may be taken to clear up this matter in case this question comes to be discussed in connection with the amendment of the District Local Boards Act.

Now Your Excellency what happened subsequently was that after about 16 years a question was asked in this Council by the Honourable Mr. Dikshit as to how this compensation was fixed and he was given an answer which runs thus :—“ The contribution paid to the Local Funds on account of Excise was granted as compensation for the loss of the one anna cess formerly levied and paid to them on “ Sayer ” Revenue which was understood to include Excise. It was fixed in 1873 and was based on the amount of the cess actually levied in the year 1872-1873. The compensation was granted as a matter of grace to make up the loss arising from the discontinuance of payments which had been made under a misapprehension for some years after the Act III of 1869 was passed, Abkari Revenue having already been separated from “ Sayer ” when that Act was passed. The answer further added ‘ Except in the City of Bombay no contribution is paid to the Municipal Revenue on account of excise. In Bombay the compensation (Rs. 1,43,750) is paid to the Municipality under Section 63 of the Abkari Act V of 1878. The amount was fixed on the average of the next revenues derived by the Municipality in the 10 years ending 1873.’ ” In reply to my question at the last sitting, the same answer was repeated with the addition that the amount was permanently fixed.

What the Honourable Mr. Trevor said with reference to the origin of this tax differs to a certain extent from the version that appears in this latter answer. Now, it is not quite clear to me what is the attitude of Government with reference to the important point as to whether this excise revenue was or was not legitimately included in the Sayer Revenue, when the Act of 1869 was passed.

That the Hon'ble Mr. Ranade's observation that the “ Sayer ” included Excise farming and Revenue was the result of his study of the use of that word in official documents goes without saying. The glossary of vernacular Judicial and Revenue terms compiled from materials furnished by the various Local Governments and administrations of British India in response to a circular issued by the Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce, on 11th November 1871, contain the following note : “ Sayer ” :—“ In its original purport the word signifies moving, walking, or the whole of the remainder, from the latter it came to denote, the remaining or all other sources of Revenue accruing to Government in addition to the Land Tax, from a variety of Imports, as customs, transit duties, licenses, fees, house tax and so on, in which sense the term is current throughout India.”—Wilson. The glossary further adds specially with reference to Bombay as follows : “ It is one of the two main heads of Revenue used in “ Jamabundi ” reports ; anything which is not Land Revenue is “ Sayer,” its literal meaning is balance or remainder”—Bombay. In another place (page 102) it says :—Miscellaneous. “ A revenue head of receipts which comprises every item not falling under the head ‘ Land Revenue Duties ’ on traffic”—Bombay. “ Sayer ” is a word of Arabic origin and is translated by Molesworth as : “ Duties on commodities or Chattels ; Excise, also excise booth, stand or station.” “ And ‘ Sayarbab ’ among other things as excise and toll and minor cesses comprehensively and generally.”—Molesworth.

Under those circumstances, I submit that the question should be left alone for the present because this Council is not dealing with this aspect of it in its legislative capacity, but it can make only certain recommendations to Government, at the same time the recommendation should be guided by considerations upon which will depend the settlement of this question as to whether the Local Funds under the Act 1869 were entitled to a tax on the Sayer revenue which was revenue of

excise. My own observation of documents that have come under my notice during my practice of 32 years confirms me in the view I take of the use of this term in Village Account papers. Therefore ordinarily under Act III of 1869, one anna cess in every rupee of liquor farming, Excise Revenue, must be available to the Local Funds. The Abkari revenue, however, and all other revenues provisional or otherwise, as has been explained above, belonged to the Government of India at the time when the Bombay Government proposed to constitute the Local Funds. Excise Revenue was looked upon as an item of progressive revenue and the Government of India deal with this question in Government Resolution No. 617 of 27th January and No. 3169 of 24th September 1873; and Mr. Nairne at page 377 of his handbook summarises them thus:—"Sayer revenue as used in Bombay Acts VIII of 1865 and III of 1869 means miscellaneous land revenue and cess on excise revenues are not allowable under these or any other Acts. Liquor farms are therefore not subject to the one anna cess." See also the Bombay Government Resolution No. 1639 of 20th April 1869 passed about the time when Bombay Act III of 1869 was passed by the Bombay Legislative Council on 18th February 1869.

The financial relations of the Government of India and the Bombay Government left no option to the latter to decide the question independently of the view of the Government of India on this question. And the Government of India was thus in a position to departmentally rule what can and what cannot be "Sayer revenue." As long as no law defines the "Sayer" there is room for urging that the legitimate meaning attaching to this expression "Sayer" may be permitted to it so as to include the Excise Revenue. No doubt, the Excise Revenue having about 1869 promised dimensions quite enough to tempt the Exchequer to separate it from its proper head, was specially ruled out or the "Sayer" Revenue head by departmental orders. But now that the Bombay Government has not assigned to itself the whole of the Abkari Revenue, we might approach Government with the recommendations couched in the above resolution. In the matters of Finance as in the matters of policies, I never regard anything as *judicata* or settled and I have no doubt Your Excellency and honourable members still agree with me in this.

I put this resolution as a recommendation for reconsideration because the question has not been decided by Law Suit as to whether the Act of 1869 was right or whether the Government of Bombay were right in enacting this, or whether it was possible to so manipulate the Sayer revenue as to take out of it a big proportion of taxation which would be equivalent to the amount derivable from the excise revenue at the present time. The question as regards sufficiency was also one which struck the Honourable Mr. Ranade in 1893 as very important. Mr. Ranade pointed out that the excise revenue had increased fourfold.

When the Hon'ble Mr. Ranade urged the point, the cess came to 5 lakhs of rupees, but the figures I have supplied for the past 5 years will show that it has increased to double that amount. The whole of the rates imposed for the benefit of the District Local Board put together falls very much short of the proper calculation of the cess on excise revenue; while other cesses would come to 10,17,308 this cess alone if permitted to the Local Boards must come to not less than 12,00,000 of rupees. It is always safe to be just before one is generous. A sense of dependence on generosity is much inferior in value and less have the impractical results, than a sense of self-help and of a necessity "to cut the coat according to the cloth."

I have got figures for the last five years to which I will briefly allude, because I am afraid I have already tired the patience of the honourable members.

H. E. the President:—The honourable member had his half hour, so that I hope he will finish his remarks as soon as possible.

The Honourable Mr. Karandikar:—Well, I submit, Your Excellency, that there is a good case made out as to why one anna cess on every rupee in the excise revenue should be allotted to the District Local Boards.

If heads of expenses are handed over to the District Local Board funds must equally be made available. By the very nature of the Local Boards Act and according to the summary of what the annual reports of such Board should contain, that is directed by Government to be followed various important matters the Local Boards are expected to manage in course of time. In the official report there appear under the present circumstances several headings of the annual statements which must be left blank and the *Times of India* seems to think that no practical purpose is served by retaining such columns and swelling the printing. I take a different view and would maintain the headings in the hope that their very presence is suggestive of the powers that the District Local Boards will in no distant future be called upon to exercise and I am trying to equip the Board accordingly. No doubt the capacity of the Boards has also to be improved, to be able to control and manage important heads of expenditure. I am glad to notice that Government hopefully look forward to the work of the District Local Boards in their resolution reviewing the Administration for the year 1910-1911.

There is only one argument which I am sure will not be raised on this occasion and it is that the District Local Boards will not hanker after revenue which is derivable from liquor. The history of whiskey money in England and its appropriation by local bodies for purposes of education at the suggestion of Mr. Arthur Acland to Parliament, soon after the Act of 1889, to give the Local Authorities power to supply or aid in supplying technical or manual instruction, must not have escaped attention. The results of the Act of 1889 and the grant (whiskey money) in 1890 were soon apparent. A large number of technical institutes and science classes were established and the science work of secondary schools was subsidised and encouraged. No doubt some of the money was wasted at the time, but the institutions founded in those early days are now attaining

a higher degree of efficiency, achieving a fuller measure of usefulness. Since 1902 in accordance with the Education Act of that year the whiskey money has been wholly devoted to the development of higher education. I am further persuaded to observe that if, as must be admitted, education is an antidote to drunkenness, by all means a larger portion of the excise revenue must be earmarked for educational purposes. As a matter of fact Sweden, wherein drunkenness was at one time rampant, the Government itself spends considerable portion expressly out of the excise revenue and part of it is specially utilized for prevention of and dissuasion from drink by lectures and other educational methods.

I am grateful to Government for the munificent grants which they have made from time to time to the Municipalities and District Local Boards. But still I think it was not quite safe to permit a sense of dependence on generosity to develop and if possible institutions like this should depend upon their own revenue. It is a matter for consideration of Government whether having regard to the altered circumstances the District Local Boards should not be given their proper share of the revenue.

The Honourable Mr. Karandikar in reply on the debate said :—Your Excellency,—The change I expected of hearing more new matter in the criticism on my resolution has only been partially realised ; portion of this fresh information was not gratifying at least to me, and I suppose to many of the honourable members. The idea—I class it as information for the present—that the answer of the Honourable Mr. Trevor in 1893 was drawn up and based on information hurriedly collected does no justice to the circumstantial evidence supplied by the few but pointed details in the answer. The information supplied by the remarks of the Honourable Sir Richard Lamb however indicated that in ledgering the subheads of Revenue the excise had prior to 1869 received a separate sub-account. I cannot persuade myself to accept this as any way causing a substantial change in the nature of the particular revenue. I have learnt to know this from the manner in which separate ledgering by creditors are treated by Courts in dealing with cases under the D. A. R. Act as to whether in practical politics certain words and phrases must attract particular meanings. I must confess I am not an expert, but I must say that when I have to construe a legal enactment the words, unless they are given special or artificial meanings by the Legislature in this or that enactment, they must convey the meanings ordinarily attachable to them and books of reference, specially prepared from official information, are a safe guide and among them the glossary of Indian Official Terms deserves larger dependence thereon. The history I have given of this subject therefore remains materially unchanged, more specially as all the Government Resolutions available to the public or alluded to in the speeches here date after the passing of the Act of 1869.

I have two more points to reply to. We are advised not to look 'a gift horse in the mouth.' I for one do not regard the legal obligations created by an enactment as a gift in the sense that none can depend upon it ; else how could the High Court decide by Inamda's against Government based on the very deed of gift passed by Government or their predecessor ? This case is very much similar to where two Departments of the same Government try to insist on their respective right, or else how should the Forest Department prosecute a Contractor under the P. W. Department quarrying within the reserve without the permission of the Forest Department. Such a case has actually occurred and was afterwards set aright both by the High Court and Government. I do not place the claims of the Local Boards higher than these illustrations. In matters of finance as in politics I never regard matters as *res judicata* or settled and I hope honourable members will agree with me in this respect.

Now I cannot attach importance to the charge of unfairness levelled by the Honourable Mr. Carmichael against any attempt to have the arrangement reconsidered. Has not the Bombay Government been representing its claims to the Government of India even when the latter says that its contributions are concessions. What has always been the canon of practical politics. I was present at the dinner in honour of Lord Ripon at the Club in 1908 to which I had the honour of being invited. The veteran statesman in replying to the toast claimed for his party the maxim which is a sound advice for India : "Take what you get and fight for the rest." That is exactly what practical politics mean as I take it. Acting on it I have already freely and gratefully acknowledged the generosity and munificence marking the grants from Government to the District Local Boards. Exuberance in display of gratitude sometimes mars the grace of the grant, when Government themselves are conscious partly of the claims of the District Local Boards, otherwise how would this annual grant of Rs. 15,500 be properly styled a compensation, an expression that involves the idea of an unconscious reparation in respect of an invasion of a right real or honestly believed to be in existence. I for one do not entertain the kind of forebodings supposed to be looming in front of the success of my motion. I have not the smallest fear about Government withholding its flow of generosity in the matter of assisting the District Local Board that has no power to create sources of revenue but to administer the expenditure and thus help Government in their task on the principle of co-operation only. Indeed, the Honourable Mr. Ellis when introducing the Bill in 1869 expressly said : "I hope it will be understood that this taxation would not in any way supersede the Imperial grants" (and grants in those days were all Imperial). Increased attention to popular education, owing to Royal munificence, has become a matter of urgency. I am certain Government will never check generosity not only on the ground that in return for the land tax the State must provide protection and education, but in this particular instance on a ground acknowledged in G. R. No. 9094 of 18th November 1884, R. D. In adverting to the possibility of the District Local Boards claiming compensation even from the Forest Department, the resolution silences the suggestion thus : "It must not be overlooked that Government are largely increasing their grant to primary education to the direct benefit of Local Fund Revenue, and the extra grants made in this way are likely in the next few years to exceed receipts which has been transferred to the Forest Department." In addition you have to look to the Income Tax or License Tax Collections. Why should the agricultural income alone bear local cess and non-agricultural should escape, as if there are no non-agriculturists who have no educational, sanitary or road interests in common with the rural population.

The answer is that, to quote the words from a commentary on the Local Boards Act, "difficulties having arisen owing to the impolicy of imposing a second tax of this description while an Imperial Certificate or License tax was in force, and the Government of India being unable to sanction any solution of the difficulty, the non-agricultural classes were omitted from the scheme.

Yet another Government Resolution affords this solution. It seems probable then that without straining the meaning of the word "farmer" the levy of local fund on most of, if not all, the items in respect of which it is at present levied, can be justified either on the wording of the Act as interpreted by custom or on the basis of contract, express or implied, and if in regard to any single item any doubt is felt in any particular instance, it can be decided when it arises. It seems difficult to lay down any general rule applicable to all items (Government Resolution No. 5033, dated 15th July 1889). There is thus no need to spin out the expression "farmer." Those were the times of economic legislation and broad accepted meaning must follow. I see the force of the remark that in a possible distribution of excise cess over various Districts my District will get less and in consequence a loser in case the Resolution were adopted. But this proceeds upon a wrong notion of good Government. If my District and Nagar, too, show there is less whiskey money, Government generosity will reward virtue the more and will come to our help in more deserving recognition of our abstemious Districts.

Now, therefore, in the motion before the Council controversial matter is subordinated to a plain request and recommendation to Government to reconsider the arrangement—whatever it be and however arrived at—allow in addition to the grants prompted by generous considerations the Local Bodies full complement on excise revenue to enable them to cope with duties that the Local Board Act is designed to prepare them for undertaking.

Rao Saheb R. R. Kale, Public Prosecutor, Satara.

1. My answer to this question is in the negative. So long as there is a paucity of educated and public-spirited men residing in villages, the right of election is not likely to be properly exercised. At present we find almost all pensioners and others flocking to the District town. If these people were to have country houses to which they can repair for some time at least and mix among the villagers it would be a good thing; as long as that is not the case, it is no use extending the privilege of election in the present state of education of the rural population.

2. No. In the mofussil at least there are no communities having special interests of their own which require special representation.

The number of members of both the Taluka and District Boards may be slightly increased

3 & 13. It is not desirable for the present that the President of District and Taluka Boards should be non-officials. The Vice-Presidents, however, should invariably be elected and non-official. The official Presidents should be empowered to delegate some of the powers to the Vice-Presidents and they should as far as possible allow the Vice-Presidents to preside at meetings and do other work wherever there are fit men for the purpose and thus train and encourage them in the work.

4. In my opinion the employment of a competent Engineer by the Board itself to execute and supervise all work in the District is necessary. The officer should be of the rank of an Assistant Engineer and being concerned with works of the Board only, he can devote all his time for the purpose of preparing plans and estimates as well as the execution of works sanctioned by the Board. In the case of Boards which have such an officer the present restriction on the preparation of plans and execution of works should be entirely removed. In other cases, now that there are qualified Sub-Overseers, the limit of Rs. 50 may be raised to Rs. 200 and Rs. 500 to Rs. 2,000.

5. The answer to the first part of this question is in the negative, since efficiency and economy are best secured by the present arrangement. With regard to budgets, Taluka Local Boards may be left to make their own budgets within the limits of the money allotted to them.

6. My answer to this question is in the negative.

7. The present rules are, I think, sufficiently wide and I can only point out that a provision may be made if possible by which the framing of educational budgets should be done by the Educational officers after full discussion with the Board and after calling for the observations and proposals from members of Boards some time before the meeting at which the budget is submitted by the Educational officer for the Board's sanction.

8. The answer to this question is in the negative.

9. (1) The power to raise the local fund cess should be taken by the Board not for the purpose of meeting additional expenditure on Local Board establishments but only, if at all, for executing large works of public utility such as the construction of Feeder Light Railways.

(2) My answer to this part is in the affirmative.

(3) My answer to this part is in the affirmative.

(4) My answer to this part is also in the affirmative.

10. Yes. Want of educated and public-spirited men in the rural areas is the chief cause. Spread of education among the rural classes, the settlement of educated people such as pensioners in villages, and the nomination of intelligent men on the Boards and the sympathetic co-operation of official members might put the Boards on a more satisfactory basis.

11 & 12. I do not think that any additions can be made in the present state of the village population.

13. This question has been considered along with question No 3 above.

14. I think the minimum may be Rs. 20.

15. This question will not survive if the suggestions made in question 9, clauses 2, 3, and 4 are carried out. As an alternative proposal I would be in favour of allotting Local Boards one anna in the rupee of the total proceeds of these sources of Revenue.

16. I am of opinion that the proportion should not be fixed by law, but be left to the discretion, as at present, of a District Board.

17. I think that it is not proper to restrict nomination to officials only. There are good many non-officials who do not care to stand for election at the hands of illiterate men and there is also the need for nomination in the case of unrepresented minorities.

18. The pecuniary limits given in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 of section 10 are certainly too high and should be considerably reduced. I would suggest a reduction by fixing that limit at one-third of the present amount.

These are in brief my answers to the various questions.

Mr. Dosabhoy Manekji, Pleader, Satara.

1. There should be no elected majorities in District and Taluka Local Boards for some years to come. Half the number of members should be nominated and half-elected

2. There should be no election by communities either wholly or in part. The total number of members should be raised to 37.

3. The Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be officials for some years still.

4. (a) No work of the Board should be executed through Government agency. The Board should keep and maintain its own establishment supervised by a qualified official at a salary beginning with Rs. 300 and rising to Rs. 500 per month.

(b) The limit of Rs 5,000 as balance in the case of District Local Board and of Rs 200 in the case of Taluka Local Board should be reduced to Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 100 respectively for the sanction of budget estimates or for reappropriations.

(c) For original works and repairs plans and estimates should be submitted by the Board Engineer along with the Budget estimate or for reappropriation for sanction by the Board.

5. No.

6. No.

7. They require no modification.

8. I think not.

9. (1) No.

(2) No.

(3) (a) (b) & (c). Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. Yes. The non-official members ought to be allowed more voice in framing the Budgets and in the general conduct of business.

11. Yes.

In section 10 of the Local Boards Act, the following amendments are suggested :—

Sub-sec. (1), Rs. 30 land revenue.

„ (2), Rs. 1,000 landed property.

„ (3), Rs. 200 annual income.

„ (4), Rs. 15 pension per month.

The following additions are suggested :—

- (1) Persons who have passed Matriculation, U. S. F. or the Vernacular School Final examination.
- (2) Jurors and Assessors.
12. I do not understand the question.
13. Yes.
14. Rs. 30.
15. Cannot answer it, as I am not furnished with their present statistics.
16. No, it should be left to the discretion of the District Local Board.
17. I am of opinion that as matters stand at present the District Local Board of Satara should consist of 18 elected and 19 nominated members and out of the nominated members 9 should be non-officials and 10 officials including the Collector as President; of the 18 elected members 11 should be from Talukas (1 from each), 3 from Mahals (1 from each), and the remaining 4 from the principal municipalities in the District.
18. The same answer as is already given to question 11 above.

Mr. Ganpatdas Hirachand Devi, Satara.

1. I am of opinion that the present system of election and nomination of the District and Taluka Boards need not be altered at this stage as I see no advantage derived from the elected majorities which system is being followed in Municipalities.
2. I think that election should not be by communities, but Government may nominate members to secure the due representation of any special communities or interests.
 - (1) I think the present number of members sufficient
3. It is advisable that the President of our District Boards and Taluka Boards should be official.
4. I think that the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of Public Works can be removed by allowing to entertain the District Local Boards' own trained staff.
5. The engagement and dismissal of the Taluka Boards should be retained by the District Local Board while the payment may be made by the Taluka Local Board.
6. In regard to education I consider that in accordance with the practice followed in certain other provinces of India the management of primary schools may be entrusted to an educational committee of the District Local Board.
8. The Taluka Local Board has never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas.
9. I think—
 - (1) That Local Board should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the Rupee.
 - (2) That the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should not be extended as it will involve additional taxes on the yillagers.
 - (3) That the Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on (b) Abkari Revenue, (c) Forest Revenue.
 - (4) Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. It is partly true. I think the reason might be that the works being scattered and in some cases they are far away from the roads.
- 11, 12, 14, & 18. I think an addition to the qualifications similar to those in Municipalities may be made.
13. The Vice-Presidents should be non-officials in the event of Presidents of Taluka Boards continuing to be official.
17. Local Government should reserve discretion to nominate non-official members when Government consider it advisable to provide for the due representation of minorities as stated above (para 2).

Mr. Syed Muniruddin Sirajuddin Moulvi, District Deputy Collector, Tasgaon.

1. It is not necessary that District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. It is not necessary that the elections should be by communities as regards the membership for Local Boards.
3. It is not advisable that Presidents of District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should be non-officials.
4. The limitation on preparation of plans and execution should be raised from Rs. 50 per mile of road and Rs. 500 for "other works" to Rs. 100 and Rs. 1,000 respectively.
5. It is not desirable to free the Taluka Local Board from the control of the District Local Board as regards the payment of Taluka Local Board servants and sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets.
6. It does not appear that time has come when the management of Primary schools could be entrusted to the District Local Board.
8. The Taluka Local Board is not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by Taluka Local Board to be spent on education in other areas.
9. The resources of the Local Boards are very limited at present and it is desirable to increase their income and lessen expenditure by—
 - (1) Enabling the creation of notified areas in large villages.
 - (2) Levying 1 anna cess on Income-tax, Abkari Revenue, and Irrigation Revenue; and by
 - (3) increasing Provincial subventionsLocal Boards may not be empowered to raise Local Fund cess up to 2 annas in the Rupee.
10. The lack of interest on the part of non-official members is due partly to lack of public spirit and partly to the limited resources of the Boards and the field for activity.
- 11 & 12. The existing law enables the election of suitable men and no modifications are necessary.
13. It is not desirable to lay down that the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official when the President is official. When a suitable person is available he may be elected as Vice-President.
14. The statutory minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 20 from Rs. 48 in view of the division of assessment on account of the introduction of Record of Rights.
15. It is not desirable to divide the Land Revenue and Income-tax between Provincial Government and Local Boards.
16. It is not desirable to fix by law a proportion between the District Board and the Taluka Board.
17. The existing law providing that half of the nominated members should be officials is suitable. No alteration in the law on this point is desirable.
18. Excepting the reduction of the limit noted under question 14, no other reduction is necessary.

A. M. Kuber, Esq., Member, District Local Board, Satara.

1. Yes.
2. There is no need to introduce any change in the present system. The number of voters should be increased.
3. An independent Executive establishment should be maintained to work under the orders of the Board. There is no objection to appoint non-officials as Presidents. In my humble opinion, elected or nominated would not make much difference. The chief difficulty is that the class from which elected members come is backward, and unless they are in a position to realize the responsibility it would not be safe to entrust them with responsible works. Some serious steps must be taken in the direction of spreading primary education.
6. Yes.
9. To meet the extra expenditure Local Boards should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess. They should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on education, etc., in important villages and they should be permitted to levy a cess on Income Tax, Abkari and Forest Revenues.

10. It is true that there is a lack of interest and absence of active co-operation. Official Vice-Presidents (Mamlatdars) hold the balance in their hands and the members directly or indirectly are under their thumb. The result is the members find it best in their own interest to submit to the wishes of the Mamlatdars whatever their personal views. If the members are given a free hand, reserving only the power of supervision and inspection with the official Vice-Presidents, it is quite possible the members will begin to take active interest. Indian Civilians when they come out newly from Home know little or nothing at the outset. But they get sympathetic training and in no time grasp the situation. If the official Vice-Presidents will take it into their heads to take work from non-officials with a sincere desire of teaching them, both will be profited. The officials will be relieved of a part of their onerous duties and the Boards will be able to discharge their work, in course of time satisfactorily. Of course the Mamlatdar is the ordinary member and he can watch the proceedings and the execution of the works.

The Members of a Committee appointed at a Public Meeting at Satara.

Constitutions of the Boards.

(1—2—17.)

1. We think the District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities, the proportion of elected members being two-thirds of the total, the remaining one-third being nominated by Government. Half of this one-third or less, may be officials while the remaining seats should be distributed among classes and interests not represented by election.

2. The introduction of the principle of election by communities will, it is submitted, be harmful to the public interest as well as to the interests of Government. It will engender and aggravate intercommunal rivalries and jealousies and will create a separate tendency in public life.

This question of election by communities is usually raised with regard to Mahomedan representation. The Mahomedan community in this as in most of the Deccan Districts is principally found in the towns. They are very thinly distributed over the rural tracts and hence communal election is not suitable for the Local Boards, where the interests are common to all classes alike. The grant of a separate franchise to the Mahomedan community will invariably create a similar demand by other communities such as the Jains, the Marathas, the Lingayats, the Parsees, and so on. If the wishes of any of the communities be not acceded to, it is likely to lead to bitterness, and the task of Government in these invidious matters will be found to be much more difficult than hitherto. We think Mr. Dutt's remarks in the Decentralization Committee's Report on this point have unfortunately proved too true, such as for instance in the Punjab.

If any large communities or interests be unrepresented it will be open to Government to nominate members to represent those communities or interests, Government may take into consideration any widely expressed and well-founded desire of particular classes and interests for representation and may give effect to the same by nomination as it thinks proper.

We strongly object to any favour being shown to any particular community on political grounds. His Excellency the present Viceroy has said that the conferment of special privileges on one community necessarily imposes disabilities on the others. Again, if privileges like these are conferred on the ground of backwardness, this is, we humbly think, a bad policy, for privileges once conferred can hardly if ever be withdrawn.

17. With regard to question No. 17 as we have stated above that election by communities is harmful to the best interests of the country we are of opinion that the power to nominate one-third of the total number of Local Board members may be reserved by Government. The proportion of nominated officials may be one-sixth of the whole. But we do not lay great stress on this point if the President and Vice-President both be non officials. The question of efficiency should have no doubt great importance, but we think it should be subordinate to the educative value of any reform measure. Even if the efficiency of the Local Boards were to temporarily suffer from any of the reforms, still we have no doubt the Boards in course of time will be far more efficient (in the best sense of the term) than hitherto.

II. (b) It is desirable that the number of members of the Boards should be so increased and the franchise so widened that the election of persons who will take active and intelligent interest in the affairs of the Board may be assured. Roughly speaking, in settling the membership of the District Local Boards, there should be one member for every 30,000 of the population. For instance, the present number of members of the Satara District Local Board is 27. We think it should be increased to 36 or more. They should be approximately distributed as follows:—

- (1) The eleven Talukas should have eleven members as now.
- (2) Each of the Municipalities having a population of 7,000 or more, should have a right to elect one member. Municipalities having a population of more than 7,000 should have additional members, the number of which may be adjusted with regard to the circumstances of each District, for the Satara Municipality one member for each additional 7,000 population will do. Municipalities in this District may thus furnish about 7 members.

The Municipalities admittedly represent the higher intelligence of the District and it is submitted when the Municipal bodies all over the District send representatives, they will not simply represent their own towns but also the Talukas and sub-divisions in which they are situated. For instance in the matter of roads, communications and other District matters they will certainly represent the wider interests of the District and sub-divisions and Talukas. If the Municipalities can send a representative to the Provincial Legislative Council, their delegates can as well or even better represent the interests of the District in the District Board.

(3) The Inamdars are a large and strong body in this District and in the place of a single member which they send at present they should we think be allowed to send three members, one for each sub-division.

(4) Again sub divisional groups of voters falling under clauses 2 to 5 and others such as graduates, pleaders, jurors, assessors, etc.—which we propose should be added—should be formed. These groups will furnish three members.

Thus there will be in all 24 elected members. Of the remaining 12 seats, six may be assigned to officials and the remainder reserved for nominated non-officials.

Presidents and Vice-Presidents.

(3—13)

3. We are of opinion that Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should, wherever possible, be non-officials. In the event of the President of a Local Board being an official, it is desirable, nay essential, that the Vice-President should be a non-official. But this reform of itself can hardly suffice. In answer to question in the Legislative Council, the powers and duties of the Vice-President were defined to be "signing cheques, and pay bills of Taluka Local Board Karkuns, peons, mistries, and the Dharmashala establishment as also those of the Veterinary Dispensary establishment, and in the absence of the President from the head-quarters, of signing grant-in-aid bills"

If a non-official Vice-President's duties are not extended far beyond these trivial ones he will, the committee is afraid, remain as hitherto a mere figure head.

Local Boards' Works.

(4.)

The Decentralization Committee are of opinion that the restrictions imposed by Sections 57 and 61 should be swept away and the sections should be amended so as to carry out those recommendations. The Boards may be trusted to make provision for the preparation, approval or the execution of their works by the entertainment of a competent engineering staff. Such works however as they cannot get done by their own agency they will certainly refer to the Executive Engineer. No hard and fast rule can or should be laid down to bind the Boards to any specified limit as that is likely to prevent progress.

Budgets and Establishment.

(5.)

The Taluka Local Boards should as a rule be free to pass their original and revised budgets within their allotted incomes. But the District Local Board should for the present retain powers, under Section 38, of engaging and paying the establishment.

Primary Education.

(6—7.)

In the opinion of this Committee the time has come to make such changes in the rules under Section 48 (b) as to empower the more advanced District Boards now or in the near future to take over the management of primary schools.

We propose that the following changes, among others, may be made in the rules under Section 48 (b) of the Act :—

Rule 5 : drop the proviso. The previous approval of Government should not be necessary.

Rules 7th and 11th should be omitted. The Education Department may have general supervision like that over the Municipal Schools. This is provided for by the present rule 9.

Taxation and Funds.

(9.)

The Local Board cess should not be raised to two annas in the rupee. The Decentralization Committee have after enquiries found that the Board should not be allowed to raise the land cess beyond one anna as it will be a very unpopular measure.

2. The scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act met in certain cases be extended by including a larger number of important villages in "notified areas." But this should not be done with a view to impose additional taxation and to relieve District Local Boards of a part of their expenditure. This Committee would welcome the extension of sanitation and education, but the primary object to be aimed at should be the improvement of those localities and not merely the transfer of obligations to other shoulders.

3. Local Boards should be empowered to levy a cess on Abkari and Forest Revenues but not on Income-tax.

4. Provincial subventions should certainly be increased, but this should be done on some definite plan and they should usually be semi-permanent.

The Failure of Local Boards.

Causes and Remedies.

(10.)

This is a very important and comprehensive question. The failure of Local Boards is no doubt due to excessive official control as well as insufficient funds. The non-official members have but little voice in the deliberations and no effective control over the Executive of the Boards. The reverse is the case in the Municipalities with regard to the official element. It has been the experience of many Municipalities that the nominated officials take but little interest in the municipal affairs and their percentage of attendance is very low. The reason for this in both the Local Boards and the Municipalities is the same. To be plain the fact is that very few Government officers have yet begun to feel the necessity of keeping in touch with informed public opinion. Detailed reasons for this lack of interest by the non-official members in Local Boards would require much space and repetition. They may therefore be summarised as follows :—

(1) The Presidents of Local Boards are officials. These should be elected non-officials at least in the advanced Districts.

(2) The Vice-President should always be a non-official.

(3) Where the President is an official, the Vice-President should have substantial executive powers.

(4) The franchise should be widened and a large proportion of the seats should be filled by public-spirited and educated men.

(5) The rule as to the appointment of a secretary to the District Board is not we suppose anywhere carried out.

The ignorance and want of information of the members are largely due to the fact that the correspondence at least in this District does not go through any non-official channel. The Huzur Deputy Collector, the President, the Executive Engineer and the Deputy Educational Inspector between themselves formulate and discuss and practically decide all matters. Even the Vice-President is ignorant of what is passing. It is necessary that at some early stage the correspondence should pass through and require the sanction of some non-official committee. The Collector and the Huzur Deputy Collector being overworked cannot be expected to take measures, personally, to see that the members receive full information on the questions placed before them.

(6) The establishment should be subordinate to a non-official President or if the President be an official, to the non-official, Vice-President, even though it may in a large measure be left for disciplinary purposes under the President.

At present the office establishment is drawn from the Revenue line and they do not see any necessity for keeping members of the Boards or committees well informed on Local Board matters.

(7) The result is that even the Central Committee becomes a nominal body, it has no initiative powers whatsoever under a rule framed for this purpose in this District at least.

Usually most of the questions come before them in the final stage with the recommendations for sanction from the Collector, or Executive Engineer, and there is hardly an instance where the recommendations are not carried out. The Central Committee does not prepare the Budget nor is the Budget previously submitted to it for approval or remarks.

(8) The Works Committee is a mere formality in this District as probably in other Districts as well. It has had no chairman for the last fifteen years. No work is assigned to them. No information is given and consequently no work can be expected by them. On the other hand, we think, an active Works Committee is likely to come into conflict with the Public Works establishment. If the Local Boards works should be taken over by the Boards the Works Committee would have ample scope.

(9) No School Committee is appointed under Rule 6 of the rules framed under Section 48 (b). School Committees should be formed and given ample powers as in Municipalities.

(10) In order to create keener interest among the members greater vigilance should be exercised in keeping them well informed as to what is going on. The annual report showing the progress of education and of works of the Taluka as well as of the District Local Boards should henceforward be circulated, passed, printed, and published. A précis or copies of papers relating to the agenda of business to be placed before a meeting should be circulated among the members except in purely formal matters. This would enable the members to follow the discussion and give intelligent opinions.

In conclusion we beg to leave the whole subject of the development of the Local Boards in your hands and those of the Committee in the full confidence that your labours will result in the expansion and liberalizing of this form of Local Self-Government.

Qualifications.

(11—12—14—18.)

As regards qualifications for members and voters we think an addition similar to those in Municipalities might usefully be made. It might be said that a contribution to the taxes or rates to the Local Funds should be the *sine qua non* for such qualifications. It is respectfully submitted, however, that this restriction might be introduced where there is so large a field of qualified men as to necessitate their imposition of restrictions to limit that field. But where the field itself is limited, no such restriction is necessary at least for some time. Again the educated residents of the Districts will be certainly persons who are most likely to have a wider outlook of the necessities of the District, and will not subscribe to the parochial views of uneducated persons. We have no desire to underrate local assistance but it is submitted there is no reason to fight shy of informed and educated public opinion. The additional qualifications therefore such as fellows and graduates of the university, advocates, pleaders, jurors, and assessors, similar to those in force in Municipalities, should be introduced in Section 10.

Groups.

(12.)

Sub-divisional groups of electors falling under clauses two to five of Section 10 together with additional electors mentioned above should be formed. Officiating Patils (Cl. 6) should be excluded from these groups since they are clearly Government servants and should not be mixed up with independent voters with dissimilar qualifications. The officiating Patils however may be tacked on to electors under (Clause 1) of Section 10.

(14.)

The qualifications under Clause 1 of Section 10 should be lowered so as to include holders paying, say, Rs. 10 assessment, especially since the Record of Right Act has had the effect of greatly sub-dividing holdings.

(18.)

Similarly the qualifications under Clauses 2, 3, 4 of Section 10 should be lowered so as to include holders of immoveable property of Rs. 1,000 in value (Clause 2); persons earning Rs. 250 yearly (Clause 3); pensioners receiving a pension of Rs. 15 per mensem (Clause 4).

SHOLAPUR DISTRICT.

J. H. E. Tupper, Esquire, B.A., I.C.S., Collector, Sholapur.

In my opinion it is very desirable to increase the funds of the District Local Board and to emancipate it from the excessive degree of control which hampers its administrative and executive activities. I am in favour of increasing subventions, of allowing the Board to raise Local Fund Cess upto a maximum of two annas in the rupee, and of permitting it to levy a cess on Income-Tax, and on Abkari and Forest Revenue where the two latter would yield a material return.

For the rest I think that any attempt to add to the functions performed by the District Local Board must conform to the essential limitations to which the Board is subjected. These are two, geographical and financial.

The Board is constituted of members living for the most part at great distances from the District Headquarter Town. Mere distance makes it impossible for them to meet except at rare intervals. I do not think it would be feasible to hold meetings more than once in two months and, if this is so, it is clearly impossible that the Board should undertake functions the discharge of which would require frequent meetings. I understand that the functions which it is proposed to devolve on the reconstituted Boards would include the management of primary education (involving the control of curricula, the appointment, promotion, leave and dismissal of schoolmasters), of dispensaries, of vaccination, of public works and of the main local roads. For the efficient discharge of these functions, I apprehend that the Board, or at least a Committee of the Board, would need to be in more or less constant session. If that be so, it settles incidentally the question of an official President, for no official could possibly spare the time. The Board as a whole could not meet with any frequency, and it is obvious that a Committee of the Board capable of frequent session could consist only of members living in or close to headquarters. The result would be that a small local Committee, probably composed largely of pleaders, would acquire practical control.

The functions of the Board must therefore in my humble opinion be limited to those which can be efficiently discharged without frequent session of the Board, in which case they must remain very much what they are now, though the *scope* of existing functions may be largely extended. The scale on which the Board operates is susceptible of great extension, but not, I think, its functions of multiplication.

The other essential limitation which cannot be transgressed is financial. Take the Sholapur District Local Board as an example. Its income is roughly Rs. 80,000. If this were increased from the sources indicated above even to Rs. 2,00,000 it would be impossible from a business point of view for the Board to maintain the staff required for the functions recited. From the report of the Commission, I find that this staff would include a trained Engineer with engineering staff, Road-Overseers, an Inspector of Education with educational inspecting staff, a staff of Assistant Surgeons, of Vaccinators, of Sanitary Inspectors, with possibly a Health Officer and certainly a Secretary to control this formidable contingent. Mere recital is enough to show that a staff of anything like these dimensions would absorb so large a proportion of the Board's funds as to make the scheme impracticable from a business point of view.

My experience of Notified Area Committees has not been encouraging. I find that they do nothing unless the Mamlatdar is in the saddle and uses his spurs freely. As a tentative measure towards reconstruction of the village system, I doubt if they can succeed. That system, as is well known, depended first and last on the existence of the village as the Revenue unit, a position to which there is no return. If reconstitution takes place, I would hazard the conjecture that it will be on a new and probably a co-operative basis, arising out of the formation of Co-operative Societies which may ultimately embrace all the industries of the village and constitute it an organic industrial unit. Combination of such units is possible, leading to the formation of Boards which might ultimately supersede our Taluka and District Boards, while profoundly modifying the boundaries of their jurisdiction.

As regards the constitution of the Board, it is I think premature to express any opinion before its functions are defined, as its constitution must depend on the nature and number of the functions it is called upon to discharge. To vote in ignorance of the functions to be performed, for an elected majority and for non-official Presidents or Vice-Presidents merely because it would meet certain natural aspirations, would be a grave mistake. The Board must be so constituted that it can successfully perform its functions, otherwise the experiment which aims at promoting political instruction will serve only to mis-instruct. One observation only appears safe, whether the functions of the Board remain unchanged, or whether they be increased in degree only or both in degree and in kind, no President, official or unofficial, elected or nominated, can do his duty by the Board unless he is prepared to spend two or three months a year touring through the villages of the District. It is a question whether unofficial Presidents can be found to satisfy this condition.

Mr. H. V. Braham, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Sholapur.

As regards the Commissioners' joint letter to Government, most of the suggestions made therein are repeated in the paper of questions. Generally speaking, I find myself in agreement with all the proposals except those contained in 4 (1) and the first paragraph of 5. The suggested raising of the rate of Local Fund Cess would be a most unpopular measure and would require far stronger reasons than appear to me to exist for its justification. Primary, as well as other, education can best, I think, be dealt with by the Educational Department as at present.

The second paragraph of 5 contains a proposal which commends itself to me perhaps more strongly than any other. Judging from my own experience, I should say that the Public Works Department has already almost more than it can manage efficiently of its own work, and I am strongly of opinion that it would be to the benefit of all concerned if it were relieved of the extra duty of carrying out certain works for the Local Boards. The result of the present arrangements is more often than not most undesirable delay which would be avoided if these works were carried out by Local Board Agency. Nor do I see any reason why the quality of the work should suffer by the proposed change, if the Local Boards are provided with a properly qualified establishment.

1. No. The present scale of half and half should be continued.
2. No. We want efficiency, which can only be promoted by having the best available men of whatever community on the Boards, and not by exaggerating sectarian interests.
3. Certainly not. Generally speaking, with rare exceptions which may be said to prove the rule, it is the officials who do all the work of the Boards and are responsible for whatever measure of usefulness they may attain.
4. All Local Board works should be effected by Local Board Agency pure and simple. The Local Boards should be provided with a properly qualified establishment for this purpose.
5. No. District Local Board control should continue as at present.
6. No. All matters educational can best be managed by the educational department.
7. No alteration or modification seems necessary.
8. As far as I know, the answer is in the negative.
9. (1) No.
(2) Yes.
(3) Yes.
(4) Yes.
10. This begs the question of failure, which is debateable. But there is no doubt that the non-official members are, on the whole and with gratifying exceptions, wanting in active interest and co-operation. The chief causes are probably lack of education and of public spirit. These can only be remedied by time.
11. I do not think so. But see 14.
12. I cannot suggest any.
13. Most decidedly not. See 3 and 10.
14. The minimum may be reduced to Rs. 30.
15. I am afraid I cannot give an opinion off hand.
16. This does not seem necessary.
17. In the interest of the efficiency of the Boards, the existing rule about nominated members should continue.
18. See 14. No other change seems necessary.

Mr. C. Nulkar, District Deputy Collector, Sholapur.

It is necessary to explain the point of view with which I start, and this is given in the following quotations from the Government of India's Resolution on Local Self-Government Policy and from the Bombay Government's Resolution No. 6444 dated 18th August 1915.

"Para 27" (Government of India's Resolution) "District and Sub-District Boards, in the opinion of the Commission, should contain a large preponderance of elected members, together with a nominated element sufficient to secure the due representation of minorities and of official experience."

* * * * *

"It will be seen that local Governments in general are in sympathy with the Commission's proposal."

Para 28 (ditto last sentence), " All local Governments have accepted this view " (*viz.* that an official should remain Chairman of every District and Sub-District Board) " with which the Government of India are in agreement, though they will have no objection to non-official Chairman being retained where such exist, or appointed where a local Government or Administration desires to make the experiment."

Para 6 of the Bombay Government Resolution No. 6444 (last sentence), " It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that this state of affairs " (complete apathy and indifference of the electorate and absence of active co-operation of the non-official members) "is to a large extent attributable to the fact that the system of administration of the Local Boards still remains what it was when these bodies were first constituted under the present Act some 30 years ago and that *during all that time there has been no movement in the direction of endowing them with a more liberal organization and releasing them from the guiding strings of official control.*"

Para 7 (ditto), " In other words, the object which he has in contemplation is the *infusion of a more vital and real spirit into the principle of local self-government as applied to the administration of the rural boards of this Presidency.*"

Keeping these deliberately recorded views of Government before me I have considered it necessary to state as plainly as circumstances will permit, the views which have been formed after observation of Local Board administration extending over a long series of years. The time has, I think, come when Government should take a long step forward and make up for what is admitted by the Bombay Government to have been largely a mistake. In spite of the fact that hitherto there has been "no movement in the direction endowing District and Taluka Local Boards with a more liberal organization and releasing them from the guiding strings of official control" a fair number of educated non-officials have trained themselves to take correct views of Local Self-Government and its possibilities and are, I believe, prepared to make an honest effort at administering the "local" affairs of the District and Taluka Local Boards and of Municipalities of cities and large towns. If many of these latter bodies can be administered successfully by non-official Presidents and Vice-Presidents, it may be said without hesitation that, given the same amount of sympathy and active interest of the District Officers, all the District Boards and some of the Taluka Local Boards will be as successfully administered under non-official control.

I do not advocate the raising of the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas in the rupee because my experience has taught me that except perhaps in a few Districts which happen to be favourably situated so far as seasonal conditions are concerned and endowed with excellent communications, the agriculturist is unable to stand the strain of further taxation. There will be much discontent if the Local Fund Cess is raised and I submit it is undesirable to risk this if we can avoid it. And this we can do, it appears; because the Commissioners of Divisions are unanimous in suggesting a cess on the Income Tax revenue and the Commissioner, S. D., adds the local Irrigation revenue as another possible source, and remarks that the fact that "these and other resources of the Provincial Government have increased greatly in recent years appears to justify the claim of all District Boards to liberal assistance."

I fully and cordially agree with the view of the Commissioner, S. D., "that the system of earmarked doles is not fully adapted to awaken a spirit of responsibility in Local Boards." It is however difficult to imagine what source of revenue the Local Boards can tax in their own areas. All imaginable sources have already been tapped. And a cess on the Income Tax, the Abkari revenue derived from country liquor and the Forest revenue appear for the present at any rate to be the only extra sources of revenue for our Local Boards.

But after all is said, the real crux of the whole matter lies in the problem of education in rural areas. It seems to me that unless strenuous and urgent efforts are made to multiply village schools and the proletariat educated *compulsorily*, nothing else will avail. The present generation of educated and capable non-officials must be assured of equally competent successors and in the long run this means thousands of schools all over the rural areas which the parents must be compelled to fill with their children and which the Imperial Government must supply with teachers—in other words, which the Imperial Government must finance.

1. I think the District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. The reason is that it is desirable to train landholders of the better type in the way of self-government and thus help in relieving the officials of work which ought legitimately to be done by the taxpayers themselves.

* 2. The election should not be by communities. A minimum land revenue payment should be the chief qualification. If the elections show that the *leading* communities have not been for some reason or other represented, the defect should be redressed by nomination. To this end, the number constituting the Boards should be materially increased.

3. I think that in this District, non-officials can be found competent enough to conduct the business of the Board, and if the official unwillingness to work with them can be overcome, it would really be advisable to try the experiment. It is high time, I consider, that qualified and competent non-officials should be more and more associated with the District Officers in the executive work of the Local Funds. The period of transition from the present state of things to the one that is bound to come sooner or later will possibly be marked by differences of opinion, but it is better that these should be anticipated rather than that they should remain unvoiced, and thus become a source of misunderstanding. I have no doubt that, given sympathetic District Officers who will interest themselves in training the new non-officialised Boards to a sense of their responsibility, the result will not be unsatisfactory and the change will be introduced without a wrench.

I would start the scheme with nomination of non-officials as Presidents of the District Local Boards. I think the Sholapur, Barsi and Pandharpur Talukas might also with advantage have non-official Presidents.

And I think that in these Talukas the Mamlatdars should continue to be Vice-Presidents in order to be at hand to guide the Boards in their deliberations and explain matters.

4. There is at present in this District serious cause for complaint that the Government Executive Engineer is unable to keep pace with the Local Board demand for estimates, etc., and in at least one more District in which I have served, a similar complaint had arisen some years ago.

I think the Local Board works generally would be done more quickly if they had their own Public Works Department and staff both for preparing plans and estimates and for executing them. It could be done cheaply and the members would feel greater interest in this branch of their work than at present.

I believe in the Central Provinces there is a District Local Board Engineer for either the whole District or for part of a District. In this District one such District Local Board Engineer with a small staff concerning itself only with purely local public works, such as roads, Dharamshalas and Chawdis, helped by the Taluka Local Board Overseers, could run the show more cheaply than at present.

And there would be no need for any limitations such as those in sections 58 and 61 and the rules thereunder.

It would be open to Government to supervise this staff generally through their Public Works Department without having the present quantity of District Local Board work on its hands.

5. No. The present state of things should continue—the District Local Board should not hand over any part of its control over the Taluka Local Boards to the latter.

6. No. I am strongly of opinion that Educational matters should be controlled by the State and that the District Local Boards should be generally consulted in all matters other than *the main educational policy of the State*.

7. A few alterations in the rules under section 48 (6) of the Act may be suggested here.

Rule 3: I think the present practice of compelling the villagers to find a suitable building free of cost for a village school under threat of closing it, even after the attendance at it for a number of years has justified its need, should cease, because at this juncture it becomes the duty of the State to build a proper school and conduct it. If the educational part of the Local Fund contribution of a District is not sufficient for the erection of new buildings that is a reason for the Government to step in with subventions, the Government through His Majesty the King having declared that it is desired to extend primary education as the principal duty of the State.

Rule 4 (4): Standards are prescribed by the Educational Department of the State and this rule should be either altered or deleted.

Rule 4 (5): This rule is at present non-effective and the Local Boards should be left free of control to exercise their power of fixing fees and it should be open to them to make these schools entirely free to children of cess payers and non-cess payers.

Rule 4 (6): Ought to go in view of my opinion on rule 4 (5).

Rule 12: The annual report of the Educational Inspector should in the first instance be addressed to the President, District Local Board, who will thus directly realise that he is part of the State machinery for educating the children of cess and non-cess payers. A copy should go to the Collector if necessary and the report to the District Local Board should be forwarded through the Collector to Government with the Board's remarks, if any.

Rule 14: The question of sites for school houses is more or less a question of local convenience and the Local Boards alone should have power to decide it without control. A wrong choice resulting for instance in there being no good foundation, etc., will be very rare indeed because there will be the District Local Board Engineer to consult and decide such technical questions. He is the officer who should frame the plans, etc.

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. If a scheme on the lines put forth in answer to question 4 is formulated, a certain amount of extra expenditure would certainly be required for extra staff, etc. I am strongly of opinion that the Local Boards should not for the present at any rate be asked to contribute more towards Education and the Dispensaries should also be withdrawn from the purview of the District Local Boards.

The District and Taluka Local Boards would thus be free to deal with communications, Dharamshalas, Chawdis and Sanitary improvements in Local Board areas *outside* Municipal and Notified areas. In the case of these last areas, the scope of the District Municipal Act should be extended by suitable amendments empowering the authorities of such Notified areas to raise their own revenues for purely local purposes.

I am convinced that the agriculturists cannot bear any further direct taxation and the Local Fund Cess should not for the present be raised to 2 annas in the rupee, though power may be accorded to them to raise it to that amount on lines similar to the proposed provision for Light Railways. There would be serious discontent caused by a statutory increase of the Local Fund Cess and it is not desirable to risk it.

I agree that a cess on the Income Tax and Forest revenues of a District should be allowed to be levied by law, but unless it is at least 4 to 8 annas in the rupee, sufficient funds will not be available. I certainly think that Abkari revenue might also be shared by Government with the Local Boards. It has always been contended by the critics of Government that Abkari revenue is a purely local source of revenue and ought to be handed over to the Local Boards, but inasmuch as Abkari revenue is made up from country and foreign liquors and Government have spent a lot in developing it, a fair portion of Abkari revenue derived from the sale of toddy and country liquors might advantageously be made over to the Local Boards.

It is fortunate that the official opinion seems inclined to allow a cess on the revenues derived from Income Tax, Irrigation, Forest and Abkari. Because there do not appear to be any other new sources of revenue which can be tapped. And for a number of years to come, the revenues derived from these sources will suffice at least in this District.

For the reasons urged by the Commissioner, S. D., I am strongly against provincial subventions or "ear-marked doles" as the Hon'ble Mr. Lawrence terms them.

10. It must be admitted that the official administration of the District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards has failed to arouse the active interest of the non-official members. This class does not feel any personal interest in the matter for the simple reason that no attempt has been made to interest them in it by encouraging direct participation in the exercise of powers, however parochial they may be. The Budgets are drawn up, plans and estimates made and the works executed practically without any study on the part of the non-officials, who are merely called in to register decisions already arrived at. The result is that the non-officials are still quite ignorant as to the ways of working the Local Funds. They must now be trained to take a genuine interest in the working of the Local Boards and the best way is to entrust the working largely to them and to lay on the officials the duty of guiding the deliberations of these Local Boards by advice and otherwise.

There will be mistakes committed—possibly gross mistakes—but as in the case of Municipalities, Government must be prepared for them. It is only after committing mistakes and getting rapped for them, that the non-officials will learn the art of self-government.

11. Yes. I would suggest the following additions and alterations in Section 10.—

Clause (1): The minimum should be Rs. 16 instead of Rs. 48 per annum.

Clause (2): For other immoveable property the minimum should be Rs. 2,500.

The pension limit of Rs. 50 per mensem is too high and might with advantage be reduced to Rs. 25.

12. I would suggest a separate group of the classes 2 to 7 and allot, say, one-sixth of the cadre of elected seats for election by this separate group. This will secure at least three good members of a superior qualification in our Taluka Local Boards.

13. I hold that the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of District Local Boards and the Presidents of some at any rate of the Taluka Local Boards may safely be non-officials. In some Taluka Local Boards, for some years to come, both the Presidents and Vice-Presidents will be officials; in others the President alone need be an official, a non-official Vice-President doing the ordinary office work in his absence.

If these changes are considered too great a departure from the present state of things, the non-officials might be either elected or nominated just as the Legislature might lay down. I do not anticipate that an elected non-official will be unacceptable in all cases and where this happens, a non-official may be nominated after publication of the reasons if need be.

14. Please see my answer to question No. 11 above.

15. My answer to question No. 9 discusses and explains my view. The Land Revenue ought for obvious reasons to remain as at present entirely at the disposal of Government for general purposes.

16. The District Local Board is the proper body to apportion the Local Board share of the Local Fund cess (after setting apart the 4 pies in the rupee for educational objects) between itself and the several Taluka Local Boards. The District Local Board will of course be constituted of members from all the Talukas of the District and if the present Standing Committees of the District Local Boards include Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards, a fair apportionment may always be relied upon which should not be fixed by law.

17. The time has not come and will not come for a long time, when the best friend of Local Self-Government could advocate the wiping out of the official element from the District or Taluka Local Boards, and I think the provision which secures a certain number of officials on our Boards should remain. The officers which the District Local Board should continue to have on its Board

are the Collector, the Executive Engineer, the Civil Surgeon, the Deputy Educational Inspector and the Sub-Divisional Officers. Therefore I consider that the total official nomination need not be more than one-third of the nominated cadre. For example, if the Sholapur District Local Board consists of 18 nominated and 24 elected members, 6 would be officials and 36 non-officials.

For the Sholapur District Local Board I would suggest that the total number of members should be at least 42; then four-sevenths will be elected (non-officials) and three-sevenths will be nominated, of whom two-thirds will be non-officials and one-third will be the irreducible minimum of officials.

In view of the modifications in principle which I have suggested the Collector may by law be allowed to vote or express his views on any particular question by letter. There is no doubt that occasionally he will desire to be present to explain his views and meet objections and thus obviate the chances of a wrong decision being arrived at. If necessary the Executive Engineer and the Civil Surgeon may also be included in this provision. The Sub-Divisional Officers should not be included in this provision but must be present at all meetings of the District Local Boards.

In the case of the Taluka Local Boards the Sub-Divisional Officers might safely be withdrawn from the Boards, the Mamlatdar of the Taluka is quite enough of a guide and the Sub-Divisional Officers should have powers to pull up or advise the Taluka Local Boards, should this be at any time necessary.

18. Please see my answer to the Hon'ble Rao Bahadur Sathe's question No. 11.

Mr. E. Mirikar, Mamlatdar of Sholapur.

The proposals in para 4 of the Commissioner's joint report No. 3251 of 29th July 1915 are certainly worth consideration and should be brought into force, and hence my answers to questions No. 9, sub-questions 1 to 3 (a) and 4 are in the affirmative.

2. As regards the election of Taluka and District Local Boards, I am of opinion that they should have elected majorities, but that such election should not be by communities and there is no necessity of any provision to secure due representation of any special community, and the present number of members is quite sufficient. My objection to the election by communities is because if communal representation is allowed, the Board would be sectarian in one sense and it would not contain large-hearted and liberal-minded intelligent members whom we certainly want on such Boards.

3. It is certainly not advisable to have a non-official President of a District or a Taluka Local Board. The suggestion of a non-official President though it sounds well in theory is not successful in practice, and the suspension of some of the Municipalities by Government and the nomination of many Presidents in Municipalities support and exemplify my proposals, and much less said on the subject would be better.

4. As regards question 4 the limit laid down in sections 57 and 61 is too narrow. There is no necessity for P. W. D. to execute work for the District Local Board, if well paid and competent Officers are appointed by the District Local Board to supervise their own work, nor there is any necessity to hand over a work whose estimated cost comes over Rs. 500. In my humble opinion the Local Boards ought to construct their own works under the supervision of their own subordinates and in only exceptional cases the Executive Engineer should be consulted at the discretion of the President. Hence, I think that the present limitation prescribed in Sections 57 and 61 be removed entirely.

5. As regards question No. 5 my answer is in the affirmative and I humbly think the sections 38 and 55 should be modified or removed in that light. The Taluka Local Boards ought to have free scope in their own affairs.

6. As regards question Nos. 6 and 7 I think that time has not come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. The present arrangement ought to continue for some years more and I do not consider that the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act be altered or modified.

8. The answer is in the negative.

9. The answers and views on question 9 are given in para 1 of this letter.

10. It is true that the failure of District and Taluka Boards are due to lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of non-official members. This is due to want of education and also want of sense of public duty and its responsibilities. The general feeling that they work honorarily and are not therefore responsible for neglect of work, and the remedy is to have more spread of knowledge and education, and that the members should be selected from learned candidates.

11. The answer to question No. 11 is in the negative.

12. Separate groups of voters be formed mentioned in paras 3 to 5 as 1, voters mentioned in paras 1, 2, 6 and 7 as 2.

13. The Vice-Presidents may be non-officials if available to carry on the duties of efficient supervision and who would move about in the Taluka to check and supervise work freely.

14. In my humble opinion the statutory minimum assessment should be Rs. 10 in place of Rs. 48, which assessment is adopted under the District Municipal Act.

15. I am not in favour of the division.

16. I think that no proportion should be fixed by law as to the division of one anna cess between District and Taluka Boards, as the amount required by the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board will depend on the amount of work each Board is responsible to do under section 49.

17. I do not think that the administrative efficiency of a Board would suffer if the Board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. The proportion of such nominated officials to elect members should be equal, that is, the officials should in no case be more than one-half of the whole Board.

18. (1) In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights and consequent division of holdings the minimum assessment should be adopted at Rs. 10 for the present figure of Rs. 48.

(2 and 3) No change is necessary in clauses 2 and 3.

(4) To secure learned men on the Board the limit in clause 4 may be reduced from Rs. 50 to Rs. 25.

Mr. R. D. Indolikar, Mamlatdar of Barsi.

Besides the answers given, I beg to state that with a view to relieve the present strain on the resources of the Local Boards all villages having a population of 3,000 souls should be made "Notified areas" under section 187 of the District Municipal Act. The Act should be amended accordingly.

I further beg to add that the Local Board should not be under the management of a separate executive establishment, but should be under the main guidance of the Revenue Department as hithertofore.

1. At present the number of elective members is one-half of the whole Board exclusive of the President. I think the present scale needs no alteration.

2. Nor do I think that there is any necessity for election by communities. At present in order to guard the interest of special communities members belonging to those communities are taken on the Board by nomination. If nominations are made with a view to keep on Board members of all communities, so far as possible, I think it needless to make any rules for election by communities. The present number of members is quite sufficient. It needs no increase.

3. I do not think it advisable to have non-official Presidents both for the Taluka, as well as for the District Local Board. The official President of the Taluka is generally the Assistant Collector. He has to tour through the Taluka twice in a year and he inspects the works executed by the Local Board Agency. This inspection has a very salutary effect on the Local Board Agency. A non-official President has no chance of making this inspection, nor would he be in a better position to know the wants of the people than an Assistant Collector. For the same reasons I think a non-official President would not do for the District Local Board.

4. At present plans and estimates of works costing more than Rs. 500 are to be first sanctioned by the Executive Engineer. This generally requires much time. After the estimate is sanctioned the work is generally handed over to the Public Works Department for execution. That Department has already too much to do. Preference is given to Provincial Works. Local Board Works are seldom executed in time. As an example people from 8 villages in Taluka Barsi have paid Local Board contributions for the construction of new school houses in the year 1912-13. It is learnt that Educational Authorities have requested the Executive Engineer for the preparation of plans and estimates, but no work has yet been undertaken. This is because the Public Works Department find little time to look to these Local Board Works. The best way would be to appoint for each District Local Board an Engineer who should be in charge of all the works done by the Local Board Agency in the whole District. The Public Works Department should have no concern with the Local Board Works. Every estimate of the Taluka Local Board must first be approved by the Local Board Engineer. Works costing not more than Rs. 100 in the case of road and Rs. 1,000 in the case of other works should be executed by the Taluka Local Board Agency. Those costing more should be executed under the supervision of the Local Board Engineer. The scale in Section 57 was fixed in 1884. Since 1884 the prices of labour and of material have increased. I think, the Taluka Local Board Agency should be authorised to execute works costing not more than Rs. 100 a mile in the case of road works and Rs. 1,000 in the case of other works. Sections 57 and 61 of the Act will have to be amended accordingly. This will give sufficient scope both for the Taluka Local Board Agency to do their work and would also relieve the Executive Engineer of the extra Local Board work thrown on him.

5. The present control of District Local Board over the Taluka Local Board is fully required.

6. Time has not yet come to entrust the management of Primary Schools to the District Local Board. The schools should be under the management of the Educational Authorities.

7. The present rules under Section 48 (b) are suitable and require no change.

8. Taluka Local Board is never consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. There is no doubt that the present Income of a Taluka Local Board is very meagre. The revenue must be increased, but the suggested increase of Local Fund Cess from anna 1 to 2 annas in a rupee should not be resorted to. The cultivating class have long been paying the cess at 1 anna in a rupee and they would think it a hardship if the cess is doubled. Nor does it seem necessary at present to levy any additional cess on either income tax or forest revenues. Income tax being a direct tax and owing to the way in which the assessment is made it has already become an irksome tax. I think no additional cess should be levied on this tax. If a cess is levied on forest revenue the burden would fall on the cultivating class. So this should be avoided so far as possible. I am humbly of opinion that a cess of one anna in a rupee should be levied on the Excise revenue. This would give a decent sum to Local Board. Land Revenue and Excise revenue should be equally treated in point of levying Local Fund cess.

10. My own experience is that non-official members take interest in their work if they are trusted and their work not interfered with. There is however no scope for them to work as the funds are limited and works very few and this is possibly the reason why it sometimes appears that the non-officials take little interest in the work.

11. Owing to the introduction of Record of Rights the number of persons holding in their names lands assessed at Rs. 48 in a village has considerably decreased. I think the limit fixed in Section 10 (1) should be reduced to Rs. 30; in other respects Section 10 needs no change.

12. The framing of separate groups for electors coming under clauses 2 to 6 in section 10 does not seem necessary.

13. The President as well as the Vice-President of a Taluka Local Board must be officials Mamlatdar is generally the Vice-President. He has to move through the Taluka and has better chances than anybody else to inspect the works. His direct supervision over the Local Board works is in my opinion quite essential.

14. This has been answered under para 11.

15. I think only one-sixteenth of the Income Tax should be taken to Local Funds. At present the division of Provincial share of land revenue between Provincial Government and Local Boards seems inexpedient.

16. Local Fund Cess of Barsi Taluka in 1914-15 was estimated at Rs. 14,700. Out of this Rs. 420 were given to the Municipality, Rs. 4,750 to the Deputy Educational Inspector, Rs. 7,140 were taken by the District Local Board (Rs. 3,570 under section 46 and the same sum under section 49), leaving only a balance of Rs. 2,380 for the Taluka Local Board. The share that has come to the Taluka Local Board looks very small, looking to the cess raised in the Taluka. The only way to improve the present poor finances of the Taluka Local Board is to increase the revenue, as suggested in paras 9 and 15 above. I do not think the fixing of proportion between Taluka Local Board and the District Local Board in dividing the revenue after deduction of Education charges would mend matters even if the fixing of such a proportion is possible.

17. The provision as to the appointment of nominated members on the Board under section 5 should remain in force. The difficulty mentioned in question No. 12 is removed while making nominations on the Taluka Local Board. Besides the proposed change of doing away with nominated members would impair the efficiency of the Board.

18. This has been answered in reply to question No. 11.

The Mamlatdar of Madha.

(a) The District Local Boards should be authorized by law to increase the Local Fund cess up to annas 2 per rupee.

(b) The Local Fund cess should be levied on—

- (1) Income Tax.
- (2) Abkari Revenue.
- (3) Forest Revenue.
- (4) Irrigation Revenue.

The well-to-do will be required to pay in case of (1). The consumers of liquor and ganja, etc., will be required to pay in case of (2). The Forest Revenue is almost nil in this Taluka.

Irrigation revenue is a small item in two or three villages. It appears there is no need to have a uniformity of taxes and their rates. In some districts cotton piece-goods are produced in Mills and a Custom duty is levied. If the Local Fund cess is levied on them it will add to the Board's Revenue.

- (c) Provincial subventions should be increased and revised from time to time.
- (d) The proportion of nominated and elected members should be revised.
- (e) The proportion of official nominees (*ex-officio*) should be curtailed.

(f) The extension and revision of the law as far as the notified areas is concerned are necessary; but it appears that the present notified areas are not looked upon so favourably by the residents. It is not liked by the people. A notified area must be constituted on a system of Panchayat Government (administration) and there ought to be elected members who must have a free hand in the matter of levying taxes and expenditure. The present constitution of the notified area is made under the provisions of section 188 of the Bombay Municipal Act, 1901, and it is treated with apprehensions as a prologue to the constitution of the Municipality. There are Full Primary Schools and Rural Schools in the villages. The Full Primary Schools could hardly be efficiently managed by a notified area. But it is expected that the scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be so extended and revised as to make provisions for funds, etc., etc. The Municipalities cannot even have sufficient funds to maintain a Full Primary School efficiently.

It is remarkable that in rural schools, the villagers take a dislike for a teacher and the consequence is that the school suffers for want of attendance of boys. The Local Board will be easily able to remove this inconvenience if the transfers are made by the Taluka Local Board or District Local Board. In other words, promotions, etc., of the staff can be managed by the Taluka Local Board or District Local Board. It is a matter for consideration how to get the things in order.

In short I beg to state that (1) the Local Fund cess should be revised to annas 2 in the rupee; (2) Full Primary Schools should be maintained out of the Provincial Funds; (3) the Rural Schools managed by the District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards; (4) that the cess should be levied on items of Income Tax, etc., etc.; (5) that notified area will have no sufficient funds to maintain Schools, Medical, etc.; that (6) the number of elected members should have a preponderance over the number of nominated members; that (7) the Presidents should be elected.

1. Yes.
2. No.
3. The Presidents of District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards should be elected whether official or no.
4. I don't think any modification is needed.
5. I think the present practice may be continued.
6. The management of Primary Schools should safely be entrusted to the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board except that inspection should be done as at present.
7. I regret I am unable to give any opinion on this point.
8. Never. But there are no separate accounts to show.
9. These are discussed in my report.
10. It is true. There is a general want of education. We must educate and then we may expect good members.
11. Yes. We may expand the franchise but it may not improve the status of members.
12. None. I think it is simply waste of time and energy.
13. It is not desirable to have the Vice-President invariably a non-official.
14. Rs. 25. But it must be noted that one-fourth of the total number of voters do not appear at the polling office.
15. I am not in favour of such decision.
16. It is not necessary, provided the Taluka Local Board keeps a very small portion of the cess, say about one-eighth of the total.
17. The rural population is not so advanced in education that they can be elected to supervise and control their own administration. It is better to increase the number of elected members and the proportion of nominated officials to elected members must be 1 to 7.

18. Yes.

Clause 1—Rs. 25.

„ 2—Rs. 1,000.

„ 3—Rs. 300.

„ 4—Rs. 10 per month.

The first thing of vital importance is to educate the masses and then teach them the principles of Self-Government. I would add that persons having educational qualifications may be eligible for a voter. The person having passed the Vernacular Final examination may be held eligible. The others with higher examinations are of course eligible.

Mr. G. M. Bhalerao, Mamlatdar of Karmala.

As Government finds, the time has come to introduce changes into the existing system of the Administration of the Local Boards, with a view to allow those bodies a freer scope and greater responsibility in the management of their affairs and to ensure that the Boards are truly representative and for this the present organization should be made somewhat more liberal on a popular basis and the bodies should be released to a certain extent from the guiding strings of official control.

To attain the object in view :—

- (1) The qualifying limits prescribed in Section 10 of the Local Boards Act should be reduced as under :—
 - Clause 1.—To be reduced to Rs. 20 as land assessment.
 - Clause 2.—Not less than one thousand rupees as the value of immoveable property.
 - Clause 3.—Earnings not less than Rs. 300.
 - Clause 4.—Pensions not less than Rs. 30 a month.
- (2) The number of members on a Taluka Local Board should be raised at least by one-half the present number, with a view to secure the representation of greater portion of the Taluka on the Board through election.
- (3) Though the President of a Taluka Local Board should continue to be an official, the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official elected by the Board and the present practice of nominating a certain number of members should be continued.
- (4) The Taluka Local Board should be freed to a certain extent from the control of the District Local Board in the matter of sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets, while
- (5) The Local Board servants consisting of a Taluka Local Board overseer, a maistri and a karkun, should have a graded service under the control of the District Local Board.
- (6) The number of peons should be two and they may be engaged and paid by the Taluka Local Board itself. The addition, to the present establishment, would be necessary, as at present the bulk of the working of the Taluka Local Board, as regards the execution and supervision of works, is got done practically under the direct orders of the Mamlatdar of Taluka, who having his duties over the whole of the Boards' area can get them done and supervise them himself along with his usual revenue duties and if a non-official be the Vice-President additional establishment will be necessary with a view to get the works properly done and supervised so that the Local Board money may be properly utilized in the interest of the cess paying public.
- (7) As qualified Taluka Local Board overseers are now appointed and as the Taluka Board's establishment will be increased the limitation on the preparation of plans and estimates of works should be modified and only such works, as require any engineering skill and the advice of an engineering expert, should only be entrusted to the Public Works Department for the preparation and approval of plans and estimates. No money limit on the estimate need be fixed, as the amounts of a single work, to be done at a time, may seldom exceed one thousand rupees.
- (8) The income derived from Local Fund cess in the Taluka, after deducting Educational, P. W. D., Medical and Sanitary charges, should be at the disposal of the Taluka Local Board to the extent of about two-thirds and not left to the discretion of the District Local Board as at present.
- (9) Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on Educational, Medical, Sanitary and other matters in important villages by extending the scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act, so as to establish "Notified areas" in a larger number of villages in Talukas.
- (10) Local Boards should be given a share in the Irrigation, Forest and Excise branches of revenue in order to secure additional revenue to the Board and to remove the inequality of assistance between the rich and poor tracts, the Provincial subventions should be largely increased in the case of poor tracts.
- (11) Local Boards should be permitted to levy cess on (a) Income-tax and (b) Abkari revenue at the rate of one and half anna on every rupee, and
- (12) The present rate of Local Board cess on land revenue should also be raised to the same level.

M. G. Shah, President, Sholapur Municipality.

1. A stage has not yet been reached when District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should have elected majorities. If however it is proposed to have elected majorities the step should be taken as an experimental measure only in case of certain District Local Boards, and if the elected majorities in them are found to be a success the experiment may be continued in case of Taluka Local Boards.

2. I think the present system should continue. There is no necessity of having election by communities. If any such community are not adequately represented such communities should be represented by nomination. The present number of members should be slightly increased.

3. The time has come when a beginning should be made in having non-official gentlemen as Presidents in certain selected Local Boards.

4. District Local Board should have its own Public Works Department and the Taluka Local Board sub-overseers should be under the District Local Board Executive. The Executive Engineer may be consulted as in the case of Municipalities.

5. No.

6. No.

9. It is now recognized by every one that the present resources of the Boards are utterly inadequate to meet efficiently the growing expenditure on the many useful functions they are called upon to discharge. Every one is aware that the needs of a Local Board far exceed the available resources. These needs go on increasing and unless means are found to substantially increase the resources most of the urgent needs of the Taluka Local Board must remain unsatisfied. No doubt several Local Boards do get large subsidies from Government. But such subsidies or grants are disadvantageous in two ways. Firstly, because they are so uncertain and fitful, and secondly, they are non-recurring.

Recourse should therefore be had to adjust the revenue of the Local Board to the following methods:

- (a) Empowering Local Board to raise Local Fund cess to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee;
- (b) Provincialling some of the services which are at present done by the Local Boards, and
- (c) The Local Board should have some share either in the form of a cess or a certain proportion in the income of Income Tax, Abkari, Opium and Forest.

As regards the enhancement of land cess I am of opinion that it should not be enhanced unless the proceeds of the enhanced part of the cess are spent on the areas more strictly local in character than a District Local or Taluka Local Board. That is, the amount should be spent on the village and should benefit that village only.

10. Yes. It is true to a great extent. The reason is that there are not such intelligent members in the District and Taluka Local Boards as there are in Municipalities. Unless education is widely spread in the rural areas this apathy cannot be overcome.

11. Yes. The limit of 10 (4) should be reduced to Rs. 25 per month and of 10 (3) to be Rs. 1,000.

Graduates of Universities, Title-holders, etc., to be qualified as voters.

13. Yes. It is quite essential.

Mr. R. H. Singi.

1. I am in favour of elected majorities, the proportions being two-thirds to one-third. Of the one-third, one-half should be salaried servants of Government.

2. No, I do not think.

3. The Presidents of the District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards should continue to be official as at present, while the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials and elected by the Boards.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and estimates and the execution of works should be entirely done away with and all works irrespective of cost should be carried by the Board's own Agency, including such higher officers as the funds may admit. Possibly it may be suggested that combined Local Board Districts may be created under the charge of one Executive Engineer.

5. This sort of control need no longer be maintained over Taluka Boards.

6. In the matter of education the present arrangements should continue. There are so many special and technical matters to be dealt with in the actual management of the Department that it seems necessary to leave it in the hands of educational experts.

7. No suggestion to make.
8. Never, as far as I am aware.
9. (1) I do not think that the rate of cess on land tax can be further increased. The incidence of assessment on the average produce of land is already as high as it can well be and no further enhancement should be made on the poorer landholders.
- (2) The number of "Notified areas" should be increased.
- (3) (a) The levy of a cess on Income Tax could only be permitted in non-municipal areas and is not likely to bring in any appreciable increase to the Board's revenue, because by far the greater proportion of the tax is collected from persons within Municipal areas, which are principally the centres of trade in the District.
- (b) The Abkari and Forest Revenues should be subjected to the payment of the cess. In connection with the Abkari Revenue it may be noted that Sayar Revenue was formerly subject to the cess, but it was abolished and in lieu thereof a contribution made by Government to the Local Funds, but this sum was once for all and has never been raised although the Abkari Revenue has enormously increased since the abolition.
- (4) The provincial subvention should be increased as they have been of late if the Boards are to be lifted from a state of poverty.

10. The general experience is that members whether elected or nominated from rural area are generally indifferent and apathetic in Local Board matters. As a rule they only yearly attend one or two meetings of the Board as a matter of form and necessity and hardly ever care to acquaint themselves with the matters under discussion nor do they evince any interest in the proceedings beyond making a demand for a well or dharmashala or a road for their own villages. This appears to be due to want of education and higher conception of duties and may gradually disappear with the spread of education.

11. I have no additions to suggest.
12. No.
13. *Vide* question No. 3 above.
14. The limit should be brought down to Rs. 15.
15. I have no remarks to offer.
16. No remarks to offer.
17. *Vide* reply to question No. 1 above.
18. (a) The minimum Land Revenue should be Rs. 15 in lieu of Rs. 48.
- (b) Persons owning other than landed property valued at Rs. 2,000.
- (c) Substitute Rs. 300 for Rs. 500 in clause 3 of Section 10.
- (d) Rs. 15 for Rs. 50 per mensem as regards pensioner.

A. N. Kaulgekar, Akluj.

I propose to deal with questions Nos. 1, 3, 5, 10, 13 and 17 in one group.

1. Yes. They should have elected majorities.
3. Presidents of Local Boards should be non-officials. They should however be nominated.
5. They should be freed in all respects.
10. It is quite true.
13. It is desirable that Vice-Presidents should be non-officials if the Presidents are officials.
17. I don't think the administrative efficiency will suffer in any way. The proportion of nominated officials and elected members should be 2 to 3 respectively.

My reasons for the above are :—

I must confess at the outset that we people are full of all conceivable defects; still the laws relating to Local Boards and Municipalities were introduced with the object of teaching people, such as we were, to look to their own affairs relating to slight matters of public nature. This object has altogether failed. Under present state of things neither the elected nor the nominated members take any interest in the affairs of Boards. Every thing is done by the official President. The members are members in name only. They don't think they have any duty to perform, at the same time they are not conscious that they have certain rights under the law. This apathy is not due solely

to ignorance or sluggishness. It is chiefly responsible to the jealousy which official members of the Board evince with respect to their power or authority. They want absolute power and no opposition and naturally enough the other members are afraid of opposing them in any of their measures or opinions lest they may suffer injury in their private business at the hands of the officials concerned. This apprehension is not quite unfounded. When in this way the members see that they have no practical voice they naturally cease to take interest. It must at the same time be admitted that very few people can be found amongst us who are sincerely alive to their duties and responsibilities. It is on this account therefore that I may say that responsibility must be thrown upon our shoulders and we must be made conscious of it. Let the measure be thus whole-hearted. The controlling powers conferred by chapter VII of the Act on Government officers are wide enough and any addition to them in the form of members is superfluous and undesirable.

I would propose an additional paragraph to section 62 of the Act to the following effect —

The Mamltidar of every Taluka shall generally watch the proceedings of the Taluka Local Board of his Taluka and whenever he deems it desirable so to do may move the Collector to take steps under this section.

2. No, it should not be. It is quite undesirable politically and sociologically that people living in one nation and under the same rule should be encouraged in the belief that their interests are not identical and are probably in conflict with one another.

4. I think sections 57 and 61 should not be interfered with.

6. I think the time has not yet come

7-12-15. I am not in a position to offer any opinion on these questions.

8. I don't think it has ever been.

9. In case of additional expenditure I think recourse should be had to one or more of the following as the case may require, viz., Notified areas, Abkari Revenue and Provincial subventions

11. I would like to add clause No. 8 to section 10 running as follows :—

Graduates of any of the Indian Universities and Pleaders practising in District and Sub-Courts, living within the local limits of a District or Taluka Local Board for a period not less than 12 months.

14 & 18. I propose the following reductions in Section 10 :—

In clause 1, 20 in the place of 48.

In clause 2, two thousand.

In clause 4, 15 in the place of 50.

I am not in favour of making any reduction in clause 3.

16. It should be fixed by law and an equal distribution will not, I think, be quite unjust. The one that contributes less may very probably want more.

—————
Mr. C. S. Madki.

1. In the District Board there should be a majority of the elected members.

There is no hope of securing any benefit from the majority of the elected members unless some limit has been placed as to qualifications of members by way of educational tests as is manifest from the experience of elections in connection with Municipal and Local Board institutions. The same method that is adopted in the Municipal elections at Poona, Bombay and Ahmedabad.

2. The principle of separate electorates for particular castes is injurious to the general interests, but if local conditions require such a provision it may be extended to such portions only having regard to the numerical strength.

3. District and Taluka Boards should necessarily have an elected President.

4. }
5. }
6. } No remarks as these relate to legal questions.
7. }
8. }

9. Without incurring extra expenditure works referred to in 5, 6, 7 and 8 can be effected.

If unavoidably there is an increase in the expenditure a fair share of revenue from Income Tax, Abkari and Forest may be allowed to Local Boards more especially from the Abkari.

10. Yes, it is true to a certain extent. It is owing to the preponderance of official majority. The remedy would lie in the introduction of suitable rules to safeguard the position and prestige of the non-official elected members so as to bring them on the level of the officials.

11. There should be a standard of education as a limit and a necessary qualification for voters.

12. No remarks.

13. If the President is an official the Vice-President should necessarily be a non-official.

14. According to the Record of Rights every one paying a land revenue of Rs. 15 and over may have a right of voting

15 & 16. No remarks.

17. The Boards should be composed of two-thirds of non-official elected members. The Government should nominate one-third of both officials and non officials whomsoever they may choose to suit circumstances.

18. No remarks.

Mr. S. S. Poredi, Huzur Deputy Collector, Sholapur.

1. *Elected Majorities.*—The Local Boards Act, as it stands at present, provides that the elective members shall not be less than one-half of the whole Board. This provision is liberal enough to allow the elected members a sufficient scope for the display of their energies and public spirit. To serve on such institutions men of intelligence, superior culture, and above all possessing a disinterested desire to serve the public are wanted and as men, possessing these qualifications, cannot be had by the dozen it does not seem desirable that the present rules should be modified.

2. *Election by Communities.*—The present election rules need no change.

3. *Presidentships.*—If suitable men can be secured it is better to have non-official gentlemen as Presidents of District and Taluka Boards. This further step in the direction will afford these men opportunities for the development of their administrative capacities and would relieve the already over-worked District Officer of his responsibilities in the matter. For the present Presidents should be nominated by Government from the nominated non-officials.

4. *Preparations of Plans and Execution of Works.*—These works fall under two heads, roads and buildings. As regards the preparation of plans the present provisions are that in the case of roads, costing on an average Rs. 50 per mile, the plans and estimates are to be prepared or approved by the Government Executive Engineer of the District and, in the case of works, this provision applies when the cost exceeds Rs. 500. As far as execution is concerned works costing over Rs. 2,500 are to be carried out by the Public Works Agency while the other works are to be in charge of the District Local Board Agency; since the abolition of tolls on public roads most of the important roads have been taken over by Government and the roads now left in charge of the Boards are of secondary importance. These money limits should now be raised to Rs. 5,000 and such works only should be entrusted to Public Works Agency; all other works being left entirely in the hands of the Boards both for the preparation of the plans and execution. For the execution of the works which the Boards are now allowed to undertake they have to employ qualified men and in order to secure the services of competent men decent salaries have to be paid. Sufficient work cannot be provided for these men under the present conditions and consequently the percentage of execution charges sometimes comes to a rather high point. But in case such of the works as are at present carried out by the Public Work Agency were to be left to the Local Board Agency, the payment which is to be made to Public Works Department in the shape of execution charges, would be saved and this saving can be utilized in paying, the qualified men engaged by the Boards, decent salaries.

5. *Control of District Boards over Taluka Boards.*—The present arrangements should continue in future.

6. *Management of Primary Schools.*—I do not think the time has come when the management of Primary Schools may well be left to the District Local Boards. They still require the guidance of Government Educational Authorities.

7 & 8. *Expenditure for Educational purposes.*—The present practice should continue. As the payments made under the provisions of Section 48 (a) of the Act are out of the funds set apart for the purpose the Taluka Boards concerned are not consulted.

9. Sources for additional expenditure, if any—the raising of the rate of Local Fund cess is not desirable. This step would create discontent among the agricultural community.

The idea of bringing important villages under the provisions of "Notified areas" is a desirable one and this step would relieve the Local Boards to some extent of the responsibility in educational and sanitary matters. Charges of such natures should be entirely borne by the "Notified areas" concerned within their limits.

The levy of cess on Income-tax, Abkari and other revenues requires to be examined on several grounds. The levy of the income-tax is not very popular in itself and to burden it with the Local Fund cess would make it still more unpopular. But in case important villages were to be converted into "Notified areas" the burden of educational, sanitary and other charges would naturally fall on the inhabitants of such villages, many of whom will be income-tax payers. By these means such persons who do not at present generally contribute to the Local Fund revenue would be taxed for the purposes contemplated by the Local Boards Act and the question of levying the cess on income-tax from them does not arise.

In case the levy of cess on Forest revenue is legalised, some additional responsibility would be thrown on the Boards as is proposed to be done in the case of irrigation revenue in a draft Bill now under the consideration of Government and the revenue thus realised would hardly be available for general purposes of the Act.

The question of Abkari revenue rests on a different footing. In case the levy of cess is authorised on this revenue it is likely to be unconditional and the amount thus raised would be useful for general purposes of the Act. Even if this proposal does not meet with the wishes of Government the subsidy now placed by Government at the disposal of the Boards in lieu of cess on Excise revenue should at least be increased. These assignments were made so long ago as 1874 and there has been considerable increase in the Excise revenue since that time and the Boards would be justified in asking for an increase in the amounts now paid to them.

The question of Government subventions is closely connected with the financial position of the state and any increase in this matter would be highly appreciated by the Boards.

10. Local Board members are mostly drawn from mofussil public and there are very few suitable men available among them to perform satisfactorily the duties assigned to them. This is the only reason for the absence of active co-operation on their part. These defects will gradually disappear as education advances among the general public.

11. The terms of Section 10 are liberal enough and no changes seem to be called for.

12. No means can be suggested for bringing about the state of things contemplated by the honourable member.

13. There is no objection to have non-official gentlemen as Vice-Presidents provided suitable men can be secured.

14. No reduction in the present figure seems to be necessary. In the mofussil the percentage of persons who have exercised their rights of voting is generally very low as compared with Municipal areas and, therefore, it would serve no purpose even if the number of voters is increased.

15. The Local Board Act as it stands at present contains no definite rules as to the division of Provincial revenues and, therefore, nothing can be said on this point. This matter entirely rests on the discretionary powers of Provincial Governments.

16. It does not seem to be necessary to legalise the apportionment of the revenue referred to in Section 45 (a) (5) of the Act.

17. Under existing circumstances it does not seem necessary to change the constitution of the Boards.

18. For the present no reduction seems to be called for in the qualifying limits dealt with in clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Section 10 of the Act.

Mr. R. M. Sane, Pleader, Barsi.

1. Yes, the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should have elected majorities.

2. No, due representation of special communities or interests may be secured by Government nomination under Section 5. The present number of members may be increased to secure intelligent classes on the Boards.

3. The Presidents of District Local Boards should be non-officials elected by a majority of two-third votes. The Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be Mamlatdars and not Sub-Divisional Officers as Mamlatdars would be able to supervise works more often than Sub-Divisional Officers.

4 & 5. The Taluka Local Board should be allowed to reserve to themselves some portion of the funds collected in the Taluka after paying for educational portion to District Local Board. That is, out of 12 pies 4 pies should go to the District Local Board for education and out of remaining 8 pies 6 pies should be reserved by Taluka Local Boards and 2 pies should be the contribution to District Local Boards for general expenses in the District. The Public Works Department is not able to do the work of the Boards without much delay and therefore one new appointment of Local Board Engineer should be made for each District at the cost of Government. The Taluka Local Board should have free hand in preparing their budgets and engaging their establishment out of funds reserved to them for works falling within their scope. In the light of these remarks the necessary changes may be made in the Sections referred to in questions 4 and 5.

6 & 7. The District Local Boards should have control of schools conjointly with the Educational Department and I do not think any changes are necessary in rules under Section 48b.

8. So far as my information goes never consulted.

9. (1) Local Fund Cess should not be raised.

(2) All villages comprising inhabitants of three thousand and above should be declared as "Notified areas."

(3) (b) Should be permitted to levy a cess of one anna in a rupee on Abkari Revenue collected in the Local Board areas.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. It is true. The reasons are want of sufficient funds and want of effective powers. The remedies are greater funds and larger powers. The area of operation is wide and not compact as in the case of Municipalities and this is also a reason why much interest is not evinced. Members should be given travelling expenses to remedy this evil.

11 & 12. In clause 1 the minimum should be fixed at Rs. 20. In clauses 2 and 3 the amounts may be reduced by half. These three classes should form an electorate for the different groups.

A separate group be formed of the following persons :—

(4) Pensioned Government servants drawing not less than Rs. 15 per month.

(5) Honorary Magistrate and village Munsiffs.

(6) Officiating Revenue and Police Patels and officiating Kulkarnees or Talatees.

(7) Schoolmasters whose minimum salary is Rs. 10 per month

(8) Public servants or servants of Limited Companies drawing salary of Rs 15 per month.

(9) Graduates, undergraduates, matrics and persons having passed School Final or persons having passed English or vernacular public service examinations.

From clauses four to nine should form a separate group and this one group should return two members. If persons come under both these groups they should have a right of voting at both places. I take the instance of Barsi Taluka Local Board. For the present the number of members is 16, eight elected and eight nominated. The Assistant Collector, who is the President, is the 17th. The Assistant Collector should not be the President as I have suggested in answer No. 3. The present number 16 should be increased to 18. Out of this eight should be elected by the groups formed of voters from clauses 1, 2 and 3. Two should be elected at one group by persons falling in clauses 4 to 9. So in all there would be ten elected and the remaining six should be nominated out of whom not more than one-third be salaried servants of Government.

13. Yes, the Vice-President should be non-official and elected.

14. See answer to questions 11 and 12.

15. The Local Board's share should be one anna in a rupee.

16. The answer is given in questions 4 and 5.

17. The answer is given in question 1—non-official nomination cannot be done away with altogether as Government must have scope to nominate non-official persons of communities or interests not represented in elections.

18. The answer is given in questions 11 and 12.

. Mr. N. G. Majumdar.

1. Yes, three-fourths should be elected.

2. Election should not be by communities. The spirit of true citizenship, of working for the common good, has already commenced to permeate through all and the introduction of communal representation will tend to damp that spirit. Not only that, but I am afraid that it will lead to across any instances of the rights or privileges of any community having been sacrificed, in any boards, the Government can remedy that by nominating a member of that community on the board or boards at the time of nomination.

I have no constitution to suggest for the boards as I am opposed to the principle of election by communities.

I think the boards should be made wider by increasing the number of members.

3. The Presidents of the District and Local Boards should be elected non-officials, except in special cases and under exceptional circumstances where such non-officials of sufficient experience and capacities are not available.

4. For all repair work it should not be obligatory on the Taluka Boards to get sanction from the District Local Boards. If some Taluka Local Boards together were to appoint a Consulting Engineer, the present obligation of the preparation and approval of the plans by the Executive Engineer may be omitted, except in special cases where a very heavy expenditure likely to be spread out on a number of years or likely to entail a constant annual heavy charge is involved. In the latter case, the plans and estimates prepared by the Board Engineer may be submitted to the Executive Engineer for approval.

6. I think the management of primary schools should be entrusted to the District Local Boards. The Principal of the Training College, if there is one in the District, or the Head Master of a Government or Private High School, should be nominated by the Government on the District Local Board, during the first few years.

9. I think :—

(1) Yes. The Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess upto 2 annas in the rupee.

(2) Yes.

(3) Yes, the Local Boards should be permitted to levy local fund cess on—
Income Tax upto 2 annas in the rupee.
Abkari Revenue Yes.
Forest Revenue Yes.

However, as some boards may get little income from the Abkari and Forest Revenue cesses, they should be allowed to levy shop tax as in Sind.

(4) An amount equal to the Local Fund Cess on Assessment and Income Tax, etc, should by a standing Resolution of the Government, or a Clause of the Act, be transferred to the Local Boards directly from the Assessment and Income-Tax, etc, income Besides the above, provincial subventions should be increased

10. The Taluka and District Local Boards comprise big areas. To go long distances to attend meetings and visit the works, etc, naturally goes hard with the members

The members would still take interest, if they realise that there is some use in their attending the meetings. With the Collector, the District Deputy Collector or Mamlatdar in the chair, they are constrained to raise their voice, since many of the members being landholders, hesitate to make a speech, or take an action that would in any way, direct or indirect, not be pleasant to the Revenue Officers, of whatever rank they be.

As remedies against the above, I would suggest :—

(1) Breaking up the present Boards into smaller ones with powers over smaller areas.

(2) Increase in the number of members and in the proportion of elected members.

(3) The election of non-official Presidents and Vice-Presidents by the *elected* members only.

(4) Municipalities of adjoining areas being given a right of greater representation (these men with their experience of the working of the Municipal Boards will be a great help and guide to others).

(5) Giving a special right of election to a group formed of the educated.

And last, but not the least,

(6) By giving more discretionary powers to the Boards as regards expenditure and thereby creating a sort of feeling of self-respect and responsibility amongst the members.

11. The literate should be given the right of voting.

13. I hold the view *strongly* that both the Presidents and Vice-Presidents should be non-official and elected.

14. For the present, the minimum may be reduced to "Rs. 24."

16. I think the incomes should go to the Taluka Local Boards directly and a certain proportion of the income, depending on the District and Taluka Local Boards' obligations, should be contributed by the various Taluka Local Boards to the District Local Boards.

17. I see no reason why the administrative efficiency of a Board would suffer by the abolition of the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination. However, for special cases and emergencies, the Government may reserve the right of appointing only one such. The rest should be elected and nominated officials. I think 20 per cent of the total number of the members should be the proportion of nominated officials, including the non-official that may have to be nominated in special cases.

18. Yes. I would propose :—

1. Rs. 24 in place of Rs. 48.
2. Rs. 1,000 in place of Rs. 5,000.
3. Rs. 180 in place of Rs. 500.
4. Rs. 15 in place of Rs. 50.

Mr. Govind Balkrishna Vakil, Karmala.

1. Elective system itself is rather questionable inasmuch as the public is not appreciative. Qualification tests presume the public to be educated, qualified and appreciative.

2. Representation by communities is as much faulty. Educational qualifications in the main, irrespective of communities, should be the tests.

Number of members should be increased.

3. Presidents both of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials.

4. The existing limitations should all be removed.

5. District and Taluka Local Boards should be quite distinct and independent of each other.

6. No.

7. The Rules shall have to be altered as to bring them to bear upon the changed circumstances.

8. No.

9. Presumption of extra-expenditure is gratuitous for the present.

(1) Any increase in taxation in any shape or form shall have to be paid in drops of blood.

(2) It is a distinction without a difference. In both, the general public is the payer.

(3) Yes

(4) Yes.

10. It is true to a word. The causes are not far to seek. Without meaning any offence to anybody, I submit, do the non-official members, except but very few, understand a bit of what they are expected to do in the Local Board Administration, beyond nodding their heads or raising up their hands in token of signifying their assent to what they do not know. In every Board, I presume, there are less than one-fourth of the members who actually seem to take interest in the work. The rest of the members naturally are found to be quite innocent of the matter. If any thing is to be blamed, it is the qualification tests under the questionable elective system.

11. Additions may be made.

12. I can suggest no means under the existing circumstances.

13. Not only Vice-Presidents but Presidents also should be non-officials.

14. It should be Rs. 10.

15. It is a question which cannot be answered in an off-hand manner. But it is certain that it is highly desirable that it should be divisible. The Local Boards share shall have to be fixed in proportion to Provincial share.

16. This proportion should be fixed by law. It should be according to the test of population.

17. All should be elected or all should be nominated with no official interference. This would ensure active interest and co-operation to answer the sole and exclusive responsibility. This would be an indirect way to educate the public for offices of graver responsibilities.

18. Any reduced limits as to make the measure more popular and far-reaching.

K. B. Moulvi Pirmahomed Daffedar.

1. There should be no majority of the elected members on the District and Taluka Local Boards. Half the members should be elected and half nominated.

2. The election should not be by communities.

3. Presidents of District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should be salaried Government officers and they should be appointed by Government.

4. I know nothing and cannot give any opinion.

5. The control of District Local Board over Taluka Local Board should remain as it is.

6. It seems improper to entrust the management of Primary Schools to District Local Board.
7. No opinion can be given.
8. Cannot get any information.
9. The Local Board expenditure will not be increased and if it will be increased it should be met from the balance by reducing the expenditure on Education, Medical, &c. It is not proper to levy any new tax or to increase the existing one.
10. It is true that the non-official members take no interest in Local Board works and it is true that they do not find time to look after the Local Board works owing to their private work.
11. There seems no reason to make any addition to the qualification of voters.
12. There is no necessity to form separate groups of electors.
13. If the President of the Taluka Local Board be a Government officer the Vice-President should be a non-official.
14. Cannot give opinion.
15. There seems no necessity to divide the share of Land Revenue and Income-tax between Provincial and Local Boards.
16. The present arrangements are good.
17. There seems no necessity to substitute the nominated members by the elected members and by doing so the Board will lose its influence.
18. I do not propose any modification to Section 10 of the Act.

Mr. G. B. Jagade, Mamlatdar of Pandharpur.

1. No useful purpose will be served by having elected majorities at least in Taluka Boards.
2. There is no necessity of election by communities in Taluka Boards, as the works generally executed by Taluka Boards do not concern any particular community but are mostly public.
3. At least in Taluka Boards the President should be official and nominated, as in the mofussil very few persons will be found willing and qualified to serve as Presidents.
4. Plans and estimates of Rs. 1,000 and above should be approved by the Executive Engineer and the works supervised by the Public Works Department. Also the limit of 50 rupees per mile in the case of a road should be extended to 100 rupees.
5. The engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board's servants should rest with the District Local Board. The Taluka Local Boards should have full power to pass their budgets, subject to any suggestions by the District Local Board.
6. I do not think that the time has yet come for entrusting the management of Primary Schools to the District Local Board.
7. No change appears necessary.
8. Never.
9. (1) Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund cess upto a maximum of two annas in the rupee.
(2) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on (a) Income Tax, (b) Abkari Revenue and (c) Forest Revenue.
(3) Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. It is a fact that there is a marked lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members and it is due to want of training and education.
11. (1) The limit of assessment should be lowered down to Rs. 30.
(2) The value of immoveable property should be lowered down to Rs. 3,000.
(3) The limit of pension should be lowered down to Rs. 30
(4) Government servants drawing more than Rs. 20 may be allowed to vote.
12. It is not possible to form separate groups of electors.
13. In the event of Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continuing to be official, the Vice-Presidents need not invariably be non-official.
14. *Vide* reply to question 11.

15. I think the status of Local Boards would be improved, if the share of Land Revenue and Income-tax be divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. The Local Board's share should be one-sixteenth.

17. No change is necessary.

18. *Vide* answer to question 11.

Mr. Sundar Malhar Patel of Surdi, Barsi.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.
2. Election should not be by communities. The present number of members should be increased. If the number of members remains the same, *i.e.* 18, the election should be as follows :—
Two of them should be officials.
Four should be nominated.
Twelve should be elected.
3. The President of Taluka Local Board should be Mamlatdar of the Taluka and the Vice-President should be non-official.
4. The Local Board should have its own Engineer and he should have control over all the works, and the limit of the Taluka Board should be Rs. 100 per mile in case of road repairs instead of Rs. 50 and Rs. 1,000 instead of Rs. 500 in case of new works. All the works should be under the control of the Local Board Engineer and the Public Works Department should not have any concern in this respect.
5. The Taluka Board should have full authority to sanction and revise the Taluka Local budgets.
6. The District Board should appoint a school committee and all the management of Primary Schools should be entrusted to the said Committee.
8. The Taluka Local Board has never been consulted in this respect.
9. (1) Local Boards should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess. (2) The scope of chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be extended in establishing 'Notified areas' in as many villages as possible. (3) Local Boards should not be permitted to levy cess on any matters. (4) Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. It is not true.
11. No addition is required to the qualifications of voters.
13. The Vice-President should invariably be a non-official.
14. The minimum assessment should be Rs. 48 and not less than that.
15. It is desirable that the Land Revenue and Income-tax should be divided and the proportion should be 1 to 16.
16. After deducting educational portion the proceeds should be divided equally among the District and Taluka Local Boards.

Letter from the Secretary, District Congress Committee, Sholapur.

My Committee entirely agrees with the view given by the Bombay Government in Press Note No. 6445 dated 18th August 1915, that the absolute lack of interest which the public displays in the management of local affairs is due to a very great extent to the fact that ever since the constitution of these bodies some thirty years ago, no real steps have been taken "in the direction of endowing them with a more liberal organisation and releasing them from the guiding strings of official control." The people must be given real power and thus made to feel the responsibility of their position. My Committee, therefore, proposes that both the District and Taluka Boards should have an overwhelming elected majority.

The District Boards should have four officials on it—the Senior Assistant Collector, the Executive Engineer, the Civil Surgeon and the Educational Inspector, all the rest being elected. The Taluka Boards should have only the Mamlatdars on it and the rest to be elected by the people.

Electorate.

My Committee is in favour of an increase in the number of members on both the Boards. The District Boards should be composed of two members elected from each Taluka Board, one member elected from each Municipality having a population of more than 10,000 and one member elected from the holders of entire alienated villages. The Taluka Board should consist of two members elected from each of the groups, into which the Taluka may be divided for the purpose of election, one member elected from each of the municipalities within the Taluka irrespective of population and one member elected by the holders of entire alienated villages.

My Committee favours the idea of having separate representatives in both the Boards for land-owner's class and for the classes specified in clauses 2 to 7 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act (and also one additional clause which is hereinafter suggested) and it therefore suggests that each group in the Taluka may be subdivided into two sub-groups, one representing the class specified in clause No. 1 of section 10 and the other representing the classes specified in clauses 2 to 7 of section 10 (and also the additional clause suggested below). The representatives of the agriculturists in a Taluka Board should elect one member to the District Board and the others should elect the second.

Qualification for Members and Voters.

My Committee is of opinion that some modifications in the existing rules are necessary. In the first place, there is no educational list and educated people have no right to vote and are eligible for membership by the mere fact of having satisfied some intellectual tests. It therefore proposes that graduates, pleaders, matriculates and those that have passed the School Final examination of the Bombay University, or those who have passed corresponding examinations of other Universities, should be added on to the list given in Section 10 of the Local Boards Act. Besides, the assessment rate should be reduced to Rs. 10, the property value to Rs. 2,000, the yearly income to Rs. 200 and the monthly pension to Rs. 15.

President and Vice-President.

The Decentralization Commission was of opinion that both the Boards should have official Presidents, as the time was not yet ripe for so radical a change, in the prevalent system, as the appointment of non-official chairman. In their opinion such a step was likely to cut off the head of the District from all the actions in the District, in which he ought to take a keen interest. With due deference to their views, however, my Committee thinks that the official chairman should be dispensed with from both the Boards, in order that the representatives of the people may feel the responsibility that is placed on them. The Collector has to be informed of all the proceedings of the Board whenever meetings are held and thus he will have full knowledge of all the work, which is done in the District under his charge. My Committee, therefore, proposes that the President of the Boards should be elected non-officials.

Functions.

My Committee falls in completely with the views expressed by the Decentralisation Commission that the service which is paid for by the Boards should be entirely controlled by them. The mere fact of granting subventions should not be made an excuse for an increase of official control.

With respect to primary education, the District Board should be given over the entire charge of the work.

They may be asked to employ qualified teachers as in other branches of administration. They should have their own teaching and inspecting staff and the whole service should be District Board Service. The Municipalities have the control of this Department and there is no reason to believe that the Local Board will fail to do the work which the municipalities have undertaken with success.

The "Civil Works" Department although the major portion of the expenditure is borne by the Boards is practically under the Government Engineer. The Local Boards Act imposes some restrictions on the powers of local bodies. These limitations, in my Committee's views, should be removed, and the Boards should be given the power to frame and pass estimates and to execute works. The District Boards should have their own Engineering Staff, fully qualified, and they should form a District Board Service.

In regard to Medical Service the same principle should be applied and the Assistant and Sub-Assistant Surgeons should form the District Boards Service.

My Committee thinks that within the allotted grants, the Taluka Board should have free scope of action. After setting apart the educational charges and other charges in connection with the other functions of the District Boards, the remaining amount should be distributed by the District Board in the several Talukas under it and then they may be allowed to frame and pass their own budgets and may make all necessary reappropriations. They may appoint and dismiss their own menial servants subject to appeal to the District Board whose decision should be final.

Resources.

The resources of several Boards are very rigidly restricted. Moreover, the efficient discharge of all the duties, which it is proposed they should take up, will demand a great deal of more money. With a view to meeting this difficulty my Committee thinks that the Government be requested to levy an anna cess per rupee on the Abkari Revenue of the Government for the purposes of Local Boards. This additional Abkari revenue would yield about 10 lakhs more to the Local Boards. Even this increase would be insufficient to cope with the needs of the Boards. My Committee is strongly opposed to any increase in the Land cess, as such a cess is sure to be very unpopular amongst the agriculturists. My Committee therefore strongly recommends a substantial increase in provincial subventions.

The yield by raising the Income-Tax by an anna in the rupee would be very small and this is therefore not recommended for adoption. The Forest Revenue is mostly derived from agriculturists and as in the case of Land cess any increase here would be highly unpopular and therefore it is not recommended.

Answers to the questions printed on pages 1 and 2 of this annexure.

[The figures at the beginning of each paragraph correspond to the numbers of the questions.]

SOUTHERN DIVISION.

BELGAUM DISTRICT.

Mr. E. L. Sale, I.C.S., Collector of Belgaum.

1. Yes.

2. I do not think that there is any reason for any provision for the representation of any special community. Individual energy and ability are the qualifications for a useful Local Board member; if he has character and influence, his caste is not a very important consideration. The present number of members is sufficient. Large boards are by no means synonymous with effective business-like boards.

3. If a capable non-official is to be found ready to carry out the duties and undertake the responsibilities of President of a Taluka Local Board, I see no objection to his nomination. Such a person is seldom to be found and, therefore, the appointment should be by nomination, not election.

Until non-officials have been found by experience to be capable of carrying out satisfactorily the duties of President of a Taluka Local Board, I do not recommend the appointment of a non-official as President of the District Local Board. When gentlemen have proved their worth and ability in this way they should be eligible for nomination to the Presidency of their District Local Board.

4. This question depends entirely on the quality of the engineering staff employed by each District Local Board.

If a District Local Board or a small group of District Local Boards can afford to entertain a superintending officer with the training and experience of an Executive Engineer to superintend all works of importance undertaken and maintained by them, there should be no need for any scrutiny of plans and estimates by any officer of the P. W. D. and such an officer could be entrusted with the execution of all works in the programme of the Local Boards.

If the District Local Board employs a supervising officer with training and experience equal to that of a P. W. D. Sub-Divisional Officer, some extension of the limits appointed under section 57 (b) and 61 should be allowed. I doubt if it would be advisable to draw a hard and fast rule as to how far the limit should be extended. The cost of a work is not by itself an index to the professional skill required for preparing the plans or superintending the construction. It would, therefore, probably be advisable to adopt different limits for different kinds of work. The individual attainments of each Local Board Supervisor also constitute a factor which might with advantage be considered before extending the limit.

Under the present arrangement the District Local Board has to pay large sums for Government charges for scrutiny of plans and estimates without in many cases getting any adequate benefit.

5. I think that the engagement of the superior staff should remain with the District Local Board. The cadre of a Taluka Local Board establishment is too circumscribed to admit of any system of promotion but an incremental one and this is not usually conducive to the best work.

There is no objection to the payment of Taluka Local Board servants by the Taluka Local Board, but in that case the Taluka Local Board's power to punish by fine should be limited to the lower-paid servants.

Selected Taluka Local Boards might be exempted from the control of the District Local Board in the matter of their budgets.

Personally I think that, if this control were to be given up, the result would in many cases be great delay in the preparation of budgets and consequent failure to carry out the programme of works provided for.

6. No. It would be a great mistake to hand over the management of primary schools to the District Local Board. There is at present no call for any extension of the scope of their energies. Consolidation and improvement of their administration in matters already entrusted to them must be first aimed at.

7. I can suggest no modifications as advisable in the rules.

8. No. Such cases are rare.

9. Of the proposed forms of raising further revenue for the Local Boards, I am afraid that Local Boards would not take advantage of the power to increase the Local Fund Cess if it were granted to them.

The extension of "notified areas" may in time provide some relief. Any such extension must however be gradual; the Mamlatdars of Talukas in which notified areas are established find that their aid is frequently necessary to smooth out difficulties and induce the committee to adopt a progressive policy. We do not want more babies than the Mamlatdars are able to nurse. The sudden creation of a number of notified areas would result in a fiasco. The powers should only be extended to areas in which a sufficient number of suitable candidates for the committee of management is forthcoming.

I see no objection to the levy of a cess on income tax, abkari and forest revenue. It would probably be necessary to have some re-distribution of such a cess if levied. If each District Local Board were to be allowed the benefit of the cess levied on the revenue of this kind raised within its district, some districts would benefit very largely and others would secure only a moderate additional revenue.

I think that Government should undertake part of the cost of primary education which now absorbs one-third of the Local Board revenue.

10. It is a contributory cause with the inadequacy of funds and consequent inefficiency of the staff. This is a difficult question to answer in a few words. The need is of more people who will give up their time to see that the public money is well-spent, that work is not scamped, and that the board's servants and employes give an honest day's labour for their pay. I am unable to say how the supply of such public spirited citizens can be increased.

11. Representatives of co-operative societies and village sanitary committees might be added.

12. No.

13. No. Not invariably.

14. From investigations held recently in this district I find that there is no reason to believe that the recent amendment of the Land Revenue Code will lead to any material reduction in the number on the electoral roll, if payment of land revenue of Rs. 48 be retained as the qualification. As, however, in some talukas this will have the effect of reducing the number of voters, payment of land revenue of Rs. 35 might be adopted as the qualification. The lowering of the qualification will not tend to improve the stamp of the average candidate elected.

15. I am not in favour of this.

16. No fixed proportions can be equitably fixed.

17. The nominated un-official members of the board are very often the most useful. Many of them would not offer themselves for election, if nomination were abolished and their services would thus be lost to the board.

18. See my answer to question 14

I think that in section 10 (4) the qualifying limit might be reduced to 10 rupees per mensem.

*The Honourable Mr. D. V. Belvi, L.L.B., Additional
Member of the Legislative Council.*

1. District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities of members. In my opinion the proportion of elected to nominated members should be 3 to 1. In the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh not less than three-fourths of the members of each District Local Board are at present elected and there is no reason why the premier presidency in India should lag behind in this matter. The nomination of $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the total number of the members of a District Local Board will secure an adequate representation both of minor communities as well as of official experience. The same proportion should, I think, be observed in the case of Taluka Local Boards also.

2. It is not expedient that there should be election by communities in the case of Local Boards. There is hardly any compactness and community of interests amongst the members of a caste spread over the wide area of a taluka. The matter stands upon a different footing in the case of elections of Municipal Councillors. There election generally takes place in a very limited area, the majority of the members of each community are well acquainted with one another and there is a much greater solidarity and homogeneity of interests among them. Due representation of all important communities and interests will always be secured by a wise and judicious exercise of the power of nomination vested in Government.

The number of members should be increased to some extent. In the case of a Taluka Local Board there should be more groups of villages than is the case at present. A representative of each group should possess adequate local knowledge and interest that he may watch the interests of his constituency with some thing like effectiveness. The present number of the group of villages should be doubled, but care should be taken to secure as far as possible at least an approximately equal number of voters in all the groups of villages in a taluka. The greater the number of members of a Taluka Local Board the easier will it be for them to exercise control and personal supervision over the roads, wells, schools, and the like, in a taluka. In the case of District Local Boards the number of members may stand as it is now for some years to come. It is more expensive and more inconvenient to undertake long journeys to the head-quarters of a district than to a taluka town. It may also be necessary to pay travelling allowances to members of a District Local Board at least in the case of such members as have to go a long distance. These points should be carefully considered before increasing the number of members of a District Local Board.

3. The Presidents and Vice-Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials and elected. Collectors of districts should not only not be Presidents elected or nominated, but even nominated members of District Local Boards. But they should watch jealously the interests of Taluka and District Local Boards. The proceedings of Taluka and District Local Boards should be submitted to Collectors and should be scrutinised by them in all cases. In the Central Provinces Presidents of District Local Boards are generally non-officials and elected. It is true that it is stated in paragraph 795 of the Report of the Royal Commission upon Decentralization in India, Vol I, "we are of opinion that, in the present circumstances, the Collector should remain President of the District Board. To remove him from this post would be to dissociate him from the general interests of the district in such matters as roads, education, sanitation, drainage and water-supply, and to convert him into a mere tax-gatherer and represser of crime. Such a change would, we think, be very undesirable and would have the effect of divorcing the Collector from the healthy contact with instructed non-official opinion." With due deference to the high authority of the authors of the Report, I submit that there is some misconception here of the exalted position which a Collector holds in his district. He is the executive head of his district and represents the Sovereign in all matters relating to the welfare of the people of his district. It is doing injustice to the Collector to suppose that he would dissociate himself from the general interests of the district simply because he does not happen to be President of the District Local Board. The Collector's interest in the administration of town and city municipalities, is not a whit less keen though as a rule he is neither a President nor even a member of those institutions. As a by-stander he will watch and appreciate the work of Local Boards in his district with greater openness of mind and will be in a position of greater independence to criticise their doings and to represent matters relating to them to Government. It should be the privilege of a Collector to promote the generous object of Government, *viz.*, to enable the people in his district to learn the art of Self-Government. These considerations apply to Assistant Collectors, Deputy Collectors and Mamlatdars in the case of Taluka Local Boards. Government should in all cases possess the power of suspending or superseding Local Boards for maladministration or wilful and persistent neglect of their duties.

4. The limitations imposed upon Local Boards by sections 57 and 61 of the Act are very burdensome and very exacting. District Local Boards should be permitted to employ their own engineering staff for the preparation and execution of public works within their jurisdiction.

"The question is really one of expediency and of ways and means. In districts where there are sufficient works falling under rural boards to justify the special appointment of a trained engineer, a District Board which desires to entertain such an officer, and can afford to pay him an adequate salary, should, we think, be permitted to do this," (para 747 of the Report of the Royal Commission on Decentralization in India, Vol I), clause 2 of paragraph 749 of the ~~same~~ Report sets out the present irksome state of affairs briefly and tersely as follows:— "Some complaint has been made as to the stringency of these provisions, and it is clear that they constitute large interference with the discretionary powers of the rural boards in regard to works, we consider that such restrictions should be swept away, and that District and Sub-district Boards should have full powers in the allotment of funds, and the passing of estimates for works, within their respective spheres of duty. They should, however, have the right to call upon the Government engineering staff to furnish advice and assistance in respect to the preparation of estimates or otherwise, whenever they think it desirable to ask for such aid." The restrictions imposed on the liberty of Local Boards by sections 57 and 61 should be abolished except perhaps in the case of public works of exceptional expense and importance.

5. Taluka Local Boards ought to be freed from the needless and galling limitations which District Local Boards are at present empowered to impose on them. Taluka Local Boards should be at liberty to employ their clerks, sepoys, dharmshala-keepers and the like servants of minor importance without the sanction of District Local Boards. They should have the fullest latitude to frame their budget according to the amount of money allotted to them specially in matters that touch the local needs of talukas.

6. In reply to this question I make two alternative suggestions. Either the management of primary schools should be fully and really entrusted to District Local Boards which should control not only the schools but also the inspecting staff and the curricula of studies. District Local Boards cannot, in view of their present limited resources, employ an adequate and efficient inspecting staff of their own. Government will have to generously place some members of their own inspecting staff, *viz.*, Assistants to Deputy Educational Inspectors, free of charge, at the service of District Local Boards and to direct these inspecting officers to work in subordination to District Local Boards. Each District Local Board will have to appoint a school committee to supervise the work of school masters and of the inspecting officers as well.

The alternative suggestion I have to make is that Government should take over primary schools from Local Boards altogether and maintain them at their own expense. This will free District Local Boards from the obligation of paying a substantial share of their revenue for primary schools and will enable them to discharge better their more legitimate duties in matters of public roads, wells, dharamshalas, veterinary dispensaries, drainage, water supply, and the like.

7. The amendment of the rules is a matter of detail and of subsidiary importance. The rules will have of course to conform to the suggestion which may commend itself to Government as to the question of real control over primary education.

8. So far as I know Taluka Local Boards are not consulted, as to the appropriation of revenues. But not only justice but clause (a) of section 48 of the Act requires that the Taluka Local Board ought to be consulted before what really belongs to it is divested to another area.

10. It is true that the failure of District and Taluka Boards is largely due to lack of interest, and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members. The chief causes of this deplorable state of affairs are that Local Boards are managed at present as quasi-departments of Government, that non-official members have very little power in their hands and that officials

dominate the boards almost from top to bottom. It will not be far from the truth to say that at present the Collector means the District Local Board and the Mamlatdar means the Taluka Local Board in most districts. Non-official members are as a rule treated more as ornamental figure-heads at the boards than as helpful and intelligent colleagues in the discharge of honorary duties. The real remedy is to free the boards from the domination of officials and to invest non-official members with real power to manage the affairs of Local Boards under the sympathetic and judicious guidance of officers from without.

11. Fellows and graduates of recognised universities, barristers-at-law, vakils and attorneys of any High Court in India, pleaders holding sanads from any Indian High Court, Jurors and Assessors, Chairmen of Sanitary Committees and notified areas and Chairmen of rural and urban co-operative societies registered according to law should be eligible to vote and also to stand as candidates for election to Local Boards.

12. Each group of villages in a taluka should select one member from class 1 and one member from classes 2 to 6. This may secure due representation of the land holders and also of other important interests in each taluka.

13. In my opinion both Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials and elected. But if the Presidents are to continue to be officials it is absolutely necessary that Vice-Presidents at any rate should be non-officials and elected.

14. I suggest Rs. 10 (ten) as a reasonable statutory minimum.

15. It is not feasible to make the provincial share of land revenue and income-tax divisible between the provincial Government and Local Boards. In the present state of the finances of the presidency it is difficult to understand how such a division can be made consistently with due regard to the needs of the numerous departments of Government.

16. A reasonable share of its revenue should, if possible, be secured by law to each Taluka Local Board. Such an arrangement will strengthen the position of Taluka Local Boards and give satisfaction to those that pay the money. I think that it may be laid down by law that a sum of money which is not less than $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the total revenue of a Taluka Local Board should be reserved for its sole benefit.

17. I believe that my answer to questions Nos. 1 and 3 sufficiently answer this question also. The only reasonable objection that may perhaps be taken to the formation of a Local Board consisting of elected members and nominated officials only will be that such a scheme overlooks the danger of minor communities going sometimes altogether unrepresented.

18. The present qualifying limits may be reduced to the following limits :—

- (1) The payment of Rs. 10 as assessment.
- (2) Immovable property worth Rs. 2,000.
- (3) Rupees 300 a year.
- (4) Rupees 15 per month.

Mr. V. B. Parulekar, Mamlatdar, Khanapur.

1. No. The case of Local Boards is quite different from that of municipality. Elected majorities may be desirable in municipality, but not in Local Boards. Intelligence or education is concentrated in towns and cities. In rural areas education is hardly to be found. Intelligent and honest people may be in villages, but they lack will of serving public. If there be few who have such public spirit, they then do not like to canvass votes. Out of the elected members many are, therefore, men of 2nd rate only. It is my experience that nominated members show more interest than the elected chiefly because their coming in again after the expiry of the triennial period, they think, depends on the interest they evince or the work they do. An elected member is sure to be returned by ignorant voters as long as he tries a little, there being no keen competition. Elected members generally come in, not with the object of doing any public service but with the object of raising their value in the eyes of the ignorant villagers by mixing with high Government officials. So selected majority is not at all desirable as long as voters are not educated.

2. Election by communities in general is both unnecessary and undesirable. However to secure the due representation of lowest strata of the society, i.e., depressed classes and backward tribes such as Mahars, Mangs, and Lamanees, &c., it is necessary that some provision should be made. Every Taluka Local Board should have one elected and one nominated members out of these people. If none is eligible for election on account of the limits prescribed in section 10, both should be nominated. One of these two should be on District Local Board. This arrangement will serve the depressed classes in two ways. They shall have opportunities of airing their own wants of which higher caste members are not likely to be cognizant or keen. The moral and indirect effect again will be an incentive that will be given thereby to the spread of education among these people by emulation. It will not be an exaggeration to say that these depressed classes are hardly served at present by Local Boards even when the bellies of the high classes are full.

3. Presidents of District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards should always be officials; especially because the sympathy of a non-official President will not extend to the whole district or taluka and also because owing to the existence of various castes and creeds in India.

4. District and Taluka Local Boards should have more latitude in utilising their own allotments. Plans and estimates should have Executive Engineer's approval only in cases where professional or technical skill is required. The amount of cess should not be the criterion as at present section 87.

All works requiring the approval of Executive Engineer also should be executed by Local Boards instead of by Public Works Department. The members will rise to their own responsibilities, if big works also be entrusted to them.

5. Yes. The engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants should be made by the board concerned subject to the approval of its President. So also about the sanction and revision of budgets. The control of the District Local Board in such matters is unnecessary and comes in the way of proper execution of works by its subordinates. This will add to the prestige of Taluka Local Board's members. To divide a responsibility between two is to make both irresponsible.

6. No. It is still quite necessary to maintain the authority of the Government Educational Department in the management of the primary schools.

7. The following modifications are necessary:—

(1) The amount of the grant-in-aid to be given to a private school should be fixed in consultation with the Local Boards.

(2) The appointment of school teachers up to Rs. 60 p.m. should be made by Local Boards subject to the approval of the Educational Inspector.

(3) Local Board schools should be subject to periodical inspection and examination by District Local Board members. These changes will make membership more attractive. Love of power is a great incentive to honorary work.

8. No. As far as I know.

9. Yes. It is true. Causes are:—

(1) Local Board membership is not so attractive as that of municipality to men of better stamp for want of powers and is not, therefore, coveted by them.

(2) In rural areas educated people can hardly be found as in towns and cities. There may be few able and influential people in villages, but they do not try for it owing to want of public spirit or self sacrifice. Only ordinary men having no sense of duty are returned. Such men having neither any honesty nor any desire to work become members with the sole object of increasing their own social status in the eyes of the villagers with whom they reside.

(3) There may be few good elected members. But the too large jurisdiction comes practically in the way of their becoming useful.

The remedies are therefore—

(1) Membership must be made more attractive by making Taluka Local Board independent of District Local Board.

(2) Jurisdiction of a member should be narrowed by increasing members.

(3) Infusion of education or of superior intelligence should be encouraged.

10. Yes. Pensioned servants paying any amount of land revenue whose pension is greater than Rs. 10 may be made eligible. It is not generally possible to find in rural areas pensioners whose pension is Rs. 50 or upwards. Such men prefer to live in cities or towns. They will be more useful than an uneducated landlord paying land revenue of Rs. 500 or even more a year. The principle that the electoral franchise should vest in all who contribute to the local rates to the exclusion of all who do not, cannot work well in India where land owning class is generally still uneducated. So school masters may be made eligible whatever may be their pay. Again if a land owner paying land revenue assessment over Rs. 50 is old or uneducated and his son or brother is fit to be a member, the latter may be made eligible instead of the former with his consent on his behalf.

11. Yes. It can be done by making separate groups in a taluka for classes two to six together (sec. 10) as is now done for Inamdars.

12. It is impossible to find in every taluka a fit man among non-officials for the Vice-Presidency. We must not forget that the Municipal Vice-President's jurisdiction is confined to a town or city while that of a Local Board Vice-President extends over miles. I do not think that in every taluka a man of such public spirit as to travel at the sacrifice of his time and money for supervising Local Board works can be found. The practical difficulties of the Vice-Presidents in getting Local Board works executed are many, and the Official Vice-President only can overcome them. But I think every Mamlatdar will be gratified if he is relieved of the responsibility of the Local Board Vice-President. The rule should, however, be that as far as possible the Vice-President should be a non-official.

13. The present minimum of Rs. 48 need not be altered. There is no use increasing the number of voters in this class, i. e., clause No. 1, sec. 10.

14. I could not understand properly what the question means.

15. The proportion should be fixed by law, as it will make Taluka Local Boards more independent of District Local Boards in financial matters and each board can thereby forecast what works it can take up. The remaining amount of one anna cess should be divided between Taluka Local Board and District Local Board in the ratio of 2 to 3.

16. Yes. The nominated element does not serve only to secure the due representation of minorities and of official experience but also helps to secure best men possible. I already said above that nominated members take more interest than the elected. So the provision of the appointment of non-official by nomination should not be abolished.

17. I do not think that it is necessary to reduce the qualifying limits of classes 1 and 2. The increase of voters from these two classes will not serve any useful purpose. The qualifying limits prescribed in clause 3 of section 10 may be reduced to Rs. 200, as business men are likely to take more interest than cultivators in India. As for the limitation clause 4, I have already said above that the limit should be reduced to Rs. 10, as pensioned servants in receipt of Rs. 50 and above can hardly be found in rural areas.

Mr. G. L. Gajendragadkar, Mamlatdar, Sampgaon.

1. The elected members do not show interest in Local Board work. If steps could be taken to awaken interest in them for Local Board matters then I think the elected members should be as many as now there are on municipal boards. (I think two-thirds).

2. It is not necessary that election should be by communities. If the election fails to secure due representation of all the communities the Collector should have the power to give representation to the unrepresented communities by nomination.

3. It is not advisable for the present that the Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials, because it is very difficult to find non-officials who could do their work as Presidents efficiently and promptly.

4. The Taluka Local Board formerly had the services of untrained maistries. But now there is a qualified Sub-overseer for each taluka, and a Supervisor for the District; hence the present limitation on the preparation of plans and execution of works should be as follows :—

Cost of Work	Plans and Estimates.		
	By whom to be prepared	By whom to be approved.	
Rs. 1,000 and under	Local Board.	Local Board.	Local Board.
Over Rs 1,000 but below Rs. 5,000	Do.	Executive Engineer.	Do.
Over Rs. 5,000	Do.	Do.	Executive Engineer.
Below Rs 100 per mile in the case of roads	Do.	Local Board.	Local Board.
Over Rs. 100 per mile in the case of roads	Do.	Executive Engineer.	Executive Engineer

5. The pay of the Taluka Local Board servants may be paid by the Taluka Local Board direct from the permanent advance; and the amount to be recouped by cheques under the Vice-President's signature. But sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budgets should be under the control of the District Local Board.

6. I think the management of rural primary schools should be entrusted to District Local Board subject to the expert advice of the Educational Department in technical matters; the management of the full primary schools should be with the Educational Department.

7. No changes suggested.

8. The Taluka Local Board is not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

10. It is a fact that the failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of non-official members. To awaken interest I think the recognition of good work done, by the presenting of rings, dhotis, turbans, &c., in Collector's Durbars should be done on a liberal scale.

11. No additions appear necessary.

12. No suggestions

13. Instead of saying "invariably" I should say "according to the advanced mode in the taluka in the exhibiting of public spirit."

14. The minimum should be lowered to Rs. 30 in order to allow the lower middle class to vote, as only the "Pandharpeshas" preponderate at our elections as things stand now.

15. No answer

16. Out of one anna cess $\frac{1}{2}$ is deducted for educational purposes; and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ is now divided between the Taluka Local Board and District Local Board according to the discretion of the District Local Board. It is desirable that this proportion should be fixed by law in the proportion of 2:1 between Taluka Local Board and District Local Board.

17. No answer.

18. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 under sec. 10 of the Local Board Act, should be reduced as follows, in order to entitle the lower middle class to vote :—

- Clause (i) Rs. 30.
" (ii) Rs. 3,000.
" (iii) Rs. 300.
" (iv) Rs. 25.

Mr. Abdullakhan I. Attar, Deputy Educational Inspector, Belgaum.

6. I do not consider that the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board.

7. I do not propose any change in the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act.

16. The proportion to be divided between a Taluka and the District Local Board should, I think, be fixed according to the proceeds of cess levied in the Taluka; but I am not in a position to mention the ratio in which it is to be fixed.

Mr. R. S. Katgiri, Mamlatdar of Athni.

1. I do not think that a board should have elected majorities. It is sufficient if the elected members are half the total number (*see* the reply to question No. 17).

2. The present Taluka Local Board of Athni has 17 members, of whom the District Deputy Collector, N. D. Belgaum, is the President and the other members are :—

Elected Members	and Nominated Members.
6 (from group)	8, of whom only one is official
1 from among Inamdars	(Mamlatdar)
1 from the Municipality, Athni	

The present number seems to be sufficient. Of the 15 non-officials, Lingayets are 6, Brahmins & Marathas 2, Jains 2 and Mahomedan 1. I do not think it necessary to have election by communities. The present system will do. There seems no necessity to make any provision to secure the due representation of any special communities or interest, as the public is not yet sufficiently educated to realise the object of securing members of different communities on the board.

3. The Presidents of both the boards should be officials and ex-officio nominated. I do not think it advisable that they should be non-officials, as they are rarely competent to discharge the duties of a President.

4. No change seems necessary.
5. No. The District Local Board's control is necessary.
6. No.
7. No alteration or modification seems necessary.
8. No.

10. Yes, it is true. It seems to me that the causes are that they are not paid members and that, therefore, they do not feel that they are responsible for the work entrusted to them. I have come across instances in which the non-official members plainly told me that they were not paid servants and that, therefore, they should not be pressed to work. In travelling from village to village to supervise works, they are to travel at their own expense. I think that they will do the work entrusted to them with interest, if provision be made to pay them travelling allowance up to a reasonable amount to suit their position, which amount may be settled by the committee appointed.

11, 14 and 18. I think that no additions seem necessary. But owing to the introduction of the Record of Rights, the number of the holders of land paying Rs. 48 assessment is decreased on account of divisions of holdings. Generally in the talukas where there is the majority of agriculturists, the number of persons qualified under section 10 (1) is large. In such talukas this number must have fallen to a small number since the introduction of the Record of Rights. It might have probably gone down to a number even to less than half the former number. Therefore I am of opinion that the minimum assessment may be lowered to Rs. 20 from Rs. 48. As regards section 10 (4), the amount may be reduced to Rs. 25, as pensioners are considered to be more educated than their neighbours in villages and also as we shall get more such men if the amount be reduced to Rs. 25.

12. I think that one of such men can be secured on the board if election be made from among such men in the same way as it is done from among the Inamdars. In that case the group election under section 6 (b) will be only to secure a member elected by each group from among the persons falling under section 10 (1) only.

13. In talukas in which it will be found that the members elected and nominated (non-officials) are educated and that one of them can manage his duties as Vice-President, there is no objection to have a non-official Vice-President. In other cases the Vice-President should be official, as experience has shown that an official Vice-President works satisfactorily as he realises the responsibility, while the non-official Vice President, does not.

15. Our experience shows that the works executed by Public Works Department cost more money and they are better done than the Local Board works, and it seems to me that this defect is owing to want of sufficient funds in the Local Board. The Local Board generally expects a work to be done within an amount less than the amount which the Public Works Department takes to do that work. So it seems necessary to increase the fund of the Local Board and that, therefore, some portion of the provincial share of land revenue and income tax may be given to the Local Board, and I think that one anna in a rupee may be given.

16. I do not think it necessary to fix the ratio. The District Local Board should see, and it should think it incumbent upon it to see, that a sufficient amount is given to the Taluka Local Board to meet its needs.

17. The administrative efficiency will not suffer if the appointment of non officials by nomination be abolished, but it will improve. I am of opinion that half the number on the board should be elected members and the other half nominated officials. I need not say that officials realise their responsibilities and do the work satisfactorily, while non-officials do not. I, therefore, prefer the said abolition, and the introduction of nomination of officials only as suggested.

Khan Saheb Ardeshir Navroji, President, Belgaum Municipality.

1. I think they should have elected majorities. The same arguments which support an increase in the number of elected councillors in municipalities also hold good in the case of Local Boards, considering the advance which the taluka and mahal head-quarter towns have made in regard to the education of the public in the matter of the Local Self-Government.

2. Election need not be by communities. Provision to secure the due representation of any special communities or interests exists in the appointment, by selection of nominated members.

In view of the above opinion, the question about the constitution with reference to election by communities does not arise.

The number of members on the District and the Taluka Local Boards can and should be usefully increased so as to widen the circle of practical education in local Self-Government, because, by this increase, a larger number of persons will have the chances and opportunities of working on the Local Boards. To secure regular attendance and consequent interest of individual members in Local Board affairs, it will be very useful to have a clause inserted in section 32 of the Act on the lines of section 15 (2) (e) of the District Municipal Act.

3. It is advisable to have non-official Presidents of District or Taluka Local Boards, provided copies of the Board's Resolutions be invariably submitted by each board to the Collector or the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of the local area, as in the case of Municipalities. A clause to this effect will have to be inserted in section 32 between clauses 11 and 12. This will be on the lines of section 24 (d) of the District Municipal Act.

The non-official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards may preferably be nominated in the beginning for some years until any particular board earns sufficient merit by its members justifying the grant of the privilege of electing the President. The District Local Board may be granted the privilege of electing its own non-official President.

4. The present limitations on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works should continue to be carried out by the Executive Engineer who should arrange to keep the Local Board staff and members who may desire to interest themselves throughout the several stages of the execution, acquainted with the stage by stage progress of the works. Such an arrangement of keeping the boards in touch with the detailed stages of the work with reference to the plan and estimates will ensure valuable practical instruction of the members in the most important branch of Local Board administration.

5. In my opinion, Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the District Local Board's control to the following extent, *viz.*—

(a) Taluka Local Board staff should as hitherto be recruited from the Revenue Department, lest Taluka Local Boards become open to the same defects in the personnel of the staff as in the case of municipalities, where, excepting the Chief Officer, the holders of all principal subordinate posts are inefficient men not accustomed to methodical ways of business and have no fear of transfer or reduction from their posts because they continue in their posts permanently, while the councillors change at every triennium with few exceptions. Such continuance has at times led the municipal staff, to meddle with party questions. Government have lent the services of Chief Officers to City municipalities and are thinking of lending the services of efficient revenue karkuns as Secretaries of town municipalities. So, if the Local Board staff be recruited from the Revenue Department, there is no harm in entrusting Taluka Local Boards with powers of appointment and dismissal &c., of their own clerical staff in consultation with the Revenue Authorities without reference to the District Local Board. In the case of menials, peons and dharmashala keepers, the Taluka Local Boards should have full powers of appointment in their own hands.

(b) Sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets by the District Local Board might well be dispensed with provided a reasonable limit is placed on the extent up to which only the Taluka Local Boards should ordinarily incur expenditure for Taluka Local Board purposes. It is reasonable and necessary that the District Local Board should reserve for the District Local Fund a fair share of the Taluka Local Board receipts for meeting expenditure on works which are of greater importance from the District Board point of view than from the Taluka Board point of view. When this fair share, with powers of re-apportionment to the District Local Board, in consultation with the Taluka Boards, is once settled for years together ordinarily, say for five years at a time, all the surplus Taluka Local Fund should remain at the entire disposal of the Taluka Board.

6. I consider that the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. It is advisable that, in the interests of practical education of Local Board members in Self-Government, the District Local Board should have real control over primary schools, that Taluka or Sub-District Boards should have the appointment of the board school teachers entrusted to the District Local Board while the recruitment and promotion will continue as now to be mainly in the hands of the Educational Department. The District Local Board may usefully have an inspecting agency of their own for all the primary schools in the district, who may work very profitably along with and under the guidance of the provincial inspecting staff, so that here may be a conjoint inspection. Such a course will convey practical instruction to the Local Board members which is very valuable in point of their education in Self-Government much in the same way as the acquaintance of members with the several stages of a work under execution by the W. U. agency, as suggested above in answer to question No. 4. Just as Local Board work executed stage by stage with knowledge of local Board members carries valuable instruction to them, so inspection of primary schools by the provincial staff in company with and the knowledge of the Local Board members so far as possible will also give valuable practical lessons to them in the matter of securing sound elementary education in the rural schools.

7. In view of the answer to question 6 above—

(a) Rule 7 at page 175 of Cumming's Local Board Manual may have added to it "in consultation with the Local Board Schools Committee."

(b) Last sentence of rule 9 may be altered as under,

(i) In the first line between the words "Boards" and "within" insert the words "or Chairman of the Local Schools Committee;" and

(ii) For the words "shall be entitled to be present" insert "shall be present" &c. Such compulsory wording is necessary to create greater interest in the members of Local Schools Committees.

8. In my District Local Board experience of many years, as far as I remember, the Taluka Local Boards have not been consulted in the way mentioned.

10. Yes, the statement is true.

The causes are in part a limitation of powers by the present law and rules and in part a lack of opportunities or of interest in individual member's more freely sharing or co-operating in local matters of Self-Government. Travelling allowance is not paid to members when travelling on inspection duty. With larger opportunities given by a reduction of the limitation of powers to a reasonable extent and grant of travelling allowance interest in individual members might be excited for taking a larger share in the Local Board administration.

11. The following addition may be made with a view to attract higher intellectual element on the Local Board Council, *viz.*

(a) every fellow and every graduate of any recognised university;

(b) every pleader holding a Sanad from a High Court;

(c) every Juror and Assessor (for the district head-quarter); and

(d) every Chairman and every Secretary of a duly registered rural co-operative society of any description whatever (for the mofussil).

(e) Every Chairman and every Secretary of a village sanitary committee sanctioned under the Village Sanitation Act.

12. The case will be very rare in which none from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10 will be elected.

The contingency can well be met by nomination rather than by separate grouping of electors.

13. Yes, in that case it is decidedly so desirable.

14. The minimum can be further lowered from the present Rs. 48-0-0 to Rs. 25 if not to Rs. 11. The minimum of municipal taxation amount to qualify a voter at municipal elections is from Rs. 3 to 5 in most municipalities.

This will surely increase the number of voters; but with the increase in the number of voters, the chances of corrupt practice will considerably lessen.

15. The Local Board's share may be up to half the amount.

16. The ratio may be $\frac{1}{5}$ for the District Local Board and $\frac{1}{4}$ th for the Taluka Local Board or one to four.

17. The administrative efficiency of a board is likely to suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination be abolished. I would desire that the system of nominating non-officials, which is an excellent one, should continue.

18. Qualification—(1) *vide* my answer to question 14 above.

(2) The minimum may be lowered from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 1,000

(3) No further reduction is desirable

(4) The pension limit may be reduced to Rs. 25.

The object of all the above lowering of the qualification limits is that the opportunities for corrupt practices will lessen with an enlargement of the circle of voters to be unfairly won over.

*Mr. Ganesh Annarao Hebbal, B.A., LL. B., Pleader, Chikodi,
Belgaum District,*

1. With a view to securing due representation of the people, it may not be wrong to have elected majorities in District and Taluka Local Boards; but, regard being had to the moral level, the stamina, and the literate portion, of the people, I am of opinion that time has not yet been ripe enough for entrusting such institutions to the care of elected majorities. Experience has taught us, that some persons, who get in by election, are not capable of doing, or attending to, the work of the boards. Such persons do not understand, or follow, or take part in the board's proceedings, but get in, as a result of election disputes in which much of private animosities and unhealthy emulation for what is considered as honour in being a member, are mixed up. It can, therefore, be stated that, in the present condition of things and of the people, the *elective majority*, though had, must be a small one, proper safeguards, again, being provided for an improvement of the electorate so as to secure more learning and much greater sense of duty, in the voters and candidates, than now available, and a proper representation of interests.

2. Election need not be by communities. It is possible that in the elections, competent person may command votes, and succeed irrespective of the communities to which they belong. No spirit has ever been found exhibited as to excluding particular communities from election. It all depends upon the ability, and zeal for work, of persons who come forward as candidates for election.

By way of encouragement, and of offering them their share in the administration of local affairs, and for creating in them a taste for such things, there will, I think, be no harm, in having a separate representation of the depressed classes on the boards, by reservation, at present, of one member's place, by election, in the Taluka Local Board, to begin with. A separate electorate for the depressed classes may, to this end, be ushered into existence, in each taluka, as a separate election 'group' and one person elected as 'member' from those classes.

3. As the object is to train people for, and allow them a share in, the administration of local affairs, it is desirable, as a rule, to have non-official Vice-Presidents in all District and Taluka Local Boards with an official President, as at present, guiding the boards' affairs. I do not think time has come for the possibility of a due administration of local affairs by the people without this substantial help and guidance of an official superior. I am, therefore, for the Collector and Assistant Deputy Collector being nominated, as at present, as President of District and Taluka Local Boards respectively. No change would be advisable, for some years to come.

4. Unless the staff of Overseers and Sub-overseers is so far enhanced and improved, and so remodelled, as to secure public works being carried out with full success by the board's own agency, independently of the Public Works Department, it is not desirable to do away entirely with the limitation on preparation of plans and estimates, referred to in this question. In the existing state of things, I am for the retention of even this official supervision of board's works to this extent. I am for the retention of the present limitation without any modification.

5. It is quite desirable for the Taluka Board's work being subjected to the District Local Board's healthy supervision. I am, therefore, not for freeing the Taluka Local Board from the sanction and revision of its budgets by the District Local Board. The salutary provisions of section 55 should not be dropped. For a similar reason, I am also not for dropping or modifying to any extent the provisions of section 38, as no such inconvenience as needs any consideration and cure seems to have been caused so far. In the present condition of things, I am not for any decentralization measure for some years to come.

6. I consider that time has come when the primary schools should be left to be managed entirely by the District Local Board. The Educational Department's ways of working and management are all known, and could be readily taken to by the District Local Board, without any perceptible difficulty. However, I am of opinion that it is not yet possible to do away with at least the ultimate supervision of the board's work by the Educational Department for setting right matters spoilt by considerations of private ill-feeling, sectional jealousies and a desire for monopoly of authority, on the part of the Board's mostly non-official authorities and their other human frailties too numerous in the nature of things to mention, from which private gentlemen, with any amount of education, refinement and ability are not yet found to be as free in the discharge of their Board's functions as administrators of important public institutions are to be expected to be. I, therefore, opine that the management of primary schools should be handed over to District Local Boards coupled with the minimum general supervision as to its working by the Government Educational Department.

ment, for, say, 10 or 15 years, as a tentative and experimental measure at the end of which period it may be entirely done away with, on a successful result of the experiment.

7. Rules should be so modified as to allow only the general superficial control of the Government Educational Department, all matters regarding detailed working being entrusted to the District Local Boards. In respect of this improvement, the District Local Board may well be placed, at least on a par with municipalities, on the lines of whose rules, the rules of District Local Boards could be revised and improved.

8. In my experience of 17 years' working of Local Boards, which came into existence about 30 years ago, I think I have come across no instance in which section 48 (a) has had operation. Such instances are of very rare occurrences, taking things generally.

10. It is a fact which cannot be gainsaid, and must be mentioned with mixed feelings of sorrow and surprise, that Local Boards have mainly failed, owing to non-official members (barring a few honorable exceptions) generally showing an unpardonable lack of interest and absence of active co-operation much against the general spirit of enactments conferring powers of Self-Government on the people, limited though they be. They unfailingly tend to create doubts in the mind of Government as to how people could properly cope with enhanced powers which they are constantly demanding. It need hardly be said that provisions calculated to stir up the people to a sense of duty should be brought into force. The causes of this inertness on the part of non-official members are mainly (1) the general absence of a sense of duty in the people, (2) faulty elections not returning competent and zealous public workers, (3) ordinary struggle for existence not leaving enough zeal for the performance of honorary duties in the cause of public good and (4) a general disinclination to divert the mind to matters in which there is no proper return for the labour done, both by way of payment and by way of appreciation. The remedies, to my mind, are (1) attachment of some authority and importance to performers of arduous and onerous public duties, (2) granting of well-graduated powers as an incentive to work, (3) providing proper rewards by way of bonuses, &c, for good work shown, and appreciation of merit by a more liberal distribution of titles of distinction, (4) offering more substantial encouragement by providing some well-paid posts in the Local Board staff and keeping them open to such non-official members of tested qualifications and proved merit, as like to accept them and put a stop to their membership; and the like. Unless some field for competition, with prospects of substantial benefit attached thereto, is kept open, it does not seem possible to expect people to come forward, with a spirit of pure generosity to perform honorary duties merely in the cause of public good. Time has not yet been ripe enough for people's coming forward wholesale for public work, without any expectation or reward and at great personal sacrifice. Eloquent lectures could well be delivered, but when the question of a live work befitting those lectures comes, all zeal and public spirit are unfortunately found to cease. This is lamentable.

11. I am of opinion that all persons who have passed the Matriculation or School Final examination, and all pleaders, residing in the taluka in question should be added to the enumerations in section 10. This will have the effect of affording opportunities for letting in persons who have pretensions to learning, and improving the tone of the board.

12. As the places to be filled up by nomination will be of a sufficiently large number, persons coming under clauses (2) to (6) of section 10 could well come in by nomination. No separate electorates seem necessary and feasible.

13. I am positively for Vice-Presidents of boards being non-official where Presidents are official. I am aware that owing to want of Revenue and Magisterial powers, non-officials fail in so many matters, in their comparison with officials (Mamlats and Deputy Collectors), who, therefore, would, in a manner, appear preferable to non-official Vice-Presidents. But such a thing could not be as the boards are intended for training people in Self-Government. I would, therefore, favour the coupling of official with non-official gentlemen, and have joint Vice-Presidents, as a tentative measure, with proper distribution of work between them so as to leave all matters requiring any show or use of authority or power to be done by the official conjointly and co-operatingly with the non-official Vice-President to whom all other work might be exclusively assigned. I would thus couple the help of authority or power (coming from the official Vice-President), where necessary, with the present work of non-official Vice-Presidents. The law and the rules may be amended accordingly.

14. Figure 30 should be adopted in place of Rs. 48.

15. I am in favour of the provincial share of land revenue and income tax being divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards in the proportion of 7 : 1. The District Local Board's present income is generally found to be insufficient. More especially the expenditure on its own works agency always falls short. No money is generally available to provide a really efficient supervision over the work of Sub-overseers. In view of this and many other necessary improvements, it is absolutely necessary to increase the resources of the District Local Board. That could be done by the allotment above proposed.

16. I am of opinion that the matter of allotment referred to should not be left entirely to the discretion of the District Local Board. It is better to fix a ratio by law or by rules, regard being had to the amount of money which, after all improvements now to be effected, would be found needed by each Taluka Local Board, and the amount of money needed for the maintenance of each District Local Board. The ratio cannot readily be stated before the necessities in view of coming revision are definitely settled.

17. I think it is now time to abrogate the provisions about half at least of the nominated members on a Local Board being officials. I am for half the number of members being elected and half nominated, with an official President. No further relaxation would in my opinion be beneficial, as it is more desirable now to increase the efficiency, the energy and the sense of duty of the members than to leave the appointment of many of them to the people. Let Government exercise its sound

choice and put in both official and deserving non-official gentlemen by nomination, so as to properly balance the two elements for a proper administration of Local Board matters, without any ratio being fixed upon and the matter being left to the then requirements and exigencies. Beyond requiring half the members at least to be "elected" members, I am not for any ratio being fixed.

18. I am in favour of reducing the limits as under:—

Section 10, clause (1)—From Rs. 48 to Rs. 30, in view of recent orders for recording divisions of holdings in the Record of Rights.

" " (2)—From Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 3,000.

" " (3)—No reduction recommended.

" " (4)—From Rs. 50 to Rs. 25.

This would enable more persons coming under clauses (1), (2) and (4) to become voters and to be elected as members. More such men would be welcome on the boards.

Rao Saheb Shivmurti Swami, Kanabargi Math, Gokak Falls.

1. Yes.

2. No. If any important community is not represented at the general election, members of such communities may be nominated specially the Mohamedans and Marathas. It is not necessary to increase the present number of members.

3. It is advisable for sometime more that the Presidents of Taluka and District Boards should be nominated officials, i.e., Sub-divisional officers and Collectors.

4. The limits requiring the approval of the Executive Engineer for plans and estimates should be Rs 200 per mile in the case of a road and Rs 2,000 in the case of any other work. The District Local Board should have an Overseer who should supervise in the districts. He should be a man of the Public Works Department of three years standing. He should serve the board for at least three years and when he is due for promotion to a pay which the board cannot pay, he should be reverted to the Public Works Department and a fresh man should be sent in his stead. The execution of a work should be entrusted to the Executive Engineer only, when he certifies that the particular work cannot be executed properly by the Overseer. There should be no money limit in respect of the execution of the works. The Executive Engineer may visit and supervise them if possible; and the percentage to be paid on account of his services, may be fixed.

5. No change seems necessary in respect of engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants. The sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budget should rest with the District Local Board but the District Local Board should not use the amount of one taluka on works of another taluka except in very exceptional cases and for good reasons stated. As a general rule the Chairman of the Managing Committee of the District Local Board, is the Huzur Deputy Collector who has very little time to look to the work of Local Boards. The Local Fund Accountant should be a man chosen for special qualification and not as at present a man transferred to the account office for incapacity in the Revenue Department. In order to overcome this difficulty, there ought to be a paid Secretary taken from the Revenue Department to the District Local Board equal to the rank of the 5th grade Mamlatdar drawing Rupees 150 per month and the Local Fund Accountant's pay can be fixed between 40 and 50 rupees. Preference should be given to the Secretary who has obtained the degree of L.C.E. At present the Local Fund Accountant is the sole-master of every thing. But he has not proved himself to be an efficient man.

6. No.

7. No change appears necessary.

8. No. Never.

9. (1) Yes.

(2) Notified areas are known not to be able to meet the charges of educational and medical institutions within its area.

(3) Local Boards should be granted a contribution at the rate of 5 per cent. on the gross realizations of the Abbari and Forest revenues.

No contributions need be paid from the income tax collections.

No cess should be levied on any of these revenues.

(4) The grant for education should be increased. With regard to other grants, much will depend on what will be done with regard to 1 and 3 clauses of question No. 9.

10. Yes. It is true. The causes are the want of public spirit, proper education and the sense of citizenship amongst members. The remedy appears to be the wide spread of education; there are already signs of public spirit developing and in rural tracts it would be sometime before a proper development is appreciable. The Vice-President and the District Supervisor should invariably check all the important works.

11. No. The following alterations may be made. With regard to clause of section 10, Rs. 20 should be the limit of assessment and Rs. 2,000 the limit of value with regard to clause 2

12. Groups do not seem to be necessary.
13. It is desirable that non officials should be Vice-Presidents, but officials should not be debarred. In many cases it is found that the members prefer an official to any among themselves.
14. From Rupees 16 to 20.
15. If a grant from the Abkari and Forest revenues is allotted and the cess of one anna is increased to two annas, no division on provincial land revenue or income tax appears to be necessary. If not, a provincial contribution equal to the probable proceeds of the one anna cess, plus 5 per cent. of the Abkari and Forest revenue should be granted.
16. It appears to be necessary to fix the minimum amount to be given to a Taluka Local Board. The minimum should be $\frac{1}{3}$ of the remaining amount after deducting $\frac{1}{3}$ meant for education plus establishment charges. The amount taken by the District Local Board should not, as previously stated be spent out of the taluka except for special reasons or except on works useful for the whole district.
17. Yes. The efficiency will suffer because many useful persons who do not wish to stand the troubles of election, will be excluded.
18. Please see answer to question 11.

Mr. V. M. Gadgil, Vice-President, Belgaum District Local Board.

Before giving my answers I may be permitted to state that I received the questions on the morning of the 10th instant with an intimation that the answers must reach the office of the Collector, Belgaum, not later than the 15th instant. This will account for the sketchy character of the answers. The figures denote the numbers of questions to which the answers relate.

1. It is not desirable that District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. It is quite enough if they have non-official majorities, because it can never be urged against the nominated non-official members that they would sacrifice public interests to please anybody. Past experience has shown that they are quite as independent as elected members, so also it can never be said that every elected member is more vigilant, than a nominated member, in watching the public interests. One is quite as good as the other.

2. Election should not be by communities. There are so many communities in India that if once a concession is made to one community, others will come forward to make the same demand and then where is the line to be drawn. There should be one free door for all communities. The inconvenience of making election communal will be apparent in place where the community (say for instance Parsis) are in a microscopic minority, they will not have the shadow of chance of election. But if there is a free door to all alike, even a member of such a community can secure election. Even in the present state of affairs we have been hearing deafening cries of party factions, and party jealousies, and racial animosities, and if the communal election be resorted to, it would be creating so many hot beds of party factions in every village and the consequences would be disastrous. The present number is quite sufficient and needs no increase. The success of a board does not depend upon the number of its members, but rather upon their quality, the zeal with which they discharge their duties.

3. So far as the Presidents of the District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards are concerned they should be officials. What little credit the District Local Boards earned in the past, is due to the fact that the Collectors have been Presidents of the District Local Boards; and but for the training which I. C. S. men alone can bring to bear to the discharge of their duties as Presidents of District Boards, the results would have been impossible. Then again the Collector being the head of a District, it is absolutely necessary that he must have direct knowledge of what is passing in the Local Board Administration, and if the Collector is excluded from the Board the work of the Board is bound to suffer, and if the Collector is to be retained at all, he must be retained as the head of the Local Board Administration of the district. The Collector always exerts a very wholesome influence upon the Local Board Administration, not because he is merely the President of a District Local Board, but because he is the administrative head of the district, and no non-official, however capable and zealous he may be, can ever command the influence, the Collector can, and of this influence the District Local Board cannot afford to lose the advantage. Under the present arrangement, the Sub-divisional officers are the presidents of the Taluka Local Boards and for the reasons stated above they must also continue as Presidents of Taluka Local Boards. Before demanding non-official Presidents for District Local Boards and non-official Presidents for the Taluka Local Boards, we must pause and see whether, ever since the constitution of Local Boards we have faithfully discharged our duties as members of these boards. Under the Local Boards Act every member of a working committee of Taluka Local Board is required to actually inspect a work before signing the completion certificate for the same. But there are instances on record, in which the members have signed the completion certificates for works seen without seeing them, although the said works were within a mile of the residences of these members; and the result of this culpable negligence on the part of the members was, that Sub-overseers defrauded Local Boards by charging for more than was actually done, or by charging for works never done at all. If this is the way in which we have qualified ourselves to act as members, after a third of a century's training, it is nothing short of asking for the moon, to aspire to presidentships of boards.

4. Where a District Local Board has engaged the services of a qualified man of the rank of an Executive Engineer or Assistant Engineer or the Sub-Engineer, as the means of a Board might permit, the present limit might safely be increased to rupees five thousand for preparing plans and estimates, and the execution of works, subject to the approval of the Government Executive Engineer; and where a District Local Board does not entertain the services of a qualified officer like the ones mentioned above, the present limit should continue. I may also suggest that a board that engages the services of a qualified man, should have the power of sanctioning works up to Rs. 1,000 instead of Rs. 500. But at the same time I am of opinion that every District Local Board should be induced to entertain the services of a qualified man as District Local Board Engineer officer. The reason for this proposal is, that under the present arrangement District Local Boards, not having advantages of the services of qualified officers have to pay heavy professional fees to the Government Executive Engineer, for preparation, execution and scrutinising, plans and estimates, prepared by District Local Board Sub-overseers, many of whom are unacquainted with "Marryat's specification." This fee to the Government Executive Engineer is not to be paid only once but every time the plans and estimates are required to be revised and approved by him; and the entertainment of a qualified man by a District Local Board will save the District Local Board these heavy fees, and these savings will be so ample that out of them a qualified man can easily be paid Rs. 200 to 300 a month. Such a course will relieve the Government Executive Engineers of a great deal of Local Board work and secure to a board the services of a qualified and competent officer to exert direct control and supervision over the Sub-overseers and the Maistris. I cannot help suggesting that if a District Local Board entertains the services of a qualified officer, he should be given direct control over the Sub-overseers' work and suitable provision be accordingly made in the Act to give him such control.

The District Local Board of Belgaum is an instance in point. The Belgaum District Local Board has, in consultation with the Belgaum Government Engineer, engaged the services of an L.C.E., having ten years actual experience of construction work, on Rs 200 rising to 300 plus a monthly allowance Rs 15. Since he came, this officer has been exerting very effective control and supervision on the work of the Sub-overseers and the work of the Executive Engineer, Belgaum, in revising the plans and estimates is very much lightened, as all plans and estimates are checked and corrected by him; but the Belgaum District Local Board cannot reap the full advantage of his services, as he has no direct control over the Sub-overseers. For example, suppose the Board is constructing a work and if there be any mistake committed by the Sub-overseer in actual construction, the board's officer cannot stop the work at once. He has to report to the Chairman and the Chairman has in his turn to report the matter to the President of the Taluka Local Board to which the work belongs, and by the time the President's orders arrive the work is completed and the mistake is past remedying. Such a work is bound to collapse soon, and fresh funds have to be found, to rebuild it. This waste of money could be obviated if the District Local Board officer had authority to stop the work immediately the mistake was detected.

5. On no account the Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Boards.

6. I do not think the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards. Seeing that the members of Local Boards do not take any interest even in the performance of their ordinary duties, it would be a grave mistake to entrust to them the management of schools. If the schools are entrusted to the boards, they shall have to take the function of the management of school inspection, and promotion, and disciplinary control, of teachers; but it is also desirable that Government should have direct knowledge of how the schools are being managed. This will necessitate the employment of a double staff—one by the board and the other by the Government. If the boards are entrusted with the management and control of schools, it will only cause confusion in a system which has on the whole been found to work well for the last so many years. It is no doubt "important that primary education should be adopted to the needs of the people." This objection can be secured in a better and more efficient manner, by the people making known their particular and local needs in this respect to the proper authorities, than by leaving the schools entirely at the tender mercies of the District Local Boards agency.

7. No alteration or modification of rules is necessary.

8. So far as my information goes what the District Local Boards do is that one-third of the total Local Fund Cess is allotted for educational purposes and the Educational authorities are informed accordingly and it is they who prepare the educational budgets and those budgets are placed before the general body for sanction.

10. It is quite true that District and Taluka Local Boards fail owing to the lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members.

One of the chief causes is that non-official members lack a keen sense of duty and they lack habits of regularity, punctuality and sustained labour. There seem to be two remedies. One remedy is to give a sufficient scope to the public to cultivate a sort of taste for performing public duty and the other is punishment. For over a third of a century the experiment has been tried to see whether the public could be roused to a sense of responsibility, but the experiment is bearing fruit in a very slow and imperceptible manner and therefore it must be supplemented with punishment, so that fruit might be quicker.

The punishment I would suggest is that if a lack of zeal and a lack of sense of duty is detected in any member, he should be non-seated and declared unfit to be elected or nominated to any board for a period of three years.

This will bring home to the non-official member the fact that a membership of a board means work and not merely decorating a chair at the meeting of a board.

11. No additions need be made to the qualifications of voters.

12. Unless it is pointed out how the present rules fail to secure the elections of persons falling under classes 2 to 6 in section 10, it is not possible to suggest means.

13. It is not desirable that the Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should invariably be non-officials.

No doubt a man with good education and ample time at his disposal to attend to the onerous duties of a Vice-President of a Taluka Local Board is preferable to an official Vice-President. But it is very difficult to get such a man in every taluka-place. If a hard and fast rule is made that a Vice-President of a Taluka Local Board should invariably be a non-official, then the result would be that it would be a monopoly of taluka pleaders, who are the only men of education among the non-officials in a taluka-place. Under the present state of affairs in the majorities of cases Vice-Presidentships have been monopolised by the Mamlatdars and if it is ruled that Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials, the monopoly would be transferred to taluka pleaders and it is impossible that practicing pleaders should have leisure and above all should have the inclination to sacrifice their professional work every day in attending to the Vice-President's work. There may be honourable exceptions to this rule, but they only prove the rule.

The Vice-Presidentships of Taluka Local Boards should therefore be open to competition to officials and non-officials alike and the fittest men would succeed.

I would further suggest that when a non-official is elected a Vice-President of a Taluka Local Board, the Commissioner of the Division must satisfy himself, before confirming the election, that the elected candidate is a man of education and leisure, who can devote at least three hours a day to the Vice-President's work; and if the Commissioner is not so satisfied the election should be vetoed.

I would also suggest that non-official Vice-Presidents should be required to send in a diary to the Collector of a district, showing the work they have done from day to day, as is the case with the Mamlatdar, Assistant Collectors, Sub-Divisional officers and even Collectors.

14. To lower the minimum of assessment below Rupees 48, on the ground that holdings have been divided owing to the introduction of the Record of Rights, may amount to giving "one man one vote."

This will increase the number of impecunious electors and the complaints, already heard, of corruption and other malpractices in connection with elections will be multiplied; and one is at a loss to conceive how such a step can improve the quality of the candidates elected. Another danger of increasing the number of indigent voters is that the man with the long purse will always manage to get himself elected, to the exclusion of poorer, though more capable aspirants and will thus become a sort of "Vatandar" member of a board. If the general tone of elections is to be improved, it can best be done by raising the minimum above 48 rupees not by lowering it.

15. A great deal of information is required to be collected to answer this question and as I received the question papers on the 10th instant and I am called upon to send in my answers not later than 15th instant, the time at my disposal is too short and I am therefore unable to answer this question.

16. It should not be fixed by law.

17. From the wording of this question it appears that the removal of nominated non-official members is a fore-gone conclusion and that they are to be retained only if the administrative efficiency will suffer by the removal. If this be the correct interpretation of the question (and I think it is), I would submit that no cause has been shown why the nominated members should be removed and how their presence on the boards comes in the way of administrative efficiency. There is not even a suggestion, much less evidence that they in any way retard progress.

In the absence of any such suggestion and evidence, the very idea of removing them, is nothing short of casting a slur upon the nominated non-official members. It seems to have been assumed that the moment they are nominated they sell their consciences to Government and that they do not work as well and as efficiently as the elected members. But on the contrary instances are not wanting to prove that nominated members have safe-guarded public interest better than the elected members.

The reason why they have to work with greater zeal, than elected members, is at the worst the fear that they will lose the chance of being nominated again, if they do not justify their nomination, and this wholesome incentive is utterly wanting in the case of the elected members because the electorate being uneducated, does not consider, at the time of an election, whether the candidate whom, it had last elected, justified his election.

Another reason is that the electorate being poor, easily succumbs to the malpractices, without taking into consideration whether the candidate has done his duty after his last elections.

Then again in an election there is a chance of persons getting in, who have the tact of committing every sort of offence under the Penal Code, without falling into the clutches of law and disqualifying sections of the Local Board Act. Although the Government and the public know full well that such gentry do manage to get in, they are quite helpless owing to this elective principle and crass stupidity of the electorate.

Now turning to the process of nomination I may submit that the list of candidates for nomination has to run the gauntlet of the Mamlatdar, the Assistant Collector and the Collector. This process reduces to a minimum the chances of unfit, incompetent and unscrupulous persons being nominated.

On the one hand the electorate being uneducated and apt to succumb to malpractices and on the other hand the process of nomination being very stringent, it would appear to my dispassionate mind that nominated element should be increased, rather than reduced or altogether eliminated.

The proposal of eliminating the non-official nominated element from the Local Boards also insinuates that Government nominate non-official persons on the tacit understanding that they are always to be on the side of Government and support any Government measure, whether right or wrong.

It is hardly necessary to say that there never exists any such understanding either expressed or implied between Government and its nominees. It is however the every day experience of Local Boards and municipalities that among the elected members there are one or two intelligent men, whose lead the other elected members follow like sheep without pausing to consider the pros and cons of a question.

As I have already pointed out there is no evidence to assume that nominated non-official members are in any way inferior either in capacity or character to elected members and that the administration has in any way suffered owing to their presence; and their removal, in my humble opinion, is sure to impair the administrative efficiency of Local Boards.

It is admitted on all hands that there are many Indian Gentlemen who are unwilling to submit to the troubles, expense, inconveniences and malpractices of an election. Our sectarian animosities are also a factor to be reckoned with. If the nomination of non-officials is altogether stopped, both the public and the Government will lose the services of the capable men of the class described just above; and I think it is with a view to avail the services of such persons that the nomination was introduced.

The time has not yet arrived, when the electors might be relied upon to send the best men to the board and elections are not yet free from the taint of malpractices and racial animosities.

View the nominations from whatever point, we may, nomination would appear to be the best possible way of selecting men for Local Boards and such other bodies.

The official element cannot be reduced without impairing the efficiency of the boards.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10. If they are reduced, the state of things described in my answer to question No. 14 will necessarily follow.

Rao Saheb S. B. Mahantshetti.

1. Yes. There should be more elected members because people believe that their rights will be considered.
2. No. It is not necessary.
3. The District and Taluka Local Board Presidents should be officials.
4. Passed Sub-overseers and Assistant Engineers should be appointed, and such work (preparing plan and estimate, &c.) should be executed by the District Local Boards.
5. The District Board should have the power of sanctioning the Taluka Local Board budget and should also have the power of appointing Taluka Local Board servants.
6. The primary education should be under the control of District Local Board.
7. No change should be made in the rules under section 48 (B) of Local Board Act.
8. The Taluka Local Board never considered about the Local Fund while transferring from one taluka to another for educational purposes.
9. Never heard.
10. The non-official members should be granted certificates for the efficiency of their work, if not granted, they do not pay attention to the work.
11. Arrangement should be made so that the educated persons of different castes may be elected. Graduates and title-holders should be added.
12. If persons stated in sub-section 4-5 of section 10 of the Act are available they should be recommended for nominated members, if not available, the other class men should be recommended.
13. Non-official may be appointed if a qualified person is available.
14. The amount should be 40 instead of 48.
15. I cannot answer.
16. I cannot answer unless I know the duties of the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board.
17. I do not see any necessity of deciding certain fixed numbers of officials and non-official members.
18. The amount 40 should be corrected for the amount 48. in group No. 1 of sub-section of section 10 of the Local Board Act, and no changes should be made for group Nos. 2, 3 and 4.

*Mr. Shripad Anant Chhatre, Pleader,
Belgaum.*

1. I should like to answer this question in the affirmative. The District and the Taluka Local Boards should consist of $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of elected members and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of nominated members. There is a cry at present that the non-official members do not take interest in Local Board matters because they have no sufficient independence. By removing that cry, at least one of the reasons put forth for the present apathy of the private members will be removed. Besides, this change may secure an adequate representation of the minorities and also of certain municipalities, co-operative societies, district sanitary associations, district agricultural associations and other public institutions.

2. I see no necessity for election by communities. At least in the case of Local Boards there seems to be no need for such election at present. It is said that the special election by communities is likely to give an impetus to racial animosity. I do not entertain this fear at all. To group members of different communities scattered over the district or the taluka is an arduous task and after all it will not be worth the trouble to do so.

3. In answering this question one has to take a sensible and prudent view of the condition of the people. One should not take a high jump at once. Independently of the view expressed by the Royal Commission, I give my opinion formed by experience that at least for ten years to come the President of the District Local Board should be the Collector of the district and no other person. The Vice-President may be a non-official elected gentleman. What I mean is that he should be elected by the members of the board from among the elected members. The Vice-President should be given almost all the powers of the President, and they should be defined. The duties of the President should only be (1) to preside at the meeting of the board and guide its deliberations and (2) to exercise a general supervision over the working of the board. Every other power should be given to the Vice-President; but the Vice-President should be enjoined to act under the guidance of the President.

After ten years if the President will find that the board has acquired a capacity in all its details to act without the Collector as President, he should withdraw himself altogether from the board, leaving it to go on with its President elected from the non-official elected members.

Now as regards the Taluka Local Boards. I am of opinion that both the President and the Vice-President should be elected from among the non-official elected members. The Mamlatdar of the taluka, and the Sub Assistant Surgeon if there is a Local Board dispensary in the taluka, should invariably be among the nominated members. The Mamlatdar who is generally keen about his position, may not like his subordinate position in the board but gradually, with the increasing sense of the Local Self-Government, he is sure to find his position to be exactly what it should be.

4. This is a difficult question to answer. If I answer this from a patriotic spirit, and my suggestions and those of other patriotic gentlemen are unfortunately adopted and embodied in the Act: it may lead to dangerous consequences. The preparation of plans and estimates requires skill and a special knowledge of making plans. For making a plan and estimate of a boat, a special knowledge is necessary, otherwise a boat may get upset in the middle of a river and might create indescribable misery and consternation. The Government Public Works Department have acquired a skill and special knowledge in making plans of different designs and it has a competent staff to do the work. I think the making of plans and estimates should be left to the Public Works Department as at present. The Public Works Department has its establishment ready for doing every kind of work. I do not see any reason why the preparation of plans and estimates and the execution of works should not be left to the Public Works Department.

If it is thought to wrest the work from the hands of the Public Works Department the Local Boards would be required to maintain efficient establishment at an enormous cost which it will be difficult to meet. I am quite against making any change in the matters touched by this question.

Whenever the Local Boards have to get plans prepared, they have the power of suggesting to the Public Works Department what they wish to do or what they wish to omit to do respecting particular works. It is not obstinate in having stereotyped plans. Make your own suggestions and it will follow them.

I do not understand what merit the boards will feel in having its own Public Works Department at an enormous cost and that too as it must necessarily be inefficient and incomplete in the end. I am really against making any change in the present system.

As for the charges of the Public Works Department they may be got reduced by approaching the Government in that department.

5. There should be no objection to relieve the Taluka Local Board of the control of the District Local Board of the matters mentioned in the question and of the sanction and revision of its budgets. The Taluka Local Board should be made an independent body as far as possible.

6. This is again as difficult a question as question 4. I do not at all conceive how the Local Boards can maintain efficient educational departments at their own cost. I do not think it to be desirable for the board to keep its own educational department. It is not possible to maintain an efficient department, which must entail much cost. If the Local Boards are given a greater voice and latitude as proposed by Rao Bahadur Ichharam, I think that that will be a sufficient and salubrious change that needs to be made.

7. In view of my opinion about question 6, I think I need not answer this question.
8. I do not remember what the practice is. But in fairness, I think, the Taluka Local Board should be consulted.
9. This question throws a great responsibility on the person answering it :—

- (1) I have made inquiries and I find that the levy of one anna more is sure to cause discontent among the agricultural class, and discontent among a large population is the mother of great evil. So I propose that the additional taxation should be avoided altogether.
- (2) No appreciable relief is expected by adopting the change.
- (3) Why should not the Local Boards get one anna in the rupee on the Excise Revenue? The refusal of the Government of India to increase the grant cannot be justified on good grounds. The Excise Revenue has enormously increased since 1872 and in justice the grant fixed so long as 1872 requires revision. In 1907 when I was Chairman of the Belgaum District Local Board I applied to the Commissioner, S. D., to move Government to revise the grant. But the Commissioner was pleased to refuse to move the Government, as the grant had been permanently fixed so far back as 1872.

If the Government of India be pleased to revise the grant with reference to the present excise revenue, there would remain no need to have a recourse to a new taxation. The revised grant will be adequately sufficient to meet the expected increase of expenditure.

- (3 (a) and (c). Require no answer.

10. The present apathy and indifference of the non-official members is likely to disappear by giving the District and Taluka Local Boards greater latitude and independence.

11. To section 10, clause (7) may be added, graduates, pleaders, title-holders, sardars chairmen of sanitary committees, chairmen of rural and urban registered co-operative societies.

12. I adopt the answer of the Hon'ble Mr. Belvi.

13. Please read my answer to question 3.

14. The statutory minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 8. This will increase the number of voters and create a desire in the people to understand Local Board matters.

15. I am unable to answer this question.

16. In answering question 5, I have said that the Taluka Boards should be made independent bodies. In view of that opinion it is desirable that the proportion of dividing the balance should be fixed once for all. But what the ratio should be it is difficult to state now.

17. In answering question 1, I have said that 1/3rd of the members should be nominated. This 1/3rd should be taken advantage of by Government for including as many officials and representatives of the minorities as the Government may choose. But it should be remembered that an Assistant Collector, the Executive Engineer, the Civil Surgeon, and the Sanitary Engineer should be among the nominated 1/3rd members in the District Local Board. It is not necessary to observe this restriction in the case of the Taluka Local Board. The nomination of members up to 1/3rd should be entirely in the discretion of the Government with the limitation that the Mamladar and the Sub-Assistant Surgeon should always be among the nominated members.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits. The reductions should be as follows :—

- (1) From Rs. 48 to Rs. 8 under clause (1) of section 10;
- (2) From Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 3,000 under clause (2);
- (3) From Rs. 500 to Rs. 300 under clause (3); and
- (4) From Rs. 50 to 15 under clause (4).

Secretary, People's Association, Belgaum.

1. The answer to the first question is in the affirmative for the following reasons :—

Unless rural boards have elected majorities experience shows that they do not take real interest in their work. In elections people choose their own representatives. If the people's representatives be in a minority the administration of the boards cannot be said to be carried on by the people and people's representatives will not be able to influence any proposal regarding constitution or policy of the boards and the boards will continue as at present quasi-departments of Government wherein the real authority centres in Government officials, the boards serving the purpose of purveyors of ways and means.

Further, as the boards are meant to be the schools for the people to learn the art of Self-Government, and to fit themselves to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the

Empire the people's representatives if in a majority will be better able to act with freedom and self-confidence and to safe-guard the interests of the people.

In a country like ours where people have more respect for authority than law nomination being the gift of authority, has more than in other countries, a demoralising effect on public life and if officials and nominated members together form the majority of a board, the effect is almost certain, and the people's representatives are hardly in a position to influence the boards. The sooner, therefore, the system of nomination is put an end to, the better it would be for the public life of this country.

Thus in our opinion, the District Boards should have four officials and the rest elected members. The four officials being an Assistant Collector, the Educational Inspector, the Civil Surgeon, and the Executive Engineer. The Taluka Local Boards should have the Mamlatdar only, so that in both boards real administration shall rest in the people's representatives, while Government interests would be watched by these officers.

There is no fear that by providing elective majorities in the rural boards, the affairs of the boards would go astray. The experience in municipalities points the other way. Government might if they think fit reserve power to check an errant board as they have reserved it now in the case of the municipalities and the boards.

2. On this question we are of opinion that election should not be by communities. In the present distracted condition of our social structure the introduction of this apple of discord would only lead to multiply the animosities and the dissensions now prevailing, but gradually disappearing. The experience of the Punjab and the U. P. should also serve as a warning against such a course. Our communities are so numerously divided and sub-divided, that it would be extremely difficult to provide a *modus operandi* by which each one of them can get representation on the boards. There is no guarantee that even after the introduction of this system there will be no complaint that there is no adequate representation of certain communities. We have been doing pretty well under the present arrangement and no change is really called for. Further the difficulties that would crop up on the introduction of this principle would be simply enormous. Let us consider the case of the principal communities only, *viz.*, Hindus, Mahomedans and Jains. There will be a regular scramble for seats among the divisions and also among the sub-divisions of such divisions. Where are we to stop? If seats must be provided for each separate caste or creed, the boards would have to be formed of more than quadruple the present number and there is no guarantee of any efficiency.

Further, we will have the difficulty that although there is a common genus for a caste, there are sub divisions according to religious persuasions also. For instance, not only is the Brahmin community divided as Deshasth, Konknaasth and Karhadas, but there is a further division into Smartas, Vaishnavas, Shaktas, &c., *ad infinitum*. Are we to recognize all these? If so, where are we to stop? There is no guarantee that representation given to one sub-division of a caste will be regarded by the other sub-divisions as given to themselves. A Digambar Jain, for instance, will not consider himself duly represented in a board by a Shwetambar. On the whole, Sir, we venture to submit that representation by communities is impracticable.

Nor do we think that it is called for. So far as experience goes, the elected representatives of any board have not given so far the least ground for complaint that they show partiality for the particular community to which they belong. On the contrary be it said to the everlasting credit of these representatives that they have acquitted themselves in the most creditable manner in this particular.

Further we are of opinion that there is hardly any room for the display of any such partiality in Local Board matters. A road, a school, a dispensary, if proposed and got sanctioned by a Brahmin member for any village, could be equally used by the members of the other communities. In fact we fail to see how the interests of the different communities can clash in Local Board matters.

But if a community must be, at all, represented on the board, the road is certainly open to it. If owing to a numerical inferiority it has no chance, the best course for it would be to forget its separate existence altogether, at least for this purpose; or it must so raise itself by education and other qualifications that the other communities would be carried by the influence of its candidate or by its own influence. Education is sure to bring forward men of all communities and merit must win. Elections will be carried by the most deserving and influential, irrespective of caste and creed. The backward communities should be encouraged to qualify themselves by education in which alone their salvation lies and not in getting seats by nomination.

Caucuses such as those to be witnessed in large towns holding municipal elections are unknown in Local Board elections so far and are likely to remain so in the near future, because the area is so large and society in the mofussil is not so compact as in cities and towns. Therefore also it would be difficult to form groups according to communities and secure election by communities.

As we understand the latter part of paragraph 1 of this question, Government seem to think that the interests of the minor communities are not properly safeguarded. No instances are given. But we venture to think that the fears of Government are rather unfounded. Till now elections have been open to all and local influence has always won here as in the United Kingdom. One community has furnished a candidate whom other communities have supported.

We think that the present number of members is not sufficient and should be increased. The proposals we have made below would, if accepted, vastly increase the work of these boards and more men would be required. In the case of Taluka Local Boards, the groups should be small but should contain an almost equal number of voters and the size of the groups should be such that it should be easy for the member representing the groups to go the round thereof as often as possible so as to make himself thoroughly acquainted with its needs. In the case of District Boards,

however, we propose that there should be a provision for payment of travelling allowances to those members who have to travel more than 20 miles to attend the board's meeting at head quarters. In the Taluka Local Boards, there should be two members for each group, one from class (1) and another from classes (2 @ 7). In the District Boards there should be two members from each Taluka Board elected by the elected members, thereof.

3. We have carefully considered the reasons given by the Decentralisation Commission in paragraphs 70 to 795 of their report for holding that for the present, at any rate, the Collector and the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of a sub-division must continue to be the Presidents of the District and the Taluka Local Boards. But we regret we cannot accept them. We cannot understand why the Collector and his Assistants must remain Presidents of these boards. Unless rural boards like municipalities were given the power to elect their own Presidents from among the elected members it is idle to expect people to divest themselves of the present belief that rural boards are quasi-departments of Government. There can be no sense of responsibility and no stimulus to exertion if people must always work in a subordinate position. All measures of reform will require the previous good will of the Collector and his Assistants to be successful. The voting would simply be a farce as at present.

We venture to think that much of the present apathy of the elective members is due to this fact in a very large measure. This was also anticipated by the Government of India so long ago as 1881; for in their Memorable Circular letter No. 3515, dated 10th October 1881, they said: "It would be hopeless to expect any real development of Self-Government if Local Boards were subject to check and interference in matters of detail." It was, therefore, laid down that "These boards should have a large preponderance of members chosen by election and when possible non-official persons should be Presidents." If the possibility here spoken of has not arrived after 30 years of official guidance, the system of guidance stands self-condemned.

There may be difficulties in the beginning, but with the spread of education and lapse of time the measure is bound to be a success.

4. We are glad to say that we concur in the recommendations of the Royal Commission on decentralisation on this point. We think that after 40 years of the existence of the Civil Engineering College and 30 years of Local Self-Government in the Presidency the time has certainly arrived to allow full liberty to rural boards to frame and sanction their own budgets and employ their own agency to execute their works. In the words of the noble Marquis of Ripon of sacred memory "Within the limits to be laid down in each case fullest liberty of action should be given to local bodies."

5. We think that not only should the Taluka Local Boards be freed from the District Local Board's control in the matter of the engagement and payment of the Taluka Local Board servants and sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Boards budgets, we would be glad to see that the recommendations of the Royal Commission were fully carried out and Taluka Local Boards were made independent in matters affecting their Talukas with full power of control over the primary schools, dispensaries, local roads and the vaccination establishments.

6. We think that the time has long arrived for entrusting the rural boards, to manage the education in the charge. We endorse the opinion of the Royal Commission, that the rural boards should have full control over the primary schools in a district; that the inspecting and teaching staff should be under the control of the board. The present system under which boards must devote not less than one-third of their income to education and yet have no voice in fixing the curricula of the schools even is simply anomalous. The cardinal principle should be that the Local Board should control a service for which it pays and if Government think that in the present political condition of the country they must have full control over the schools even to the minutest details the best course for Government would be to take over the schools and the educational service altogether in their hands, and relieve the rural boards of this burden. At present the inspecting staff being provincial naturally look to the provincial authorities for promotion and prospects. If the educational service were given over to the management of the District Boards we think the inspecting staff may be materially curtailed and the whole managed on a decent scale within the same expenditure, but with more money spent on primary education as such with the help of the recurring grants made by Government for this special purpose.

7. The rules may be modified as under:—

(1) In rule 2 for the words "by Government in the Educational Department" the words "by itself" should be substituted.

(2) In rule 4 (5) delete the words from "subject to limitations"..... to "Educational Department." In rule 4 (6) delete the words "subject as aforesaid".

(3) Strike out the proviso to rule 5.

(4) In rule 7 for "The Government Educational Department" substitute "The District Board".

(5) In rule 8 similarly substitute "the District Board" for "Government Educational Department" and "Government" where they occur.

(6) Rule 11 should read:—

"Any complaint, observation or suggestion brought to its notice on the recommendation of any one or more of its members or with reference to the Government Deputy Educational Inspector's inspection reports, may be considered by the board in meeting and disposed of by it as seems best under the circumstances and a copy of the resolution on the same should be forwarded to the Educational Inspector for information."

(7) For rule 12 substitute the following :—

“The annual report of the Government Deputy Educational Inspector on the Local Board schools shall be submitted to the Inspector through the District Board who may controvert any remarks therein made.”

(8) Rule 13 should be cancelled.

(9) Rule 14 should be cancelled.

(10) Rule 17 should be cancelled.

8. So far as we are aware, Taluka Local Boards are not consulted.

9. We think that the agricultural population is already overtaxed and is not in a position to bear any additional burden. We concur with the Royal Commission that the land cess should not be increased, because, such a step is likely to make Government unpopular. Boards should be encouraged to tax themselves in some other way, but Government can come to the board's relief in a substantial way by making larger subventions and by making larger grants to the boards from the abkari revenue, as well as the land and income taxes.

10. The Decentralisation Commission have recorded ample evidence on the matter and on its strength have held that the present state of things calls for urgent reform. Diagnosing the causes of this lack of interest they have come to the conclusion and we think rightly that excessive official control and lack of resources were the two things that went to make the rural boards, the inanimate bodies that they admittedly are. Both these points have been carefully sifted by the Commission and they came to the conclusion that the Local Boards should have greater freedom of action in regard to all the matters with which they are concerned and that the resources should be materially increased. In the words of late lamented the Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, “one has only to enumerate these functions and to contrast their wide range with the extremely meagre character of their resources to realize how unequal, how pitifully unequal the resources of local bodies are to a proper performance of the functions which have been entrusted to them. Who that has taken this situation into consideration can wonder that things are as they are.” (Speech in Council on moving the resolution regarding the resources of the local bodies, March 1912.) In the words of the present home-member of the Supreme Government “Considering the fact that the resources at the disposal of the local bodies were so extremely meagre the surprise was not that they had not done better, but that they had done as well as they are doing.” The present Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces has expressed the same sentiment in more plain language. “The inefficiency of rural boards” he says “is largely due to the lack of funds and to the lack of genuine activity and to the lack of interest in the work which follows from poverty”

On the point of the official control also the evidence collected by the Royal Commission clearly showed that the present control was so excessive as to make the rural boards mere registering bodies. The point is worth labouring a little.

The main normal functions of a rural board are :—

- (1) Maintenance and improvement of roads, &c.
- (2) Education.
- (3) Upkeep of Medical Institutions.
- (4) Vaccination
- (5) Sanitation.
- (6) Veterinary work.
- (7) Construction and maintenance of markets and rest-houses.
- (8) Charge of pounds, tolls, and ferries.

They may also be called on to devote funds for famine relief, plague, and other epidemics (*vide* section 30 of the Local Board Act).— On a reference to the several provisions of the Local Boards Act, the rules framed thereunder, and the orders of Government thereon, it will be found that although the boards are to provide funds for each of these objects, the control of one and all of them rests with the several departments of Government. If a road is to be constructed costing more than 50 rupees a mile or a work costing more than Rs. 500 is to be undertaken, the Government Executive Engineer must prepare or approve the plan, and if the work is to exceed Rs. 2,500 in cost the Executive Engineer must execute it (section 57 (b), G. R. No. 220-A-262, dated 31-7-1885, Public Works Department, and G. R. No. 254-A-328 of 4th December 1885, Public Works Department). If a school is to be established or maintained, previous approval of Government must be obtained. If a site for a school building is to be chosen, it must be done by a Government Educational Inspector. The Educational Department of Government must control all schools and the teaching and inspecting staff (*vide* rules 5, 14, 13 and 7 of the rules under section 48). Yet, the board must provide in its budget to spend not less than one-third of its land-cess on education. If a hospital is to be established, the rural board may do so, but its occupation is gone immediately it provides the money necessary for its upkeep. All actual management must rest with the Civil Surgeon. If a vaccinator must be appointed the board has no power. In sanitary matters too the Board's position is not much enviable. In veterinary matters the rural boards pay largely but have little control, the staff being all provincialized.

Such an administration can have but one result, *viz.*, lack of interest on the part of the people's representatives as at present.

As regards the remedies we would suggest the following.—

(1) Abolition of the provisions under which Collector and his Assistants must be Presidents of the District and Sub-district Boards.

(2) Provision that the Vice-President of every board must be a non-official elected member.

(3) The abolition of the rule under which plans and estimates of works costing Rs. 50 a mile or Rs. 500 in aggregate must be prepared or approved by Public Works Department and under which works costing more than Rs. 2,500 must be executed by the Public Works Department only.

(4) Liberty to the Local Board for employing its own engineering staff.

(5) Complete control over the primary schools with liberty to employ their own inspecting staff in the hands of the District Board.

(6) Complete control over the hospitals located outside the head-quarters of the district in the hands of the several Taluka Local Boards.

(7) Complete control over the vaccination and sanitary staff.

(8) Freedom to allot funds for sanitary objects and educational objects.

(9) Severing of connection with veterinary work.

(10) Relief from the obligation to spend money on famine relief, plague and other epidemics, which should always be a provincial if not an imperial charge.

(11) Increase in the resources of the board—

(i) By freeing them from contribution to Government for the advice and assistance from Government officers.

(ii) By increasing the Government grants and subventions.

(iii) By restoring the cess on abkari revenue to the proper level, *viz.*, 1/16th of the total revenue.

(iv) By handing over part of the land-tax to the boards as the land is pre-eminently a source from which local taxation must necessarily be largely drawn.

It will be remarked that drastic as these proposals at first sight appear, all of them except the first and part of the 11th have been accepted by the Decentralisation Commission. If the board's powers were enlarged in the manner herein indicated, there would be no need for the surprise expressed by the Commissioner, S. D., in the case of the closing balance of the Belgaum District Board, much of which is inflated inordinately owing to the spending of the educational fund being retarded in most cases by the delays incidental to the acquisition of sites and the preparation of plans for school buildings (G. R., G. D., No. 2410, dated 24-3-1915) which when paraphrased means that the board was powerless to spend the money it got from the Government, because it had no power to prepare and approve the plans or choose the sites for the intended schools (*vide* rules 13 and 14 of the rules under section 48, Cumming's Local Board Manual, page 181).

Local Fund administration indeed offers "a considerable field of activity for those non-official members who are willing to sacrifice their time and devote their energies to the supervision and inspection of works undertaken for the benefit of their constituents (G. R., G. D., No. 2410, dated 24-3-15). But such administration must be free from excessive official control and there must be sufficient resources at the disposal of the board.

11. The question is rather unintelligible. If the question means whether any more persons should be included in the list of persons eligible to be members we recommend that the following classes of persons be deemed to be qualified to be entered in lists 1 and 2:—

(1) Graduates of the University of Bombay of 5 years' standing residing in a district.

(2) Pleaders of a similar standing.

(3) Medical practitioners holding the diploma of L. M. & S. of the University of Bombay of a similar standing.

12. Each group of villages in a taluka should elect one member from class 1 and one from classes 2 to 6 mentioned in section 10.

13. If Presidents must remain as they are, the Vice-Presidents should be elected non-officials.

14. The minimum should be Rs 6. The franchise qualification should be as low as possible in order that the humblest individual should feel that he has a voice in the administration of the board. In municipal areas a person paying a much smaller rate is entitled to a vote, and a man who pays Rs. 6 as land revenue will on an average hold more than one acre of land and thus have substantial interest in the district.

15. We are in favour of the land-tax and the abkari revenue being divisible between Government and the Local Boards. 1/8th of the former and 1/16th of the latter should be given to the board.

16. The minimum should be fixed by statute and should be one-third of the one anna cess.

17. We do not think the efficiency of the boards will be impaired at all by the abolition of nomination, and if efficiency is somewhat impaired we consider that efficiency must here give way to the education of the people in Local Self-Government. We have already discussed this point under the first question, question 5.

18. We are in favour of reducing the qualifying limits as follows:—

Clause 1, Rs. 6
" 2, Rs. 500.
" 3, Rs. 100.
" 4, Rs. 20.

*Rao Saheb G. R. Kalyanpurkar,
Huzur Deputy Collector, Belgaum.*

1. Perhaps it is generally supposed that a nominated member is more in favour of Government policy since he is a man appointed by the Government. Though I do not agree with this view, I do not intend to enter upon a discussion of the question. I will content myself with only observing that we have found the nominated members not unfrequently as independent as the elected members. The questions which a Local Board has to deal with are generally questions of a purely local nature involving rarely questions of general policy. I do not, therefore, think it necessary that there should be elected majorities.

2. I do not think that this is necessary. It would not be an easy thing to make electorates by communities. It may of course be possible to resort to communal electorates where broad divisions such as Hindus, Mahomedans are concerned. But it would not be the case with small communities and interests and we have so many of them. If communal electorates are extended to the larger communities only, there would still be the complaints from the smaller ones and some of these smaller communities might be comparatively more enlightened communities even. Besides this, communal electorates might widen the door for racial animosities and petty jealousies and party factions of which even now we come across instances. It is not necessary to make any special provision for any special communities or interests. If it is found that any such community or interest has not been duly represented, Government have still the remedy with them. Nomination can set this right.

On an average a taluka contains six groups. This, I am of opinion, is generally sufficient. But if it is found that the conditions of a taluka are so changed owing to expansion of trade and such other causes that a greater number of representation is necessary the groups may be increased, the number of nominated members also being increased proportionately.

I do not think it necessary to generally increase the present number of members either on the Taluka or the District Boards. Each Taluka Local Board and the Municipalities having a population of over 18,000 have now a member of their own on the District Board and I should think this number quite sufficient.

3. I am not for non-official Presidents either for the District or the Taluka Boards. Official Presidents move about constantly in their charges and therefore, are likely to know more about actual conditions and necessities. We cannot expect the same from non-official Presidents—though we may have an exception here and there—unless they make it a point to move about in their charges and keep themselves in touch with actual conditions. But this, I think, is too much to expect of them as many of them will not have the time on account of their private concerns and some few perhaps not even the inclination. Under the present system, the Collector is the President of the district and the Sub-divisional officer, the President of the Taluka Board and these official Presidents exert a wholesome influence on Local Board Administration. Non-official Presidents however capable they may be, cannot be expected to command the same influence which the official Presidents do, nor will it be found that the suggestions coming from a non-official President would carry the same conviction and weight as suggestions coming from an official President.

4. The Local Boards Act and the rules thereunder were passed so far back as in 1884. When the Act was passed the men in charge of Local Board Works were generally men of the Maistri class. These were, as a rule, unqualified men of inferior calibre and it was but desirable that works unless of a petty nature should not be entrusted to their sole management. Under these circumstances the limit set down by the Act, in section 57 for the approval of plans and estimates and in section 61 for the execution of works was a necessary one as it exercised the necessary professional check. But conditions have changed to some considerable extent during the last 30 years. We now find that men of the antiquated Maistri class have generally gone out of fashion in a Local Board and their places filled up by men of the Sub-Overseer type who have had some professional training and that the more well-to-do Boards like the Belgaum Board have even engaged the services of an L.C.E.—a fully qualified man—as the District Local Board Supervisor. Men of these qualifications can certainly be entrusted with greater responsibility and the time has therefore come now when a change could be made in the limits already fixed. However I would not advocate the total abolition of check by the Government Executive Engineer. The changes I propose would be as follows:—

(a) Approval of plans and estimates by the Government Executive Engineer.

Roads—Original works.

Costing over Rs. 50 a mile.....Plans and estimates to be approved by the Executive Engineer as at present.

Repairs

Whatever the amount of cost, need not go to the Executive Engineer for approval.

Building and other works.

Raise the limit to "above Rs. 1,000".

(b)

Execution of works.

In the case of those boards which, like the Belgaum District Local Board, have engaged a fully trained Supervisor the limit might with advantage be raised to Rs. 5,000 and above. In this case very few of the Local Board buildings will go to the Executive Engineer for execution as not many of the Local Board buildings exceed this amount in cost.

This would be as it should be, for with fully qualified and handsomely paid men, we must be able to take care of as many of our works as possible. In the case of those boards however which do not engage a fully qualified L. C. E., I would let the limit stand at its present figure

5. When the schedule of the Taluka Local Board staff has once been approved and sanctioned by the District Local Board, I would have no objection to the Taluka Local Board appointing its own men and paying them within the scheduled scale.

As regards the sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets, I would make no change in the present practice. This should continue as at present.

6. The management of the primary schools would include in it a host of things connected in the primary education. If the management were transferred to the Local Boards the boards would have to make all arrangements for the teaching, and the discipline at the schools and also the appointment, promotion and dismissal of the teaching and inspecting staff. These are onerous duties and I do not think the boards are as yet in a position to take up these duties. The time therefore not yet come for the transfer of these duties to the boards and any hasty withdrawal of the control of the Educational Department might lead to disastrous results

7. As I am not in favour of the transfer of the control of primary schools to the Local Boards, I see no necessity for the alteration or modification of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act.

8. So far as I am aware the Taluka Local Board is not consulted in the matter of the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas nor perhaps is this strictly necessary since the procedure now followed has never given room to the Taluka Local Board to complain. The $\frac{1}{3}$ rd amount of the cess set apart for educational purposes is transferred to the educational department as it accrues. The subvention granted by Government every year which is considerably more than the boards' $\frac{1}{3}$ rd cess is added to this and the whole amount thus available for expenditure is spent according to the needs and demands of the several talukas, care being taken to see that the whole amount is spent within the limits of the particular district to which the amount referred. The Government grant is generally very much more than the amount supplied by the Local Board, that the amount spent in each taluka never as a rule falls short of the amount supplied by the taluka and thus no cause for complaint remains. The Local Board gives only its portion of the $\frac{1}{3}$ rd cess. The allotment of the money to the several talukas is made by the educational department and the system works without any hitch. I, therefore, see no reason to disturb this arrangement. The boards will certainly not be able to manage it half so beautifully.

9. As I do not advocate the transfer of the management of primary education to the Local Boards, I have no suggestions to make regarding additional establishments. On the question, however, whether in order to meet increased expenditure a Local Board can resort to one or other of the four suggestions made in this question, my observations are as follows:—

(1) If the conditions of a board demand it, I see no reason why a Local Board should not be empowered to raise its Local Fund cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee. At the same time, however, I would insist that any increment over the standard one anna must be with reference to a particular specified object and that the additional amount so levied must all be spent on that particular object.

There should not be a general increase; the rule must be "specific increase for a specific object." An increase on such lines would appeal to the people and we would then be moving on lines of least resistance.

(2) No Local Board would, I think, have any objection to this course. If any village grows in importance so as to deserve a "notified area" committee or a municipal board, it is but reasonable that this new board should come into existence and afford some relief to the Local Board.

(3) From the definition of cess as given in Bombay Act 3 of 1869, the Local Funds Act, it would appear that a cess of this nature was connected more or less with income derived from lands. An income-tax has no connection with lands and would, therefore, be not liable to the cess. Moreover Local Fund Cess on income tax would mean a second tax on income and such a course would not be politic. Therefore, the Local Boards should not be permitted to levy a cess on income tax.

(b) Abkari revenue.

(c) Forest revenue (one anna cess is already levied on grazing).

As the power to raise the cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee is recommended to be given to a Local Board, I see no further cause for levying the cess either on income tax or on abkari or forest revenue.

10. In the absence of specific instances I cannot give any opinion on it. We might come across a few instances in which non-official members show lack of interest but this would not justify us in drawing a general conclusion nor an inference that any particular board has failed in the discharge of its legitimate functions.

11. I see no necessity for making any additions to the qualifications of voters.

12. As it is, I do not think there is anything to bar a man from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10 of the Act from being elected. Unless it is shown that such classes of men are not properly represented under the present rules, I am not prepared to think that any separate groups of electors are necessary for them.

13. No such hard and fast rule should be laid down. It should be left to the free discretion of the electors though I would add that a Mamlatdar Vice-President would certainly be the more desirable. The official President who, as a rule, is the Sub-Divisional officer being not always available at taluka head quarter station most of executive work of a Taluka Local Board falls to the share of the Vice-President and the Vice-President must, therefore, be a capable man.

14. No other minimum is necessary. The present limit of Rs. 48 might stand
15. Government already gives substantive subvention from Imperial revenues for most of the important items of local expenditure. No case is, therefore, made out in favour of this suggestion.
16. I am not in favour of fixing by law the proportion in which the proceeds from one anna cess should be divided between a Taluka Local Board and a District Board. The District Board should make the allotment according to the needs of each Taluka Local Board.
17. I am certainly not in favour of this suggestion. If the nomination of non-official members were stopped the elections might not always give us desirable non-official members and this element being shut out the means of counter-acting party cliques and machinations would be much restricted. Such a state of things is bound to impair administrative efficiency.
18. I answer this question in the negative.

Mr. V. T. Naik, Khanapur, Belgaum District.

1. Yes. I certainly prefer to have the majority of the elective members in the Taluka Local Boards and District Local Boards; but of the constituted, the number of ex-officials (who should be Mamlatdar of the Taluka, Sub Assistant Surgeons or Assistant Surgeons in charge of dispensary of a Taluka and the Sub-Divisional officer of the Public Works Department where possible) together with that of the nominated should in no case exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the whole.

In some talukas the board, while considering the questions of sanitation and other matters relating to public health, will have the help and advice of a qualified man. So also a man of the Public Works Department will be of much use to the board in deciding what works are practicable and in preliminary discussions and considerations of different projects and thus will guide the board unofficially.

At present the number of nominated ones is equal to that of elected. Since the passing of the Act good many changes have been introduced and hence I think people should be allowed to have freer hand in electing their own representations

And in the case of the District Local Boards there should be at least one member nominated from each taluka.

2. No. Elections based on classes, communities and castes should on no account be encouraged. The policy which accentuates caste distinctions is bad. I do not see any necessity of representing in the Taluka Local Boards the depressed classes. With strict restrictions representation from the depressed and lower classes should be allowed in the District Local Boards only where the population of the district requires.

The number of members in both Taluka Local and District Local Boards is quite inadequate. Some of the Taluka Local Board groups comprising the number of villages should be enlarged. The number of members should be at least 25 in the Taluka Local Board and at least 40 in the District Local Board and more according to the district.

3. The Vice-Presidents of the Taluka Local and District Local Boards should be invariably non-official and elected ones subject to the approval of the managing committee of the District Local Board; but certain restrictions of education, ability, position of the man in society and general status should be made to qualify to the post of the Vice President of the Taluka Local Board. And more stringent restriction should be made to qualify the Vice-President of the District Local Board.

The Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards should invariably be nominated; and where possible nomination should be non-official.

The Presidents of the District Local Boards should be the Collector ex-officio; but the Chairman of the Managing Committee of the District Local Board should be the Vice-President of the same board.

4 All the plans and estimates of original works not exceeding Rs. 1,000 should be framed and carried out by the Taluka Local Boards. All the plans and estimates of original works exceeding Rs. 1,000 and within Rs 3,000 should be approved by the District Local Boards, i.e., by the working committee by the District Local Board.

All plans and estimates of original works exceeding Rs. 3,000 of the Taluka Local Board should be examined free of charge and approved by Government Executive Engineer.

All other plans, estimates and reappropriations, &c, may be approved and carried out by the Taluka Local Board only.

All works, plans, estimates, of the District Local Board of less than Rs 5,000 should be approved and carried out by that board. All plans and estimates of original works of the District Local Board exceeding Rs 5,000 should be examined and approved by the Executive Engineer free of charge. All plans, other estimates, reappropriations, &c., of the District Local Board may be approved and carried out by that board only.

All works of any nature should always be carried out and executed by the agency of the respective boards only, but Government Executive Engineer should have the power of inspecting and making remarks, suggestions, &c., on the works that are carried out by the boards agency.

5. (1) The Taluka Local Boards should be empowered to retain, appoint and dismiss and make payment and fix the salaries of all the servants and employees that the board think and deem necessary except the clerks, Sub-Overseers or persons equal to these grades or higher to these grades.

(2) The District Local Boards should meet the expenses of their establishment and should on no account debit the charges thus maintained to Taluka Local Boards.

(3) All clerks, Sub-Overseers, supervisors and persons of such grades or higher in ranks should be engaged and paid by the District Local Boards; but their pay, gradations of pay, &c., to be settled by the Divisional Commissioners with the help of the District Local Boards.

The services of such persons under this 3rd clause should be made pensionable.

6. Yes. The management, general supervision of all the primary schools may be safely entrusted to the District Local Boards subject to the general control of the Government as regards training of the teachers qualifications, gradations of pay, pensions, methods of teaching the standards, subjects to be taught, &c.

The District Local Boards may be empowered to transfer and appoint vernacular teachers and other menials in their district below Rs 40. The Taluka Local Boards may be empowered to found new schools where possible and get the teachers appointed and transferred below Rs. 15 in their taluka, subject to the general control of the District Local Board.

7 I have already stated that general management and direction of schools subject to the general control of the Government as stated in my previous question 6, may be entrusted to the District Local Boards.

I think that rules under 48 (6) require no change except in selecting the sites of the school and in accepting the plans, estimates of the school buildings which should be entirely left to the District Local Boards irrespective of the Educational Department.

8. No. So far as I know.

9. For the present it is not desirable to increase land tax or cess from one anna to two annas. Some eminent economists have proved that average income of an Indian or earnings of an Indian has been reduced, and hence I dare say that fresh taxation of any nature would mean fleecing the Indians. As Government's income have during the last 30 years, from various sources swollen, it would be just and proper for Government to forego a part not more than one-eighths of income from each of the Forest, Abkari and Irrigation Departments which though in one way or other have a source of income from land. The boards have a moral right to claim these as they do form pure land assessment.

At present the Taluka Local Boards have no real property, provision should be made to have some property.

If the above revenues or sources of revenue be allowed for Local Board, the board will have some more works to undertake as funds permit.

It is not necessary all Taluka Local Boards and District Local Boards of the Presidency should have almost equal money. Some Taluka Local and District Local Boards will have some advantages over the other. Some will have the advantages of the forest revenues, while others will be benefited by the revenue of abkari, and some will be profited by the revenue of irrigation in case where forest or abkari revenue is lacking.

If all these be granted for the present, I think, there is no need of increasing the provincial share. But the charges, repairs, construction of village chavdis and cattlepounds should be met from the provincial share; while on no account should the income and proceeds of cattle pounds be credited to the Provincial Government but they should be credited to District Local Boards.

10 Yes. The non-official members having no real voice and power in the affairs of the board, men of good qualities do not stand for being elected as members and nominations are made only of those who are favourable and in good moods of the local officials. The goal and aim of such persons is to seek opportunity to introduce themselves to the Government officers and thus obtain favours. In some cases the officials, too, do not nominate good men of more abilities and of independent nature to avoid friction with the officials. In certain cases the local officials show apathy and do not freely mix with the people and thus cannot know many of the persons who shall render them help, co-operation and advice disinterestedly. While a few, though elected or nominated of good qualities possessing knowledge and experience, do not purposely render any active part and co-operation as they think that the majority of the board do not side with them.

To remedy these causes is to enlarge the board and vest it with some real powers giving the non-officials certain powers and responsibilities so as to attract men of ability possessing merits, experience, knowledge, &c.

11. Yes Section 10 of the Act requires amendments and additions

Clause 1 of the section is ambiguous. It should be clearly worded as to leave no doubts. At present Khatedas, mortgagees, tenants, sub-tenants may mean land-holders. This should not be. It should be Kabjedars whose name appear in the Record of Rights, &c., the minimum assessment may be fixed as at present Rs. 48 which he is assessed in aggregate within the limits of the groups for which there is a member. But if he be an old man and if he be disabled from any other cause and if he does not wish, his heirs and sons may be selected.

Clause 2—Instead of the word 5 (five) the word 3 (three) may be substituted with modifications, i.e., in taluka headquarters persons that have or own immoveable property estimated to be not less than five thousand rupees in value while that of three thousand rupees in value in the villages of the taluka.

Clause 3.—May be rescinded as it is difficult to get proper information regarding their earnings and in its place may be substituted all persons that pay income taxes.

Clause 4.—May be modified to Rs. 25 i.e., whose pensions are not less than Rs. 25 p. m. as persons drawing pension more than Rs. 15 and that have no lands or income from the lands very scarcely desire to pass remaining of their days by staying in villages.

Clause 6 —May be done away with but it may be substituted as follows :—Officiating revenue or police patels of villages within the taluka whose Potgi should not be less than Rs. 100 a year and who know reading and writing well.

Clause 7 may be changed as follows :—

Clause 7 —A provision should be made by which a man who does not come under any of the above clauses, but is fit to become a voter can become a voter if the Collector thinks and approves under the recommendations of the Mamlatdar.

The following may be added:—

- (1) Persons possessing educational qualifications and University degrees.
- (2) Persons that have passed the vernacular school final examination.
- (3) All certified qualified teachers.
- (4) All officiating kulkarnis or talathis.
- (5) All Government servants in superior service employed under any department, but residing in that taluka.

At present all voters are eligible to become members. But I should like to draw some distinctions between voters and members. If the board require to be represented by good and able men there is every necessity to make distinct qualifications as to become members. Member should be such as to be aware of the respective duties and responsibilities. They should at least have sense to understand the workings of Local Boards. For this purpose &c, I should like to suggest to constitute a board consisting of a few officials and more of non-officials for each taluka from whom the intending members of the voters should obtain and produce a certificate as to their eligibility as to become a member. The board so constituted should be nominated by the local officer (the Collector of a District) subject to the approval of the Divisional Commissioner.

12. I do not think that there is any necessity for forming separate groups of electors with a view to secure some more men from clauses 2 to 6 of the section 10.

13. I have already touched this in my question 3. I am of opinion that Vice Presidents should invariably be non-official, and in the case of Presidents of the Taluka Local Board, it should only be nominated as far as possible, nomination to be made non-official.

14. No change in the present figure Rs. 48 is necessary except that I have already stated in my question No. 11.

15. I have not clearly understood the question and I cannot give any opinion as I do not know the present rules and procedure.

16. The Taluka Local Boards should be made independent of the District Local Boards subject to the general control of the Working Committee of the District Local Board. The income of the Taluka Local Board should be separate and fixed by law so to give free scope, settle its working by taking more projects in hand to meet the various wants of the taluka. The Taluka Local Boards should never be kept at the mercy of the District Local Board for its funds. After deducting its educational portion from the Taluka Local Board it should be fixed in some proportion say 3-2.

17. It may be remarked that Local Board Act was passed as a first step towards Local Self Government some 30 years ago. Times have considerably changed. With the spread of education and in view of the growing aspirations of the public it is just and proper that the Act and its working should require material alterations as to give a free scope and a freer hand of the public to manage Local Boards carefully and judiciously; and I am of opinion that there should on no account be the majority of the officials. What is wanted is the official guide and help where and when the Boards require. And for this purpose there should be only a few by nomination; and so also there should be only few (counted on fingers) of the ex-officials to guide the board. The appointment of non-officials by nomination should not be wholly abolished. The administrative efficiency will in no way suffer if the board be constituted of the majority of elected members and a few by nomination (both officials and non-officials) the number of which in no case should exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the whole.

I have already touched about this in my questions 1, 2, 3. Majority of both the elective members in both the Taluka Local and District Local Boards should invariably be maintained.

The members of the Board should be held responsible and some powers be delegated for certain execution of works carried in their groups. The Chairman of the Working Committee in the Taluka Local Board should invariably be the Mamlatdar of the taluka, as his out door duties and touring will enable him to supervise, see, and satisfy himself that the works are carried out and completed in accordance with the estimates.

I have already touched this in my questions Nos. 11 and 12. I do not propose nor desire to reduce to any limits in clauses 1, 2 and 4 of section 10 beyond what I have stated in my question 11.

Mr. M. Webb, B.A., I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Belgaum.

1. No, not at present. My experience is that the members who take an interest in Taluka Local Board affairs are generally the nominated members; as an instance I would quote the Works Committees of Belgaum and Samargaon talukas; in Samargaon the Committee consists of 6 nominated and one elected member and in Belgaum of 7 nominated and 3 elected members. These committees are elected by the members of the boards themselves; and if elected members took an active interest in taluka works, they should and would, in my opinion, try to get themselves on the Works Committees. Until greater interest is shown by elected members, I do not see what purpose would be fulfilled by placing them in the majority. The result would generally be stagnation.

2. Not necessary. In the case of Local Boards the lack of intellectual weight of agricultural classes is made up for by their numbers.

3. Indian gentleman to whom I have spoken about this think that the proper administration of a board requires more influence than a non-official member can usually command. I agree; but I consider that there is no objection to a non-official President being tried in selected cases; but until public opinion is more developed in the electorate, I think he should be nominated. To take a parallel case, I know of at least one Municipality in which a non-official member by the use of more than doubtful methods, got himself elected Vice-President; and as he has no aptitude whatever for the office the result has been absolute stagnation.

4. It rests with the board to decide whether plans and estimates of works costing over Rs. 500 are to be prepared or only approved by the Executive Engineer. I am unable to say whether the review by the Executive Engineer of plans prepared by a Local Board Maistri serves any useful purpose. I have heard a District Engineer say that it does not. I think it might be left to the option of the board whether they should call in the aid of the Executive Engineer or not in preparing or reviewing plans.

5. Engagement and pay of their servants should be in the hands of the Taluka Local Board subject to sanction of the District Local Board. I see nothing to be gained by the District Local Board's revision and sanction of the Taluka Local Board budgets.

6. I presume this question refers principally to the appointment and pay of masters by the District Local Board. I see no objection to this, provided rules are laid down for their guidance, to secure proper qualifications in the selected candidates. I do not think the time has come when the whole inspection of primary schools can be entrusted to Local Boards.

7. No remarks.

8. I do not know, and have received the questions too late for me to find out.

9. (1) Judging by the discussion in the District Local Board of the proposal to allow an increased cess to be levied to pay for light railways, I think such a revenue would be very unpopular. As a step in this direction, I would suggest that District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards subject to proper sanction should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas in local areas within their control for works definitely of benefit to those areas:—e.g., in a village for the construction of a well. People in this district are already used to the idea of making popular contributions in such cases; by narrowing the area over which the cess is to be raised, it would be possible to obtain the opinion of those actually affected, and to bring home to them the benefits of this method of self-taxation. It would, I think, educate them without frightening them.

(2) Generally I agree with this proposal.

(3) and (4) No remarks.

10. The question presumes that Local Boards have failed, which I should dispute. Though not arousing general interest, they give an opportunity to private gentlemen of public spirit; and to some extent this opportunity has been availed of. They also carry out a fair number of useful minor works, though hampered in this by limited means.

11 and 12. No remarks.

13. Not invariably, but wherever a suitable non-official gentleman can be found; in such cases I think the Vice-President should for the present be nominated.

14. Judging from figures obtained recently from three talukas, the introduction of the Record of Rights will affect the qualifications and numbers of electors very slightly.

The figures are as under:—

Voters at last election	2,243.
Voters under new conditions	2,445.

15 and 16. No remarks.

17. I think administrative efficiency would suffer, because under present conditions some of the best and most useful non-official gentlemen would be liable to be ousted by intrigue; such gentlemen are at present so few that I would wish to see the presence of all of them assured on the boards. The present maximum number of nominated officials—one quarter of the board excluding the President—seems to me suitable. It allows all the local officials with special qualifications to be nominated and at the same time is not too high.

18. No.

Mr. Y. B. Borkar, B.A., District Deputy Collector, Belgaum.

1. Elected majorities may be allowed in the boards which have shown their fitness for them by actual work done and interest shown by non official members. This will stimulate other boards to do similar good work and to get the privilege. In other cases it will be enough to have a majority of non-official members

2. I do not support election by communities, as it is calculated to accentuate and to promote the differences and factions spirit already existing, and opposed to any inclination towards unity and solidarity which is so much desirable in this country. Provision may be made to secure a due representation of any special communities or interests by nomination as at present.

3. With my personal experience in four districts in the southern division, *viz*, Belgaum, Bijapur, Kanara and Kolaba in which I have served as District Deputy Collector and as the President of 13 Taluka Local Boards, I am respectfully of opinion that time has not yet come to have non-official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards, howsoever we may desire the change. My experience has been that all the driving power has to come from official source and the non-official members generally show a remarkable apathy towards Local Board affairs. I need quote only one glaring instance as an illustration and a proof of what I have observed elsewhere. I am the President of the Taluka Local Board of Hukeri, which has the proud privilege of counting among its members a gentleman who is an additional Honourable Member of His Excellency's Council for many years. He has been an elected member of the board since 1st April 1910. But I regret to mention that he has not attended a single meeting since then, though there have been 38 meetings held till 8th instant. There is no question as to his ability to do any work efficiently and no non-official member would have been fitter for the post of President of Taluka Local Board than this Honourable member. But what appears to be wanting is a spirit of self-sacrifice. If such be the indifference from an educated, capable and promising member of the board, who should have set an example to others, what can we expect from the rest? If the members were trying to do something though clumsily, I would not have found fault with them, because we cannot expect much from the beginners. But where the members are wanting in the very desire to work for the board and do not take any initiative in its matters, the case becomes one for serious consideration. These remarks would apply with greater force as regards non-official Presidentships of District Local Boards. On the other hand, I beg to remark here that the limited powers of the members of the Taluka Local Boards, as constituted at present, may be responsible to a large extent for the apathy observed among the members. Besides no institution reaches perfection at the very beginning and a spirit of generous confidence in members is likely to awaken a sense of corresponding responsibility. Therefore, if in any other part of the Presidency, there be non-official members who take particular interest in the Local Board matters and promise to make efficient Presidents of Taluka Local Boards, the experiment of appointing one may be tried, at first by nomination and then by election.

4. If a highly paid engineering officer of the initial education of the standard of L.C.E. and having some practical experience in the Public Works Department be entertained by the Local Boards in each district or a combination of districts, then the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works may be considerably raised according to the status of the engineering officer entertained. Two or three districts together may be able to entertain an officer of the position of an Executive Engineer, and in such cases no limitation appears necessary. If the officer be of a position corresponding to the position of an Assistant Engineer, the present limit may safely be raised to Rs. 5,000 for preparing plans and estimates and execution of works, subject to the approval of the Government Executive Engineer. But it will not be desirable to increase the limit without having some competent officer under the District Local Board. But some decentralization appears necessary in this direction as the officers of the Public Works Department appear to have their hands full and have scarcely any time to devote to Local Board works.

5. I think that some action towards freeing the Taluka Local Boards from the District Local Boards' control in the direction suggested is possible and desirable. The Taluka Local Board servants should be engaged and paid by the board itself, except in the case of the Sub-Overseers who are graded officers and are meant for the district and are liable to transfers from taluka to taluka. As regards the budget the District Local Board may interfere in works which are of district importance and in allocation of funds, considering the predominating importance of the district over the taluka, but in all matters of internal details of the taluka budgets, the Taluka Board should have free hand even to appropriate amounts from one work to another according to urgency, &c.; and so long as the amounts have been properly and economically utilized the District Local Board should have no power to interfere in the discretion of the Taluka Local Board. It is probably owing to the present limitations, which were wisely placed when the boards were in their infancy and which appear now unnecessary, that the non-official members do not take at present that interest which they would have taken in Local Board matters.

6. In regard to education I do not think the time has come, when at once the management of primary-schools can be entrusted whole-sale to the District Local Boards. A beginning, however, may very well be made by transferring the rural schools to the District Local Boards.

7. The rules under section 48 (b) of the Act should be modified by introducing the new class of schools known as "rural schools" as schools to be entirely under the control of the District Local Boards.

8. The information on this point is not readily available, as I will have to get the information from the three talukas and it will take some time.

9. (1) The Local Board may be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee under proper safe-guards, but such a measure is likely to be looked upon with suspicion by the less educated classes and is expected to become unpopular.

(2) Even sanitary committees in which people have to pay by popular contribution $\frac{5}{13}$ th only of the fund and the $\frac{7}{13}$ th is contributed by the District Local Board and Government are unpopular in many places simply because they have to pay the contribution. Educational expenditure is very heavy and it will absorb most of the revenue of notified areas, leaving very little for sanitary and other improvements. Notified areas are not yet quite popular even without the burden of educational expenditure. When they are made liable for this expenditure they are likely to be less popular still.

(3) The Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on (a) income tax, (b) abkari revenue and (c) forest revenue. There appears to be no reason why abkari revenue and forest revenue should be exempted from contributing to the Local Fund. In forest areas the Local Board roads and Dharma hallas are much used by the forest department and it should not grudge a small contribution to the Local Funds.

(4) I also think that the provincial subventions should be considerably increased.

10. I think it is true to a great extent that the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. The causes appear to be mostly those summarised in para 6 of G.O. No. 6444, dated 18th August 1915, G. D. The Municipal Councils are generally men of better education than members of Local Boards. The remedies will be the spread of education among the people, the increase of funds by augmenting the resources of Local Boards, investing the boards with the power of self-taxation as in the case of Municipalities, and widening the scope of their activity. A system of rewards and punishments so to say will be useful to stimulate their members into more activity. For instance members who show good work may be rewarded in various ways and those who take little or no interest may be weeded out. The Municipal Act provides for out-seating a councillor when he does not attend a certain number of meetings and a similar provision in the Local Boards Act will have beneficial results.

11. I do not think it necessary to make any additions to the qualifications of voters.

12. The qualifications 1 to 6 are not necessarily exclusive, but in many cases they are overlapping. Unless it be intended to give more than one vote to 1 person, any means for forming separate groups of electors are not expected to give much advantage.

13. Non official Vice-President may be appointed wherever a non-official member of sufficient education and leisure is available and willing to do the work. But it is not always possible to get such a member howsoever desirable the change may be. In my sub-division out of three Vice-Presidents, only one, that of Athni, is a non-official Vice-President. As a knowledge of English has become almost a *sine qua non* for the efficient discharge of duties as a Vice-President, the field of selection is extremely limited.

14. In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights and consequent divisions of holdings, I am respectfully of opinion that the present statutory minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 may be conveniently reduced to Rs. 30 or so. Even at present as the law stands a smaller minimum may be fixed by His Excellency the Governor in Council for each Taluka.

15. I have not got sufficient materials at hand to answer this question.

16. It does not appear desirable that the proportion should be fixed by law, but His Excellency the Governor in Council may roughly indicate the proportion for the guidance of the Boards in order that the Taluka Local Boards may not suffer.

17. I do not think that time has come to abolish the nomination of non-official members. Considering the state of society and education of people, the sectarian and racial differences and animosities which are noticed in every Taluka, the retention of this power appears highly desirable to represent minorities and to check a preponderance of any one element in the boards and keep their balance. As the nominations are carefully scrutinized by a number of officers unconnected with the local factions there is no fear of worthless men being nominated. There are also persons, who, being unostentatious and retired in their nature, consider it below their dignity to go through the ordeal of an election and nomination provides a means for utilizing their services. Abolition of nomination of non-official members in the present state of affairs, I think, is likely to affect administrative efficiency.

18. I have already recommended that the minimum of Rs 48 in clause (1) may be reduced to Rs. 30 or so (*vide* my reply to question No. 14). The value limit in clause (2) I think may safely be reduced to Rs. 4,000, and the pension minimum in clause (4) may also be lowered to Rs. 25 with great advantage. A pensioner drawing Rs 25 is generally a person of the status of a head karkun, Police Sub-Inspector, Sub-Registrar or Senior Karkun or clerk and such men if they enter the board as members are likely to be very serviceable. I do not see any necessity for reducing the limit in clause (3).

General Remark

On the whole I am of opinion that there should be no cast-iron rigidity in the rules and provisions that may be made for changing the constitution of the boards. A degree of elasticity is desirable to adapt them to the needs of boards in different conditions of progress at present and also for being applied to the same boards when they show signs of further development on healthy lines and fitness for more liberal treatment. One of the chief characteristics of administration and education in their higher stages in India, is that they are carried on in a foreign language. Every law, rule and resolution takes much time before it permeates among the masses. Progress, therefore, is necessarily slow. Much, therefore, depends upon the spread of education and particularly secondary education, which is as it were a link between the ruled and the ruler and means of knowing each other. To many willing hands with ample leisure, who do not know English, the Vice-Presidency of a Taluka Local Board becomes practically a prohibited area.

Mr. S. A. Chhatre, Chairman, District Congress Committee, Belgaum.

It appears, from the wording of the Bombay Government Press Note No. 6445, dated 18th August, that the scope of the Committee's enquiry is limited to the consideration of questions with regard to the constitution, function and financial resources of the Rural Boards of the Bombay Presidency. The question of creating smaller units of Local Self-Government like the village Panchayats, the formation of which was so strongly insisted upon by the Decentralization Commission, is, we believe, outside the sphere of Committee's deliberations. We have, therefore, thought it right to confine our observations to the subject under immediate inquiry. We beg to state, however, that we are in complete agreement with the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission with respect to the village Panchayats and we earnestly hope, the Bombay Government will take up the subject in the near future.

I. Constitution.

We are firmly convinced that no progress in the direction of Local Self-Government is possible unless the people are invested with larger powers and are thereby made to take substantial interest in the management of local affairs. We cordially accept the principle laid down in the Resolution of 1882 that the extension of Local Self-Government "is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of Political and popular education." With this object in view we propose that the District Boards should consist of only four ex-officio nominated members, the rest being elected. We should suggest that ex-officio members should be an Assistant Collector, the Civil Surgeon, the Executive Engineer and the Educational Inspector. The Taluka Boards should be wholly composed of non-official elected members with the exception of the Mamlatdar, who should be the ex-officio member of the Taluka Board as well as of the Works committee.

Electorates—We are of opinion that the number of District and Taluka Local Board member should be increased to make them more representative. The Taluka Local Board should consist of two elected members for each of the groups fixed, one elected member from each municipality within the taluka, and one elected member from the entire alienated villages. The two members from each group should be elected as under:—One by the land-holders' class as referred to in clause (1) under section 10 and the other by those referred to in clauses (2) to (7) of the said section and graduates and leaders as hereinafter recommended. The elected members of the District Board should be as follows:—two elected from each Taluka Board within the district, one from the entire alienated villages and one from each municipality having population of more than 10,000.

Qualifications of Members and Voters.

As, at present, there is no provision in the Local Board's Act for educated classes purely as such, we propose that graduates and pleaders should be added on to the list. Besides, with a view to widening the opportunities for people of smaller means, we propose certain reductions in the existing scale. We think that the assessment rate should be reduced from Rs. 4 to Rs. 10, the property value from Rs. 500 to 2000, the annual income from Rs. 500 to 300, and the monthly pension from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15 per mensem. This reduction is suggested to make the boards more popular and to educate a larger number of people in respect of the responsibilities of taluka and district administration.

Presidents and Vice-Presidents.

The Presidents of both the District and Taluka Boards should be elected non-officials. We are aware that the Decentralization Commission report does not support our view, but regards the presence of official Chairman under present conditions absolutely necessary. With due deference to the Commissioners, however, we are constrained to submit that we do not share their opinion. We are not blind to the fact that the Collector, being the head of the district, is bound to know every thing about the district in his charge. However, we are of opinion that, if he is kept acquainted from time to time of the proceedings of the meetings of the boards, there is no ground for apprehension that the collector will be, by being outside the committee, disassociated from all healthy activities within the district. The Vice-Presidents of both the boards should be similarly elected non-officials.

II. Functions.

The Decentralization Commission has laid down the fundamental principle "that a Local Board should control a service for which it pays and that where it is expedient that the control should be wholly or largely in the hands of Government, the Government should take over such service altogether." In accordance with this cardinal principle with which we concur, we propose that the control of primary education, of Civil works and the medical work should be entirely in the hands of the District Board.

The District Board will have its own inspecting staff for educational purposes and the whole service will be a District Board service.

In respect of the restrictions which at present exist as regards the construction of roads and other Civil works, we think that they are unnecessary and should be done away with. The District Boards should have their own Engineering staff. They may in special cases ask for advice from

Government Public Works Department which should be given free of charge. The Engineering staff should also be a District Board service.

With regard to medical work also we think that the Assistant Surgeons and the Sub-assistant Surgeons should constitute a District Board service.

III. Resources.

We think that the agriculturists are already overburdened with taxation and are not in a position to bear any additional burden. We are glad to know that the Decentralization Commission is against the raising of the land cess. We hold that any step in that direction is likely to make the Government unpopular. The principle of additional self-taxation is likely to commend itself to the boards and through them to the people after they begin to administer their own affairs without more control of the Government than necessary.

We are in favour of the levy of an anna cess for Local Board purposes on the whole amount of the abkari revenue of the Bombay Presidency. This is likely to yield to the boards an income of about ten (10) lakhs of rupees in addition to the amount which is now being paid in lieu of the cess. Even with this increase the District Boards would not be able to meet their annual expenditure. We, therefore, request the Committee to recommend to the Bombay Government that the amount of present subventions should be substantially increased. At present the contribution from the Bombay Government is about forty per cent. of the total income. We think the contribution should be raised to 50 per cent. at least as the local bodies can rightly claim the share in the increase of provincial revenues. We are, however, against any increase in the land cess on the forest revenue or the income tax

IV. General.

We propose that the Taluka Local Boards should be made more autonomous. They should be given free hand in passing their own budgets and making re-appropriations, if necessary, within the sum allotted to them by the District Boards. The Taluka Boards will look after the construction and maintenance of Civil works which are local, the management of cattle pounds, the collection of tolls and ferry charges, &c. We do not think the Taluka Boards under present conditions should be given the control of education and medical work. But in these matters the recommendations of the Taluka Boards should be considered by the District Boards more sympathetically.

While accepting the main principle that the Collector should have general control and power of supervision over the working of Rural Boards we beg permission to say that the Bombay Government should be requested to inform the heads of all the districts that such powers are to be utilized only in exceptional cases of gross mal-administration. The administrative efficiency may temporarily suffer, but the fundamental principle, with which the extension of powers and responsibilities of Rural Boards is undertaken, should never be lost sight of. The Political education of people is necessarily slow and even efficiency should be occasionally sacrificed to bring about the desired result

BIJAPUR DISTRICT.

Mr. J. K. N. Kabraji, Collector of Bijapur.

1. I think the time has come for establishing elected majority in District and Taluka Local Boards.

2. (i) Election to Taluka Local Boards should be (1) partly general—without respect to communities and (2) partly by communities in a minority. Important minorities, not securing sufficient representation by election, should not have to depend on nomination by Government. To secure this a special group or groups could be formed of important minorities in a Taluka and one or more members assigned to each of them; they should, however, be free to elect any eligible candidate, not necessarily one of their own communities. Election by communities is not necessary in the case of the District Local Board.

(ii) The present number of members should be enlarged both for Taluka and District Local Boards. It is necessary to have a larger number of nominated members, both to represent minorities and to make room for gentlemen of position, merit and experience, who will stand for election. This can only be done if the number of elected members is first increased. On general considerations also an increase in the number of elected members is desirable.

3. The Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be elected and should be non-officials. But this necessarily requires the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer for each District Board with functions and powers similar to a Municipal Commissioner or Chief Officer.

4. Provided an Engineer of the status of an Assistant Engineer of the Public Works Department is entertained, the preparation and execution of public works may be left to the District Local Board, the Government Executive Engineer and Superintending Engineer being, however, consulted in regard to all original road-projects and other works, costing over Rs. 10,000.

5. I see no advantage in the proposal. The Taluka Local Board ought to remain subject to the control of the District Local Board in all matters, once the elective basis and freedom from official leading strings are conceded.

6. The management of primary education may be entrusted to the District Local Board only if the executive powers and inspection are left to special officers like the present Deputy Educational Inspectors and their assistants, as servants of the board, the Government Educational Inspector being consulted in all important matters. The executive details cannot possibly be left to the board or to school committees, as they would not be competent enough.

7. There is not sufficient time to go into this question.

8. No instances can be given without making detailed inquiry for which there is no time.

9. (1) The inelasticity and consequent inadequacy of the local fund cess was brought by me to the notice of Government as far back as in 1898 as regards the Bijapur District, and in 1903-04 as regards the educational requirements of the Ratnagiri District, and I proposed in each case that Government should give special grants in-aid to Local Boards whose income was woefully short of their requirements. This was partly conceded and the system of annual provincial subvention followed. I do not believe the inherent inelasticity of the system can be cured by raising the cess to two annas. As soon as the expenditure once equals the increased income, the inelasticity will be re-established. The proper solution is to give a provincial contribution to Local Boards equal to 25% of the land revenue for general purposes, and another for educational purposes on an adequate scale for carrying out the Imperial educational policy irrespective of land revenue or local fund. The power to levy an extra cess should be reserved for railway projects or other development schemes of a remunerative or at least partly remunerative character.

(2) "Notified Areas" may be established in all large villages, but I do not think it possible to saddle them with the charge of local education and dispensaries, except to a very limited extent. It would lead to their failure as happened in the case of the smaller municipalities established in 1885-90.

3) I see no real advantage in the proposal as it is framed. I would rather assign a percentage of these and other items to the local fund.

() Provincial subvention should be considerably increased. I have already discussed this in sub-para. (1) *supra*.

Mr. V. N. Sathye, Huzur Deputy Collector, Bijapur.

1. I do not think the District and Taluka Boards should have elective majorities if they have non-official residents.

2. I think the Mahomedans alone may have the privilege of electing their own representatives to Taluka and District Local Boards as they are an important community and their interests sometimes clash with those of the Hindus. The number of such elected members may be one-fifth of the total number of members on the Board. I think the present number is sufficient.

3. It is advisable that the Collector should continue as at present to be ex-officio President of the District Local Board in order to help the board with his official experience and also to protect the interests of the public from misuse by the District Local Board of their powers.

The Taluka Local Boards should have non-official Presidents nominated by the Commissioner from among the members. It is not advisable to empower the Taluka Local Boards to elect their own Presidents.

4. If the District Local Boards are provided with a competent staff the present restrictions on their power may be relaxed so as to empower the District Local Boards to sanction plans and estimates of works costing less than Rs. 2,000 each without reference to the Executive Engineer and to execute works up to Rs. 5,000 each on obtaining the approval of the P. W. D. to the plans and estimates.

5. It is not advisable that the Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Boards. It was only last year a Taluka Local Board in this District prepared a Budget in flagrant disregard of the rules. To correct such mistakes and to check such tendencies it is necessary that the District Local Board should have a control over the Taluka Local Boards.

6. I think the time has not yet come for the District Local Board to take over the management of primary education. Education is a very important subject and an essential factor in moulding the development of the country. It is, therefore, necessary in the interests of the public that its control should remain in the hands of the Government: educational authorities who are far more competent than the District Local Board. It would not do to allow even an experiment to be made in any single district; the step would be disastrous to the intellectual and moral welfare of the public concerned. The case of municipalities is different. The area is more compact and self-contained and it is much easier for Government officials to supervise the working of Municipalities than of Local Boards where schools are spread all over the district which are visited by officials only once or twice a year.

7. I have no remarks or suggestions to offer.

8. No, as far as I remember.

9. The resources of the Local Boards are at present extremely insufficient to meet the growing requirements of the people in the matter of education, sanitation and means of communication and it is absolutely necessary that they should be augmented either by additional taxation or supplementary subventions from Provincial revenues.

- (1) Local Boards may be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee but it is very doubtful whether they will exercise these powers without pressure from Government. In other words the taxation will be an indirect imposition by Government.
- (2) Local Boards may be relieved of a part of the expenditure on medical and sanitary matters by the establishment of notified areas in important villages with a population say of 5,000 and above.
- (3) I think Local Boards should not be permitted to levy a cess on either income tax, Abkari or Forest revenue. The income tax payers live and carry on their trade mostly in Municipal areas where they have to pay taxes to the municipalities. It would not be fair to tax them separately for Local Board purposes. The levy of one anna cess from income tax payers in rural areas would bring in very little revenue which would be out of proportion to the discontent which it may create. Similarly there is no reason why Abkari farmers or shop licensees should pay a tax to the Local Boards which do not render them any special services. The same remark holds good in the case of contractors of Forest revenue.
- (4) I think the Government grants should be increased so far as as provincial funds permit by contributions out of Excise or Forest revenues.

Mr. S. K. Sathe, District Deputy Collector, Bijapur.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should not have elected majorities as a rule. Government may be empowered to extend the franchise of having elected majorities to such boards as they may think deserving in view of the general advancement of the people in the districts concerned.

2. Elections should not be by communities wholly or partially. The representation of any special communities or interests should be secured by nomination.

The present number of members is sufficient.

3. It is advisable that the Presidents of Taluka Boards should be non-officials. They should be elected by more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total number of members in the board and approved by the Commissioner of the Division. Officials should not be precluded from being Presidents if elected as above. In certain cases, a fit non-official may not be available. The President of the District Local Board should be the Collector as at present.

4. Plans and estimates for works which do not cost more than Rs. 1,000 need not be approved by the Executive Engineer; those for works costing more than Rs. 1,000 should be sent to that officer for approval.

Works of which the estimated cost exceeds Rs. 2,500 should be executed by the Executive Engineer as at present.

5. It is necessary that the District Local Board should have a control over the Taluka Local Boards in the matter of the engagement and payment of servants and sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets as at present under sections 38 and 55. A uniform and proper standard of educational and other qualifications among servants can thus be maintained and transfers from one Taluka Local Board to another when necessary can be effected. The budgets also require scrutiny and revision to ensure expenditure on proper works.

6. The time has not come for the District Local Board to take over the management of primary schools. The board cannot maintain an efficient staff of officers for supervision. The primary schools in a province ought to be conducted on uniform principles of policy and under effective supervision of responsible officers of Government.

7. No change in the rules under section 43 (b) appears necessary.

8. I am not aware of any instance in which the Taluka Local Board has been consulted in the matter referred to in section 43 (a).

9. The establishment at present engaged by the District Local Board is poor and insufficient. A stronger and more efficient establishment will be absolutely necessary, particularly in reference to the suggestion made in (4) above. This increased expenditure should be met by larger subventions from provincial revenues, such as Forest and Abkari.

- (1) Local Boards should be empowered to raise the local fund cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee, with the sanction of Government for special purposes. The enhancement of the tax should be subject to the approval of not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total members on the board concerned.
- (2) Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on educational and other matters by establishing notified areas as far as possible in important villages.
- (3) Local Boards should not be permitted to levy a cess on (a) Income-tax, (b) Abkari revenue and (c) Forest revenue.

*Rao Saheb S. J. Deshmukh, Member, District
Local Board, Bijapur.*

1. District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.

2. Elections should not be by communities, but Government should nominate persons so as to represent special communities.

3. It is advisable that District and Taluka Boards should have non-official Presidents but they should be nominated.

5. Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Boards in matters referred to in the question.

6. The time has not come to entrust the management of Local Board Schools to the D. L. Board.

Mr. V. S. Kulolgi, District Deputy Collector, Bijapur.

1. Yes. As regards Taluka Local Boards, it may further be suggested that each taluka may be divided into two or three rural boards according to convenience, so that members may meet and conduct the business of the board more often than is now done. This arrangement will at the same time enable the members to watch and execute works by turns.

2. No. However, provision should be made to secure by nomination the due representation of communities that form the bulk of a taluka and that cannot secure representation by election.

3. Presidents should be non-officials. They should be elected. However the Commissioner should be empowered to veto if the President elected is really unfit.

4. Limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of works should be removed altogether. Proper officers should be appointed by the board to secure the object in view.

5. Yes. Superior servants should be engaged by the District Local Board. Peons and inferior servants should be appointed by the Taluka Local Boards.

Sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board Budgets should be left entirely in the hands of the Taluka Local Boards.

6. Yes, provided properly trained officers are entertained by the District Local Board.

7. The rules should be so modified that the District Local Board should exercise full control over the Local Board schools and the establishment through their own agency and that the Government Educational Inspector should be regarded as an expert adviser.

8. No. Similarly rule 17 printed on page 179 of Cumming's Local Boards Manual is not observed

9. Yes.—

(1) Yes.

(2) Yes.

(3) (a) yes; (b) yes; (c) yes.

(4) Yes.

Mr. P. G. Halkatti, L.L.B., Pleader, Bijapur.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities
2. The election should not be by communities. For

(1) The interest of all communities with respect to Local Boards does not conflict.

(2) The election is impracticable, for there are innumerable communities in each division and district and if we are to give separate representation to each, the number of members of the boards will have to be indefinitely increased. This means want of efficiency.

(3) But to obviate this difficulty, if we are to lay out limitation of number of members for each community with reference to its population or importance, this brings out invidious distinction and there can be no principle on which they can be based.

(4) This action emphasizes the differences of communities and bars any connection between them which will be otherwise in a general election. For in the latter case, a candidate of a community will have to rely for his success on the voters of other communities as well, and this will act as a healthy check in case of his too communal proclivities, more so, when Government wishes to eliminate official connection with their Local Boards and entrust them with private persons.

(5) In the interest of these communities themselves, this system is not desirable. For, such an election brings out internal contests in that very community. But in case of a general election, there is a tendency of all minor communities to combine against the strongest community. This will not only act as a check to the aggressiveness of the stronger community, but will also tend to a combined efforts of smaller communities. It is true that this has not happened in many municipal and Local Boards. If that be so, nor will it happen even if each community be given its own representative.

(6) Local Boards have necessarily to draw its members from rural areas. But on account of backwardness of their areas, efficient men are not to be found in larger numbers. But, election based on communal principles puts hindrances on such persons. This means deterioration in the constitution of the board.

(7) Want of sufficient representation of any important community may be made good in nominations by Government. The Government has been doing this hitherto with success both in municipalities and Local Boards.

3. The Presidents of both Taluka and District Local Boards ought to be non-officials and elected. I am strongly of opinion that any inclusion of officials in these boards will fetter independent action on the part of non-official members, especially in Local Boards, whose members are less educated and more under official grip. The presence of even one single official is enough to nullify independent action on the part of these members so much so that a majority of elected members will be of no use. Hence, my opinion is that both Taluka and District Boards should have elected Presidents.

But it is feared that such a step will bring about total collapse of boards on account of known inefficiency and want of interest shown by members already. These fears are in some measure true although I do not go to that extent which some believe. But I propose that in the beginning, side by side with these independent powers of these boards, there should be provided checks against the action of the boards, in the nature of revisional powers vested with Government. Not only there should be such checks, but there should be improvements in the mode of the working of the boards also. With respect to this, I suggest the following:—

(1) The first difficulty which the boards have to labour under is the want of a good staff. The Local Board staff is insufficient, inefficient and corrupt; and it cannot but be so when there are no high prospects for efficient men to go in it. Hence, I suggest that Public Works Department and Local Board Department should be amalgamated with regard to staff and the appointment, promotions of the servants of both departments should be made on the same lines as the school-staff is of the municipal and Local Boards. The Local Boards will then have the opportunity of using the services of trained men such as L. C. E.s. An active assistance of a trained and honest staff is needed to help the boards, especially, if the official element is to be eschewed out of it.

(2) There should be a larger number of members in Taluka Boards. For such larger number of members will give opportunities for all classes to enter the Board. Besides, such

an increase will give smaller one for each member for supervision which means greater efficiency. There should be a larger number of circles in talukas and their radii should not exceed 6 miles and such a limit will give scope to a member for his personal activities and greater supervision. This will also give keenness in election-contests. For smaller the area, the keener the contest

(3) The members should be given bhatta for inspection work, when they inspect a work which is more than 3 miles away from the village. It should be ungrudgingly paid. It will be a sort of stimulus to these in inspection-work. I know of a person who would not attend a Taluka Local Board meeting as he had to spend Rs 1½ for cartage to go to the taluka-town

(4) The revisional checks above referred to should be vested with the Collector in case of District Boards and with prant officers in case of Taluka Boards. Special rules should be framed by Government. They should be stringent in the beginning which may be gradually relaxed as the board show greater efficiency

4. I am not in a position to give my opinion on this point as I had no direct experience in the framing of Local Board budgets, so far as I remember, no difficulty was raised or discussed in the meetings of the boards on such limitations, as long as I was a member.

5. The Taluka Local Boards ought to be unfettered in all their actions by the District Board. The District Board should allot separate sums to each Taluka Board, after providing for the District Local Board works. Such allotments should be primarily based upon the income which the particular taluka contributes to the general fund. As far as I know, these allotments are now arbitrarily made. The Taluka Local Board should be free to frame its own budget and revise it and spend it in the way it thinks best. Such an unfettered action is quite essential for the growth of the Taluka Boards which means growth of activity in rural areas. I would go even farther and propose that even the Taluka Boards, while selecting works to be undertaken in any circle of their talukas should allot money to their respective circles in proportion to what each circle pays. Generally speaking, contribution of money and the use to be made thereof, ought to go hand in hand.

The servants of Taluka Boards should be engaged or removed by Taluka Boards. But there may be an appeal to the District Board.

6. The District Local Boards should not be entrusted with the management of primary schools. The time for it is not yet come. The elaborate working and the importance of the department demand that its actual working ought to be with a separate Government Department which should be staffed with experts and the most intelligent men of the country. The Local Boards, if they are to have any hand at all in educational matters should be solely advisory bodies. I, on my part, think that education ought to be directly under the supervision of the Government which should conduct it on liberal lines and spend much more money than it does now in which the Local Board money ought to form only a fraction.

7. As regards questions Nos. 7 and 8, I am not in a position to give my opinion.

Letter from the District Congress Committee, Bijapur.

I, on behalf of the District Congress Committee, Bijapur, have the honour to submit the following representation on the question of widening the powers and responsibilities of Local Boards in the Bombay Presidency, which has seriously engaged the attention of Government and which is at present under consideration of the special committee presided over by your Honour.—

The representation deals from 3 stand-points:—(1) constitution, (2) functions, (3) resources of the Local Boards:—

(1) Constitution.

The committee is of opinion that if Local Self-Government is to be made a real success and if people are to be initiated into science of Self-Government, it is absolutely necessary that they should be given greater voice and more freedom of action in the management of local affairs. In both the District and Taluka Local Boards, therefore, a great preponderance of elected members with greater powers vested in them is absolutely necessary.

The Taluka Boards should be wholly elective, with the single exception of the Mamlatdar, who should be the ex-officio member of the board. The District Local Board should have on it four nominated officials only:—viz, (1) the Senior Assistant Collector, (2) the Executive Engineer, (3) the Civil Surgeon, (4) the Deputy Educational Inspector, all the rest being elected ones

The number of elected members on both the District and Taluka Boards should in the Committee's opinion be increased so as to facilitate the entry of young, capable, and energetic men into them and thus to satisfy the growing ambitions of the educated public.

The Taluka Boards should contain two members elected from each of the groups into which the Taluka may be divided for electoral purposes, one member elected from each municipality within the taluka, and one member elected by the holders of entire alienated villages in the taluka. The District Boards should be composed of two members elected from each taluka, one from each municipality having a population of more than 10,000, and one member from the holders of entire alienated villages. The committee proposes certain changes in section 10 of the Act so as to make

both the boards more efficacious, more representative in element, and more awakened to a sense of responsibility. The changes proposed are :—

1. That graduates and pleaders should be given the right to vote, and that they should be considered eligible for election.

2. That the right of voting should further be extended to the following persons :—

- (a) Persons paying an assessment of Rs. 15 a year,
- (b) Persons possessing property worth Rs. 2,000,
- (c) Persons having an annual income of Rs. 250, and
- (d) Persons having a pension of Rs. 15 a month.

The committee is of opinion that the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of both the boards should be non-official elected members.

(2) Functions.

The educational, the medical and partly the Civil Works Departments are to all intents and purposes managed by Government officials at present, though a substantial part of the expense is borne by the boards. The Decentralisation Commission is strongly in favour of handing over the control of these departments to the Local Boards. The committee also shares the same views and hopes that the Local Boards should be given entire control over these departments.

The District Boards should have its own teaching and inspecting staff directly under its control. It should, in fact, constitute a District Board's service.

The limitations with regard to construction of Civil Works should be removed. The district should have its own qualified staff directly under its control. In fact it should also be a District Board service. The same principle should be extended to Medical Department and the medical service also should be a District Board service.

The Taluka Local Boards should be given comparatively greater freedom of action. They should be allowed to pass their own budgets, to make necessary re-appropriations within the grants allotted to them and to appoint and dismiss their own menial servants. In case of dismissal of menial servants of Taluka Boards, an appeal should lie to the District Local Board and its decision should be final in such matters.

(3) Resources.

The boards will certainly be in need of money to discharge all these duties. The committee is of opinion that one anna cess should be levied on the Abkari revenue which would bring in about 12 lakhs of rupees to the Local Boards. The Bombay Government subventions should be increased from 40 to 70 per cent. The boards will thereby get sufficient money for the satisfactory discharge of all these duties. At the same time the committee respectfully states that it is in entire agreement with the views expressed by the Decentralisation Commission that the land cess and forest revenue should not be increased as the adoption of those measures will be a pressing burden to the already suffering poor and as they might be extremely unpopular. The changes suggested in this representation are, in the opinion of the committee, in consonance with the growing education of the people and with the spirit of the Local Self-Government Act of 1884 and also with the condition of the Indian people.

Mr. G. R. Tilak, Retired Executive Engineer, Public Works Department.

1. I am in favour of giving District and Taluka Boards elected majority.

2. The election should in my opinion not be by communities. The interests of special communities may be considered when selection of members is made by Government.

I think the present number of members on the board will have to be increased, if it is decided to give elected majority to it.

3. I think the Presidents of District Boards should be officials as at present, but those of Taluka Boards might with advantage be non-officials when capable men, who will find time to devote to Taluka Board's work, would be found in the Taluka Boards members.

4. The present restrictions as per section 57, clause (b) are that for any original work costing above Rs. 500 and in case of roads costing above Rs. 50 per mile, the plans and estimates are to be prepared or approved by the Executive Engineer. Similarly all new works and repairs costing over Rs. 2,500 have to be executed by the Government Engineer. I think these restrictions, being safeguards, should not be removed.

5. I think the present control of the District Board over the establishment of the Taluka Board need not be removed. However the matter is not of great importance; if any concessions be required in a particular case, there will be no harm in granting them.

6. I do not think that the management of the primary schools can with advantage be entrusted to District Local Board. I have got no copy of the report of the Decentralization Commission and therefore cannot refer to paragraphs 751 and 754.

7. No great change in the arrangement and management by Government Educational Department can be made with advantage.

8. I have no information on the subject.

Mr. A. R. Jalihal, Retired Deputy Educational Inspector, Bijapur.

1. Yes. There should be an elective majority. This reform has been recommended by the Decentralization Commission in paragraph 789 of their report. Lord Ripon's Government laid down the principle of Local Self-Government in 1882. The period of trial has been sufficiently long—*viz.*, 30 years—since the Local Board Act 1884 has been in operation, and it is now high time that there should be a fully developed Local Self-Government. If there be a failure or want of success in the working of Local Boards, it is mostly owing to official predominance and pressure in the boards. An elective majority will inspire the elected members with zeal and interest in discharging their duties as representatives of the people.

2. No. I do not think that election by communities will be advantageous on the whole. Special election by special communities will lead to a separation of common interest and introduce an element of discord and distrust among the different creeds and castes of the people.

Broadly speaking the population of a district, as of the country, is composed of two communities—Hindus and Mahomedans. In spite of the difference of religion and social custom, the two communities are on the same plane, mix together in trades and business with mutual trust and confidence and are educated in common institutions. They should be free to elect any candidate whom they consider fit and in whom they confide. There appears no necessity for elections by communities.

Government, however, reserve to themselves powers of nominating a certain number of members and they can wisely help unrepresented communities, if such a course be considered advisable.

The present number of members appears insufficient. I would suggest that there should be one elected member for every 5,000 people of the population of a taluka. In the Municipal area of Bijapur city, there are 12 elected members for about 25,000 people, *i.e.*, one member for about 2,000 people; while in the Local Board area of the Bijapur taluka there are, I understand, 7 elected members (out of the total number of 17 members) for a population nearly 4 times that of the Bijapur city. This is a very inadequate representation of the people of the taluka on the Local Board.

3. Yes. I consider it advisable that Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-official and elected. Under the present constitution of the board, the Assistant or Deputy Collector is President and the Mamlatdar, a Vice-President by election or nomination. The nominated members including Government salaried servants generally support the official view and constitute a permanent majority against the elected members, who remain constantly in the minority. The latter, therefore, do not possess any real powers and responsibilities and find little interest in the business of the board. Under a non-official President the elected members will be freed from the official restraint and have a feeling of independence and responsibility.

As for the District Local Board though the election of a non-official President is desirable, I cannot consider it advisable at present. A high controlling authority for supervising the affairs of the Local Boards of the whole district is necessary and the Collector should be the President of this board. In this case a non-official member should be elected Vice-President.

4. I would suggest that there should be a separate Public Works Officer of the grade of an Assistant Engineer or Supervisor for the District Local Board. Plans of works exceeding an estimate of Rs. 5,000 should be got sanctioned by the Government Executive Engineer. All public works of the Local Board should be executed by the Public Works Officer of the board.

The extra charge from 10 to 12 per cent. over the estimate which the District Local Board is now required to pay as charges for plans, establishment, tools, &c, when the works are executed by the Government Executive Engineer will be a saving to the board, who can use it for maintaining a permanent establishment for their own public works.

5. Yes. The Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Board (under section 33) in regard to servants who work exclusively under the supervision of the Taluka Local Board, *viz.*, the engagement and payment of servants up to a monthly salary of Rs. 25. But the appointment of the Sub-Overseer should be made or approved by the District Local Board.

No change appears necessary in the provisions of section 55

6. No. I do not think that time has come when the management of primary education can be entrusted to the District Local Board. The Decentralisation Commission have recommended

that Sub-District (taluka) Boards should have charge of primary education—namely—maintenance of schools, appointment of teachers and also inspection of the schools and determining curricula of studies, &c.

But considering the present slender sources of funds of the Local Boards, it appears to me undesirable that the District Local Board should be entrusted with the management of primary education. The District Local Board will be quite unequal to the task. A glance at the education budget of the Bijapur district will show that the receipts from the District Local Fund is not more than Rs. 40,000, while the total expenditure is about Rs. 1,40,000. It will appear that Government pays a lakh of rupees for primary education in this district, besides maintaining a large inspecting staff and establishment from purely provincial funds.

The opening of new schools in villages without schools and the building of school-houses are matters of urgency and great further expenditure, which will be beyond the means of the board.

The problem of universal and free primary education has yet to be solved and it can be solved by Government alone.

7. No. I do not consider that any alteration or modification of the rules under section 48 (b) is necessary.

8. No. It does not appear that an occasion has ever arisen for the District Local Board to consult the Taluka Local Board, as there is no practice of making separate allotments to each taluka for educational purposes. The whole cess collection of the district is at the disposal of the District Local Board which allots 1/3 of this cess for education for the whole district and the Educational Inspector prepares an educational budget for the whole district, which is incorporated in the general budget of the District Local Board.

Mr. G. C. Shannon, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, S. Division, Bijapur.

1. Elected majorities for Taluka and District Boards. The question is largely academic. At present the members, both elected and nominated alike, do not attend the meetings very regularly and take remarkably little interest in the work of the board. A very large proportion of the members of the District Local Board come from parts far removed from the head-quarters and cannot really be in touch with the acts of the board as at present constituted and managed. In Taluka Boards I know that the nomination of members is often determined by the desirability of having a quorum at or near the taluka head-quarters. The time has not come for this proposal. There is no cohesion in a district and the idea of electoral areas is unknown at present. Our districts are not necessarily natural divisions of the country. They are largely based on conquest, annexation or administrative convenience. There is not the local spirit of an English county or a Swiss Canton.

2. I am most decidedly opposed to the suggestion that election should be by communities. The caste system is bad enough without this intensification. Bijapur has factions enough and to spare. Different communities would want different franchises, e.g., Brahmans, Lingayats, Mussalmans, Byaders, Kurbars &c. Many of the communities, who would, under such a system, be entitled to representation, have not a person fit to send as a representative.

For the present perfunctory work of the District Local Board, I think its members are adequate. The members of the Taluka Local Board might be increased considerably.

3. The President-District Local Board might well be a non-official, but I think that the President of the Taluka Local Board should continue to be an official. It is a matter of indifference whether the President be nominated or elected.

4. Until the boards employ on their staff Executive Engineers of the same qualifications as those now serving the Public Works Department, I would not remove any of the salutary provisions now obtaining.

5. The guiding hand of the District Local Board will be necessary for Taluka Local Board budgets so long as the finances of all the Local Boards are in their present sphinx-like obscurity. The Taluka Local Board has only two servants a Sub-Overseer and his peon. Probably better men are secured by the present system of appointments.

6. I regret that I have not before me the report of the Decentralisation Committee. If Government will transfer to the District Local Board the inspection staff (Inspectors and Deputy and Assistant Inspectors) that is now entertained by Government for the schools, I would welcome the proposal. There must be the same rigid inspection and one man with the executive power; a committee cannot manage the schools. The chaos of municipal school administration should be a deterrent example.

7. This is such an enormous question that I cannot answer it off hand. If changes are made as suggested in question No 6, then the existing rules, made under section 48 (b) of the Act, will probably be worthless.

8. I have never heard of any such case. I might add that no member of the District Local Board, save perhaps the Deputy Educational Inspector and the Huzur Deputy Collector, i.e., the Vice-President of the District Local Board, has the foggiest idea of the yield of the Local Fund Cess for each taluka or knows even vaguely the cost of maintaining the Local Board schools in each taluka. No doubt silence on the latter point is often advisable.

9. I regret that I am not versed in District Local Board finances. It is almost impossible to ascertain the principles on which they are worked. As an amateur I should suggest the doubling of the Local Fund Cess and at the same time the imposition of a tax on shops and non-agricultural professions. At present our notified areas are far too few and their revenues are pitiable. If we constitute several more villages as notified areas, they will demand subventions from the District Local Board at least in the form of a grant of the full amount of the Local Fund Cess levied in their villages. It will be impossible for the District Local Board to deny this grant, if the notified areas undertake to maintain the schools situated in their limits. In such a case the District Local Board will get very little relief.

In the notes which accompanied the questions, the futility of special cesses, e.g., on income-tax or abkari or forest revenue was demonstrated. That would indicate the necessity of increasing provincial grants, which in its turn means an increase in direct taxation.

Mr P. A. Desai, B.A., L.L.B., Bijapur.

1. As regards question 1, I think that both the District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities; $\frac{2}{3}$ ths or at least $\frac{1}{2}$ rds of members constituting the board should be elected members. The Bijapur Local Board at present consists of 21 members including the President; the number, I think, should be increased.

Unless the elected element is increased, it is not likely that people will appreciate the benefits conferred by such measures of Local Self-Government. Society is much improved during the last 30 years; since the Local Boards Act came into force, education is spread, the aspirations of the educated public are increasing day by day and people are beginning to feel more interest in Local Self Government.

2. As regards question 2, I think it is not desirable that election should be by communities. The work which is to be done by the Local Boards is not to be done for the welfare of a particular community and if once the principle of election by communities is admitted, each community would like to be represented and it will be difficult to comply with the request of each community. The duty of the members of the Local Boards is to look to the interest of the people in their respective districts and if Government think that any particular community should be specially represented, they can safe-guard the interests of that community by appointing one or two members of that community among the nominated members.

3. As regards question 3, I am of opinion that it is advisable that the presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards should, as far as possible, be non-officials and that they should be elected.

Unless responsibility is thrown on the people, they will not take as much interest in such matters, as they ought to; and official Presidents being over worked by their official work will not find sufficient time to devote to the business of the boards. It is desirable that opportunities should be given to the people to do the work of Local Self-Government.

4. As to question 4, I think the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works can be removed. It is desirable that the boards should have their own officers to prepare plans and estimates and to execute the works according to them. The work done should be checked by the officers of the Public Works Department.

5. As regards question 5, I think that the engagement and payment of servants of Taluka Local Boards may be left to the Taluka Local Boards. In case of removal of any servant, he should have a right of appeal to the District Local Board. The budgets of the Taluka Local Boards should be submitted to the District Local Boards for sanction.

6. As regards question 6, I think the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards. Educated men are available for being members of the Local Boards and a school committee can be appointed of such men to look to the management of primary schools.

7. As regards question 7, I think the appointment of educated teachers, their suspension, and dismissal should be made by the District Local Boards. The internal management of the schools should be left to the boards themselves; and the educational department of Government should be their guide. The control of the Educational Department should be from outside. The rules under section 40 (b) should, therefore, be modified so as to be in consonance with this principle.

8. As regards Question 8, as far as my experience goes, Taluka Local Boards are not consulted; and any such occasions rarely occur.

Mr. Raghavendra Krishna, Pleader, Bijapur District.

It is quite desirable and expedient that District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities. On the board elected members should be $\frac{2}{3}$ and the nominated $\frac{1}{3}$.

2. There should be no election by communities. There are so many communities in each district that it is impossible to organize a scheme by which all the communities could be represented on the board. To give favour to some communities and to overlook others is to make a sad distinction and to foster racial feelings. In making nominations Government may consider this factor and try, if possible, to nominate such persons as would represent the communities not elected.

The present number of members should be increased.

3. It is advisable that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Boards should be non-officials and that they should be elected. It is also desirable that the Collector and the Mamlatdar should be ex-officio members of the respective boards. If Government wishes to train up people in the administration of Local Self-Government, this step is as much desirable in the interests of the people as in the interests of Government. It is human nature that he does not want to bear any burden, unless it is thrown upon him.

The present limitation in the preparation of plans and execution of public works can be modified by entrusting only such works to the Public Works Department as exceed Rs 10,000. It is rather difficult to get competent persons to look after works involving higher skill and so an officer in the position of an Executive Engineer is the most reliable person to be entrusted with works costing Rs. 10,000 or above

5. The Taluka Local Board can be freed from the District Local Board's control in the matter of engagement and payment of Taluka Board's servants and in the sanction and revision of Taluka Board's budgets. It is well known that the business of sanctioning re-appropriation statements and the pays of the Taluka Boards by the District Boards is only a formal matter. At the most it is enough if the District Board sanctions the Taluka Board's budget.

6. The management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards; when the municipalities have not shown their incapacity to manage large primary schools, there is no reason to fear that the same or similar work could not be done by the District Board. Surely the District Board would have to employ the present supervising staff to work under the general control of the Educational Inspector.

7. No suggestion could be made as to how the present rules under section 48 (b) of the Act could be altered or modified, as no copy of Cummings's Local Board Manual could be had in time

8. It is not known if the Taluka Local Board has ever been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the Taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

DHARWAR DISTRICT.

Mr. A. E. L. Emanuel, M.A., I.C.S., Collector of Dharwar.

1. Yes.
2. First part no; present number of members sufficient.
3. Presidents should be nominated and non-official if good one obtainable.
4. I would alter Rs. 50/- in section 57 to Rs. 1,00 and Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000 unless Local Board income is doubled, when the whole section should be repealed.
5. The Taluka Local Board should appoint and control servants up to Rs. 50 a month. I would repeal section 55.
6. No. I could decentralize the Educational Department by giving more power to Deputy Educational Inspectors.
7. None.
8. Not to my knowledge.
9. (1) Yes. (2) Yes. (3) a. yes; b no; c yes. (4) Yes
10. No.
11. No.
12. I do not understand "Secure"
13. No.
14. None.
15. I have no opinion.
16. Yes; not less than half for Taluka Local Boards. The latter are often starved by District Local Boards
17. First part yes. I would keep a proportion of nominees in regardless of office.
18. No.

The Hon'ble Rao Saheb Venkatesh Shrinivas Naik.

1. The question of having an elected majority in the constitution of both the Taluka and District Local Boards is one of controversial nature. The chief object with which the Local Boards were first adumbrated by the Government was to give the subjects an inkling into the administration of their own affairs by taxing themselves and providing for their local needs out of the income from such taxation, thereby giving them a sort of training in the Local Self-Government. In the case of Municipalities this object has been fruitful to a certain extent, but in the case of Local Boards it has not been so effective as it was expected. The reason for this, I may say, is due to the fact that the Local Boards' works are not as interesting as the Municipal. The power of taxation in the Local Boards is exercised by the revenue authorities directly and the revenue from almost all the other sources is also collected by the revenue authorities and the amount so collected is only made available to the Local Boards for expenditure upon their local requirements. The Local Boards have no voice in the matter of their income and are required to adjust their wants according to the funds that will be made available by the higher authorities. It is too well known and greatly discussed that the funds made available to the Local Boards are quite insufficient to meet their wants, and the Local Boards have only to select and decide which of the wants are urgent and should be given preference to. Unless the Local Boards are given the power to increase their income according to their exigencies, the work of the Local Boards will not be as interesting as the Municipal. Of course elective majority in the matter of local administration is greatly desirable, if proper sort of persons are returned. The qualifications kept for persons to compete for a seat on the Local Bodies is too low. The mere payment of a tax qualifies a person to seek a seat on the Local Boards. There is no education or other standard of qualifications prescribed and in the absence of which any undesirable person can apply and compete. Now-a-days it is only in big places where general voters are of higher calibre, elections are successful and are carried upon merits. In rural areas any and every sort of influence is brought to bear upon the voters and the elections are never upon merits. Under such circumstances respectable persons rarely think of competing in the elections and stand the chance of being beaten by one much inferior to themselves both in status and means. Unless some educational qualification, such as will guard against any illiterate and undesirable person getting into the board, is prescribed, I am not in favour of elective majority. It is at the same time difficult to describe what this educational standard should be in rural areas. What I mean is that either some standard should be prescribed for the candidates, by which men of higher grade can get into the Local Boards by election until the whole mass is educated if elective majority is to be given, or, the matter may be allowed to stand as it now is. It does not necessarily mean that we get right sort of men by election. In localities where it is found that elected members take great interest in the board's works and the people in that particular locality greatly co-operate with the work of the boards, Government may be empowered to extend the elective franchise to

two thirds. This will give an impetus to certain boards and the other boards will commence to vie with each other in the matter, securing the right of elective majority. I may also remark here that the term of office of the members, *viz.*, three years is too short for any member who enters the board with enthusiasm and zeal to show any appreciable work, and I suggest that the term may be extended to five or even ten years.

2. In rural areas it is a general cry and a real one too that though the elections are thrown open to all the communities, right sort of people are not returned. The castes, subcastes and communities are so numerous and so widely scattered in this country, that it is quite impossible to make any hard and fast rule to secure representation of all communities in the elections. If communal representation is to be given, it will be necessary to prescribe a minimum population of a community, to ask for a seat; without fixing this minimum if the right is given, only those belonging to the community who are more boisterous and make greater agitation get the representation whereas their brethren who are silent and sober remain unrepresented. In these public matters I do not understand why communal questions should be brought and if they are brought, encouraged. The elections should always be upon merits, and not because a man belongs to a certain community. Moreover it is only in big places that we find that people are literate in many communities. If a man is sufficiently literate it is open for him to compete in the elections. It may be apprehended that more educated men in other communities try to put him down. Such cases are imaginary, and if at all they exist they can be remedied by nomination. If a seat is given to a community and if we do not find sufficiently educated men in that community, as well as in the locality, the seat will either fall vacant or will be filled in by one of inferior calibre thereby lessening the chances of better administration of the boards. The board's works as at present managed are only the selection of local needs and their execution to a certain extent. Though education absorbs a lion's share of the Local Fund revenue, the boards have practically no voice in the educational administration beyond the District Boards, passing the educational budgets and the Taluka Local Boards according sanction for opening new primary schools in the taluka and sanctioning special freeships and the like. It is true inspection memos are usually sent by the educational authorities to the Presidents, who, in their turn, forward them to the Vice-Presidents for being filed. Taluka Local Boards allot certain schools amongst their members for inspection and as the educational status of the majority of the members is lower than that of the village trained school master, their inspections and remarks will carry no weight. For better administration it is advisable to raise the standard of qualification to become a member than give seats to men of different communities and necessarily men of lower ability. In cases of very great disparity Government have the remedy by nomination

3. As in the case of elective majority the question of non-official Presidents to the Taluka and District Local Boards entirely depends upon the finding of suitable persons. Where such persons are available, they should be appointed as Presidents. It is desirable that after a training of Local Board's administrations for the last 32 years, some boards at least, who can find amongst their members men able to manage their affairs, should have at their head some non-officials. There are instances in this district in which some non-official members have managed the Taluka Local Boards as Vice-Presidents most successfully continuously for more than 14 or 15 years and such people if appointed as Presidents, being encouraged, will not only work better but such recognition will be an aspiration for new and energetic members to look upon. If Presidentships are to be given by elections, as in the case of the Municipalities, Government should retain the power of appointing or otherwise, such elected persons as Presidents. It is often said on the public platform and in many places that if Government retain the right of nominating a person to the Presidentships they will do only such persons as are amenable to them. I do not believe in this. If a person rightly performs his duties and if the same is appreciated by the public, Government will be the last to reject such persons. I suggest that where proper non-officials with sufficient experience and knowledge of local affairs are available, Government should appoint them as Presidents of Taluka and even District Local Boards. If the Presidentships are to be given by a general rule and by election, in many places competent people will not be found, and therefore I suggest that the power of extending and withdrawing the franchise should rest with His Excellency the Governor-in-Council and the appointments may be made after the boards recommend one of their members for Presidentships.

4. The Public Work Staff under a Taluka Local Board in this district consists of a Sub-Overseer who in most cases is trained in the Poona Engineering College. These are required to prepare plans, estimates and prepare also projects and execute them after funds are provided. These plans and estimates are reviewed by the Government Executive Engineer in the case of roads, if the cost thereof is more than Rs. 50 per mile, and in other cases if the total cost exceeds Rs. 500. I do not understand how in the case of roads a limit of Rs. 50 per mile, is fixed. Practically all the road works, however small the amount to be spent upon them, and however trivial the work to be executed is, the Executive Engineer's approval is necessary, and unless it is a big project the Executive Engineers or their subordinates pass them on as approved and the boards will have to pay review charges. According to the present limitation, if even a pie and three quarters are to be spent on a road a foot in length as repairs or as original work, the Executive Engineer's approval is necessary, whereas in the case of wells, buildings or any other sanitary works, costing each up to Rs. 50, which some times require the advice of more qualified officers, plans and estimates are framed by the Sub-Overseers and are approved and passed by the Taluka Local Boards. I suggest that this limit of Rs. 50, per mile, in the case of roads should be changed. In the case of current repairs to the roads, I think the estimates may be made by the Sub-Overseers only. They are supplied periodically with the rates of wages to be charged, prepared by the Executive Engineer under the directions of the District Local Boards, and they are required to stick up to these rates when framing estimates which are also checked by the Taluka Local Boards and District Local Boards. Generally when reviewing the estimates the Public Works lower officers to whom these are sent for review make very little inquiries as to the requirement of the works, but confine them-

selves to see that the rates allowed are proper. The Local Boards appreciate very highly the liberal offer of Government in placing the services of the Executive Engineers, gratis for the Local Boards works, but unless there is a separate Engineer for the Local Fund works who would think that all the works executed in the district are his departmental ones and that he is responsible for the proper execution of the same, the reviewing of plans and estimates and their execution will not be so perfect as expected. In this respect I can point out a concrete instance under this Taluka Local Board. An estimate for the special repairs of a road was made by the Sub-Overseer for Rs. 4,000, and it was reviewed by the Executive Engineer and the review charges were recovered. But when the amount required was provided and the work was entrusted to the Executive Engineer for execution as it exceeded the limits of the Taluka Local Boards they returned the estimate and surrendered the amount remarking that the estimate was too sketchy to spend Rs. 4,000, on it and asked the same to be revised by taking levels and longitudinal sections and making provisions for water courses with the result that the estimated amount of the work has come to Rs. 10,000. This latter estimate is now sent to the Executive Engineer for review. In the first instance Rs. 40, have been paid as review charges and the board will now have to pay, I think, Rs. 100 or its about as review charges though the work is to be executed by the Executive Engineer. Under section 57 all the estimates costing Rs. 50 and more per mile in the case of roads and in other cases the total cost is more than Rs. 500 require to be reviewed by the Government Executive Engineer, before any provision is made in the budgets for the works. Generally the Taluka Local Board budgets are discussed and works provided in the month of October and to keep the estimates ready for provision reviewed by the Executive Engineer, they require to be prepared in the month of July or August at the latest. Invariably not less than a month or even two are required before the estimates are returned reviewed by the Executive Engineer. So the estimates prepared by the Local Board Sub-Overseer require nearly a full year before any money is spent on the work. In the case of roads there is much washing about in rains and practically such estimates require a revision, before the actual execution of the works, thereby the efforts and time of the Executive Engineer as well as the boards' money for reviewing these estimates will become useless. Now as to the supervision of works under execution by the Taluka Local Boards, there is only one Sub-Overseer, who is required to supervise about a dozen works possibly one or two wells and buildings. He generally entrusts these to the piece works contractors and supervises them occasionally. The works Committee members are also allotted certain works for supervision and they occasionally visit them. Though the Sub-Overseer can impose condition upon a contractor that the works should not be further executed unless and until certain stages are inspected and passed by him, it is necessary that the works should have professional supervision as often as possible. Proper execution of the work depends more upon the honesty and energy of the Sub-Overseer. If the Sub-Overseer colludes with the contractor, there is every probability of the board being deceived. Any amount of supervision and remarks made by the Works Committee members can be refuted by the Sub-Overseer as being from laymen, having no knowledge in professional matters. Wherever available the Public Works Sub-Divisional officers are members of the Taluka Local Boards, but it is not possible for them to inspect all the works under execution. I, therefore, suggest that there should be a direct and professional supervision upon the works of the Sub-Overseer by some responsible officer in addition to the Works Committee members, which can only be secured if there are either District Overseers either of the grade of Assistant Engineer or Junior Executive Engineer entirely for making and reviewing the boards' plans and estimates and for supervising the boards works both when they are under execution and after they are completed. One such Engineer with an adequate staff will, I think, be enough for the whole district. I believe such Engineers for the Local Fund works exist in the Madras Presidency as well as in a few districts of the Punjab and United Provinces. From the reply given to an interpolation by the Hon'ble Mr. C. V. S. Narasimha Raju in the Madras Legislative Council on 20th November 1914, I find that the qualifications of these Engineers are about the same as the Senior Overseers and assistant Engineers. I have called for the pay staff and other particulars about these Local Fund Engineers and on receipt of the same I shall be glad to send the same to the committee. From the figures supplied to me in reply to my interpolation in the Legislative Council on the 12th July and published on pages 284 and 381 of the Bombay Government Gazette, Part VII, it is found that on an average for the last three years, charges paid to the Government Public Works Department for works and advice given, come to about Rs. 10,600 in Dharwar, Rs. 7,600, in Belgaum and Rs. 4,000 in Bijapur Districts by the Local Boards and Rs. 1,450 in Dharwar, Rs. 390 in Belgaum and Rs. 1,010 in Bijapur Districts by the Municipalities. These figures show that a Senior Overseer or an Assistant Engineer of sufficient experience with an adequate staff can be very conveniently and without any extra cost maintained for each district or at least for Dharwar and Belgaum Districts. If such an officer is maintained he can tour in the district, inspect all the Local Board works both under execution and after they are completed, as well as review and prepare, if necessary, plans and estimates, relieving the Executive Engineer of the work of reviewing the estimates. By maintaining a separate Overseer or an Assistant Engineer for the Local Boards considerable delay now caused in the matter of plans and estimates being reviewed will be avoided. The District Board works are generally executed by the Executive Engineers and the Taluka and District Local Board Members are allowed no voice in their execution even if the works are in or near their places except that the Vice-Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards are required to sign the completion certificates as far as they relate to the works in their talukas without knowing when the work was commenced, when it was completed, who executed it, and how it was executed. They generally believe the Public Works Sub-Divisional officers and sign the completion certificates, taking upon their shoulders the consequences if the work was not properly executed.

5. The clerical and menial staff of the Taluka Local Board consists in this district of a karkun one poen and a few Dharmshalla keepers. At present these clerks and poens are considered to be members of the taluka revenue staff and I think that in the interest of getting good and proper persons they should be allowed to remain as such. If Taluka Local Boards are asked to appoint their own clerks and poens there being only one place of each in the office and the difference between the maximum and minimum pay not being so great good and proper people cannot be secured

and therefore I am of opinion that the present arrangement may continue. As for Dharmshala keepers the Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to appoint their people. It is often the belief that the work of Local Board clerks is light and they are often asked to help the taluka staff. Such a procedure gives scope for the Local Board clerks to plead excuses for the delay in the dispatch of papers, &c. I think that the board's work is fairly sufficient for one clerk. The work of Sanitary committees in the taluka if any may, with advantage, be entrusted to the Local Board clerks. In some places the Local Board clerks are given a part of the regular work of the taluka offices which I am of opinion is not desirable.

The Taluka Local Board budgets are formally sanctioned by the District Local Boards. The wants of the Taluka are better known to the Taluka Local Boards than to the District Local Boards. In the District Local Board there is generally one member presenting the interests of the taluka possibly one nominated or representing the interests of the City Municipalities in the district. Only one or two at the most have to represent the views of the whole taluka and unless he is fully conversant with the Taluka Local Board affairs and takes great interest in the work of the board, I fear he cannot properly represent the taluka wants and the changes made by the District Local Boards in the budgets upon the representation of one or two members or without representation if such members are absent from the committee, greatly affects the interests of the Taluka Local Boards and therefore I am of opinion that the Taluka Local Boards should be free to frame their budgets and pass them. Moreover the accounts of the Taluka Local Boards are scrutinized and audited by the Examiner of Local Accounts and therefore I do not think that by this control by the District Local Board in the scrutiny of the budgets and reappropriations any object is gained. On the other hand by this restraint a considerable delay is caused in the matter of sanctioning budgets and reappropriation statements.

6. The primary schools are now under the direct managements of the Government educational authorities and I do not believe that their efficiency will be better if the management is transferred to the District Local Boards who will have to maintain a paid staff to manage and inspect the numerous schools under them. Now the educational matters are considered by the public as being entirely Government and the members take very little interest except a few who occasionally visit the schools and pass remarks in the visitor's books. It is desirable that though the management of education is not entirely proposed to be given to the District Local Boards, some more interest should be created amongst the members and steps taken to enlist the sympathies and co-operation of the District and Taluka Local Board members.

7. As I do not hold the view that the management of the schools can be better secured by transferring the control to the Local Boards, I do not think that any changes in the rules are necessary but however, suggest that the boards may be allowed greater voice in the educational matters such as fixing the curriculum of the standards, working hours, and holidays according to the different localities and communities.

8. The one-third educational cess of one anna cess collected from each taluka is separated by the District Local Board and made available to the educational authorities for expenditure on educational matters. I do not think that a separate account is maintained for each taluka and during my experience as member of both District and Taluka Local Boards as well as Vice-President of the latter for the last 14 or 15 years I am not aware of any instance in which the Taluka Local Boards have been consulted as to the appropriation of this revenue to other talukas or outside the taluka area.

10. I do not believe that the Taluka and District Local Boards have entirely failed in the execution of their duties and the object sought for when the Local Boards were first adumbrated has not at all been gained. It must, however, be admitted that the Local Boards have not been as successful as the Municipalities. The chief reason is that the work of the former is not as interesting as that of the latter. The boards have no concern with the raising of their revenue. The revenue which these boards now get is quite insufficient to meet the necessities of both the talukas and districts. Many members when they find that the wants they propose cannot be provided on account of insufficiency of funds think that they have no voice in the board's affairs and commence to look upon the board's works with indifference. Even the villagers when they see that their local needs are not attended to, commence to think that the works of the boards taken for execution for the benefit of the taluka or a few villages such as roads, &c., are not theirs and in which they have no interest or concern, even though such works are executed in their own villages. Generally want of realisation of the sense of public duty and the spirit of self-sacrifice for public duties, due to the want of proper education are the chief amongst the drawbacks of the rural population. The boards should be given the power of raising their revenue according to their wants and a portion of the revenue raised in each village should be invariably made available for the local improvements of the village. Many complaints are often raised by villagers that though they contribute local funds year after year their villages have not had any Local Boards' works in them. Such people do not realise that they indirectly derive the benefits of works done by the boards in other villages such as schools, communications, wells, &c. The representation of the Taluka Local Board in the District Local Boards if the former is to be the branch of the latter should be more wide. The Vice-Presidents should invariably be ex-officio members of the District Local Boards. The works done by members on the Taluka and District Local Boards should be better appreciated and the Local Board members should be given a better status so as to attract right sort of people for the office.

11. Educational qualification is, I think, necessary to secure right sort of people on the boards and to exercise the franchise of voting. It is difficult to say what sort of educational qualification should be for the rural area. If examinations are prescribed, we often find that though some people have not passed the tests are better and more desirable on the boards than those who have passed the tests and such people should not be excluded from the boards. A list for each village should be made excluding illiterate and undesirable persons from time to time and such people

should have the right of voting and competing in the elections. Members of successful co-operative societies agricultural and sanitary associations who have shown public spirit should be given the franchise though they do not possess any of the qualifications prescribed in section 10.

12. A separate ward for men belonging to classes 2 to 6 is desirable, but in a taluka they are very few. Wherever a decent number of such persons can be found, a separate ward may be created who would give object lessons to the people by electing proper and right sort of persons. Such wards have been created in some municipalities, this being one of them and they have worked successfully.

13. The Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials, if suitable persons are available. With some Mamlatdars of the old schools it is the tendency to crave all the powers in the taluka and in such cases even if right sort of people are available, they do not like to come to the front and run the risk of incurring the displeasure of the chief revenue authorities. Finding right sort of persons depends more upon the local circumstances and a hard and fast rule that the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials in all cases may not be workable. The Mamlatdars, however, should be instructed that unless there are no proper persons they should not get themselves elected as Vice-Presidents. When the Mamlatdars are elected as Vice-Presidents and when the Commissioner is required to approve such election the Collectors and Commissioners should make inquiries as to whether a suitable non-official person was not available.

14. The object of prescribing a minimum limit of the payment of a tax for qualifying a person to vote and compete in an election seems to have been to confine the elections to men of certain positions. If this tax is reduced to less than Rs. 48 the voters will be without sufficient status, will be mere tools in the hands of some busy body, and as such incapable of exercising independently the franchise. If a man holds shares in different fields and the aggregate revenue of his holding is Rs. 48 or more he will have the voting right. It is only in cases in which such person holds shares in different villages the aggregate revenue paid by him in any single village does not exceed Rs. 48 his name does not appear amongst the voters lists, but such person can assert his right by protesting against lists Nos. 1 and 2 and be enlisted as voter by revision of the lists. I, therefore, am not in favour of reducing this minimum.

15. By local improvements income from both lands and trade is increased. It looks quite reasonable that the revenue from trade and lands should go to a certain extent to contribute towards the local improvements. The land revenue and income tax are divided heads of revenue and if any thing is to be paid out of these it should be paid out of the Provincial share. It is true that Provincial Governments are indirectly contributing to the Local Boards in the form of occasional grants. These grants depend more upon the affluence of the Government revenue and so, are not certain sources of income. It seems desirable that a certain portion say one anna or two in a rupee, may with advantage be transferred to the Local Boards.

16. The proportion, at which the local cess proceeds, after deducting the expenses of collection and one third educational share, should be divided between Taluka and District Local Boards, depends more upon the local circumstances. In some places there are very few District Board works. The tendency of people is to appreciate works nearer their houses; it is reasonable that the Taluka Boards should get a greater share and I think that this share should not be less than one-third of the whole cess proceeds or not less than half after deducting the educational share.

17. The object of provision in the Local Boards Act to nominate non-official gentlemen is to give scope for the minorities being represented. Moreover some desirable persons may not like to compete in the elections and stand the chance of being defeated by less important persons and as elections in this country are not held even in big places upon merits, it is not possible in rural areas that they will be upon merits, and to secure the services of proper and able persons, I think that there should be provision of nominating non-officials on the boards.

18. In view of the fact that in a Local Board election the major portion of the electors are such as do not understand their rights properly and cannot, therefore, exercise the franchise freely. I do not think that the qualifying limit should be reduced. In respect to No 4, I think that the limit of pension may be reduced to Rs. 25 or 30.

I may take this opportunity and suggest that in the disqualifications under section 11 after the end of disqualification (d) the words "who is suffering from leprosy or any other loathsome disease" should be added. In this Taluka Local Board, one elected member is a leper. It is quite reasonable that such persons should be excluded from the Local Board members and be not allowed to mix with them. Neither the Local Boards Act nor the Lepers Act have any provision to prevent them from coming to the Local Boards office and mixing with the other members.

Mr. E. L. Moysey, I. C. S., Assistant Collector, Dharwar.

1. Until a great deal more interest than is shown at present is exhibited in elections, I am not in favour of District and Taluka Local Boards having elected majorities. In any case the experiment should be tried first with Taluka Local Boards and then, if successful, extended to District Local Boards.

2. I see no necessity for election by communities or for any provision for the representation of special communities or interests. I have never known a board where special representation seemed to be required and even the wants of the Mahars and other untouchables are, in my experience

sympathetically considered and provided for, as far as possible, by special schools and wells. I do not at present think it is necessary to increase the number of members of the Dhawar District Local Board or of the Taluka Local Boards in my subdivision.

3. I am strongly against the proposal to have non-official Presidents. They would rarely have the necessary training or knowledge of the district and their appointment would lead to chaos, unless any board were saved by an extraordinarily strong and efficient executive staff, which of course, is wholly lacking at present.

4. I am not in favour of the removal of the restrictions in section 57 (b) and 61 of the Local Boards Act as the technical knowledge of the boards is usually so poor at present unless a competent District Local Board Engineer is appointed to fulfil the functions now performed by the Government Engineer. I presume it is not intended to remove the restrictions imposed by clause (a) of section 57. They do no harm, as far as I am aware.

5. I would not at present free the Taluka Local Boards from the District Local Board's control in the matter of engaging and paying Taluka Local Board servants. I would let the Taluka Local Boards sanction their own budgets provided that the plans and estimates of the works provided for therein have been passed by the District Local Board Engineer and that copies of the budgets are submitted to the District Local Board and Collector.

6. In view of the increasing pressure of petty work on the Educational Inspectors, it seems necessary to give District Local Boards the management of primary schools. But Government should provide, and the Educational Inspector should appoint and control, the same inspecting staff as at present and the Educational Inspector should have power to hear appeals against the orders of District Local Board, transferring or punishing or passing over for promotion any master. Rates of pay and rules for promotion should be fixed by Government.

7. I do not see any need to modify the present rules under section 48 (b) of the Local Boards Act.

8. I have never known a Taluka Local Board to be consulted on the appropriation for expenditure in other areas of Local Fund money raised in its area.

9. I am in entire agreement with all these suggestions.

10. I do not say that District or Taluka Local Boards are a failure or that there is no co-operation on the part of non-official members. I notice an increasing degree of interest and co-operation on the part of these members, but most of them have little technical knowledge or business ability. These defects will be remedied in time and signs of their disappearance are not wanting.

11. I see no necessity for extending the franchise as long as voters take such little interest in elections.

12. I see no necessity for the proposed formation of groups.

13. My experience of non-official Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards is that the Taluka Local Board karkun is usually in practice the Vice-President and the nominal Vice-Presidents sign any thing that is put before him. I think that the election of a Vice-President should be left to the Taluka Local Boards as at present.

14. I think that an assessment of Rs. 48 is a sufficiently low standard of qualification.

15. I do not understand the proposal to make the provincial share of land revenue divisible between Government and the Local Boards. I am in favour of increasing the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas in the rupee and to making income tax liable to pay Local Fund Cess.

16. I think that District Local Boards often treat Taluka Local Boards in a very illiberal way and try to keep everything in their hands. I am of opinion that, after providing for educational needs and for roads and buildings in its charge as well as for any special grants to other bodies or institutions which may be called for, the District Local Board should hand over the remainder of the money at its disposal to the Taluka Local Boards, but the needs of the various Taluka Local Boards vary and I do not think that any unvarying rate of distribution should be fixed by law. For example, a poor taluka like Kalghatgi may have much greater need for expenditure on wells than a rich taluka like Hubli and should get more than it would, if the distribution were made proportionately to the revenues raised in the various taluka areas. For this reason I do not think it right that the whole of the fees levied under clause (f) of section 44 of the Local Boards Act, which are sometimes extraordinarily valuable, (e.g., Fees for quarrying lime-stone in the Thana District) should always be handed over to the Taluka Local Board in whose area they accrue.

17. I am decidedly of opinion that the efficiency of the Local Boards would suffer if provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination were abolished and boards were constituted of elected members and nominated officials. The nominated non-officials are often very valuable members who are not willing to stand for election.

18. I do not think it necessary to lower the standards prescribed by clauses (1), (2), (3) and (4) of section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

Messrs. V. M. Herlekar and H. B. Desai.

1. Yes.

2. It is not necessary to make any such provision either partial or complete. No answer is necessary to the second paragraph of the question.

- 3 The President should be an elected non-official one.
4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of Public Works should be removed completely and the District Local Board should employ an Assistant Engineer to do the work which is now got done through the Public Works Department. This arrangement will not entail any additional expenditure on the funds of the District Local Board.
5. The engagement and payment of the Taluka Local Board servants can be safely entrusted to the Taluka Local Board. Sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Budgets should continue as at present.
6. The time has not yet come for such a transfer of management. If the President or Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board be consulted before any transfer of school masters is effected it will be sufficient.
7. I had no opportunity of seeing those rules and therefore cannot make any suggestion.
8. It is never consulted so far as I know.
10. The present administration of the boards being practically official the non-official members may not be taking due interest in its management, but if they be given larger share in the administration of the affairs they will show themselves sufficiently able to discharge the responsibility thus thrown upon them. The experience of the Municipal Administration can be taken as a justification for this opinion.
11. In addition to the qualifications given in section 10, graduates and pleaders may be included in the list of voters.
12. Unless the number of elected members is increased, formation of any such separate groups is not desirable.
13. The Vice-President should invariably be non-official.
14. The minimum should be reduced to Rs. 20.
15. Such a division is desirable but I cannot make any definite suggestion as to the share of the Local Board.
16. It is desirable, that the proportion should be fixed by law. The ratio should be not less than one-half of the taluka's contribution.
17. The administration is not likely to suffer if the nomination of non-official members be abolished altogether. In that case the number of nominated officials should never exceed one-fourth of the total number of the members of the board.
18. In order to put the right of representation on a broader basis, I propose the following alterations
 - In clause (1) The minimum may be reduced to 20 rupees.
 - „ (2) The minimum may be reduced to 2,500.
 - „ (3) The minimum may be reduced to 250.
 - „ (4) The minimum may be reduced to 25.

Mr. D. R. Moberji, District Deputy Collector, Dharwar.

1. Yes.
2. No. Provision should be made for minorities, by nomination, if necessary.
3. No. But where the boards themselves elect Non-officials they should be allowed subject to the power of the Commissioner to veto the election of a particular Non-official for very strong reasons.
4. I think that power can safely be extended in the case of all road works, for which both the plans and estimates should be allowed to be made and works carried out by the boards themselves. Where the boards desire that any particular plans should be made by the Government Public Works Department, or any particular work should be carried out by them they should be allowed to ask the Public Works Department to do so. For other works such as bridges, wells, buildings, &c., the limit of Rs. 500 now embodied in section 57 of the Act can well be raised to Rs. 2,500.
- Where a District Board can employ a trained Engineer or Engineers, the limitations of sections 57 and 61 can be entirely removed, the only check necessary then being the power of the Public Works Department to inspect and find defects in the work of the boards' Engineer and to report them or any suggestions to the board for action. If the Public Works Department's suggestions are ignored by the board, there is present the final controlling power vesting in the Collector, Commissioner and Government to enforce compliance by the board.
5. In the matter of servants, I think, Taluka Local Boards should remain subject to the District Local Board's control as at present. Taluka Local Boards do not suffer in the least by the present control.

As regards budgets the Taluka Local Boards should have authority to pass its own budgets original or supplementary within the limits of receipts allotted to it by the District Local Board and with the prescribed minimum. But the District Local Board should, for any special reasons have power to order at any time the omission of any work sanctioned by the Taluka Local Board or the inclusion of any new work in addition to the Taluka Local Board's programme or in lieu of any other work or works on that programme.

6. No. The only thing that appears possible is to place the staff of school masters under the board's control.

7. The rules may be changed to give effect to the above suggestion.

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. (1) No.

(2) Notified areas are not in a position to undertake any large expenditure on educational, medical, &c., matters unless their resources in turn are largely increased. Until the notified areas at present existing are placed on a satisfactory footing it seems useless to extend the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act.

(3) No objection to (a) and (b). As for (c) no objection except for grazing fees on which it would not seem expedient to allow the cess to be levied.

(4) Why not if possible?

10. Yes

Causes—(a) Lack of ample resources,

(b) Lack of public spirit,

(c) Factionousness,

(d) Lack of a high educational and moral standard,

(e) Lack of appreciation of happiness to be derived from hygienic and sanitary surroundings.

Remedies—(a) Improvement of the sources of revenue.

(b) A general spread of education amongst the people as a whole and the larger permeation of higher education amongst a few higher intellects.

(c) Elected majorities and expanded electorates.

(d) Imposition of larger responsibilities in the matter of budgets and works.

11. University men may be added.

12. Not possible with a system of wards.

13. No. Such a hard and fast rule will be impracticable to apply in some places. The point here is not to contract the chances of Non-officials, but how to meet the case of Taluka Local Boards where no suitable gentlemen are forthcoming. Where they are the absence of a rule of the kind has not operated as a check against their election in the past.

14. I think Rs. 24 may be adopted.

15. This is a matter for Government to decide. No opinion can be given except that any expansion of Local Fund Revenue from whatever source if practicable is welcome.

16. The section does not seem to lay down any rule about division in proportion between District and Taluka Local Boards. The rule as laid down in the section seems equitable. The District Local Board must levy proportionate shares of general charges (as per sections 46 and 49) from all Taluka Local Boards and about this no particular maximum can be fixed. The balance is under the existing law to be appropriated to the Taluka Local Boards and not divided between it and the District Local Board.

17. Yes. The provision is very salutary as enabling Government to secure a due representation of the minorities. But the proportion of elected members may with advantage be increased by adding to the present numbers, a certain number of extra elected seats.

18. Yes. section 10 (1) Rs. 24.

(2) Rs. 2,500.

(4) Rs. 25.

Mr. C. Balikundri, District Deputy Collector, Dharwar.

1. Yes.

2. No. Due representation of any special communities or interest may be secured by nomination.

As I do not think that election should be by communities, I have no suggestions to make as regards the constitution of boards on that line.

I think the minimum number of members on the Taluka Local Board should be 15 instead of 12 and maximum 18 as at present. Two-thirds of the number should be elected and one-third nominated. The Officials should not be more than half the number to be nominated.

3. I do not think it advisable that the President of a District Local Board should be a Non-official. In case of Taluka Local Board the power to elect, on the analogy of section 23, clause 2 (c) of the District Municipal Act, their own President, may be given.

4. In my opinion it will be a step in the right direction in view of the policy now enunciated to do away altogether with the control of the Public Works Department by entertaining a separate competent staff by the District Local Board to check the plans and estimates and control and supervise the execution of big or important works. I believe the review and establishment charges now paid to the Public Works Department amount to no small sum

5. I do not see any necessity of freeing the Taluka Local Board from the control of the District Local Board in matters referred to; I should think that the control should rest with the District Local Board. But the sanction and the revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets, by the District Local Board may be dispensed with.

6. I think the management of primary schools should rest with the Educational Department as at present, but in case of punishment, dismissal and promotions, the District Local Board should have power to entertain appeals from the aggrieved.

7. Rule 7 should be amended accordingly.

8. No. Not to my knowledge.

9. (1) Yes.

(2) Extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act is limited by clause 3 of section 187 of the Act to a town which is the Head Quarters of a taluka or is within a distance of one mile from a Railway Station; such towns are very few, and in fact only two in my division, *vis.*, Annigeri and Ron, but even in these towns I do not think the income that can be expected from their conversion into notified areas can admit of a part of expenditure on matters educational, medical, &c. The expenditure on primary education at Annigeri is about Rs. 4,320 and the income expected will hardly exceed Rs 3,000 to 4,000.

(3) (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes, except on items such as grazing fees and minor forest produce.

(4) Yes, so far as it is possible and it is sure to be much appreciated.

10. Yes. It is true to some extent. It is difficult to get sufficiently educated and public spirited men on the rural Taluka Local Boards. Initiative can scarcely be expected from them, but when properly goaded they turn out valuable work with their local influences.

Education alone should improve matters.

11. The following persons may be added as qualified to vote and be a candidate (*vide* section 12 of the District Municipal Act):—

(1) Every fellow and every graduate of any University.

(2) And every Pleader holding a Sanad from the High Court and

(3) Every juror and assessor who for a period of not less than six months next proceeding the date on which a list of voters is required to be prepared for election purposes has been resident in the taluka

12. No separate groups necessary. Nomination is a remedy.

13. In case the President of the Taluka Local Board is an Official, it may be laid down that the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official.

14. The minimum may be fixed at half the present limit, *vis.*, at Rs. 24.

15. I am unable to express any opinion though I consider that such division can hardly be insisted on, owing to other important administrative considerations.

16. It is not possible to fix by law any definite proportion as the amount required to carry out the obligations imposed on the District Local Board by sections 46 and 49 must vary in every district.

17. The provision for the nomination of Non-officials is, in my opinion, necessary to secure the due representation of special communities or interests.

18. (1) Rs. 24.

(2) No.

(3) No.

(4) Rs. 25.

Mr. R. R. Kulkarni, B.A., Mamlatdar, Ranibenur.

1. I have no experience of District Local Boards. In view of the lack of interest of active co-operation by non-official members, I am not in favour of elected majorities every where. In exceptional localities, when the elected members take due interest, and actively co-operate, there may be elected majority.

2. Every caste and sub-caste and even every sect is a community. The communities are so numerous that it is impossible to provide for election by all communities. Mahomedans have a special interest regarding Urdu schools only. Depressed castes have some special interests as they are usually excluded from public water-works.

Few educational matters come under consideration of Taluka Local Boards. Therefore, I am not in favour of giving a special representation to Mahomedans. As a general practice, there is a Mahomedan member in each Taluka Local Board. That is sufficient.

Depressed castes are not advanced enough to have a suitable representation of their castes. The Mamlatdar may be expected to watch their interests.

Therefore, I am not in favour of election by communities for Taluka Local Boards. I have no experience of District Local Boards.

The present election groups be maintained. A representation may be given to Municipalities

Members of election groups.

- 1 Inamdar.
- 1 For each qualified Municipality.
- 1 Education ward.
- 1 Professional ward.
- 1 For smaller Municipalities, notified area committees and Sanitary Committees.

too small to have a separate representation, notified area committees and Sanitary Committees together.

The number of elected members may be raised as shown in the margin.

3. In accordance with the policy of organizing Local Boards "on popular basis" and their emancipation from official control, the President of the Ranibenur Taluka Local Board may be a non-official. The Honourable Rao Saheb V. S. Naik is quite fit to be the President. It is hoped that he will train his successors in the post. For some years, the President should be nominated. Rao Saheb Naik is the elected Vice-President at present. I have no confidence as yet that the members will always elect the best persons for the Presidentship. Therefore, I am not in favour of an elected President at present.

4. I am not in favour of removing the present limitation. At present, each Taluka Local Board has either a Sub-overseer or a Maistri. In examining the plan and estimates prepared by him, the Executive Engineer or his responsible subordinates, appear to make local inspection rarely. In execution of the works, there is no professional supervision over the Maistri or Sub-overseer. The Local Board members are generally ignorant of professional and technical matters, and are often disregarded on account of ignorance of such matters. Therefore, it seems desirable to have a District Supervisor under the Executive Engineer to make or examine plans and estimates for Local Boards and to supervise execution. His salary and establishment may be paid out of contributions from the several Local Boards in the District, under the last clause of section 61.

5. The engagement and payment of the Taluka Local Board Sub-overseer and clerk may remain with the District Local Board, because there are many advantages in having a district service of the said servants. But the engagement and payment of peons, Dharmashalla servants and other inferior servants may be freed from the District Local Board's control.

As Local Board accounts are audited by the Local Auditors, Taluka Local Board budgets may be freed from the necessity of sanction and revision by the District Local Board.

6. As I have no experience of District Local Boards, I cannot give my opinion.

7. One of the reasons for which agriculturists are unwilling to send boys to schools is that, by so doing, the boys cannot be useful to the family in agricultural works. This objection can be met by allowing several vacations at the time of the agricultural seasons, such as harvest and by adopting the time of holding the school to the leisure time of the boys in some seasons. Taluka Local Board should have the power to fix the vacations, holidays, and working hours of the school according to the said principles.

The Taluka Local Boards should have the power to prescribe the subjects to be taught and unnecessary subjects. If the decisions should not fit in recognized standards of the Educational Department, that Department should try to frame new standards for the purpose.

No other modifications appear necessary.

8. I have seen no such instance.

9. (1) It is desirable.

(2) Do.

(3) Do

(4) *Vide* my reply to 15th question.

The following ways of increasing Local Funds deserve consideration:—

(Not the value of the land) produce of trees. (not the sale proceeds of the tree itself) grazing revenue, &c. (a) Some items of miscellaneous land revenue—e.g., Ground rent, like those given in the margin may be transferred to Local Funds.

(b) Local Boards may be authorized to levy rent of special accommodation in Dharmashalas.

(c) Local Boards should be authorized to impose service rates, such as water rates, bhauri rates, conservancy rates, public light rates, &c., on condition of spending the proceeds in the village itself.

(d) Local Boards should be authorized to levy license fees and to control noxious trades, by licensing power.

(e) Local Boards should be authorized to impose house tax in villages, subject to maximum, on condition of spending the proceeds in the village itself.

10. I have no experience of District Local Boards.

In this question, the failure of Taluka Local Boards appears to be regarded as proved. I do not see how they have failed. I consider that they have not failed. However, it is a general experience that non-official members, with some exceptions, do not take interest and co-operate actively in Local Board affairs.

Causes—

- (1) Limited scope of the functions of Taluka Local Board.
- (2) Ignorance of the objects and ways and means.
- (3) Apathy and indifference of the electors.
- (4) Want of habit of patience and perseverance.
- (5) Deficiency of funds to meet the various demands so that many proposals are often rejected for want of funds, consequently, the members regard it as almost useless to make proposals. If villagers be asked as to their wants, they state many wants; few of which can be supplied, for want of funds. Therefore there is a disinclination to inquire about people's wants.
- (6) The planning, estimating and execution of works are technical matters. Suggestions in such matters are often fruitless for technical reasons.
- (7) Members have to visit works at their own expense. When they do visit, the workers are often absent or plan and estimates are not available, or the work is not yet commenced. Suggestions or remarks communicated in writing, are often fruitless, so that they are privately reproached for making them. These circumstances produce disinclination to visit works, or to make suggestions or remarks.

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Remedies—

- (1) Habit of patience and perseverance, in spite of adverse attitude of some people, can be formed slowly.
- (2) Presidents and Vice-Presidents should so deal with members as not to discourage them and as to impart useful knowledge.
- (3) Funds should be increased by all practicable means.
- (4) No suggestions, proposals, or remarks of members should be neglected.
- (5) Expenses of visits to works should be paid to members.
- (6) The functions of Taluka Local Boards should be increased.

11. Educational status is not recognized in giving the franchise. Educated people are recognized as the leaders of the spread of Western Civilization in India. Citizenship is a Western idea. Therefore if a separate general ward of educated people together with persons of classes 4 and 5 be formed, they may be expected to give object lessons to rural people regarding the best way of exercising the franchise and their example cannot but influence the rural people.

Members of registered co-operative credit societies, recognized sanitary associations, recognized agricultural associations, &c., may be given the franchise.

The educational qualification for women should be lower than that for men.

Approved medical and veterinary practitioners should be made voters.

12. According to my experience (from 1899 to 1915), men of classes 2, 4 and 5 are too few to have separate representatives, in the Taluka Local Board. Patils are generally big landholders, and have rarely any interests in the Local Boards, differing from the interest of class 1. Persons of class 3 are professional Sawkars, traders, &c., whose interests may sometimes differ from those of class 1, e.g., they may press for technical school, or trade routes, &c., which the agriculturists do not appreciate. Therefore a general ward of voters of class 3 may be made. Their votes may be taken in a separate box at each polling station. The votes so taken may be collected together by the Mamlatdar and the result of all the votes may be declared.

13. In the event of the Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continuing to be official, it is desirable that the Vice-President should be non-official, provided a suitable person is available for

the post. Whether suitable persons will be available or not, depends upon local circumstances. Sometimes influential but undesirable persons desire the post and can get it by securing a majority. Therefore, while the desirability of a non-official Vice-President should be recognized, it should not be made an invariable rule.

14. I am not in favour of any statutory minimum of assessment. A voter should be capable of being independent in the exercise of his franchise. A voter should be an economic holder, according to Mr. Keatings' definition. I think, an economic holding differs according to local circumstances. What minimum assessment or area constitutes an economic holding, should be determined by the Collector for each homogeneous locality.

15. Citizenship connotes liability and responsibility. Any franchise without liability will be deprecated. People value that most, for which they pay most. Therefore in the interest of citizenship, it seems desirable that people should pay for their local wants. However such local collections should receive grants-in-aid by the Provincial Government. Such grant-in-aid should be in form of a share of the Provincial revenue rather than discretionary grants. The Local Boards share may be put down at one anna per rupee.

16. I remember a taluka where the Taluka Local Board did not receive a decent share of the Local Fund. The people appreciate what is spent nearer to their houses and fail to appreciate major works at a distance. Therefore I think, one-third of the cess-proceeds must necessarily be given to Taluka Local Boards.

17. One of the objects of nomination of non-officials is to give scope for representation of minorities. Accordingly, a Mahomedan gentleman is usually nominated.

Some gentlemen do not like to stand for election, for various reasons. But they are so fit to be members of Local Boards, that, without them, the administrative efficiency of Local Boards is likely to suffer. Retired Government officers, gentlemen like the Honourable Rao Saheb Naik, &c., are such gentlemen. Therefore nomination of non-officials is a useful provision.

18. With regard to the 1st qualification, reference is requested to my answer to the 14th question.

2nd and 3rd qualification — I do not see any benefit in reducing the qualifying limit.

4th qualification — Retired Government servants are generally educated and experienced. They will be useful voters. Many of them may be hoped to exercise the franchise properly and thus set good examples to others. Therefore I think, all retired Government servants of superior grades should be voters, irrespective of the amount of pension.

*Messrs. R. V. Paddidri, B.A., Mamlatdar of Gadag and
S. Vinekar, Pleader, Gadag.*

I am not in favour of an elected majority in the Taluka Local Boards. These elections are more or less in the hands of some influential gentlemen of the talukas, who are swayed more by party spirit than by a desire to send in to the boards really deserving men. The voters are simply a tool in their hands and they (voters) are generally under various sorts of obligation to them. I should, however, like to see such a majority in the District Local Boards. There, the voters are Taluka Local Board members who can be expected to know better what sort of men would do best in the District Local Boards, than the majority of people who voted for them (Taluka Local Board members).

2. No. Because the object of representing the wants and needs of the community concerned would not be gained by such a system of election. The voters would not send in the best men who would bring to the notice of the board their interests, but only those who command influence among them, not by their education and high character, &c., but by mere wealth and riches. I am saying this from my experience as a Mamlatdar for over 12 years in 4 Districts in this Division. Nor is any provision of law necessary for representing special communities or interests. Departmental instructions to keep in mind always these considerations in making recommendations for nominations would be amply enough to gain the object aimed at. In view of the above, there is no need to suggest any constitution of the District or Taluka Local Board. The present number need not be increased in Taluka Local Boards but it may be done so in District Local Boards. In fact what we want in Taluka Local Boards for good work and good management is not quantity but quality. Increase in number or quantity, I am afraid, will only increase the amount of friction in the smooth working of the Taluka Local Boards.

3. Though I should much like to see it, I cannot come to think that it will do any good to have non-official Presidents for Taluka Local Boards. In my 14 years' experience I did not come across any Vice-President even—not to speak of Presidents—who took any active interest in the Board's work—with two honourable exceptions. Time has yet to come—at least in this District—for non-officials in the mofussil to prove themselves fit and worthy for the onerous duties and responsibilities of a President. I have no experience of District Local Board to give any opinion on this point. If it can be done without impairing their efficiency, I should like to see the District Local Boards have elected non-official Presidents. At any rate the experiment is worth trying for a short time at least.

4. I would have all plans and estimates prepared by the Public Works Department. At present they are sent to the Executive Engineer only for approval, when the total amount for any specific work exceeds Rs. 500 or in the case of any road work, when it exceeds Rs. 50 per mile. My experience is that the plans and estimates prepared by our Sub-Overseers who once had a professional training are generally found faulty by the Public Works Department, and a good deal of time is spent in correspondence between him and Public Works Department, with the result that the plans and estimates do not get ready to be sent along with the budget estimates as required. Very often they have to be prepared anew. Probably it would have taken less time and cost less trouble for the Public Works Department authorities to prepare these themselves than in tossing the papers backwards and forwards. Plans for minor works, *i.e.*, costing less than Rs. 500 are fully at their mercy. Their professional skill is very little and has got rusty long ago. Instances are not uncommon in which these minor works have come to brief shortly after their completion. If we want our Taluka Local Board works to be done well and in time, first we should have proper plans and estimates for them and then get them executed by, or under the supervision of, professional people. I would, therefore, have both these done by the Public Works Department. I can almost hear it said "where is the time for them to do all this." I know that this argument will be knocked on my head against my suggestion. It is indeed true they cannot spare time. The only remedy then lies in having an experienced Sub-Engineer or an Engineer for the District Local Board with one or two experienced *Sub-overseers of the Public Works Department*—and not old fossils that we now have—for the Local Board, as we have in the Madras Presidency. This would mean a pretty large amount of expense but if we want to see the board's work properly and well done, we should be prepared to meet it. It is not, in my humble opinion, a sound policy to be content with any sort of indifferent works merely to save expenditure. I would also not insist on every Taluka Local Board having a minimum balance of Rs. 200 annually. There may be some Taluka Local Boards whose income may be very small and who may find themselves hard hit by practically losing this big slice of their loaf of income Rs. 100 should, in my opinion, be the minimum.

5. I would not have the Taluka Local Board freed from District Local Board's control for purpose of establishment, &c, section 38, nor for sanction and revision of budget estimates (section 55). But at the same time I am against the District Local Boards cutting down wholly any projects in any taluka budgets on the ground that there is no sufficient amount to be spared for the taluka, as it has been given to other talukas. I have often seen that some taluka members in the District Local Board manage to get more than the proportionate amount from the District Local Board for their talukas at the expense of other talukas. The reply generally given to the latter is "these works are more important than yours," forgetting the fact that "important" is only a relative term. To remedy this risk, it may be laid down that the District Local Board should, long before the preparation of the budget estimates, inform the talukas what amount they can give them for their relief. At present they only give us what share of the local fund income falls due to the talukas and the amount District Local Board can give in addition to this for relief of the Taluka Local Boards, is not given. With this amount and their own, the talukas will prepare their budget estimates, plans and estimates. The District Local Boards should have no power to cut these down entirely, though they might make modifications in them, if need be.

6. No, certainly not. To entrust these schools to District Local Board would mean for the District Local Board to entrust them in its turn to the Taluka Local Board members, and this would eventually mean their total neglect. One has only to see what interest the Taluka Local Board members take in the primary school of their own villages, before entrusting the management of all the Taluka Local Board primary schools to them. I may be excused if I am too pessimistic in saying that by doing this we shall only be tolling the knell of primary schools and primary education. I am only saying what I have seen in the course of my experience.

7. These rules are now out of date and should be thoroughly recast. Now that large grants have been given in aid of primary education by the Imperial and Provincial Governments, there is no reason why the Local Boards should not be lightened of some of its burden of expenditure on this account—*e.g.*, (3) in rule 2 stipends of teachers and rule 3 cost of suitable accommodation. These two items at least might be met from Government expenditure. Want of trained teachers and want of schools in villages are generally ascribed to want of funds in the Local Boards for these purposes. If we are to wait for sufficient funds for these from the Local Board, I am afraid, we shall have to wait too long. The time when we can have all trained teachers only in a primary school, as in the Madras Presidency, and when we can have a nice school building in all villages will be very distant unless Government steps in and provides for these, to give the blessing of good primary education to our rayats. It is in vain to hope that the Local Boards would look to them, as their income is very limited and there are other equally pressing if not more urgent wants for which it is also required. The time is too short for me to say what other amendments are required in the rules under section 48 (b), but I have no hesitation in saying that they should be amended to meet our present requirements.

8. No, so far as my experience goes. There was hardly any occasion for it.

9 (1) The cess may be raised slightly—not to 2 annas but to 0-1-6, *i.e.*, 2 pice over and above what is now levied, 1 pice for irrigation and 1, for establishment.

(2) Yes. This is very desirable. The difficulty, however, is that large villages are some times at a long distance from municipal town and railway stations. Legislature will have to be made specially to include them in "notified areas."

(3) Yes, if a certain portion of these revenues cannot be given to Local Board.

(4) If cess is allowed on income-tax, abkari and forest revenues, provincial grants need not be increased; otherwise they will have to be increased to meet all the pressing wants of the rayats.

10. It is very true that failure of Taluka Local Board is due to lack of interest and active co-operation of non-official members. I cannot say if this holds good for District Local Boards as I have had no experience of them. It is not easy to know exactly the why of it. But some of the causes are :—

- (1) Want of proper education.
- (2) Want of public spirit and sense of duty.
- (3) Narrow mindedness.
- (4) Party faction.
- (5) Indolence and want of business habits.

I have heard some say that the powers given to the Taluka Local Board members are so few and wholly dependent on District Local Board and the amount left to the Taluka Local Board is so little, that no interest for active work is created by them. I am not sure if this is not putting the carriage before the horse. It is not because Taluka Local Board is given very limited powers and limited amount to spend on works that the members are indifferent or apathetic; but because they are so, they are not given more independent powers or more money to spend on works, than what they have at present. This is my view of this question. I may be corrected, if I am wrong in it. When the Taluka Local Board members show their fitness for it by taking more interest in the works, it will be time to give them more powers.

11. I would add "persons who hold degrees of any University and not falling within clause (1) to (6)" There are such persons.

In clause (4) instead of not less than Rs. 50 per mensem I would have "not less than Rs. 12". This would mean persons who, while in service, held appointment carrying a pay of Rs. 25 at least. Such persons surely are better persons to vote than people falling under clauses (1), (2), (5) and (6).

12. No I see no need for them.

13. Not invariably, though it is very desirable to have non-official Vice-Presidents where fit men can be found. A President is more or less a general Supervisor and being not the man actually on the spot, cannot be expected to see to efficient and timely execution of works, &c. This only a Vice-President can do. And a non-official who can see to this is not easy to find. But if one can be found by all means go in for him. There should be no hard and fast rule laid down for this. The fittest and best man, whether official or non-official, might be left to be elected as Vice-President.

14. No. We do not want increase in number but we want improvement in quality or rather in qualification of voters. By lowering the minimum of assessment limit, I am afraid, we shall get more of the former and less of the latter. For efficiency in the administration of Taluka Local Boards, we want men on the boards who should know their duties and realise their responsibilities and secondly, voters who would know what people would do the best work in their boards. For both these, they should be literate and educated. I would, therefore, have some educational qualifications or at least of their being able to read and write added to the conditions given in clauses (1), (2), (3) and (6) of section 10.

15. It is desirable to make the provincial share of land revenue and income tax divisible between Provincial and Local Board as the Local Board is not adequate to meet all the local requirements of the rayats. What the proportion should be is not easy to say, as there is no sufficient data, i. e., of the local fund income and expenditure of the district. I would not, however, have it more than 7 per cent.

16. No. The proportion need not be fixed by law, as circumstances may vary. I do not think, for example, that the proportion fixed for Gadag taluka or Hubli taluka would be proper for Kalghatgi or Shiggaon which are more backward in education than these talukas. And if districts like Kanara and Ratnagiri where education has progressed much more than in these parts, be taken into consideration, it will be very difficult to fix a uniform proportion for all districts. A minimum proportion may be laid down. I have no data, however, to say what this minimum proportion should be.

17. Yes. Administrative efficiency will suffer. For, as already stated by me these elections will wholly be in the hands of some influential and possibly unscrupulous people in the talukas, who can twist the voters as they like.

18. No, except in clause 4. In that clause I should like to have Rs. 12 per mensem, for reasons given above in my reply to question 11.

*Mr. B. V. Dhume, L.C.E., Chairman, Managing Committee,
District Local Board, Dharwar.*

1. Yes.

2. I do not think that election should be by communities or that there should be any provision for the representation of special communities or interests. Such representation can best be secured by nominations. The present number of members in the District and Taluka Local Boards is sufficient and does not require any increase.

3. I do not think it advisable that the President of the District Local Board or of a Taluka Local Board should be a non-official.

4. I am not in favour of the removal of the present restrictions in respect of the preparation of plans and execution of Local Board works as the present Local Board staff is not sufficiently competent unless the District Local Board can engage an officer of the rank of an Assistant Engineer.

5. I do not think that Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the control of the District Local Board in respect of the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Boards' servants except menial servants.

I think that sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets should rest with the District Local Board. Re-appropriations of budget grants may however be sanctioned by Taluka Local Boards.

6. No.

But the Educational Inspector should give due consideration to any recommendations or suggestions of the Presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards.

7. I do not think that there is any necessity to modify the present rules under Section 48 (b) of the Local Boards' Act.

8. I have no knowledge on this matter.

9. I agree with the suggestions.

10. I do not think that non-official members with some honourable exceptions take yet sufficient interest in Local Board affairs. Many people simply think it an honour to be Local Board members and their interest ceases as soon as they become members. This is, I think, partly due to their want of public spirit and partly to want of technical knowledge. Matters will, however, improve with progress of time.

11. I think the following persons should be added to the list of voters :—

(1) Every graduate or fellow of any University.

(2) Every District and High Court Pleader.

12. I see no need for such groups.

13. Not invariably but as far as possible.

14. I think the statutory minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 32.

15. I think half an anna out of land revenue and one anna out of income tax should be paid to the Local Boards.

16. The practice in this district is to divide the one anna cess as follows :—

1/3 portion devoted to educational purposes under section 48.

2/9 share of charges payable by District Local Board under section 46.

2/9 Do. do. under section 49.

2/9 portion placed at the disposal of Taluka Local Boards.

I think this is a fair division. In case of poor talukas with greater needs it can be competent for the District Local Board to allot any sums from the funds of the District Board as far as possible according to their needs.

17. There can be no doubt that the administrative efficiency of a board will suffer by the proposed measure; besides the provision for nomination of non-officials is necessary to secure the interests of all classes.

18. The qualifications may be reduced as follows :—

(1) Rs. 32.

(4) Rs. 25.

Mr. M. S. Kumpta, Mamletdar of Hubli.

1. I see no objection to there being elected majority in the Taluka Local Boards.

2. It is not possible to secure election by communities. If any important community is not represented in the election Government may nominate a suitable person from such communities. At present the number of nominated and elected members in the Taluka Local Board of Hubli is 8 each in addition to the Assistant Collector who is ex-officio President. I think that the number of elected members may be raised to 12, and the groups should be arranged in such a way as to include

an area of 5 miles to facilitate supervision of works and the candidate for election should be resident of any village in the group for which he stands.

3. It is not advisable that the President of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-official. The Collector and the Sub-Divisional Officer should be ex-officio Presidents of the boards. In the course of their tour they acquire knowledge of the wants of the people and their position secures proper discharge of the duties by the boards.

4. It is desirable to have a separate Overseer for the District, who has passed the B. E. with pay rising from Rs. 100, to 250, to perform the duties now entrusted to the Executive Engineer. At present much delay occurs in getting plans and estimates approved by the Executive Engineer, whose hands are full with the work of his department. The District Board Overseer will also be able to supervise the Taluka Local Board works.

5. The Taluka Local Board may be authorized to engage peons, Dharmshalla keepers and any temporary establishment whose pay is charged to works. This will save unnecessary correspondence and delay in carrying out works. The plans and estimates regarding original works and special repairs only should be subject to the sanction of the District Local Boards and these should accompany the original and supplementary budgets. As regards current repairs, allotments may be sanctioned by the District Local Board and the estimates should be prepared and sanctioned by the Taluka Local Boards. The Taluka Local Board should be empowered to sanction re-appropriation statements copies of which should be submitted to the District Local Board for information and account adjustment. This measure will facilitate the work of the Taluka Local Board.

6. I do not think that the management of primary schools by the District Local Board will be a change for the better. The present system is suitable to local conditions. Even now the members of the District and Taluka Local Boards visit schools and their suggestions are duly considered. The educational authorities only can properly supervise the schools. The change is likely to result in slackness of supervision.

7. The rules published at pages 179-181 of Cumming's Manual need no alteration. Rule No. 4 is at present a dead letter and the powers are exercised by the Educational Department. The powers will add to the dignity and sphere of activity of the Taluka Local Board members. The bills for the pay of the establishment should be preferred to Taluka Local Board which will make the school masters feel that they are subject to the control of the board.

8. Taluka Local Board has never been consulted.

9. I am respectfully of opinion that the expedients suggested in Nos. 1 and 2 should be resorted to. Any village with a population of 2,000 and over may be declared to be notified areas.

10. There is no failure of our District and Taluka Local Boards owing to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members.

There are some cases of members who are unable to attend meetings regularly owing to other business engagements. The draft amendment bill about disqualifying members who do not take interest in the affairs of the Board will rouse them to a sense of their duty.

11. Clause 3 of section 10 of the Taluka Local Board should be modified so as to make only persons paying income-tax eligible to become voters. The minimum limit of Rs. 500 now laid down is likely to lead to abuse, as any man can assert that his income is Rs. 500 and below Rs. 1,000 and his statement is not subject to scrutiny. Graduates and title holders should be qualified as voters as in the case of Municipalities.

12. This is answered under the question No. 2 above. I have no other suggestions to make on the point.

13. In places where there are competent men it is desirable to have non-official Vice Presidents.

14. In view of the introduction of the record of rights, it is not desirable to include tenants as voters as laid down in note 3 under section 10 at page 15 of Cumming's Manual. "Land holder" should be taken to mean a Kabjedar as entered in the Record of Rights either as owner or mortgagor. Permanent lessees only may be included. Minimum assessment may be reduced to Rs. 35.

15. I do not consider it desirable to disturb the present system regarding provincial share of land revenue, but $\frac{1}{4}$ part of income tax may be given to the Local Boards.

16. As the proportion is fixed according to the peculiar conditions of different districts, it is not desirable to fix it by law.

17. This is partially answered in the reply to question No. 2. The nominated officials should be only the Mamlatdar and the Sub-Divisional officer of the Taluka residing at the taluka station in the case of a Taluka Local Board. These officers should be ex-officio members. In the case of a District Local Board, the Collector, the Sub-Divisional officers, the Executive Engineer, the Deputy Collector, the Educational Inspector, the Civil Surgeon should be ex-officio. The present system of nominating non-officials is desirable as it gives opportunity to secure suitable men who may fail in the election and men from unrepresented communities.

18. This is answered partially in the reply to question No. 14. As regards pensioners it is advisable to reduce the limit to Rs. 30. per mensem.

Mr. N. S. Chitgupi, Hon. Magistrate, Dharwar.

1 I see no objection to have elected majorities in the District and Taluka Boards, if right sort of persons are returned. Some such restriction as not to allow illiterate and undesirable persons to get into the Board by election should be imposed.

2. The election by communities is not possible, looking to the fact that there are many castes and sub-castes in this country. If any important community is left in election it may be represented by nomination. At present, the number of nominated and elected members of Hubli Taluka Board is 16 excluding the President. In my opinion the number of elected members should be increased by 4 and the groups should be arranged in such a way as to include an area of five miles or so, so that each member will have proper supervision over the works entrusted to him. The candidate for the election should be the resident of any village in that group for which he stands. As for the District Board the present number of members is sufficient.

3. In my opinion the Presidents of the District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards should be officials. They should be ex-officio. The Collector and the Sub-Divisional officer should be Presidents of the respective boards. It is advisable to have official Presidents as there will be more check and the works will be properly supervised as they move in the District always. However in the case of Taluka Local Boards, if a non-official member, having sufficient knowledge and experience of the local affairs of the Taluka and who has put in a service of at least 10 years on the board to the approval of the authorities concerned be available, he may be appointed as President of the board provided he has served as Vice-President for some years. As for Dharwar District, there are some Taluka Boards, which are managed very successfully by non-official members as Vice-Presidents for years together. If such gentlemen are appointed as Presidents they are sure to do the work satisfactorily, and it will be a kind of recognition of their long services rendered to the board. In my opinion such appointments should be only by nomination in the beginning for some years. If it works smoothly and if competent persons are coming forth, the election franchise may be extended.

4. It is advisable to have a separate District Local Board Overseer or an Assistant Engineer. At present much difficulty occurs in getting the plans and estimates of the road works whose cost is more than Rs. 50 per mile and of other works whose estimate is more than Rs. 500, ready as they have to go to the Executive Engineer for revision whose hands are full with his own work of the district. If a District Overseer of the grade of an Assistant Engineer is appointed, the works will be done smoothly and without any delay. The same officer will have a direct supervision over the works of the Taluka Local Boards which are under the management of the Works Committee and the Sub-Overseer.

5. The Taluka Board may be allowed to engage peons, Dharmashalla-keepers and temporary establishment whose pay is charged to works. This will save unnecessary correspondence and delay in carrying out works. The estimates regarding original and special repairs should be only sent to the District Board with the general and supplementary budgets for sanction. As regards current repairs, allotments may be sanctioned by the District Local Board and the estimates should be prepared and sanctioned by the Taluka Board. The Taluka Board should be empowered to sanction the reappropriation statement, the copy of which should be submitted to the District Board for information and adjustment. By adopting this system the work of the Taluka Board will be facilitated.

6. I do not think that the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board as the proposed change will not be of any great use in controlling the schools as the Government educational authorities are the best to manage the schools, the present system being satisfactory. The proposed change will not give proper supervision over the numerous schools coupled with efficiency.

7. There need be no alteration in rules under section 43 (b) as rule No. 4 is under that section, page 17 of Cumming's Manual is a dead letter and it should be exercised now by the Taluka Local Board. It will give power and control over the work of schools. The board should be given authority to pay the schools' staff.

8. The Taluka Local Board has never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. - ?

10. There is no failure of our District and Taluka Board owing to the lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. There are some cases of the members who were unable to attend the meetings owing to their other engagements. The draft amendment bill of Local Board disqualifying members who do not take interest and neglect the duties entrusted to them should be enforced.

11. Clause 3 of section 10 should be modified in such a way as only income-tax payers should be eligible to become voters. The minimum of Rs. 500 now laid down is likely to lead to abuse as any man can assert that his income is Rs. 500 as it is not subjected to any scrutiny.

Graduates and title-holders should be qualified as voters as in the case of Municipality which franchise does not entitle them to become voters under the present system.

12 This is answered in question No. 2 above. I have no other suggestions to make on this point.

13. It is desirable to have non-official Vice-Presidents if competent men are coming forth in the taluka.

14. In view of the introduction of the record of rights, it is not desirable to include tenants as voters as laid down in note No. 3 under section 10, page 50 of Cumming's Manual. Land holder should be taken to mean "Kabjeddar" as entered in Record of Rights either as owner or mortgagee. Permanent lessee may be included. The minimum assessment may be reduced to Rs 40.

15. I do not think it is desirable that the share of land revenue and income-tax should be divided; but I suggest that $\frac{1}{4}$ th part of income-tax may be given to the Local Board as it will give additional revenue to the board to carry out important urgent works in the taluka.

16. It is not necessary to fix the proportion by law as it is fixed by the District Local Board according to the peculiar condition of the district.

17. This is partially answered in reply to question No. 2. The nominated officials should be only the Mamlatdar and Sub-Divisional officer, Public Work Department residing in the taluka station. These officers should be ex-officio. In the case of District Local Board the Collector, Sub-Divisional officers, the Executive Engineer, Huzar Deputy Collector, Educational Inspector, Civil Surgeon, should be ex-officio. The present system of nominating non-officials may be continued as it is desirable and it gives opportunity of securing suitable persons who may fail in election or who do not like to stand for election for some reason or other and also from unrepresented community.

18. This is partially answered in the reply to the question No 14. As regards pensioners, it is desirable to lower the limit to rupees 30 or 35

*Rao Bahadur B. Y. Jathar, B. A., Chairman,
District Congress Committee, Dharwar.*

I, on behalf of the district congress committee, Dharwar, have the honour to forward this representation, expressing the committee's views on the question of the "extension of the principles of Local Self-Government in regard to Local Boards" in the Bombay Presidency.

2. At the outset, I beg to cordially thank the Bombay Government through your committee for taking up this question and thus affording the public an opportunity of putting forth its views.

3. I would have wished the committee's scope of enquiry to include the subject of the formation of village Panchayats. I hope, however, that the Bombay Government, in accordance with the recommendations of the decentralization commission, will take up the question at an early date.

4. In my committee's opinion the primary cause of the failure of the Local Boards' administration in the Presidency is lack of real power in the hands of the public. To make it a success, it is desirable that the public should have a free hand in the management of local affairs. Official control, for which there is ample provision in the Local Board's Act should be exercised "from without and not from within." My committee, therefore submit the following few proposals, suggesting methods of reform in the existing system.

5. My committee think, the Taluka Local Board should be entirely elective, with the single exception of the Mamlatdar who should be an ex-officio member of the board, and the number of the members on the Board should be increased. Each group within the taluka should send two representatives instead of one. All Municipalities in the taluka should send a representative each and one member should represent the holders of entire alienated villages.

6. Besides, my committee propose the following changes in clauses 1 to 4 of section 10 which deals with the qualifications of members. The assessment rate should be reduced from Rs. 48 to Rs. 20, the property value should be reduced to Rs 2,000, the yearly income should be fixed at Rs. 300 and the monthly pension should be fixed at Rs. 15. Besides, my committee think graduates and pleaders should be included in the section to recognise the educational test. My committee are not in favour of communal representation, because in their opinion its adoption would create and foster racial feeling.

7. The District Board should consist of 5 ex-officio nominated members the rest being elected. The Senior Assistant Collector, the Civil Surgeon, the Executive Engineer, the Educational Inspector and the Deputy Sanitary Commissioner should be the ex-officio members. The elected members should be composed of two representatives from each Taluka, one from each Municipality having a population of more than 10,000 and one from the holders of entire alienated villages.

8. My committee hold that the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of both the boards should be elected non-officials.

Duties.

9. My committee are in full agreement with recommendations of the Decentralization Commission that the service which is paid for by the boards should be under their absolute control. They therefore hold that the management of primary education, of civil works and of medical works should be completely under the supervision and control of the Local Boards.

10. In respect to education the District Board should have its own teaching and inspecting staff, which should be a District Board service.

11. Similarly with regard to civil works the limitations under which the boards labour at present should be removed, and the board should have full authority to prepare its own plans and estimates and execute the works. The board should have a qualified engineering staff which should be a District Board service.

12. As regards medical works the same principle should be adhered to and the Assistant and Sub-Assistant Surgeons should constitute a District Board service.

Finances.

13. For the efficient discharge of all their duties the boards should have sufficient funds at their disposal. The committee are not in a position to recommend any increase in the one anna land cess. It is in their opinion likely to be unpopular with the agriculturists who form the vast majority of the Indian population. Neither do they advocate any increase in the forest revenue or the income tax. Instead the abkari cess may be raised by one anna in the rupee. This would bring in about 10 lacs more to the District Board in addition to the contribution which the Government makes in lieu of the cess. Over and above this, my Committee earnestly recommend a substantial increase in Provincial subventions so as to enable the boards to perform their work more satisfactorily.

14. The existing financial relations between the District and Taluka Boards should continue with this exception that the latter should be empowered to sanction their own budgets and make necessary reappropriations within the allotted grants.

Mr. V. M. Herlekar, President, Dharwar District Association.

I on behalf of the District Association of Dharwar beg to offer the following observations on the question of "The extension of the principles of Local Self-Government in regard to Local Boards" which is under the consideration of the Committee presided over by you.

It appears from the wording of the Bombay Government Press Note No. 6445, dated the 18th August that the scope of the Committee's inquiry is limited to the consideration of questions with regard to the constitution, function, and financial resources of the rural boards of the Bombay Presidency. The question of creating smaller units of Local Self-Government like the Village Panchayats, the formation of which was so strongly insisted upon by the Decentralization Commission, is, we believe, outside the sphere of the Committee's deliberations. We have, therefore, thought it right to confine our observation to the subject under immediate inquiry. We beg to state, however, that we are in complete agreement with the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission with respect to the Village Panchayat and we earnestly hope, that the Bombay Government will take up the subject in the near future.

Constitution.

We are firmly convinced that no progress in the direction of Local Self-Government is possible unless the people are invested with larger powers and are thereby made to take substantial interest in the management of local affairs. We cordially accept the principle laid down in the Resolution of 1882 that the extension of Local Self-Government is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration. It is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education. With this object in view we propose that the District Boards should consist of only four ex-officio nominated members, all the remaining being elected. We would suggest that the ex-officio members should be an Assistant Collector, the Civil Surgeon, the Executive Engineer and the Educational Inspector. The Taluka Local Boards should be wholly composed of non-official elected members with the exception of the Mamlatdar, who should be the ex-officio member of the Taluka Board as well as of the Works Committee.

Electorates.

We are of opinion that the number of District and Taluka Local Boards' members should be increased to make them more representative. The Taluka Local Board should consist of two elected members for each of the fixed groups, one elected member from each Municipality within the taluka and one elected member from the entire alienated villages. The elected members of the District Board should be as follows:—Two elected from each Taluka Board within the District, one from the entire alienated villages and one from each Municipality having a population of more than 10,000.

Qualifications of Members and Voters.

As, at present, there is no provision in the Local Board's Act for educated classes, we propose that graduates and pleaders should be added on to the list. Besides, with a view to widening the opportunities for people of smaller places, we propose certain reductions in the existing scale. We think that the assessment rate should be reduced from Rs. 48 to Rs. 20, the property value, from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 2,500, the annual income from Rs. 500 to 250 and the monthly pension from Rs. 50 to Rs. 15 per mensem.

President and Vice-Presidents.

The presidents of both the District and Taluka Boards should be elected non-officials. We are aware that the Decentralization Commission Report does not support our view, but regards the presence of official Chairman under present conditions as a desideratum. With due deference to the Commissioners, however, we are constrained to submit that we do not share their opinion. The Collector, being head of the District, is bound to know everything about the District which is within his charge. Moreover, he is supplied with a copy of the proceedings of the meeting of the board whenever these are held. We think, therefore, that there is no ground for apprehension that the Collector will be by being outside the committee disassociated from all healthy activities within the District. The Vice-Presidents of both the boards should be similarly elected non-officials.

Functions.

The Decentralization Commission has laid down the fundamental principle "that a Local Board should control a service for which it pays and that where it is expedient that the control should be wholly or largely in the hands of Government, the Government should take over such service altogether." In accordance with this cardinal principle with which we concur, we propose that the control of primary education, of Civil Works and of Medical Work should be entirely in the hands of the District Board.

The District Board will have its own inspecting staff for education-purposes and the whole service will be a District Board service.

In respect of the restrictions which at present exist as regards the construction of roads and other Civil Works we think that they are unnecessary and should be done away with. The District Board should have their own engineering staff. They may in such cases ask for advice from Government Engineers which should be given free of charge. The engineering staff should be a District Board service.

With regard to Medical Work also we think that the Assistant Surgeons and the Sub-Assistant Surgeons should constitute a District Board service.

Resources.

We think that the agriculturists are already overburdened with taxation and are not in a position to bear any additional burden. We are glad to know that the Decentralization Commission is against the raising of the land cess. We hold that any step in that direction is likely to make the Government unpopular.

We are in favour of the levy of an anna cess for Local Board purposes on the whole of the abkari revenue of the Bombay Presidency. This is likely to yield an income of about 10 lakhs in addition to the amount which is now being paid in lieu of the cess. Even this increase would be insufficient for meeting the annual expense of the boards. We, therefore, request the committee to recommend to the Bombay Government that the amount of present subventions should be substantially increased. At present the contribution from the Bombay Government is about forty per cent. of the total income. We think this contribution should be raised to 50 per cent. as the local bodies can rightly claim a share in the increase of Provincial Revenues. We are, however, against any increment in the land cess or the forest revenue or the income tax.

General.

We proposed that the Taluka Boards should be made more autonomous. They should be given a free hand in passing their own budgets and making re-appropriations, if necessary, within the sum allotted to them by the District Boards. The Taluka Boards will look after the construction and maintenance of civil works which are local, the management of cattle-pounds, the collection of tolls and ferry charges, &c. We do not think the Taluka Boards under present conditions should be given the control of education and medical works.

While accepting the main principle that the Collector should have general control and power of supervision over the working of the Rural Boards, we beg permission to say that the Bombay Government should be requested to inform the heads of all the districts that such powers are to be utilized only in exceptional cases of gross mal-administration. The administrative efficiency may temporarily suffer, but the fundamental principle, with which the extension of powers and responsibilities of Rural Boards is undertaken, should never be lost sight of. The political education of a people is necessarily a plant of slow growth and even efficiency should be occasionally sacrificed to bring about the desired result.

Honourable Rao Bahadur S. K. Rodda.

1. It is not necessary that District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities. The present arrangement of equal elected and nominated members works well and no practical difficulty is felt. Besides it is difficult to get more competent members to be elected.
 2. The answer to question No. 2 is in the negative. The election by communities is open to grave objection, as many illiterate persons are likely to step in and race hatred will be generated.
 3. It is not advisable to have non-official Presidents and Vice-Presidents in all Local Boards at once. Only in selected areas where competent gentleman can be secured, Government may nominate non-official Presidents as is done in the sister Presidency of Madras.
 4. I think present arrangements are satisfactory.
 5. It is better that Taluka Boards should be entirely under the control of the District Boards in such matters as establishment and budget, and there ought to be no change in the procedure laid down.
 6. I am strongly of opinion that the management of primary schools should not be entrusted to the District Local Board. A board is not competent to handle such an important matter as education. The department specially organised by Government to control education is composed of eminent scholars and able men solely devoted to the cause of education. Moreover, it is the duty of Government to manage the education of the masses directly under its own supervision and by its own agency. Sad experience there is in respect to education in municipal area, where education is controlled by the Municipal Board. The case will be worse in the Local Board area where there cannot be adequate supervision and proper guidance, the Board consisting as it sometimes does of members, whose educational qualifications are poorer than those of the teachers they are expected to direct and control. Besides it is not desirable to leave the management partly with the board and partly with the department, thus entailing double Government which always is a failure. I am, therefore, of opinion that the time has not come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board.
 7. No change is necessary.
 8. The Taluka Local Boards are not consulted. It is, however, desirable to have a general budget.
 9. No additional establishment may be necessary as I do not approve of many of the suggestions:—
 - (1) I am against the proposal.
 - (2) The Local Boards are not likely to derive any advantage. On the other hand they may lose a part of their income.
 - (3) I agree that Local Cess may be levied with far greater advantage on
 - (a) income-tax,
 - (b) abkari revenue,
 - (c) forest revenue.
- The rayat now pays both revenue and local cess on lands. As abkari and forest revenues are derived from lands, a cess on both these revenues should be paid to Local Funds.
- Cess on water-rate (irrigation) and on the sale price of liquor shops should also be levied.
- Provincial subventions should be increased.
10. This is true in respect to Taluka Boards and not with regard to District Boards. Ignorance and party spirit reign in the Taluka Boards, while the District Board is composed of more intelligent and educated gentlemen. If the non-official members of the District Board are paid their travelling allowance, they will be encouraged to take greater interest. The way of arousing interest in the Taluka Boards is to fix an educational qualification as well as that of respectability gauged by the great amount of land revenue paid. The voters and the candidates are not to be of the same qualification as regards payment of assessment. In Madras a candidate has to pay Rs. 150 assessment and a voter Rs. 50.
11. Please *vide* the preceding. Graduates paying an assessment of Rs. 25, persons holding pensions of Rs. 50 p. m. and above, gentleman paying income-tax of Rs. 28 and above, persons paying an assessment of Rs. 150 and holders of immovable property of Rs. 5,000 and above, may only be candidates. As for voters the present qualification of Rs. 48 may be reduced to Rs. 30, as otherwise the number of voters will be less according to the Record of Rights. Pensioners of Rs. 30, and graduates may also be qualified to vote. Those who possess the qualifications of candidates should also be entitled to vote. Officiating Revenue and Police Patils within the Taluka should be disqualified to be candidates, but may vote if otherwise qualified.
12. This is not possible as the No. of electors will be small in classes 2 to 6.
13. No rules can be laid down on this. Each case should be treated on its own merits.
14. Rs. 30 as above indicated.
15. This is not feasible.

16. No rule can be laid down by law and it is not necessary.

17. This is answered by reply No. 1. The present arrangement of having officials to the extent of half the nominated members is quite reasonable.

18. Revenue and Police Patils should be expunged. The reply to question No. 11 is an answer to this.

RATNAGIRI DISTRICT.

Mr. W. W. Smart, I.C.S., Collector of Ratnagiri.

1. I have nothing to add to Mr. Madan's remarks.
2. I agree with Mr. Madan, but suggest that the number of members of Taluka Local Boards in the district should be 15, 17, 19 and 21 according to the size of the talukas.
3. There is a general agreement amongst officials and non-officials that the Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be officials. Any change in this respect would be the reverse of popular though so called politicians may on principle declare the contrary.

No unofficial gentleman could spare the time for touring and obtaining the requisite knowledge of the district to be President of the District Local Board and the knowledge of the working of several Taluka Boards is an asset which the Prant officer alone possesses. Moreover official Presidents form a necessary link between Government and the Boards, provided Government do not expect them to act as Government servants but as servants of the board.

4 I agree generally with Mr. Madan's remarks, but think the money limit should vary with different classes of works. It would seem quite unnecessary to class repairs either of roads or buildings with important new constructions. There is much to be said for abolishing obligatory reference to the Public Works Department in the case of Boards, which engage a competent staff.

5. I agree with Mr. Madan.

6. Education is a subject in which members take almost as much interest as in communications. The present system by which the bulk of the money of the Board is appropriated by the Educational Department and spent practically without an atom of control by the Board should, in my opinion, be stopped.

The Deputy Educational Inspector, his assistants and staff should be Local Board servants, but the appointment and transfer, pay and promotion of masters and their training should be entirely in the hands of the Deputy Educational Inspector and the Educational Inspector. The services of Deputy Educational Inspectors should be lent by the Department to the Board for 5 years; assistants should remain under the board until promoted. The position would resemble that of the Municipal Commissioner and his assistants in the Bombay Municipality. The Deputy Educational Inspector should be an ex-officio member of the board.

7. The rules should be altered to carry into effect the proposal suggested in answer to question 6.

8 Apparently the Taluka Local Boards have never been consulted in the matter.

9. (1) I think Taluka Local Boards should be allowed on the vote of a 2/3rds majority at a special general meeting to levy Local Fund cess upto a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee for expenditure within the Taluka and that contributions from Government should be in proportion to the amount so raised. The extra cess so levied should not necessarily be levied every year. It would be levied in a good year and form a special balance to meet special expenditure in future years. I am of opinion that any other proposal will be vehemently opposed.

(2) This should be done where there are villages suitable to be made "notified areas."

(3) Yes: on (a) to make residents of towns pay for education, and facilities of communication, on (b) to increase the resources of the board and on (c) because the removal of forest produce does much damage to roads.

(4) Provincial subventions should be increased but the increase should be given only to those boards which raise extra taxation and the amounts should be proportionate to the extra taxation raised.

10. I agree with Mr. Madan except as to non-official Presidents.

11. The qualifications might include pleaders and graduates.

12. I agree with Mr. Madan

13. Ditto.

14. The statutory minimum might be reduced to Rs. 30.

15. I think a fixed contribution should be made to each District Local Board and subventions should be made to Taluka Local Boards as stated in answer to question 9 (1). I am not in a position to say any more on the subject.

16. I am strongly of opinion that no proportion should be fixed by law for the reasons stated by Mr. Gulwadi. Also the conditions of each district differ considerably.

17. I agree with Mr. Madan.

18 I think it is only necessary to make a change as stated in answer to question 14. There is no reason for change in other cases.

Mr. J. A. Madan, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Ratnagiri.

1. I think there should be elected majorities in the case of both the District and the Taluka Boards. The number of elected members should be, generally, 2/3rds the total number of members. The advantages of this change would be (a) a probable increase in the interest taken by

the people in Local Board elections and affairs, (b) a more practical interest taken by each member in the area represented by him, as this area would be smaller than at present, and (c) in the case of the District Local Board, a lesser possibility of the increased taxation being unpopular. A majority of elected members is also likely to lead to increased independence in the expression of views on the part of these members and to be ultimately a source of strength to the boards.

2. I am not in favour of having election by communities. There are some strong and weighty reasons for having separate representation for communities in the Legislative Councils, but these do not exist in the case of the Local Boards. Very few, if any, of the questions which come before a Local Board are of purely sectional interest. Due allowance for the representation can be made in making nominations.

The District Local Board, Ratnagiri, consists at present of 21 members, out of whom 11 are either ex-officio or nominated, 9 are elected by the Taluka Local Boards and 1 by Inamdars. I should like to suggest that under the new constitution the number of members should be increased to 30, out of whom 10 should be either ex-officio or nominated (number of officials not to exceed five), and 20 elected. Each of the Taluka Local Boards should elect two, instead of one member as at present. This would give 18. The Inamdars of the district should elect one. As it is proposed to levy a cess on income tax, it would be fair that the income tax payers should be allowed to elect one member also.

The Taluka Local Boards in my sub-division have on an average a membership of 15. Exclusive of the ex-officio President, there is an equal number of nominated and elected members. The total number, in my opinion, should be increased to 21; seven (out of whom, not more than four should be officials) should be nominated, and 14 elected. Out of these 14, one should be elected by every municipality under section 6 (a), one by the inamdars and one by the income tax payers. The remaining should be elected each for a group of villages. (The number 21 will be suitable for an ordinary taluka, like three out of the four in this sub-division. For a smaller taluka like Vengurla, a proportionately smaller number, say 15, might be fixed.)

3. I have already discussed this question in a demi-official letter to the Collector, a short time ago, in which I stated that for the present at least, the District Local Board here must continue to be under the control of the Collector, while some of the Taluka Boards may be allowed the privilege of electing their own President.

On the one hand there is bound to be a considerable loss of efficiency in the administration of the board, if the control of the official Presidents were removed. The revenue officials now do a good deal of the executive work of the Local Boards, and unless the Local Boards are prepared to employ a strong stipendiary executive of its own, it will not be possible, in the absence of the official Presidents, to exercise proper supervision over Local Board works. It must be remembered that the Local Boards, at present, have the services of the Presidents and of the Mamlatdars free of charge. If the supervision now exercised by these officers is to be replaced by a paid staff, the expense of entertaining this latter would be considerable.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that the presence of an official President, while ensuring efficiency, is antagonistic to the development of local Self-Government. However sympathetic the President may be, and however desirous he may be of encouraging free discussion, members are generally chary of expressing any views antagonistic to those held by the President. His influence is often too great, and in spite of his wishes, stifles a free expression of views. The control exercised by him has also the tendency of reducing the Local Board to the position of a department working under him.

Such being the case, I think it would be advisable to start with the Taluka Boards first, and allow them to elect their own non-official President. It may be possible, in some districts, to allow this privilege even in the case of the District Boards, but in this district, it should, in my opinion, be confined for the present to Taluka Boards.

4. So long as the Local Board is not in a position to employ a competent and well paid engineering staff, the present limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works should continue. But if the resources of the board are improved and the board is in a position to employ such a staff, the limitations can fairly be relaxed. If an engineer is engaged as suggested by the Commissioner, S. D., in his No. 2314 of 21-5-1915, the limit under section 61 might be raised to Rs. 10,000, and no plans for works costing less than Rs. 2,500 need be sent to the Executive Engineer.

In view of the proposed increase in the revenues of the Local Boards, it should be quite feasible for them to employ a well paid engineer in future to look after Local Board works.

5. The Taluka Local Boards may be allowed to employ the subordinate staff. The appointment and control over sub-overseers should however remain with the District Boards. The service of the Sub-overseers should be graded, and they should be liable to be transferred from one taluka to another.

I think it would be quite safe to allow the Taluka Boards to make and alter their own budgets without receiving the sanction of the District Board. At present such sanction is merely formal.

6. I think the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board, as recommended by the Decentralisation Commission, and as is actually the Board is purely nominal. A certain amount has to be sanctioned under the Act for expenditure on matters educational, and the budget for this is framed by the Educational Department. Proposals for opening and closing schools, for constructing buildings, are framed by the same department and placed before the board for sanction, which is more or less formal.

The board's responsibility will no doubt be increased, but unless this is done, members will not take real interest in Local Board affairs. Though there might be a certain loss of efficiency, the boards, it can fairly be said, are in a position to look after their own educational institutions. I am all in favour of the recommendations made by the Decentralisation Commission in paras 753 to 755 of their report.

7. I have at present no suggestions to make for alterations of the rules under section 48 (b) but some of these and especially rule 7, will have to be changed, if the control over primary education passes to the Local Boards.

8. I do not know of any case in which a Taluka Local Board has been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka and spent on education in other areas. Under the present system, however, it is not easy for members to find out, if such money has been actually spent outside the taluka. Besides, in educational matters, it is better to consider the district as a whole, and make arrangements annually according to the needs of each taluka. If a smaller amount is spent on the schools in a taluka in any year, it is not unlikely that the balance would be made good in some subsequent year.

9. The resources of the Local Boards are limited, and are insufficient to meet even the urgent wants of the district. The system of raising revenue at present in force, is inelastic. Nothing is more likely to increase interest in Local Board affairs and the responsibility of the members, as the power of self-taxation. The boards may be allowed to raise the cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee, but as this will fall almost entirely on agriculturists, it is necessary that other classes of people like traders, &c., who also considerably benefit from the existence of the boards, should be made to contribute. This can be done by raising a two anna cess on income tax, and by relieving the boards of part of the expenditure on educational, medical and sanitary arrangements in urban and semi-urban areas where agriculturists are a minority.

A similar cess on abkari and forest revenues, will strengthen the resources of the Local Boards, and is desirable.

Provincial subventions to Local Boards have not kept pace as pointed out by Commissioner, S. D., with the increase in provincial revenues and I am all in favour of increasing these. I have, however, nothing to add to the remarks made by the Commissioner, S. D., in his note on this subject.

10. The statement is in a great part true. The reasons are:—

(a) absence of power, e.g., of self-taxation, (b) absence of responsibility, (c) limited resources.

If Local Boards are given the power of self-taxation and their resources are increased as stated above, if educational matters and public works are brought under their control, and if the boards have elected majorities and non-official Presidents, the interest taken by the members, will, I think, considerably increase.

11. The limit mentioned in section 10 (1) can be reduced to Rs 24; so that all occupants paying Rs. 24 may have the right to vote. Similarly the limit in section 10 (2) might be reduced to Rs. 2,500.

12. I do not think it is either feasible or desirable to have separate groups of electors from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10. Such men can stand for election in any of the ordinary groups. Income tax payers in the whole taluka might, however, elect one member to the board, just as the inamdars do at present.

13. It should be left to the Taluka Local Boards to select their own Vice-Presidents. Even now the boards are not obliged to select an official Vice-President. It is, no doubt, desirable that Vice-Presidents should be non-official, but in the absence of a proper supervising staff, an invariable rule like the one suggested might seriously affect the proper carrying out of Local Board works.

14. Please see answer to question No. 11 above

15. I think it would be desirable, that the Local Boards should receive a fixed share of the Provincial share of land revenue and income-tax. The Board will not thus have to depend upon occasional doles from Government. It can estimate its income for several years ahead, and can provide for its expenditure accordingly. Unless some definite share in the land revenue is allotted to the Local Boards, these do not know what amount they would receive from Government in a particular year. They are not, therefore, in a position to plan and undertake schemes which they would undertake and carry out if they were sure of their income.

In addition to this share, however, Government can, give occasional subventions, for urgent and necessary works, especially in the case of the poorer Local Boards, who may not receive any large amount from the cesses on income-tax and abkari or forest revenue

16. I think that a minimum of 6 annas in the rupee should be fixed as the proportion of the proceeds of the one anna cess which should go to the Taluka Local Boards after the "educational portion" has been deducted.

17. For reasons mentioned in answer to question No. 1 and especially for allowing due representation of minorities, I am not in favour of the change proposed in this question.

18. See answer to question No. 11 above.

Mr. S. S. Deshpande, District Deputy Collector, Ratnagiri.

1. Yes, not that the elected members have so far shown any very appreciable aptitude in managing or assisting the board's affairs, but because a larger scope and more opportunities might be given them to educate them in Local Self-Government and make them realise the importance and necessity of giving more attention to and having a larger share in the management of works which directly contribute to their comfort and convenience.

2. I am not in favour of election by communities. The population of each community varies from tract to tract and it is no use making one set of rules for all varying conditions.

Besides, if it is meant to secure the best intellects on the management of the Local Boards, which it is now under contemplation to put on a sounder footing as regards finances, and of which the affairs are to be transferred to the members thereof to a much larger extent than hitherto, it is better to leave the populace to elect the man whom they consider best by reason of his birth, age, education and influence. Election by communities may not necessarily result in the return of a suitable person, as in a particular locality, a particular community may not have one, and then the board will have on it some at least who are merely head-nodders and who are returned simply because there are no others better than they in the community to which they belong, and are incapable of assisting in any material way in the management of the board.

At present everywhere the elected members are one half of the whole board, exclusive of the President. But section 5 of the Act fixes the minimum only. There is nothing in the Act itself to prevent increasing the number of elected members. I should think that the board should be constituted in the proportion of 2 elected members to 1 nominated member and that the number of groups should be doubled, which can be done under the terms of clause (b) of section 6.

A taluka might be divided into 12 groups, each to elect one member, the franchise given to municipalities at present remaining the same. For, the municipalities, howsoever large, have apparently no more concern in the Local Board than as board's work might affect the area comprised within the municipal limits, in respect of lands, roads, trees, &c. But this happens very rarely. And one member to represent it on the board is quite sufficient. Also, there need be no increase in the number to be elected by Inamdars. So that, taking a Taluka Local Board within whose area there is a municipality, there will be

12 members elected by groups,
1 member by Inamdars,
1 „ by the Municipality.
14

Then there may be 7 nominated members including the President, who should continue to be official, if the official control in time of need is not to be minimised, and if the boards should have the benefit of official advice whenever necessary. This leaves 6 members to be nominated of whom 3 or 4 may be nominated from among the communities who are found to have not been represented in the elections. The Mamlatdar and the Medical officer should be two of the nominated members, but the Sub-divisional Officer, Public Works Department, may be left out if the circumstances do not allow of his being included in the nominations, as his presence can be required at any meeting or he may if he thinks necessary attend any meeting under section 33, paragraph 2.

The increase in the number of groups will result in the return of a greater amount of keenness and experience in Local Board affairs, and of an enlarged body each member of which can be charged with a particular work in connection with the board or with the supervision of works going on in his own locality, which, while making him feel honoured by being entrusted with it, will not be too much for him to do.

The elected members of the District Board may be as under :—

2 elected by each Taluka Local Board.

1 elected by Inamdars.

1 by each municipality having a population of 15,000 (not 18,000, which should, I think, be changed to 15,000 in view of the opportunity now being taken of expanding the constitution of the board).

Taking a District to consist of 8 talukas and to contain two municipal districts of more than 15,000 inhabitants, the elected members will be

16 elected by talukas.
1 „ by inamdars.
2 „ by municipalities.
19

The nominated members may be 10 of whom 5 may be nominated from communities not represented by the elections or as the Collector thinks fit. The Collector to continue to be President. It is essential that he should be in direct touch with Local Board affairs which vitally concern the people in his charge.

3. I think Presidents should continue to be official. Vice-Presidents may be non-official with the approval of the Commissioner as at present Taluka and District Boards should always be advised to have a non-official as chairman of the managing committee. The Vice-Presidents and Chairmen may be either elected or nominated.

4. It should be compulsory for each District Local Board to have at least one engineering officer of the status of a Supervisor of the P. W. D., who should direct and control the work of the subordinate executive staff in the district.

He should —

(1) Prepare every estimate of a road work whether of first construction or repairs, which costs more than Rs. 50 per mile.

(2) Prepare plan and estimate of every work which costs more than Rs. 1,000, but not more than Rs. 5,000.

(3) Personally be in charge of every work which costs Rs. 2,000 but not more than Rs. 5,000.

Plans and estimates for works which cost more than Rs. 2,500 should be submitted to the Public Works Department for approval; and works costing more than Rs. 5,000 should be entirely carried out by the Government Executive Engineer.

Each Taluka Local Board should have an Overseer of the status of a Public Works Department Overseer. He should prepare plans and estimates of all works not specified above and submit them for scrutiny by the District Local Board Supervisor.

He should carry out such works as are directed by the Supervisor to be carried out by him or such works under the Supervisor's own direct supervision as the latter puts him in charge of.

If plans and estimates are prepared and works are carried out as above, there will be appreciable savings in the establishment charges and charges of review of projects and of plans and estimates, payable to the Public Works Department. Besides there will be a far larger field than at present for the engineering staff of the Local Board to ply their skill.

5. *Section 38.*—I am not in favour of altering the section in any way. It is always good that the control of all Local Board establishments should be in the hands of the central body. The District Local Board knows the requirements of each Taluka Local Board and can shift any employee from a place where he is not needed to another where his services are required. If a Taluka Local Board requires any additional hand, the District Local Board may sanction one temporarily.

Section 55.—I think the existing practice under section 55 of the Local Board Act should continue. The submission for scrutiny by District Local Board of the Taluka budgets has a wholesome effect. For want of knowledge of the system of framing and keeping correct accounts, the budgets are in most cases irregularly prepared and are required to be recast in the District Board Office. Besides, the submission for sanction itself implies higher authority and there is no good ground to withdraw it. In fact, the complaint has never been that budgets are required to be submitted to the District Board for sanction. The ever ringing complaint from every Taluka Board is that the District Local Board spares so little for it after utilising the income of the one anna cess derived in the taluka for various purposes over which the Taluka Local Board has no control. In some cases a taluka is not given even one thousand rupees. How many local roads and wells for which there is a crying need every where, can be executed out of such a small sum?

I can think of no item on which the District Local Board unnecessarily exercises control over the Taluka Local Board at present or in which its control should be slackened.

6. Unless given the opportunity of doing a thing one will not be able to do it. Education has much advanced and educated people wish to have a larger share in local Self-Government. There is a general desire on the part of Local Boards to have a larger share in the management of primary schools over which they have at present very little or no control. The management of primary schools may be entrusted to a schools committee composed of educated gentlemen, who are members of the boards, in the same way and under the same conditions in which schools committees on the municipalities conduct the affairs of the municipal schools. The central schools committee of the District Board may be assisted by taluka committees formed of the more intelligent and educated members of the Taluka Board, so that there should be a systematic co-operation between the central committee and the Taluka Local Board committees. The Deputy Educational Inspector need not be necessarily subordinate in any sense of the word of the District Board, any more than he is of the municipal schools committees. But there should be perfect co-operation between him and the schools committees and all questions about the establishment of schools, removal of schools, school buildings, school discipline, school fees, free and half freeships, supply of furniture, books, apparatus, &c., and the extent to which the private schools should be aided, should be decided on by mutual approval. The budget itself should be prepared by the committee in consultation with the Deputy Educational Inspector who should be present at the budget meeting of the committee. The appointment of school masters, their promotion, degradation, transfer, leave, &c., may be left to the Deputy Educational Inspector. Such matters entrusted to the schools committee might create friction between the committee and the educational authorities. The Deputy Educational Inspector may duly consider any recommendation on the part of schools committee at head-quarters or of a Taluka Board about the promotion or punishment of a teacher and meet the wishes of the committee as best as possible. But except for matters relating to the masters and teachers, everything connected with primary schools should be decided on by the central schools committee in consultation with the Deputy Educational Inspector and carried out under their orders by the taluka committees. This will result in a diminution of work in the office of the Deputy Educational Inspector as he will have most to do with the schools committees

only, who will do everything in connection with Local Board Schools, just as municipal schools committees do in the case of municipal schools. In this manner there is much scope for interesting Local Board members in the education of the masses of the district.

7. The rules do not seem to require much alteration. Their spirit should remain; only a few alterations would be required if Schools Committees are modelled in the manner suggested above.

8. Such a case rarely happens, though one does meet with a solitary case or two some times, such as contribution to a singing class at the Head Quarters of a district though it is a municipal district. But the Taluka Local Boards are not consulted in such matters, as far as I have known.

9. It is evident that in order to carry out the various objects calculated to promote the public good with which it is entrusted, the Local Board should have a larger income than at present, which hardly suffices to provide for the various services, which, under the present Local Boards Act, it is required to do.

(1) The raising of the Local Fund Cess from one to two annas in the rupee will, it is true, bring in a large addition and materially help the resources of the board. But it is a bold step for taking as from the point of view of the rayat, it practically will enhance the assessment on the land by $1/8$ th of the present assessment, whether, it be levied in the shape of land revenue or as Local Fund. It will be better to consult the public on this point.

(2) I am in favour of constituting large villages say of 3,000 inhabitants and over wheresoever situated, into notified areas in charge of a Panchayat of 5 persons resident in the village. The Panchayat, to construct and keep in good order the streets in the village and the approaches to sources of water as well as the link roads from their villages to the main roads, to improve the sanitary condition of their village as suggested from time to time by the officers of the Sanitary Department, to meet the cost of preventing and checking the spread of epidemics and if possible to pay a contribution towards the maintenance of the local schools.

(3) (a) It is a good idea that income tax should yield Local Fund Cess. If agriculturists pay for the public comfort and convenience, there seems no reason why the monied classes should not pay their share for the same.

(b) At present, a contribution is received from Government in lieu of one anna cess on abkari revenue. I think it has remained the same all along though abkari revenue has increased considerably since the contribution was first fixed. If a Local Fund Cess is levied at 1 anna or 2 annas on the total abkari revenue, it will yield a good income.

(c) There seems no reason to levy a cess on forest revenue. Forests are outside the pale of Local Board matters and Local Boards have not to provide for any convenience required by the Forest Department. It is true, sometimes the officers of the Forest Department ask for repairs to roads by which a forest is reached or by which forest produce is brought. But that is for the convenience of the public; and generally the Forest Department repairs the roads actually within the limites of the forests at its own cost.

(4) Yes. Provincial subventions should be increased.

10. Yes. That is true especially in the case of members of Taluka Local Boards. The chief reason is the small allotments made to the Taluka Boards by the District Local Board out of the one anna cess. I do not mean that that is the fault of the District Local Board. The District Local Board has to provide for so many items of expenditure through the various departments (such as the expenditure through the Public Works Department, the expenditure through the Sanitary Department for pay of vaccinators, &c., that through the Veterinary Department, that through the Educational Department and so on) over which it has no control, and has so much to reserve for itself for expenditure on establishments and on works which it has to carry out through its own agency as those that serve more than one taluka, that there generally remains a comparatively small amount for distribution among the Taluka Boards. The Overseer or Sub-Overseer entrusted with the works on which that small allotment is to be spent is also of indifferent abilities or at least loses what knowledge or ability he has in the routine work of turning the tiles of dha-mashalas or road surfacing or digging a village well, which are almost the only works which he is required to do. The members, too, do not take much care about these petty works. What keenness is to be expected from them when the money spent under the supervision of each is often a trivial amount? Many of them sign the formal completion certificate after at best visiting the work after completion. The more conscientious of them however, pay a visit or two when the work is in progress.

As for the District Local Board members, the apathy on their part in most cases is due more or less to their living at a distant place from the works in progress. But on the whole such works are not many and do not create much interest in the members.

If the revenues of the board are increased in the manner suggested in paragraph 773 of the report of the Royal Commission on Decentralization by relieving it of some of its present functions and by bringing in additions to its present income in the manner suggested in clauses (1), (3) and (4) under paragraph 9 above, if larger amounts and more works come to be entrusted to Taluka Local Boards, and if the engineering staff is increased so as to cope with the increased work, the members will awake to the responsibility, take keener interest in Local Board affairs and be more watchful to see that the money is properly spent and that the needs of their own immediate locality are not neglected.

11. No additions to the qualifications of voters are called for.

12. As I have said in paragraph 2 above it is better to leave the electors to elect the man best suited to be a member by reason of his birth, age, education, &c. No separate groups for any class

of persons are necessary. It is enough if instead of 6, the villages in a taluka are divided into 12 groups, and one member is elected for each group.

13. It is advisable to have a non-official Vice-President. No hard and fast rule need be made. Perhaps the best man to control the affairs of the board may be an official. (For further remarks please see paragraph 3 above.)

14. There is no need to alter the wording of the section. The section is permissive of a smaller minimum than Rs 48. Here in Dapoli the minimum is 40 and in Khed and Chiplun it is Rs. 30. The conditions of each taluka or mahal must determine what minimum should be adopted to qualify one to stand for or vote at a Local Board election under clause (1) of section 10 and clause (1) of section 18.

15. It is not known whether any particular portion of the land revenue allotted by the Imperial Government to the Provincial Government is paid by the latter Government to the Local Boards. But it seems it is entirely at the discretion of Government to pay what subvention it pleases to the Local Boards out of the land revenue. The same discretion should, I think, continue, as it would not be desirable to tie the hands of Government in this connection by legal provision. But if desirable, a minimum of 10 per cent. may be fixed, the payment in excess of which, to any Local Board, should be entirely at the pleasure of Government.

16. *Section (a) (5)*.—I think that the existing provision is sound and reasonable. It will not conduce to any good to tie the hands of the District Board by enacting that it must allot a particular proportion of the land cess to the talukas. A uniform proportion will not do for all talukas. A taluka is rich by reason of its other resources which are absent in the case of another taluka. I know of a taluka which has an enormous income from sand and quarry fees, while I know others in the same district where this income is insignificant. Yet in the latter talukas, on account of their being important in other respects, there are more Local Board works to be carried out than in the former. If land cess is to be distributed among talukas in a uniform proportion, there is a likelihood of a Taluka Board being overstaffed with money which it is unable to spend, while others will emaciate for want of money. District Board is like the belly and the Taluka Boards the members. It should be left to the District Board to allot what is "equitable" according to the circumstances of each board so as to keep it healthy and working and not overfeed it with money nor render it weak by giving it only a fixed proportion and no more. It is enough that what share of the cess is allotted to any taluka, represents a portion of the amount raised in the taluka after 1/3rd portion of it is deducted for educational purposes. The District Local Board should always have enough funds at its disposal to supplement the resources of the poorer Taluka Boards.

17. I have already stated what should be the constitution of a District Local Board and of a Taluka Local Board (*vide* paragraph 2 above). I am not in favour of doing away with the nomination of non-officials. There should be some scope for taking in persons, who have not been elected or did not stand for election, but who, it is advisable, should be on the board on account of their experience, education, position, influence, &c, or on account of belonging to a community which has not been represented by the elections held. The nomination of non-officials is a wholesome provision and must not be altogether given up.

18. *Section 10, clause (1)*.—About this I have already stated above (*vide* paragraph 14 above).

Section 10, clause (2).—To give a wider scope for persons desirous to stand for election the minimum of Rs. 5,000 may be reduced to Rs. 2,000.

Section 10, clause (3)—For the same reason the minimum of Rs. 500 income per year may be reduced to Rs. 200 a year.

Section 10, clause (4)—The minimum of pension amount may be reduced to Rs. 30.

Mr. A. R. Gulwadi, District Deputy Collector, Ratnagiri.

1. In my opinion there is no harm whatever if District and Taluka Local Boards be allowed to have elected majorities. I have not so far heard of a single case relating to Local Board matters in which the elected members opposed any proposal brought by nominated members or *vice versa*, on the sole ground that the proposal was made by the one or the other class of members. No instances of display of inimical spirit by the one class of members against the other have so far come to my notice. The nominated as well as elected members have to my knowledge worked smoothly and in co-operation. No difference whatever is made between the two classes of members nor the members of one class consider themselves to be superior to those of the other. I am, therefore, of opinion that the efficiency of the Local Boards will not suffer if they be allowed to have elected majorities. Two-thirds of the members may be elected and one-third nominated.

2. So far as this sub-division is concerned it is not at all necessary to have recourse to election by communities, though I am of opinion that in talukas where the minorities are not likely to succeed in elections, provision should be made for the due representation of such minorities or special communities such as the Mahomedans, by nominating their representatives.

The present number of members of the two Taluka Local Boards in this sub-division is 17 for Ratnagiri and 15 for Sangameshwar and is inadequate. I am of opinion that that number should be increased to 21 and 19 so that each member may have a smaller area for the supervision of Local

Boards works than now and so that he may thereby be able to exercise greater supervision than he is now able to do. Generally members now complain that they have to travel far from their homes for the supervision of the Local Board works at much expense and trouble. If the number be increased, the supervising member's jurisdiction can be made smaller and the supervision can thereby be made more efficient.

3. My reply to this question is in the negative. I have not seen any non-official taking so much interest in the Local Board Works at the sacrifice of his own private business as would entitle him to the appointment of President of the District or Taluka Local Boards. Even if any such is to be found, it is hardly possible for him to be able to control the District or Taluka Board as President thereof. The Collector should continue to be President of the District Board and the Sub-divisional officers to be Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards.

4. I am of opinion that clause (a) of section 57 of the Local Boards Act should stand as it is but that clause (2) should be modified by eliminating the 2nd part thereof beginning with the word "and in the case of a road".

I am of opinion that there should be no statutory obligation for a board to get plans and estimates of any of the works to be undertaken by that body either prepared or approved by the Executive Engineer of the district. The existing provisions on the subject should be made optional instead of obligatory. If the Local Board's engineering staff be inadequate and inefficient as in this district or if the contemplated projects are such as are too intricate or difficult for the Local Board's staff to prepare plans and estimates in respect of them, the board itself would request the Executive Engineer to do the same and even to undertake the projects on payment of the usual charges. Provision in the law should be made to this effect and the obligatory provisions now existing in the law should be done away with. The existing provisions have placed the Taluka Local Boards under great disadvantages especially in the matters of repairs to roads, when the cost thereof per mile exceeds Rs. 50. Sometimes emergency cases of road repairs arise, especially in the monsoon and the repairs have to be undertaken immediately after the road gets into disrepair at a cost exceeding Rs. 50 per mile, but the board is hampered in undertaking the repairs at the time most needed for want of approval of the Executive Engineer for the plan and estimate. Generally plans and estimates sent by the boards to the Executive Engineer are received back after much inordinate delay and therefore the board is unnecessarily hampered in undertaking the proposed works at the right time and it is, therefore, highly desirable that the board should have its own efficient engineering staff and should have full power to undertake the works at the proper time. For attaining this object I have proposed alteration in the existing provisions of section 57.

Section 61 also should be modified. The board should be allowed to get all its work executed by the agency, which it considers best fitted for it. Works requiring high engineering skill will, of course, be got done by the Public Works Department, if necessary. The board should have full discretion in this matter and its hands should not be tied down by any hard and fast rule to be made by Government.

5. I do not think that the Taluka Local Board should be allowed to engage its own clerical and engineering staff. The District Board should be allowed to do it as at present. If each Taluka Local Board is to engage its own staff, karkun and Sub-Overseer, the staff will have no prospects of promotion unless the board is prepared to make the pay progressive, which is not possible having regard to the finances of the board. If the appointments are to be made by the District Board, as at present, chances of promotion of the hands and of their transfer from one place to the other either in the interests of the board or of the incumbents will be greater and will contribute partly at least to contentment in the staff. The control of the menial establishment consisting of peons, dharmashala-keepers, &c., should on the other hand be in the hands of the Taluka Local Board and not of the District Board, as is now the case. If the Taluka Local Board be not empowered to make such appointments, it cannot keep a strong and efficient check on their work. While I am in favour of ministerial appointments being made by the District Board, I propose that the Taluka Local Board should be empowered to punish the incumbents serving under it, so that the fear of punishment may be a strong incentive to the incumbents for the proper discharge of their duties otherwise they will not heed the authority of the Local Board, but only of the District Local Board in whose hands the power of their appointment, promotion and dismissal lies. This proposal is not without a precedent. In the Judicial Department the Subordinate Judges have been empowered to even dismiss highest paid ministerial official serving under him, while he is not empowered to appoint even the lowest paid karkun and bailiff. The Subordinate Judges are, therefore, able to keep the staff in the highly possible state of efficiency, on the other hand officers of the corresponding rank or of even higher ranks in other departments not empowered to do so, are unable to keep due control on the establishments. Section 55 should be amended so that the Taluka Local Board may have full powers to pass their budgets, without submitting the same to the District Board. I do not see any advantage in subjecting the Taluka Local Board budgets to the sanction of the District Board. So long as there is the official President to control the affairs of the Taluka Local Board, there is no fear whatever of Taluka Local Board making an unfair budget and of squandering public money uselessly. I have not come across a single instance of rejection of the Taluka Local Board budget by the District Local Board. The sanctioning of the same by the District Board has become a mere matter of formality. If this formality be done away with, I am sure the Taluka Local Board will be freed from the sense of its being subordinate to the District Board even in matters of mere formality and will consider itself to have some sort of independent existence.

6. My reply to this is in the negative. For more than one reason I am of opinion that in this district at least it is not possible to give the District and Taluka Boards a free hand in educational matters. The Government in the Educational Department should continue to manage the School Department.

7. Rule 6 in my opinion may be slightly modified. The words "District and" may be omitted and Taluka Local Board should be given the full power of making the arrangements. Even now I think that the District Local Board hardly makes any arrangements but that the Taluka Local

Board does them. Rule 31 should in my opinion be modified. The District Local Board should have the unrestricted power of preparing plans and estimate, having regard to the cost the board is able to defray. Standard plans may be fixed by the Educational Authorities once for all and the District Board may be asked to adopt them as far as possible. It is not possible to locate primary schools in very costly buildings and in highly sanitary surroundings, as the schools are meant for young children who are unable to attend the schools situated at great distances from their homes. The District Board's finances at least in this district are poor and the people too are poor and therefore it is not possible for either the board or the people to spend large amounts on primary school buildings.

I have no modifications to suggest in the other rules

8. I do not think that the Taluka Local Board has ever been consulted in this matter.

9. In my opinion there will be a great need of strengthening the existing engineering establishment of the District and Taluka Local Boards in this district. If the proposals I have made above in my replies to questions Nos. 4 and 7 be carried out, I do not think that there will be any need for strengthening the clerical staff of the District or Taluka Local Boards. Generally the financial condition of the board in this district is straitened. It is highly necessary that there should be means of augmenting the income of the Local Boards both District and Taluka not only in this district but elsewhere, where the Local Boards are not in affluent circumstances and that therefore I am of opinion that the Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of annas two in the rupee

There are no important villages in this sub-division where notified areas may be established with a view to relieve Local Boards a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters. But in the talukas, where there are such villages, as for instance in the Karnatic, notified areas may be established by extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act to villages other than the head-quarters of the taluka, which is most desirable, otherwise important villages other than the head quarters of the taluka cannot be constituted notified areas and wherof reluctance on the part of inhabitants to pay voluntary subscriptions, as for instance at Sangameshwar no sanitary committee or sanitary board can be established, though it is highly desirable to have an institution of the kind solely from the sanitary point of view. Local Board should, in my opinion, be permitted to levy a cess on (a) income-tax and (b) abkari revenue and also on forest revenue in talukas where there are valuable forests and where the timber trade is heavy and the income from forests is large as in Kanara

Provincial subventions should also be increased

If the income of the Local Boards be not augmented by adopting all or most of the means suggested above, it is not at all possible for the boards to carry on much useful practical work benefiting the public in general whatever be the constitution of the boards. What can, for instance, the Taluka Local Boards of Sangameshwar and Ratnagiri, with paltry funds varying from 1,400 to 1,600 to be allotted to them annually for being spent on a number of projects, go to show practically useful and good work and how can the several members show any energy and activity, which would attract the notice of outsiders? The two Taluka Local Boards having got each year in the recent years substantial help from the District Board have been able to undertake urgently needed projects.

10. I am not prepared to say that the District and Taluka Boards have been entire failures. It is true that the non-official members do not generally take much interest in Local Board works. But, at the same time it is not true, so far as my knowledge goes, that there is no co-operation on the part of non-official members. I must on the other hand say that I have not heard of any discordant spirit existing in them or in their relations with the official members. They have shown themselves on many an occasion to yield to official members, proposals even when those proposals went counter to those made by themselves on being convinced of the soundness of the former. In my opinion they are in no way obstructionists in the smooth working of the Local Boards Act. There have been rarely, if at all, any quarrels among the members of the Local Boards, as have been among the members of several Municipal Boards. They cannot be viewed in the same light as some of the members of some of the Municipal Boards have unfortunately to be done. Some of the causes of the lack of interest on the part of the non-official members in the Local Board matters are those which have been already stated—*viz.*, the first and the most important one is that for want of funds the Taluka Local Board is unable to undertake any important projects and has to be content with ordinary repairs to the already existing roads, dharmashalas and other similar Local Board works and therefore the members too cannot show any great energy and activity in connection with such works.

Second cause is that the members are generally not in a position to spare much time and to undergo much trouble at their own cost and at much self-sacrifice, supervise the Local Board works in part of the taluka far from their homes. Third cause is their confidence in the official members that they manage everything properly and also the fear that any interference on their part in the work of the officials would result in the latter's displeasure being incurred by them. Fourth cause is that some of the members are not so well educated as to understand the law and the rules, which govern the Local Boards. Highly educated persons can rarely be found in villages. They all settle in cities and towns. Even if there be such men in villages they consider it below their dignity to be members of Local Boards being conscious of the fact that they can by trying succeed in becoming members of the Legislative Councils.

Some of the means by which the apathy of the non-official members can be removed and energy and activity may be put in them are, in my opinion, those which have been stated by me already above, *viz.*, the augmenting of the Local Board's income, the increase in the number of electorates, the reducing of the supervising members' jurisdiction in order to enable them to make a thorough and constant inspection of the Local Board works within a radius, say of 5 miles from their residences, making the Taluka Local Boards more independent than now and the throwing of

greater responsibility on the Taluka Local Board which tantamounts to the throwing of greater responsibility on each member.

11. As I agree with the suggestions that the Local Board should have elected majorities, as I am of opinion that want of sufficient education is one of the causes of non-official member's apathetic attitude towards Local Board matters and as I am in favour of the suggestion that the Local Boards should be empowered to levy a cess on income tax, the extension of the franchise by Government to graduates, pleaders, &c., is justifiable also on the principle stated by Mill (please see page 15 of Cumming's Local Board Manual). I would, therefore, propose by way of addition to the qualifications of voters that the Government should extend the franchise to graduates, pleaders and traders, &c.

12. I do not think that any purpose will be served in my sub-division by forming separate group of electors with the object of securing some men from classes 2 to 6. Nor do I think that it is needed in view of the extension of the franchise proposed in my reply to question No. 11.

13. I do not think it necessary to provide for Vice-Presidents being invariably non-officials. It should be optional as is now the case. The members should have full discretion in the matter. Their discretion should be unfettered and they should be allowed to elect any member they please as Vice-President.

14. There should be reduction in the statutory minimum of assessment. It should be fixed at Rs 24 in my opinion.

15. I am not in favour of any such division. Government subventions have been suggested to be increased. Government have been making large contributions to Local Bodies and the latter should gratefully receive such a amount of contributions as the Government will be pleased to make.

16. I am not in favour of the suggestion that the proportion should be fixed by law. The District and Taluka Local Boards are not quite distinct bodies, that can work independently of each other. The District Board is generally supplier of funds and the Taluka Board is the body required to execute the District Boards as well as its own works. Even if the proposals made to free the Taluka Local Board from the District Board's control in matters connected with budget, &c., and to augment the sources of income of the Local Boards are carried out, the Taluka Board will not be in a position to do all it is required to do, without substantial pecuniary help from the District Board. Both the District and the Taluka Boards should work in harmony and co-operation and, therefore the District Board should have full discretion in the matter of making grants to the Taluka Boards having regard to the needs of each Taluka Board. If a proportion be fixed, some boards will have accumulated funds, while others will starve for want of the same.

17. I do think that the administrative efficiency of a board is likely to suffer if the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished. There are places where the minorities or special communities or interests must be represented on the Local Boards by persons concerned therein, but it cannot be had in the course of elections. Therefore it is highly necessary that Government should have the power of nominating the representatives of such communities or interests.

18. I have already stated in my reply to question No. 14 above that the minimum in clause 1 should be Rs 24. I think it necessary to reduce also the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 2 and 3 and 4 from Rs. 5,000, 500 and 50 to Rs. 2,500, 250 and 25 respectively.

*Mr. Jagannath Malhar Karnik, member of the District Local Board,
Ratnagiri.*

1. District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. The election should not be by communities. No special precaution be taken to safe-guard the interest of communities. The factor of representation by communities should not be introduced in the affairs of the Local Boards which as the name indicates are local and the interest of the different communities are properly represented by the members that form the board. Although representation by communities is not introduced in our present system in that particular name, yet the notifications are made on the same principle and though the principle be not observed yet the interest of the communities would not suffer.
3. The President of the District Boards and Taluka Boards may be officials and nominated.
4. Some of the restrictions imposed by sec 57 should be swept away and that the District and Taluka Local Boards should have full powers in the allotment of funds and the passing of estimates for works within their respective sphere of duty. Some provision should be made to enable the District and Taluka Local Boards to consult and *without any change* the Government Engineering staff with respect to the preparation of estimates and plans, &c. Some of the words in section 57 are to be omitted and some new work inserted so as to bring it into conformity with a system of non-requisition of detailed estimates of all repairs before the passing of a budget.
5. I do not think that the Taluka Local Boards could be freed to any extent from the control of the District Local Board in matters of engagements and payment of Taluka Local Board servants, as for sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budget I should like to suggest that no such sanction and revision need be required in cases of repairs the estimated costs of which would not exceed Rs. 100.
6. It is still necessary to maintain the authority of the Educational Department of Government in the management of primary schools.

9. I have not as yet come across any case during the term of my office as Vice-President in which the Taluka Local Board has ever been consulted in the matter.

10. It is true to some extent that there is no co-operation and the members do not take intelligent interest in the affairs of the boards. The causes are that proper persons are not elected and the choice of nomination in some cases does not fall on fit persons. These defects should be removed by nominating really intelligent workers on the boards.

11. Some educational qualification should be added to the list of qualifications of voters.

13. I have suggested official Presidents and I would urge that the Vice-Presidents should invariably be non officials.

16. I do not think that this proportion mentioned in question should be fixed by law.

17. I am humbly of opinion that the administrative efficiency of a board is likely to suffer if the provision in question is abolished.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act.

Mr. Ramkrishna Keshav Karandikar, member, District Local Board.

1. Yes.

2. Not at all by communities. Some provision should be made to secure due representation of special communities by nomination. The present number of members is not sufficient. It should be increased.

3. The Presidents should be officials, appointed by Government, as at present.

4. Can be modified to this extent that in section 57 (b) the figures 50 and 500 should be replaced by 100 and 1,000.

5. No change is necessary as regards engagement and payment of servants. As regards Taluka Local Board budgets, the recommendation made in para. 781 of the Decentralization Committee should be brought into effect.

6. The time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards, but at the same time it is necessary to have an independent inspection of board and aided schools by Government Officers.

7. Rules under section 48 (b) require modification as regards clauses 13 and 14, page 179 of Cummings's Local Board Manual. The selection of sites and the approval of plans and estimates of school buildings should be left entirely to the District Local Boards if the cost of the buildings does not exceed 1,000 per unit. In other cases the approval of the Government Educational Inspector should be necessary.

8. No. Not to my knowledge.

10. It is partly true. The causes are:—(1) The elected members are in a minority and do not feel sufficient interest. (2) Improper selections for nominations. (3) Absence from meetings—no disqualification. The remedies are:—(1) increase of the elected and decrease of the nominated members; (2) the elected members should be at least $\frac{2}{3}$ ths; (3) absence from $\frac{1}{3}$ meetings in the year or three consecutive meetings should be considered in disqualification; (4) requisition of conscientious workers in some form by the Government.

11. No additions are necessary.

12. There should be no elections either by separate communities or groups or interests.

13. No.

14. Rs. 20.

15. The Local Boards should have at least 10 per cent. of the total Land Revenue, whatever the proportions in which the same is divided between the Local and the Supreme Governments.

16. It should be fixed by law and that should be half and half.

17. See answer to question 10.

18. Yes. (1) Land-holders assessed to the land revenue at not less than Rs. 20; (2) three thousand instead of five; (3) three hundred instead of five; (4) not less than Rs. 20 per mensem.

L. V. Parulekar, Esq., Govt. Pleader, Ratnagiri.

1. I think that there is no necessity for the present for the District and Taluka Local Boards having elected majorities. In my opinion there is very little difference observable, in the sense of duty, or understanding in relation to the relative position between a nominated and an elected member. Both appear to work on the same lines. I think, therefore, that no good can come out from extending the number of elected members. But on the contrary it may lead sometimes to mischievous consequences. Occasionally it is found that the voters make their choice of election rather whimsically and in such cases there will be no remedy of bringing in, efficient nominated members to make the body, as a whole, a competent one.

2. In connection with this I think, so far as this district is concerned, I do not think election by communities is necessary wholly or partially because there are no such communities with special interest which could suffer for want of proper representation: and no instances of any grievance on that score and no complaints have been heard even privately or otherwise. In connection with this subject I think that the present number of members is sufficient and there is no necessity of an increase. It is not from the number of members but the interest taken in their respective works by the existing number that the good and satisfactory results are expected to accrue.

3. I think that it is not in the least advisable that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards should be non officials, without the direct and continued official connection, support, supervision or control any administration, according to my experience, is always found to be unmethodical, irregular, careless, or slack, if not anything more, and consequently its efficiency is surely to suffer. In public and semi-public institutions where the official connection is indirect, remote, or none just like agricultural associations, co-operative societies or district associations and similar others, I have found, not on few occasions, that the meetings are to be postponed days after days for want of quorum and annual meetings also in some cases are to be postponed far beyond their legitimate dates, on account of the want of attendance, and in many instance recourse is to be had to official help for securing such attendance, and even then the whole thing is altogether unsatisfactory.

On the whole, without the official close connection, administration becomes very difficult and is likely to result in a failure. That is my experience at least as far as this district is concerned.

4. I think all usual and ordinary works may be left to the boards to be executed by them by their own overseers or similar other servants. Only in exceptional cases where special skill or knowledge, in the opinion of the board, is required, for preparing a plan or executing a work, then only it may be got done through the agency of Public Works Department. What should be done by the Public Works Department should not be determined by the quantity of the work, but by its quality. This will, I think, save time and money and also will not interfere with the regular work of the Public Works Department.

5. In connection with this my opinion is that every local authority must have full power and free hand in matters coming within their sphere of action, of course subject to the general control of the higher authorities; but interference must be an exception rather than a rule. According to this principle the engagement of the servants and the payment to them may be left to the discretion of the Taluka Local Boards unless it interferes with the general arrangement connected with the same to be made by the District Local Boards. The same should be the case about the sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets.

6. I do not think that the time is yet ripe for entrusting the management of the primary schools to the District Local Boards. Under the present state of things it can hardly be said any satisfactory result can be secured by this change.

7 and 8. I have no sufficient time and material to give my opinion on these two questions.

10. I think it is too true that a lack of interest and absence of active co-operation do exist on the part of the non-official members. The reason of this seems to be the general advancement of the country has not yet reached that stage where men feel their own responsibilities towards the public and act accordingly. At least so far as this district is concerned, I see that there is a general apathy on the part of all, in matters of public, semi-public and even private matters where individual self-interest is not involved. People join such institutions sometimes with the intention of increasing their personal value or dignity or with the desire of coming into contact with the officials, or with the vague idea of securing some chance for getting personal advantage to themselves. But very few, so to say, none do so join, with the genuine desire of doing some real public work. The remedies which I can suggest under the present circumstances are that the official members should sympathetically encourage the non-official members to do a piece of work, leaving it entirely to their supervision, but making them duly accountable for the same in due time, and in case of good results manifestly show due appreciation for the same. But the real remedy lies in the spread of general education given in such a manner as to develop sense of responsibility in public matters.

11. I think it will be necessary to introduce the element of education into section No. 10 of the Act such as graduates of the university or undergraduates may be made eligible for election.

12. I do not see the necessity of framing separate groups of electors under the present circumstances.

13. Vice-Presidents in such cases should be non-officials but not invariably, but only where available.

14. I think assessment of Rs. 30 would be a proper standard taking into consideration the extent of holdings in the district.

15. I have no sufficient time and material to form and give opinion in connection with this point.

16. I think that the ratio contemplated in this question should be left to the discretion of the District Local Board. Generally speaking the division of the proceeds between the Taluka and District Local Boards should be half and half. But this will have to be modified according to the nature of the works in the hands of the respective boards requiring more or less expenditure.

17. My observation in connection with the question No. 1 will be, I think, a sufficient reply to this question.

18. Taking into consideration the general condition of the people in Ratnagiri, I think that it will be necessary to reduce the qualifying limits referred to in this question.

Clause 1. I have already expressed my opinion in answer to question No. 14.

Clauses 3 and 4. Persons earning more than Rs. 25 per month so also pensioned Government servants getting more than Rs. 25 per mensem as pension may be eligible for election.

Mr. V. B. Sakalkar, Huzur Deputy Collector, Ratnagiri.

1. I do not think that the Local Boards should have an elected majority. It is a matter of common experience that the elected members generally secure their election by influence or other means and show lack of real interest in Local Board matters. If there is a majority of them on the board the interests of the board are very likely to suffer. The nominated members are usually servants of Government or other persons selected as fit persons for membership and they are naturally quite awake to the responsibilities as members of the board for otherwise, in the case of the former they may render themselves liable to censure of their superiors and in that of the latter they may be dishonoured by not being nominated again. In the case of the elected members they can secure their election again by any means. I think, therefore, that in the interests of the board the principle of having a majority of elected members should not be adopted.

2. I do not think that election by communities is always feasible or desirable. Unlike municipal towns a taluka is not a compact group of communities and it does not appear necessary that all the communities should be represented on the board. It is also not possible in the cases of many communities like the Kumbis, Mhars, Chambhars, Kharvis, Daldis, &c., to have men from among them eligible to be voters or members of the board, unless the qualifying limits laid down in section 10 of the Local Board Act are considerably reduced and even if this is done, it is little likely that, these people, being mostly ignorant, illiterate and dependent for their business on other people of higher communities will be able to exercise their franchise properly. This is what is generally experienced in villages in the case of appointments of Patels. If we ask these people to stand up as candidates for Patel's post, they would, if possible, prefer to give in, for another man who may be their Khot or Saokar. The number of members will also have to be increased considerably, if the election is made by communities and then the Board would be quite unmanageable. I think the present number is fairly sufficient.

I am of opinion that there should be no general election by communities. If however any particular community is found to need to be represented on the board, it may be allowed to elect a member on their behalf in the manner suggested in answer to question No. 12 and this will not be an inexpedient addition to the board.

3. It is neither advisable nor desirable that the President of District or Taluka Local Boards should be non-official.

4. The limitations on the preparations of plans and estimates and execution of works laid down in sections 57 and 61 of the Local Board Act appear to be quite suitable and to need no modification as far as this district is concerned. Works costing over Rs. 2,500 or other important works to be entrusted for execution to the Public Works Department are very few here and they are usually managed by that department with ease. Plans and estimates of roads costing more than Rs. 50 per mile, and of other works costing more than Rs. 500 to be scrutinized by the Public Works Department are also not many and their scrutiny is done by that department apparently without any inconvenience to it. Delay frequently occurs on the part of the department in this respect, but it is not, I think, due to pressure of other work, but to the inclination of the staff of the department to give preference to their own work to that of the Local Board.

The above work cannot be taken up by the District Local Board, unless it entertains a highly paid overseeing establishment for the purpose at a very heavy cost, while in its present financial circumstances it is unable to bear.

It may be necessary and desirable for the Local Boards of other districts where the board's revenues are large and the Local Board works exert a large amount of pressure on the Public Works Department, to take up the works themselves, and employ a highly paid staff of overseers for their supervision.

But to meet such cases I think, the limitations referred to above may be omitted from the Law and the Local Boards in general empowered to prescribe, with the sanction of Government such limitations as may be suitable to their individual cases.

5. In the matter of engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants, I think, the District Local Board should have control over the Taluka Local Boards. For otherwise, owing to the limited prospects of promotion the service it will afford, will be difficult for the Taluka Local

Boards to get efficient men to serve as their karkuns or overseers unless pay of their posts is considerably increased: and they would also be handicapped by undesirable servants whom they cannot get rid of unless by dismissing them. Under the control of the District Local Board these difficulties will be obviated.

In the case of the Taluka Local Board budgets if the District Local Board communicates to the Taluka Local Board the allotments of funds made to them, there appears to be no objection to the latter sanctioning or revising the budgets; provided they arrange to maintain their prescribed minimum balances and also forward a copy of the budget to the District Local Board to enable it to see if the funds are being properly utilised and to make its next allotments accordingly.

6. I do not think that the management of primary schools should be transferred to the Local Boards. It is true that it is the principal duty of the board to manage these schools and that on account of their intimate knowledge of local circumstances, they are in a better position than the Educational Department to regulate matters connected with them according to local needs. But in such matters as selection of staff curriculum and maintenance of discipline, &c., on which mainly depends the efficient working of the school Educational Department which has been specially organized trained and maintained for this purpose is undoubtedly the proper agency to regulate them. Under the management of the boards the efficiency of the schools is bound to suffer particularly in the case of Taluka Local Boards. The inspecting staff maintained by the board must on account of its limited scope for promotion, be less efficient than the Government inspecting staff and since the management of secondary and higher education of which the primary education is the basis, rests with Government and since also Government pay large contributions to the boards for primary education Government will have to maintain their inspecting staff, as well, to see that the management of the primary schools by the boards is efficient, but this staff also having no direct control over them is likely to slacken its present interest in the schools. The result of all this is considerable increase of expenditure with not only no corresponding benefit but on the contrary loss of efficiency. The present arrangement under which the Educational Department has the management of the schools and the boards, the control over the funds and such matters as location of the school, &c., is quite satisfactory. It is not known on what lines the new system is worked in the United Provinces. It may be worthwhile to ascertain them and then to give the system a trial in a few selected districts and if it proves a success to extend it to other districts.

7. In view of the above remarks I think the rules under section 43 B of the Local Board Act need no modification at present.

8. The Taluka Local Boards are never consulted in this respect. No allotment is made from the educational portion of the Local funds to Taluka Boards but the whole is managed as a district educational fund by the District Local Board without reference to the Taluka Local Boards.

9. To meet the growing demands on the funds of the Local Boards, the suggested measures may be adopted. But I think, there should be no uniform rate of cess to be levied on income tax and forest and excise revenues in all districts. For these revenues are not in all districts in proportion to the needs of their respective Local Boards. For instance, in Ratnagiri, where the requirements of the Local Board are very great, the above kinds of revenue is very small, particularly the forest revenue which may be said to be practically nil. While in some other districts the revenue may be more than enough for their requirements, and as it is not just to allot the local cess levied from the cess-payers of one district to another district, I think that the rate of cess should be prescribed for each district according to its own circumstances. In my opinion, minimum and maximum rates should be fixed and each board empowered to adopt such an intermediate rate as will suit its own case.

In any case where the boards' revenue is insufficient to meet its legitimate needs, and cannot be otherwise increased, the deficiency may be made up by increasing the provincial subventions. This increase would undoubtedly be an additional burden on the provincial revenues, but having regard to the fact that Government already makes such subventions in large proportion, and the cases in which the increase of the above kind will have to be made, will be few, I think the burden may be borne by Government in the interests of the Local Boards.

10. It is true that the failure of the local boards is due to the lack of interest on the part of Non-official members. This lack is mainly due to the absence of stimulus to them for the revenue of the boards is fixed, and the way in which it is to be expended is also almost settled. There is no scope for introducing and developing important scheme for want of funds and the board has no power to augment them by taxation, but must ask for Government subventions, which they cannot do as often as they had.

Measures preferred above for increasing the District Local Board Revenues, would, I think, go a long way to remove this cause and the advance of education will do a good deal for the rest.

11. The only addition that I can suggest is that of "title holders." Such men may not fall under any of the clauses mentioned in section 10 of the Local Board Act and yet by their character and influence, they may be useful members of the board.

12. For this purpose it will be necessary to fix the number of men to be elected from clauses 2 to 6. Groups of electors of these clauses should then be formed and they should be asked to elect an equal number of men from among themselves, who are eligible to be members of the board just as inamdars elect one from among themselves.

13. Having regard to the object of Government in introducing the Local Self-Government, if the President of a board is an official, the Vice President may be a non-official. It is true that it is not always possible to get such suitable men for this duty and the experience shows that in most cases the members of boards prefer to elect an official as Vice-President (particularly in the case of Taluka Local Board when the Mamlatdar is usually unanimously elected as Vice-President) but when it is possible the Vice-President may be a non-official.

14. The maximum of the assessment should in my opinion be reduced to Rs 20.

15. I am not in favour of allotment of any of the provincial share of land revenue and income tax to the local boards. I doubt if it will be a sound principle to allot portion of provincial revenues for expenditure for which funds are to be raised by local taxation. The present Local Fund Cess and the proposed cess on income tax and excise and forest revenue will be the proper sources for the purpose

16. I do not think that the proportion of one'anna cess to be allowed by the District Local Board to the Taluka Local Board should be fixed by law. The needs of different boards vary and so no hard and fast rule should be made for the apportionment of the cess, among the Taluka Local Boards. But the District Local Board may be allowed to exercise discretion and make the distribution fairly and equitably.

17. I think the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is a good one. It is a matter of common experience that under the existing election system it is not always that the best men are elected for the board, but such men can be appointed by nomination by Government. If the provision referred to above is abolished these men will have no opportunity to take part in this public duty. Further, these men are most awake to their responsibilities as members than the elected members, for, if they do not properly work they will not be nominated again, while the elected members can secure this election by any means. I, therefore, think the existing provision should be allowed to stand.

18. I think the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3, 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act should be reduced as under to widen the field of election as well as nomination and also to secure better representation of the various communities and interests :—

- (1) Rs. 20.
- (2) Rs. 2,000.
- (3) Rs 300.
- (4) Rs. 25.

*Substance of two Vernacular petitions dated 19-9-15 from the residents
of the villages, Varveli, Palset, Pomandi, Patpanhale and others
of the Guhagar Petha, District Ratnagiri.*

“The agricultural and trading population of Varveli, Palset, Pomandi, Patpanhale and other villages of the Guhagar Petha is about 90 per cent, of the aggregate population of these villages. We, accordingly, pay Local Fund Cess to Government in the same proportion. But we are not benefited in return for the payment. Because there are no members of our own on the Local Boards to represent us and to put forward before the board our wants and grievances which require to be met by the board. Almost all the Local Board members are Brahmins who do not care for the benefit of non-Brahmins.

We understand that Government is going to widen the powers of Local Boards. We are afraid that under existing circumstances such change will do us much harm. We, therefore, pray that the Commissioner may confer upon us the privilege of electing Mahomedan members to represent the Mahomedan community and Maratta members to represent the Marattas on the boards.

KOLABA DISTRICT.

Mr. G. A. Thomas, B.A., I.C.S., Collector of Kolaba.

1. There should be elected majorities both in District and Taluka Boards but the majority should be small and there should always be enough nominated seats for Government to nominate non-officials as well as officials. This is important, as the nominated non-official generally makes a better member than his elected brother.

2. There is no necessity in any district in which I have served for election by communities. The power to nominate non-officials, which should be retained, provides for special interests and classes, where provision is necessary.

If election by communities be introduced, I would suggest the addition of one member of each of the chosen communities to each Taluka Board and two additional members for the District Board, to be elected by the communities' representatives on the Taluka Boards.

3. The President of the District Board must always be the Collector. He alone has sufficient authority, knowledge and power to inspire confidence. He is above suspicion of prejudice or self-interest. His experience of other districts will be most valuable, especially in backward districts. To remove him from the position of President would be to place him at a greater distance from the welfare of the people under his charge.

The President of the Taluka Board should preferably be a non-official, but sentiment should never be sacrificed to efficiency and if a thoroughly reliable, capable and energetic non-official cannot be found, the President must be an official. For the present at any rate the President of Taluka Board should be nominated. It is the general practice for Prant Officers to be President of Taluka Board with the Mamlatdar or sometimes a non-official as Vice-President. I am not altogether in favour of the Prant Officer being President of the Taluka Board. The arguments applicable to the case of the Collector and District Board do not apply with the same force to the Prant officer and Taluka Board. The Collector cannot be a mere member of the District Board, but the Prant officer can, and his knowledge of the district will be as useful in the capacity of member of District Board with delegated powers of Collector (*vide* section 62 of Local Boards Act) as in the capacity of President of the Taluka Board. It is impossible for him to spend more than 2 or 3 months a year in any particular taluka, so that the bulk of the work and responsibility falls upon the Vice-President and the dual control does not make for efficiency. I think therefore the Prant officer would be more useful as an inspecting officer.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and execution of work imposed by section 57 of the Act should be almost entirely removed, but this can only be done by a very great improvement in the efficiency of the executive staff and would necessitate the appointment of the Local Board Engineer on a pay of not less than Rs. 300 to begin with. If this were done, works up to Rs 5000 and all roads might be prepared and executed without an obligatory reference to the Public Works Department. Of course this means an appreciable increase of expenditure. An alternative would be to increase the Local Public Work Departments establishment by a special Local Board section.

If section 57 is altered as above suggested, section 61 does not require much amendment.

5. This is rather a difficult point, the answer to which seems to depend upon the efficiency and reliability of the boards. Generally speaking, I think the District Board should continue to prepare and sanction a schedule of the staff to be maintained by the Taluka Board and to perform the other functions prescribed in section 58 of the Act, except that the actual engagement of purely local employees drawing less than a fixed pay, whether temporary or permanent, should be left to the Taluka Board. This I think would be specially necessary if the District Board takes over the entire control of primary schools, as the number of masters even in a small district would be too many for a single District Committee to control.

The District Board should continue to apportion to Local Fund revenues among the Taluka Board, reserving for its own expenditure less than has usually been the case. It should prescribe the percentage of expenditure by the Taluka Board under different main heads, but within their limits the latter should frame their own estimates without submitting them for sanction. Re-appropriations, however from one main head to another should not be allowed above a certain figure without the District Board's sanction.

Certain heads of expenditure, such as Veterinary dispensaries and particularly the construction of new roads which involves a question of policy, should be kept within the hands of the District Board, which should also maintain a discretionary reserve for making special grants to the Taluka Boards for special purposes.

6. My answer is in the affirmative, although I fear there may be some little loss of efficiency at first. I think that the Taluka Board should have as large as possible a control over the primary schools in their jurisdiction. I would vest in them the power to appoint, dismiss, promote and punish (subject to an appeal to the District Board) all primary school masters drawing less than a fixed salary; to open and close new schools and to aid private schools. I would however not entrust them with further powers. Questions of local educational policy such as maintenance of rural standards should be decided by the District Board, who should also appoint, dismiss, &c., the higher paid teachers and should arrange for an annual inter-transfer of teachers between talukas. The District Board should employ an Educational Inspector in addition to Government inspection. In all questions of general policy however the District Board should be subject to Government orders.

7. I suggest the following alterations and modifications in the rules framed under section 48 (b) of the Act:—

Rule 2.—The rates should be sanctioned by the District Board subject to Commissioner's approval. Grants-in-aid to private schools should be made by Taluka Board.

Rule 5.—The previous approval of Government might be dispensed with.

Rule 7.—The administration of Local Board schools should be conducted by the District and Taluka Boards instead of by the Government Educational Department subject to the restrictions suggested in para. 787 of the Royal Decentralisation Committee's report. All punishments should, I think, be inflicted by the Taluka Board Educational Committees in the case of teachers engaged by them with an appeal to the President, District Board, and in the case of teachers appointed by the District Board, by that body without appeal beyond the President.

Rule 8.—Taluka Boards should fix grants-in-aid to private schools within their jurisdiction according to rules prescribed by the District Board.

Rule 9.—Inspections by officers of the Government Educational Department should for the present continue in addition to inspections by the educational staff employed by the District Board.

Rule 11.—Para. 1. Complaints, &c, should be addressed to the District Board.

Para. 2 should be deleted.

Rule 12.—Annual reports should be made by the District Board Educational Inspector to the District Board. If inspections are also made by Government inspectors, as I think desirable at first, their reports should be sent to the District Board and a copy to the Director of Public Instruction for making remarks and suggestions to the District Board.

Rule 13.—For District Local Board substitute Taluka Local Board and for Government Educational Inspector and Director of Public Instruction substitute President, District Board.

Rule 14.—For Government Educational Inspector substitute President, District Board.

Delete second para.

Rule 15.—So long as Government Deputy Educational Inspectors continue to inspect primary schools, this rule may remain down to the words "such board's authority." The rest may be deleted.

Rule 16.—Delete.

For Rule 17.—Substitute "Each Taluka Local Board shall submit to the District Local Board a list of the objects for which it has made provision in its educational budget-estimate."

8. No.

9. (i) Yes, but by degrees.

(ii) Yes. Notified areas might include two or more villages.

(iii) Yes, but the cess should be recovered by the departments concerned in (b).

(iv) Yes.

10. This is partially true. The chief cause is that non-official members regard their membership not as an "*onus in honore*" but as an "*honor sine onere*" The remedy is to increase their responsibilities, which must be added, as a necessary corollary, and to remove those members who fail to discharge their responsibilities.

11. Add fellows and graduates of Universities and jurors and assessors. Reduce minimum of pension from Rs. 50 to 30.

12. No.

13. The word "invariably" must be dropped, as a suitable person cannot always be found. "Whenever possible" might be substituted. So long as Prant officers are Presidents of Taluka Board, the Vice-President must be a thoroughly capable and reliable person. The post is no sinecure. If, however, the President is the Mamlatdar, the post of Vice-President would be merely decorative and a non-official might invariably be appointed, if in such cases a Vice-President is at all necessary.

14. The present minimum should be retained.

15. If the Local Fund Cess is raised and cesses also levied on income tax, abkari, forests and irrigation it does not seem necessary to make a division of land revenue and income tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards.

16. I do not think that the proportion of the cess proceeds, after deducting the educational share, to be divided between Taluka Board and District Board should be fixed by law. It should be fixed by the District Board.

17. The efficiency of Local Boards would certainly suffer if there were no nominated non-officials. The best members of the boards are usually nominated non-officials, many of whom would often fail to get elected.

18. No, except in the case of pensioners. The minimum might be reduced to Rs. 30.

I am of the opinion that the District Board would be more efficient, if it had fewer members. At present owing to the infrequency of its general meetings and the distance at which most of its members reside from headquarters the bulk of the work is left to the President, Vice-President and managing committee and this body often finds extreme difficulty in meeting. I am, therefore, in favour of as many of the functions of the District Boards as possible being transferred to the Taluka Board. It does not seem necessary to have more than one representative from each Taluka Board, who should be elected. These with the Collector as President, the Prant officers as ex-officio members and the Executive Engineer as ex-officio advisory member, would in my opinion constitute the ideal board. I do not consider a Vice-President either necessary or desirable, if a competent Secretary is employed. The President with the Secretary would get through the work of the District Board other than the framing of its budget, the apportioning of funds to Taluka Board and questions of policy which would all come before its general meetings, more efficiently and more expeditiously than a managing committee with members, drawn from all quarters of the District. This would throw extra work on the shoulders of the President-Collector and might appear a retrogressive step from the policy of decentralisation, but it would, I think, be for the good of the board. I would also in all cases delegate to the Prant officers the powers vested in the Collector under section 62 so far as their sub-divisions are concerned and make them primarily inspecting and supervising officers.

Mr. A. R. Dalal, B.A., I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Kolaba.

1. Yes. Elected majorities already exist in the Central Provinces and on the Sub-Divisional Boards of Bengal. They have been recommended by the Decentralization Commission. In my humble opinion no substantial progress in Local Self-Government is possible unless both District and Taluka Local Boards contain a majority of elected members.

2. I am opposed to election by communities as tending to introduce a further element of disunion among the different castes and creeds of this country. The object should be to educate the people to a feeling of community of interest and objects in civic life. The interests of minorities can be adequately safeguarded by Government nominating representatives of minorities and special interests whenever necessary.

3. The Collector must always remain ex-officio President of District Local Boards otherwise he will be dissociated from the general interests of his district in matters such as roads, education, sanitation &c. Moreover no non-official member would possess the general knowledge regarding the whole district which the Collector acquires by constantly travelling about his charge. The same arguments apply in the case of the Taluka Local Boards; but the Government may take powers to nominate non-official Presidents in selected Taluka Boards as an experimental measure.

4. This question is intimately connected with the question of finances and establishment. If the present meagre resources of the Local Board are increased it will be able to maintain a fully qualified engineer and in that case the existing limitation on the preparation of plans and the execution of Public Works can be removed. It is necessary it may be provided that plans and estimates for all works costing over Rs. 10,000, should be scrutinized by the Executive Engineer. The Local Boards should also have the right to call upon the Executive Engineer to furnish advice and assistance regarding the preparation of plans and execution of works on payment of the necessary charges.

5. Low paid servants such as Dharamshala keepers, sweepers, peons and other menials may be appointed and removed by the Taluka Local Boards. Temporary establishment which is paid for by the Taluka Local Board should also be appointed by it on the principle that the body which pays for an establishment should control it. I think the Taluka Local Boards should continue to send their budgets to the District Local Board but as long as the provisions of the law are complied with and the minimum balance maintained, interference by the District Local Boards with the Taluka Local Board budgets should be deprecated.

6. I am of opinion that the time has come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. The District Local Board should maintain an inspecting staff of its own with an Inspector for the whole District at its head.

There should be a further Government inspection as recommended by the Decentralization Commission in para. 754 of their report.

7. *Rule 2.*—The rates of salaries and allowances of teachers, establishment, &c., should be fixed by the District Local Board once for all with the approval of the Government or the Commissioner. Any change in them should receive the sanction of the Commissioner.

Rule 5—The previous approval of Government may be dispensed with.

Rule 7—The administration should rest with the District Local Board instead of with Government. The Local Government may promulgate model by-laws and schedules laying down rules regarding leave, allowances, pensions, &c., as recommended by the Decentralization Commission in para. 787 of their report.

Rule 8—Grants-in-aid may be made by the board according to the rules framed by itself.

Rules 11 and 12, 15 and 16.—Instead of the Local Boards making suggestions regarding management to the Educational Department of the Government the Government inspecting officers will make suggestions to the Local Boards which they shall consider.

Rule 13.—Please see answer to question 4.

Rule 14.—The site and plans must conform to the rules laid down by Government, in case they do not, reasons should be given to the Sanitary Board and the erection of the building commenced after receipt of their sanction.

8. I have no information on the subject. I concur with the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission in the concluding portion of para. 778 of their report.

9. A large increase in establishment will be necessary to carry out the above suggestions. To meet the increased expenditure I am of opinion that

(1) Local Boards may be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee. I am afraid this proposal will meet with a great deal of opposition. The limit of 2 annas should be very gradually worked up to and should be accompanied by a corresponding increase in the cess on income tax so as not to throw an unfair burden on the land-holding classes.

(2) I agree. The definition of notified area should be amended so as to include all important villages in a district.

(3) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on

(a) Income tax. It should be double of the increase in the Local Fund Cess, i. e., if the Local Fund Cess is recovered by one anna in the rupee, the income tax cess should be two annas in the rupee so as to equalize the burden on the land-holding and trading classes.

(b) A cess on abkari revenue is desirable and will not give rise to any discontent as it will not fall on one of the necessities of life.

(c) A cess on forest revenue need not be levied as forest revenue varies very much in different districts.

The same objection applies to income tax and abkari revenue but to a much smaller extent.

(4) Yes.

10. The failure of the Local Boards is in a large measure due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members. The progress made by these bodies in the course of 20 years is almost insignificant. The cause of this state of affairs is partly to be found in the backward state of this country in education and public spirit and partly in the fact that the resources of the boards are strictly limited and inadequate to their needs, their powers are circumscribed and subject to somewhat excessive official control and consequently there is no scope for the development of a sense of responsibility. Some of the remedies for this have been suggested in answering the previous question. They consist of wider financial resources, a larger and more competent establishment, increased powers and consequently increased responsibilities. It is possible that the increased powers such as administration of primary schools will result in some loss of efficiency, for the time being at any rate, but the question is to be looked at from what may be called the statesman's as well as the administrator's point of view and if some loss of efficiency results in educating the people to manage their own local affairs it must be regarded as the price which necessarily has to be paid.

11. The franchise may be extended to the persons mentioned in the District Municipal Act section 12 (a), (b), (c) and (d) and to every holder of an honorary title.

12. Such groups will be extremely difficult, if not impossible to form; nor is such a step necessary.

13. It is desirable that Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials if there are any men fit and willing to undertake the duties available in the Taluka; but a hard and fast rule that Vice-Presidents should invariably be non-officials will give rise to difficulties in talukas where properly qualified men are not available.

14. The Record of Rights does not reduce the size of the holdings, it only records all holdings however small according to the fact of possession.

15. It is proposed to levy a further cess on the land revenue and income tax and not to trench on the provincial shares of these imports themselves and thus reduce the income of the Local Government (please see answer to question 9).

16. The proportion may be fixed by law. Half should go to the District Local Board and half to the Taluka Local Board.

17. The board should not consist of elected members and nominated officials only. There should be provision for the nomination of non-officials to secure the representation of minorities and official interests.

18. No. Such a step is not necessary at present though it may become so in course of time.

Mr. G. G. Desai, District Deputy Collector, Kolaba.

1. The experiment of having elected majorities in the District and Taluka Boards is worth trying. It may be tried first in the case of one District and one Taluka Board in each division in the first instance and if found successful may be extended universally. I do not think it would be unsuccessful and is very likely to make the boards more popular at least in those parts of the Presidency where the level of education is fairly high even in the rural areas.

2. I do not recommend election by communities and I do not think any fresh provision necessary for securing the due representation of any special communities or interests.

I think the present number of members of my Taluka Boards as also of the District Board in this district is sufficient and need not be increased.

3. I think the Presidents of the District Local Board should be officials for some time to come at least, but in the case of elected Taluka Boards suitable non-official Presidents (if available) may be tried. They should, however, be nominated and not elected for some time to come.

4. The restrictions imposed by section 57 (b) of the Act should be removed and the District and Taluka Boards should be given full powers in the allotment of funds and the passing of estimates for their works. As recommended by the Decentralization Committee the boards should have however the right to call upon the Government Executive Engineer and his staff to furnish advice and assistance whenever they think it desirable to ask for the same. The Local Boards should moreover be encouraged to employ their own engineering staff and this they would not do unless the restrictions imposed by section 57 (b) and also section 61 of the Act are removed altogether to a very large extent. At the least the experiment of giving full freedom in these respects to suitable boards should be tried without delay and its results watched. Necessary power may be given to the Governor in Council or the Commissioners of Divisions by law to exempt capable boards from time to time from the operation of these restrictions.

5. The control of the District Boards in the matter of Taluka Board servants need not in my opinion be relaxed except perhaps in the case of petty servants employed temporarily in cases of emergency. As regards their budgets, however, the Taluka Boards should be allowed as free a hand as the District Boards. Their budgets need not have to be revised or sanctioned by the District Boards since their allotments would partially at least be liable to be curtailed by the latter in case they are found to be needlessly extravagant.

6. Yes, the experiment in question may be tried at first in selected districts and the system may then be gradually introduced and extended elsewhere. Government should, however, provide adequately for the proper and periodical inspection on their behalf of these schools managed by the Boards.

7. Rules 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16 would have to be modified if the management of their schools is to be given to the District Boards. The powers regarding these matters at present vesting in the Government Educational Inspectors and their Deputies may well be exercised by the President and Secretary respectively of the District Boards Educational Committee under the general supervision of that committee and as per rules framed for their guidance by the District Boards who should also act as appellate authorities having powers to revise, amend or cancel the decisions and orders of the President and Secretary of their Educational committee if these have been duly confirmed by the said committee.

8. No, not in any district that I know of.

9. (1) yes, (2) yes, (3) (a) yes, (4) yes.

10. Yes. It is true generally speaking. The chief cause is that the right class of people do not come as members of the boards and the powers and responsibilities of the latter are not sufficiently large and great to induce such people to come in, want of sound education and proper sense of public duty in the people generally is another of the chief causes for the present state of affairs. However only actual work could give the necessary training and therefore higher powers and greater responsibilities should be given and then the right sort of people are sure to come in, in course of time even those who are dull and of mediocre abilities would in this way improve and be more active. If the powers are found grossly abused in any case (or if gross incompetence is proved) they may be withdrawn temporarily as in the case of municipalities or the individual delinquents declared unfit to sit on the boards for a definite period. The most important reason for the present deplorable state of affairs appears to me to be want of proper scope for the growth and exercise as well as application of non-official talent and ability and the only remedy that I would humbly suggest is "give them more real and greater powers." Begot in them the proper sense of their responsibilities. Deal with them sympathetically and with a view to correct and teach. Punish abuses and lapses even sternly, if necessary. But do not lose sight of or confuse the goal to be reached, viz., making them completely fit and willing to manage their people's affairs as if they were their own.

11. Yes. 'Graduates and fellows of University residing within the taluka' may be held as qualified to have their names entered in list No. I and consequently in List No. II also.

12. The question is not properly understood and hence no useful answer could perhaps be given. However, no such means occur to me and I do not understand the object of trying to find out the same.

13. Yes. Where suitable non-official gentlemen could be secured for holding the office in question.

14. I think the statutory minimum of assessment for the purposes of section 10 (1) may be reduced to Rs 32 or even 24. Land at present generally is valued at from 100 to 300 times the assessment and the average mean value may be taken as 50 to 200 times the assessment. At these rates land assessed at Rs. 32 and 24 respectively would be valued as worth Rs. 4,800.

15. I am not in favour of the division in question. I would rather prefer the levy of an increased cess on land and a cess on income-tax as means of increasing the income of the boards.

16. Yes; in my opinion the proportion should be fixed by law and may be in ratio 1 to 2 not more than a third of the amount available being kept by the District Boards for their own purposes.

17. I am not in favour of doing away with the nomination of non-officials altogether as it sometimes may be and is very necessary to supply the deficiency of representation of a particular class or interest or minority by nomination. I am, however, in favour of an elected majority both on the District and Taluka Boards. The number of elected members may be twice or even thrice as large as that of the nominated ones. By doing away with nomination in the case of non-officials altogether perhaps administrative efficiency may not appreciably suffer but this is in my opinion more a question of policy than of efficiency.

18. No. I am not in favour of reducing any of the qualifying limits in question.

M. R. A. Natikarni, Huzur Deputy Collector, Kolaba.

1. Yes. The time has come to justify the granting of the privilege to the District & Taluka Local Boards to have elected majorities. So far back as 1882 Lord Ripon's Government had laid down that there should be a larger preponderance of non-official members on the boards suggesting thereby that the majority should consist of elected members and this view was endorsed by the Decentralisation Commission in para. 78 of their report. It has also been recently resolved in Bombay Legislative Council to recommend to Government that the number of elected members on the boards should not be less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total number. Considering the fact that in the United Provinces the number of nominated members cannot exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number, and in the Central Provinces it cannot exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the total number, the proportion of the elected members recommended by the Legislative Council is certainly very reasonable.

2. Election by communities or castes does not seem to be advisable as well as justifiable. The payers of the Local Fund Cess are the most entitled to deal with the disposal of the cess and their election is best secured by the present group system. There appear to be no reasonable grounds to recommend election by castes or communities as such election is likely to introduce discord and disunion between the different communities which have been given a representation and which have not. There are certain large communities in the district not contributing anything or contributing on a very insignificant scale to the Local Fund Cess and they would, without a just claim, come forward to be elected, if election by communities be allowed. In certain backward classes we can hardly find a man sufficiently able to take part in the debates of a Local Board meeting. No useful purpose would, therefore, be served by giving such a community, however large it may be, the franchise of electing their members from among their own community. On the whole, the principle of election by communities would not be wholesome, till all the backward classes are properly educated. For reasons given above the second part of para. 1 and first part of para. 2 of this question are not required to be answered.

In order to secure the representation of the whole taluka properly, it is necessary to increase the present number of members and for this purpose I am humbly of opinion that each taluka should be divided into 10 groups instead of 6 as at present each comprising a smaller number of villages.

3. Looking to the present state of the boards I consider it quite necessary that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Boards respectively should invariably be the Collector and the Prant officer. These boards are connected with the administration of the district and taluka respectively and it is indispensably necessary that an officer having intimate knowledge of the district and also interest in the maintenance of its roads, sanitation, dispensaries, &c, should have the executive power vested in him. Also the co-operation of official circles is badly necessary and it will be secured by having an official President.

4. The present limitation on the preparation or approval of plans and estimates as far as —

(a) roads are concerned should I think be wholly removed;

(b) with respect to works five hundred rupees limit should be modified and fixed at Rs. 1,000, and

(c) the construction of works costing over Rs. 5,000 alone should be made over to the Public Works Department for execution.

* Of course the above change, if approved, would necessitate an increase and better qualifications in the staff at present maintained for preparing estimates and executing works. A more efficient staff with an increased cost will be needed and the boards will have to be prepared for it if they are to be given the above concessions.

5. I do not think that the Taluka Local Boards should be freed from District Local Board's control as regards engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants and sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Boards budgets. If the Taluka Boards are left to themselves to select their own establishments and pay them there will be no uniformity in the system in the district and every board will have its own way. It is sometimes found that provision is made for works in the Taluka budgets without getting plans and estimates prepared for them, and if the sanction and revision of the budgets are left to themselves such irregularities will multiply.

6. I answer this question in the affirmative, the Decentralisation Committee have recommended this course including the maintenance of the board's own inspecting staff. But I am

humbly of opinion that for some years to come the inspection work of the schools should be left with the Government Educational Department as in the case of Municipal schools. The other administration of the schools as regards teaching, discipline, appointment, punishment of masters and the fixing and payment of their salaries, allowances and pension contributions and the grant of leave to the masters, &c., should be taken over by the board. The schools are called Local Board schools, and it is but proper that the boards should assume the management of their own schools.

7. Rule 7 will have to be modified by substituting the words "District Local Board" for "Government Educational Department" in the last line of the rule, and adding at the end "In the case of appointments, transfers, punishments of masters, the suggestions and recommendations from the Government Educational Department will be considered by the board."

Rule 8 will have to be modified by inserting the words "District Local Board in consultation with the" between the word "shall be fixed by the" and "Government Educational Department."

Rule 11 should be dropped.

8. The answer to this question is in the negative. The distribution of revenue is made by the District Board to which Government communications, the total revenue assigned to the district and no necessary arises if consulting any Taluka Board as the educational portion is deducted from the total revenue of the district without regard to the amount that might be due from each taluka in proportion to its revenue.

9. (1) Yes.

(2) It is desirable that the Local Boards should be relieved of a part of expenditure on educational, medical and sanitary and other matters in important villages by establishing in them "notified areas." But in order to effect this section 187 (3) of the District Municipal Act will have to be modified.

(3) and (4) Yes.

10. Yes, it is true that there is lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members and these ten to the failure of the District and Taluka Boards. The reasons for this are that with a few exceptions, these members do not know their responsibility as members; that they never try to learn the actual working of the board's transactions; that most of them do not know what their duties and privileges are under the Local Boards Act; that they hardly understand that they are representing a certain portion of the taluka for watching its interest. Some of them become members only for the sake of honour.

Remedies to mend these matters may be briefly suggested as under:—

(1) They should be forced by law to convene occasional meetings of persons residing in the groups to which they are elected, enlighten them as to what is being actually done for them in the boards and ascertain from them their necessities and wants and place them before the meetings of the board which are held at stated periods. In short, the persons in the taluka should be stirred up to know their own duties and privileges.

(2) The administration reports should be translated into vernacular and copies or extracts of the translations should be furnished to the elected members with instructions to place them before the persons whom they represent by holding meetings at convenient places soon after their publication.

11. For reasons given in my answer to question 2.—I am not prepared to suggest any further additions to the qualifications of voters mentioned in section 10. But in order to widen their sphere I can suggest that

(1) The assessment limit referred to in sub-para. 1 of section 10 should be brought down to rupees 20, as under the Record of Rights Act the former occupancies have now been divided and sub-divided into more than one holding.

(2) The five thousand rupees limit in clause (2) should be reduced to Rs. 3,000.

(4) The fifty rupees limit of the pensioner's pension should be brought down to Rs. 20 per month.

* 12. Not answered.

13. Yes, it is desirable that where there are official Presidents the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials. But the change should be gradually introduced by pressing upon the minds of the members the importance and the responsibilities of the position. It is necessary that they should really understand their duties in their capacity as Vice-Presidents and should take interest in the work, otherwise they would merely be puppets in the hands of their Karkuns.

14. The question has already been answered in reply to question 11 by stating that the minimum should be fixed at Rs. 20.

15. Not answered.

16. Under the practice at present followed in our district the whole balance of the one anna cess after deducting therefrom sums required under sections 46, 48 and 49 is made over to Taluka Local Board and nothing is reserved by the District Local Board therefrom as the sums left after the above deductions are generally not very large and it would be an injustice to the Taluka Boards, if any further portion is reserved by the District Board out of the residue. I, therefore, cannot suggest any ratio.

17. It is true that by the abolition of the provision for appointing non-official persons as nominated members the administrative efficiency of a board would not in any way suffer and a board minorites or any special communities might not be left out of account, some unofficial nominations to represent such minorites are necessary.

18. This question has already been answered. Please see the replies given in respect of question 11 above.

Mr. Jamshedji Bomanji.

1. No. I should be excused but I have to differ from the views expressed in the Legislative Council recently. Personally I think the time has not yet come to have elected majorities, as I have found by my own personal experience in this district. If the attendance of the elected members be seen, it will be found that they take very little interest. In fact Government nominate those only who are apparently known to the district and sub-divisional officers as persons who are of thorough knowledge and who are energetic, willing workers. Those elected are not always willing workers. Generally they only get themselves elected for their own personal objects only.

2. Election by castes or communities does not seem to be advisable and it is not justifiable as well. I can also say with justification that there should be no elected majority also because there are a number of contributors of Local Fund Cess who are not able to understand their own interests. People of the backward classes who abound in this district in the Mahad and Mangaon talukas holding numbers of acres of land in those talukas as well as in Panvel and Pen talukas of this district cannot put forward a man amongst them to represent their cause. A number of Mahrattas of this district and particularly from Mahad, Mangaon, Karjat and Pen talukas are simply tools in the hands of their Sawkars and if a right of election be conferred, I most humbly beg to submit these people will simply work in the hands of those Sawkars.

As regards this taluka of Alibag I beg to submit the present groups are quite sufficient.

3. I consider the present system of the appointment of the Collector as a President of the District Local Board and Prant officers as Presidents of Taluka Local Boards quite nice, fit and proper. It is indispensably necessary to have district officers as heads of the boards because they are thoroughly acquainted with the requirements of the district and are intimately acquainted with the state of circumstances existing in those districts as they move about from place to place and see things personally.

4. I most humbly beg to submit that sections 57 and 61 ought to be altogether modified. District Local Boards should have their own man to look after their building, roads, &c. Work of unusual importance and efficiency should only be handed over to the Public Works Department. Generally all road repairs, constructions of new roads, erection of new buildings such as schools, &c., ought to be looked after by our own engineer, who should prepare all the plans and estimates also.

If the requirement of this district does not necessitate an appointment of an engineer, the municipalities should also be asked to contribute towards the payment of an engineer's salary and establishment as a number of water works in this district which belong to the municipality are also overlooked and neglected for want of a proper supervision.

I do not think the Taluka Local Boards can be freed from the District Local Board's control as regards engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants and sanction revision of Taluka Local Boards' budget. As a member of the managing committee for years together I have seen that Taluka Local Boards are generally found providing for works in their budget without plans or estimates and sometimes with insufficient facts or figures before them. Oftentimes they are found making various changes unauthorisedly and which is often brought to their notice by the managing committee of the District Local Board. If this control is done away with I think there will be a lot of confusion and irregularities in their budgets.

6. The Local Board schools ought to be under the control and management of the Local Boards just as municipalities have the management of their own schools. The inspection work must be left to the Educational Department as is the case with the municipalities.

7. Rule 7 of the rules under section 48 (b) should be modified by substituting the word "District Local Board" for "Government Educational Department" in the last line of the rule and a further rule 7A be added to the effect that all inspections of Local Board schools should be made by the Government Educational Department and the Local Boards should be guided by such recommendations as the Government Educational Department thinks fit to suggest in matters of appointments, transfers, punishment of masters and some such suggestions which the Government Educational Department thinks essential for the proper control and guidance of schools. Rule 11 should be dropped altogether.

8. I have no means before me to reply to this question, but so far as I know Taluka Local Boards are not consulted.

10. Yes. It is true. This also helps me in my reply to question 1. Some members come out for election for the sake of honour only. They do not know the importance and responsibility of their appointment as members. A number of them do not know the Local Board Act or rules and by-laws. They do not care to study them nor are they in a position to know the working of the board nor the duties and privileges under the Act.

I should be excused if I have to say that this can only be remedied after the education of the masses is improved. Unless people know their own privileges and what they ought to exact from these elected members there is no remedy. We have not come to that time and consequently elected majority will not help in improving the working and better management of the boards at present.

11. No.

12. No.

13. Yes. It is desirable where the Presidents are official Presidents. The Vice-Presidents ought to be so far as possible non-official ones. But this appointment also ought to be under some control of Government otherwise undesirable persons are likely to secure a majority only for the sake of honour.

14. No.

15. I am not in a position to answer.
16. No. The present arrangement is quite appropriate and works well.
17. I am of opinion that the efficiency of the board is likely to suffer if appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished.
 Appointment of non-officials by nomination is quite necessary as Government is so far careful to appoint such only who will honestly and diligently work for the good of the district and who are persons of known ability and intelligence. So far as my experience is concerned, I have found that non-officials nominated by Government work more diligently, attend more meetings and take more interest in the work.
18. No.

Mr. Mahomed Emus, Vice-President, Taluka Local Board, Alibag.

1. If special electorates, on the lines of the Mahomedan representation in the Legislative Council of His Excellency the Governor are given, then only Taluka Boards may have elected majorities. In no case should District Boards have elected majorities.
 Taluka Boards deal with matters which are purely local and of a limited scope and there is generally no risk of one community being outvoted by another; while the District Local Board deals with much important matters such as education and there official and nominated majorities become a necessity to watch over the interest of all communities impartially.
2. Election should be by communities. I may suggest that the constitution of the Kolaba District Board should consist of in the proportion of 5 elected Hindus to one elected Mahomedan member; while Alibag Taluka Local Board may be constituted in the proportion of 6 Hindus elected to one Mahomedan elected member as the Mahomedan population of this Taluka is comparatively much smaller. I think the present number of members is sufficient.
3. The President of the District Board should be official while that of the Taluka Board should be non-official but nominated.
4. I do not wish to suggest any change in section 57A, while as for section 57B the limit of Rs. 500 mentioned therein may be raised to Rs. 1,000. The limit under section 61 of Rs. 2,500 mentioned in G. R. 254-A-318 (Local) of 4th December 1885, Public Works Department, may be raised to Rs. 3,000.
5. As regards engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants whose services are non-pensionable, the Taluka Board should be freed from the control of the District Local Board. The Taluka Local Board should be allowed to sanction and revise their own budgets.
6. The time is not ripe for the management of the primary school to be taken over by the District Local Board.
7. * * * * *
8. The Taluka Local Board has not been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas. It may be mentioned that a taluka is being represented by its President and a member in the District Local Board.
9. * * * * *
10. I fail to see the failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards, but at the same time I must admit the lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of some of the members. This apathy, on the part of the members, is due to their admission to membership without sufficient safeguards. Those who take keen and genuine interest in public matters should be nominated or elected. As far as possible they should be permanent residents of a taluka or a district for which they stand.
11. No additions be made to the qualifications of voters.
12. * * * * *
13. In the event of Presidents of Taluka Local Boards continuing to be official the Vice Presidents need not invariably be non-official.
14. In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights, the statutory minimum of assessment should be Rs. 25.
15. * * * * *
16. The divisible proportion of the proceeds from one anra cess after deducting its educational share need not be fixed by law.
17. The administrative efficiency of a board is likely to suffer if nomination of non-officials is abolished; because it often happens that by nomination a board gets persons of marked ability who would otherwise be shut out.
18. As for reducing the qualifying limits in clause 1 of section 10, the reply is given in No. 14. I do not favour the reduction of the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 2, 3, 4 of the said section.

Mr. B. S. Suggékar.

1. District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.
2. Election should not be by communities. No provision need be made for any special community.
 - (a) The present number of members is sufficient and should not be increased.
3. It is advisable that the Presidents of the District Boards and Taluka Boards should be officials.
4. The present system of entrusting the preparation of plans and the execution of public works to the Public Works Department under sections 57 and 61, should be continued.
5. It is advisable to keep the Taluka Local Board under the control of the District Board as at present
6. I do not consider that the management of primary schools should be entrusted to the District Local Boards.
7. Taluka Local Board is consulted in regard to the expenditure on education within the limits of the Taluka Local Board.
(The opening of new schools or the reduction of schools is not done without the consent of the board.)

KANARA DISTRICT.

Mr. G. Monteath, B.A., I.C.S., Collector, Kanara.

The only general remark I wish to make is that I deprecate any legislation that would lay down uniform obligations to all districts alike, regardless of differences of circumstances. This, I venture to think, is a thing to be avoided in all schemes of reform. What may be possible and desirable in district A may be impracticable even if desirable in district B.

So I venture to express the hope that any legislation that may be passed will be so far permissive as to take account of and make all due allowance for the different circumstances of different districts,

1. Not in this District. Un-official opinion as well as official is against it.
2. No. For Local Board purposes it is more important that election should be for localities. In this district there is no special need for provisions to secure representation of special communities at present. Un-official opinion is against this proposal also. I do not, however, regard it as impossible or unlikely that the need might arise in future. At present all that is necessary can be secured by means of nomination.
3. No. Un-official opinion is practically unanimous against this suggestion. I would not be against a beginning being made in the case of Taluka Local Boards (assuming Taluka Local Board to be retained, and there is no suggestion for doing away with them) if the personnel were available. But with one possible exception it does not seem to be available. I would myself like to see the Taluka Local Boards done away with, the membership of the District Local Board considerably increased and a large number of works assigned to village agency; but there are difficulties in the way of making so large a change and perhaps, for the present, it is best to keep the Taluka Local Boards and at the same time as far as possible extend the use of village agency.
4. It cannot be modified at all in this district without so large an increase of Local Fund revenue as would permit the employment of staff equal in qualification to that employed by the Public Works Department.
5. Not without unnecessarily curtailing the scope of selection and chances of promotion in the first case, in this district. You want to be able to transfer for example maistries from an unhealthy to a healthy taluka and from a less important to a more important one from the point of view of Local Board works. In the second case I think it desirable to adhere to the present practice.
6. I should not object to this measure. If the inspecting staff were also placed under the control of the Local Board and a satisfactory arrangement arrived at as regards their payment. At present this board could not afford to provide any part of their pay.
7. I have no suggestions to make.
8. I am not aware of any such instance.
9. (1) Yes, in some districts. It would probably be opposed here.
(2) Yes, but in Kanara owing to the peculiar constitution of villages in most parts of the district the scope for such extension would be very limited.
(3) (a) I have no objection, but all it amounts to from the point of view of the payer, would be an increase of his income tax, and I do not know whether this will be considered a suitable time to make any such increase. In this district the resulting revenue would be small; in some, no doubt it would be considerable. Also in this district a considerable proportion, I believe, of income tax payers do as Khatedars of land pay some Local Fund Cess.
(b) I do not see how it is to be done. On whom is the cess to be levied? On Government? It seems out of the question for the Local Board to levy a cess on the results of tenders for contracts or bids for shops sold by auction (the latter in this district).
(c) Again, I do not see how it is to be done. Forest revenue is derived from contracts and from auction sales, the latter held at no fixed time and at different places. The proposal was made, a long time ago, by a former Collector, but was negatived as impracticable. The Local Board cannot very well levy a cess from the Forest Department. In Kanara a direct contribution is made of Rs. 10,000, by the Forest Department to the Local Boards. In this case and in case (b) a direct contribution by Government or the Head of the Department under Government orders seems the only way with these sources of revenue.
- (4) This I think is the best way, and the afore-mentioned sources might be drawn upon for the purpose. As observed in the note attached to the joint letter there might be inequality if the revenue from a particular source realised in a particular district was laid under contribution only for that district, though it might be said as between Kanara and Broach, for example, that the former district might get all that was available from her forest revenue and still be poorer than Broach, while the number and cost of works to be carried out and maintained is not necessarily in proportion to the resources of the board. I would like to see a number of roads in this district provincialised as one way of relieving the board and they are roads that ought to be provincial or general considerations. I sent up proposals a good long time ago, but have heard nothing of their fate and no doubt little can be done in the present financial circumstances.
10. The question involves a *petitio principii*. I do not think the boards can be said to be a failure, though Self-Government in the matter of administration of Local Board revenue has no doubt not developed as far as may have been expected when Local Boards were first started. The

amount of interest and absence of co-operation varies a good deal, but in a considerable measure it is true that there is not enough of either. The causes are two-fold. One is that members in the majority of cases with their other avocations have not the time necessary to take sufficient active part in the supervision of work. The other is the natural tendency to shirk individual responsibility in regard to work which is the concern of a committee, and for the execution of which there is a paid establishment. I do not know that there is any particular remedy beyond taking suitable notice of cases in which members do show active interest. Apart from this one must await the development of a better sense of responsibility. There are enough exceptions to the general rule to indicate that such development may be expected, and of course those members who are actively helpful are borne in mind and encouraged.

As above remarked I would like to extend the use of village agency as far as possible, to the extent if practicable of doing away with the Taluka Local Board and substituting village agency in respect of as much as possible Taluka Local Board works.

11. No useful addition in this district.

12. I have no suggestion to make.

13. I would rather see the President non-official and the Vice-President official and in any case think that either the Vice-President or the Chairman of the Works Committee should be official not from any dislike of putting more of the management into the hands of non-officials, but because it is very seldom that a non-official has the leisure to make sufficiently long or comprehensive tours of inspection. You must have some one who can speak both from personal knowledge and from an unbiased point of view in regard to claims for priority.

14. I think the present figure may stand.

15. I think it is desirable. The Local Board's share cannot be fixed uniformly for all districts. The question is one for the decision of Government on consideration of the resources, area and needs in respect of different kinds of works of different districts.

16. No. The circumstances and needs of different talukas vary too greatly to admit of fixing the proportion by law.

17. I do not think it would matter much, but would prefer to keep to the present system in this district.

18. No.

Mr. H. R. Gould, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Kanara.

1. I am of opinion that only in very advanced districts, and certainly not in this one, could District Local Boards be given an elected majority without grave inefficiency resulting. Not very many members appear to take even the small interest in Local Board matters that attendance at meetings indicates; and practically no non-officials take any real and continuous interest. Besides there is not a sufficiently strong public opinion to control a board with an elected majority.

2. I do not consider that election by communities is necessary. Judicious nominations should be sufficient to secure adequate representation of minorities.

3. I think that an official President of the District Local Board is necessary in all save very advanced districts and certainly in this one. Non-official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards would perhaps be desirable in some talukas, but I think non-official Vice-Presidents would always be sufficient. If a really capable Vice-President is available, the President exercises practically no actual control. He is only there to intervene if things are badly done. In this subdivision I do not think any of the Taluka Local Boards except Kumpta are fit to have an unofficial Vice-President and in Siddapur I do not believe it would even be possible to find any one willing to serve.

4. The question of the removal of present limitations on preparation of plans, &c., is a large one and must depend largely on the question whether it is advisable for the District Local Board to maintain a competent technical and supervising staff. I do not see why the present limitations should be laid down by law. Could not District Local Boards be allowed to choose whether they would maintain a competent establishment and carry out their works themselves or would continue to rely on the Public Works Department? The experiment of maintaining a competent technical establishment could then be tried by the boards in more advanced districts. I must admit I have no great confidence in the success of the scheme. The Local Boards will not, I think, be able to compete with the Public Works Department and the result will be their staff will consist of people whom the Public Works Department have discarded as not good enough.

The system of Local Boards keeping a competent technical staff is, I believe, in force in Madras and the opinions which I have heard expressed thereon have not been favourable.

5. I do not see any objection to allowing the Taluka Local Boards to control and fix the pay of their servants. In a district like this however, there is much to be said for the present system by which maistries can be transferred from one taluka to another. If the appointment was made by the Taluka Local Board the above ghat talukas would probably have very great difficulty in obtaining the services of a really satisfactory man.

The control exercised by the District Local Board over the Taluka Local Board budgets amounts to so little in practice that I do not think there is anything to be gained by relaxing it. The Taluka Local Board might, however, be allowed more freedom in the matter of re-appropriations.

6. I should think that in most districts the control of primary education might with advantage be given to an educational committee of the District Local Board. In this district the paucity of means of communication would probably mar the success of the scheme. The members of the committee who did not live in Karwar would probably seldom attend meetings of the committee.

7. I cannot at the moment suggest any desirable modification of the rules under section 48 (b).

8. The Taluka Local Board has, never, so far as I know, been so consulted as on occasion to do so has arisen within my experience.

9. I think the income of the District Local Board is even under present conditions grossly inadequate. I think the Local Fund cess might be raised to 2 annas in the rupee.

I do not think notified areas would anywhere be satisfactory in this district as most of the large villages are not compact. Personally I do not think notified areas are very satisfactory anywhere as they can seldom be efficiently worked. I think a Local Board cess on income tax would better secure the desired end of making non-agriculturists contribute to Local Funds. Whether a cess on abkari and forest revenue is desirable or not would depend, I should say, chiefly on whether these cesses could be collected easily or not. The argument that they would yield vastly different sums in various districts does not seem to me to be important. Receipts from forest revenue in Kanara would compensate to some extent for the smallness of the cess on land revenue.

If Government would relieve the Local Board by providing a good main road system in each district it would probably be better than increasing provincial subventions.

10. The causes given for the failure of Local Boards seem to me to be largely true. In many talukas the only remedy is to wait until a public opinion and a spirit of co-operation appears. In others something could probably be done by making the Local Board Act much more elastic and enabling the Collector to encourage the more progressive boards by giving them wider powers.

11. I do not see that any further additions are desirable.

12. I cannot suggest any means.

13. *Vide* answer to question 3.

14. I do not see any necessity to reduce the statutory minimum of assessment.

15. An increase in the Local Board cess and a levy of cess on income tax seem to me more desirable than the suggestions contained in this question.

16. I think the present practice should continue.

17. Some talukas are in my opinion unfit to have elective boards at all. In others I dare say a board consisting of $\frac{2}{3}$ th elected members and $\frac{1}{3}$ th nominated officials might do as well as the present boards, but I do not see that much would be gained by the change.

18. *Vide* answers to questions 11 and 14.

Mr. G. F. S. Collins, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Kanara.

1. So far as my experience goes, I have not yet come across any cases where District or Taluka Local Boards have suffered owing to the need of more elected members, nor any cases in which there has been a demand for such. As far as the general business of the boards is concerned, probably nominated members are more capable and show more interest. It is usually in the local inspection of works that a Local Board member has the best chance of displaying his use and interest, and here elected members can, if they wish, do as much as nominated members. The whole question must, it seems, depend on the desire for Self-Government shown in any particular taluka or district. Thus in Karwar taluka elections evoke interest where as little or none is shown in other talukas of my charge.

2. I can see no reason for election by communities, and think that it would probably increase caste differences, and produce the wrong spirit. It is seldom that any community of any size is unrepresented. Perhaps occasionally one finds a number of Musalmans scattered here and there in a particular area, who owing to lack of education and interest, might be unrepresented. But here again the difficulty is met by the system of nominated members. Care would be taken to nominate a Musalman. Nominated members are usually selected with a view to provide for most communities and minorities, and there is, therefore, no need of further provision.

The number of members is, I think, sufficient at present. Neither efficiency or interest would be increased by increasing them.

3. It appears inadvisable to have non-official Presidents, in this district at present. It is necessary above all things, at any rate in the case of Taluka Local Board Presidents, that they should travel all round their respective areas, and this is practically impossible in Kanara.

4. In this district it is generally agreed that it is advisable to get as many works as possible executed by the Public Works Department owing to the paucity of contractors, labour conditions &c, and I have, therefore, no limitation to propose.

5. (a) *Taluka Local Board Servants.*—These are usually of the same kind in all talukas, e.g., Dharmshalla sweepers, dispensary servants, &c. It seems advisable to have an uniform scale throughout the district, and the control by the District Local Board is, therefore, neither inappropriate or irksome. Recommendations made in special cases by Taluka Local Boards are almost invariably accepted.

(b) *Taluka Local Board Budgets.*—The control in this case does not appear irksome. It is merely formal such as the control of the Accountant General over all Government Departments.

6. Not until an adequate staff can be entertained to deal with the work, and the requisite funds are forthcoming. It is true that in England each County manages its own education, and that here it is a big thing to expect Educational Inspectors to deal with 12000 school masters. The service is, however, regarded as a purely Government one, and the school-masters would be the first to complain if the change were made. One may instance the present municipal control of its educational matters, which often leaves much to be desired. However, I think that if it be decided to make any change, which will give more control to Local Government, a start might well be made with education.

7. This is really part of the last question. It seems inadvisable to alter the rules relating to the various duties of District and Taluka Local Boards, and of the Educational Department, until it is decided to entrust the general management to the District Local Boards. I am not in favour of handing over any power as to educational matters to Taluka Local Boards, as opposed to the District Local Board.

The rules referred to deal with 4 main points - (1) appointment, transfer, pay, &c, of school masters, (2) curriculum to be taught in the schools, (3) opening of new schools, (4) building of new school buildings. One is apt to receive complaints that the standards taught are too hard, or perhaps unsuitable for certain places, and it is possible that the general curriculum laid down may not be suitable for all localities. Local Boards might have the power of making this simpler in rural schools up to 3 standards, but not of course in full primary schools. Though the opening of new schools rests nominally with the Local Boards, it is often largely in the hands of the Educational Inspector, who provides the masters. Similarly in the building of new schools, which is perhaps the most important thing at present, it is sometimes irksome to have to conform to the views of the Educational Inspector or Sanitary Engineer. There are e.g., in this sub-division many cases where villagers have collected a number for building new schools, and these have been lying in Saving Banks for long periods. It is, however, essential that some plan of sanitation should be followed in constructing the buildings.

8. No remarks

9. (1) I am in favour of the principle of a two anna cess, but whether it should be applied immediately to all districts of talukas seems to be a matter of doubt. In some places the lack of funds has reached such a point that after providing for the yearly repairs to roads, water works, education, &c., there is little or nothing left for original works, which have to depend on contributions raised. Some talukas, e.g., in this district have very fair balances, and can construct a fair number of original works. There is also the difficulty that some villages have so far received very much more than their share of the funds, and the other villages would not welcome an increase of the cess, unless it was assured that they would receive direct benefit from it. Even allowing for the general advantages of better communications, opportunities for education &c., there are some villages which have benefited little so far. It might be worth while considering the advisability of starting village Panchayats, where such were likely to be advantageous, for the performance of purely local works, such as village roads, wells, sanitation, and the like. To such panchayats direct grants from the increased funds resulting from the two anna cess up to say half the village share might be given to spend in this way. Such panchayats would be similar to the parish councils in England.

(2) The number of notified areas might well be increased. At present it is the custom for Local Boards to spend large sums on the larger villages, and on taluka or petha head quarters. One finds 2-4 sweepers, paid out of Local Funds, four or five schools in each of such places, and it is necessary for the people to realise that they are getting more than their share of Local Funds, and should contribute. A cess on income tax would help in this respect, but is insufficient in itself. There remain still the ordinary trading classes and shop keepers. Under the Small Local Funds Act provision has been made for a shop tax, but this has not yet been levied. Many of these people who now avoid their liabilities, would have to subscribe where there were notified areas.

(3) (a) For reasons stated in the last section, I am in favour of a cess on income tax.

(b) and (c) As the amounts raised by such cesses would vary so largely in each district, it does not seem advisable to levy them generally. It might be considered whether a certain limit could not be fixed in each case. In Kanara, e.g., over a lakh would result from a one anna cess on forests. The limit might be kept down to one or two thousand rupees.

(4) Provincial subscriptions are already expected for every conceivable project, and I do not see any reason for increasing them beyond the proposals mentioned under headings (3) a, b and c.

10. It is only natural that most of the non-official members cannot take a large part in deciding the larger questions relating to the general management of funds, audits, supervision of Local Board staff, &c, as this needs an organized office. Their opportunity for active co-operation is the inspection of works and the Works Committee meetings. And here they seldom show active interest by, e.g., thorough inspection of works in their respective areas, and reports on such inspections. They

seldom investigate and report the needs of the areas they investigate, and these are usually discovered by local representations to touring officers. Co-operation might, I think, be increased by measures calculated to improve these and other committees.

11 and 14. If it be decided to extend the powers and functions of Local Boards, it is, I think desirable to increase the number of voters, and in that case the Record of Rights might well be used to determine the status of agricultural voters, and the minimum of assessment lowered from Rs. 48. There are, however, cases, e.g., in the Konkan where owing to the demand for land, certain of the more respectable agriculturists have no lands of their own, and rent lands up to a considerable value. Whether such men should or should not be excluded would have to be considered.

The minimum of Rs. 50 pension to qualify a retired Government servant seems to me somewhat high.

12. This matter appears to be already secured by the system of nominated members, who are very often traders, retired Government servants, members of committees otherwise unrepresented.

13. The Vice-President is even more important than the President as regards Taluka Local Boards, and it is essential that he should travel all over the taluka. This cannot be the case at present with elected Vice-Presidents. Until the amendment in the Act, by which they can draw travelling allowance, is passed, it seems inadvisable to have them in any district.

The Hon. Mr. Patel's questions.

These are mostly repetitions of former questions and I have no remarks to make.

Mr. K. V. Joshi, Huzur Deputy Collector, Kavara.

I beg to observe that one suggestion which I remember to have read in 'Times of India' as regards the extension of the term of office from three years to five years has not been taken into consideration in these questions. In my humble opinion it is worth thinking. The extension will I hope create more interest and zeal in the work on the part of non-official members.

1 No.

2. There should be no election by communities, nor is there any necessity for any provision to be made to secure the due representation of any special communities or interests, for the right of nomination by Government enables sufficiently the latter to see that the special communities or interests are properly represented on boards.

3 It is not advisable as yet that the Presidents of District Board or Taluka Boards should be non-officials, for it is the officials who are, by their direct contact with the rayats in the district or sub-division, in a better position to know the needs of the rayats and their importance. There may be forthcoming in some quarters influential men for these posts, but their knowledge of the district or of a sub-division will be confined to a very narrow sphere as compared with that of officials.

4. There are at present qualified Sub-Overseers attached to almost all the Taluka Local Boards besides Overseers working under District Local Board. Therefore, where such agency exists the present limitation requires modification. It may be fixed at Rs. 1,000 in case of works and at Rs. 150 per mile in the case of roads.

5 I think that the Taluka Local Board can be freed from District Local Board in connection with the appointments, dismissal, &c. of petty menial servants such as care-takers of Dharmashallas, ferry servants, &c. As regards sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets the present control of District Local Board should in my opinion continue; for in the meetings of the latter there is an opportunity again to examine them from the point of urgency and importance of the works entered therein which examination is facilitated by the personal knowledge of the Presidents of Taluka Local Board who always represent them on District Local Board and of members who are returned by such boards to District Local Board.

6. I think that time has not yet come for entrusting District Local Board with the management of primary schools.

7. But I think the rules 7, 8, 13 and 14 of the rules under section 48 (b) may be modified. District Local Board should have a voice in the administration of Local Board schools as regards teaching, discipline &c. (referred to in rule 7). Also the sanction of District Local Board should be necessary before the amount of the grant in aid is given to any private school. As regards school buildings and selection of sites (rules 13 and 14) District Local Board should have a final word in the matter, because that body has members on it who know better the local circumstances.

8. I know of no instance in which revenue raised by one Taluka Local Board is spent in areas outside that Taluka Local Board.

9. To meet the extra expenditure due to the carrying out of some suggestions additional resources are necessary. They may be the following:—

(1) Raising of Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee.

(2) Setting free a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters in important villages by establishing notified areas in them.

(3) Levy of a cess on (a) abkari revenue, (b) forest revenue.

I do not recommend the levy of this cess on income tax because I believe that the whole of it is added to the famine fund of the country.

(4) Increase in Provincial subventions for educational purposes and for expenditure on roads which Local Boards are unable to construct or maintain.

10 It is in my experience true that there is lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of non-official members. The causes are in general want of sufficient education among the persons from among whom they come, of idea that by performing the duties entrusted to them they serve the country for its better, and of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice which are essential qualifications for due performance of a public duty. The remedies will come of themselves in course of time as the general education improves and civilization spreads in rural areas.

11. I would recommend the addition of holders of cash allowances in receipt of Rs. 100 and above per annum. I make this recommendation, because such holders are generally Deshmukhs, Deshpandes, Mokashies, Kajies, Mullas &c. All these men come from high ancestral families.

12. It does not seem advisable to form separate Groups of electors for each of the classes 2 to 6 in section 10. There may be a case for forming one group for classes 2 to 5 if it be found that these classes are debarred from securing representation on Taluka Local Boards due to causes over which they have no control. As for Patels, each village has at least one Patel and many of them are landholders who are qualified for election under clause (1).

13. It should not be an invariable rule that Vice-Presidents should be non-officials on Taluka Local Boards, Presidents of which are officials.

14. The statutory minimum of assessment may be reduced to Rs. 24; for it has been found on an average in Deshi tracks that the number of Khatedars is generally doubled on account of the introduction of Record of Rights.

15. I think that it is not desirable that the provincial share should be fixed. It should be elastic to be increased or decreased according to the requirements of a particular District Local Board. As for share in the income tax I am not in favour of the division for the reason given in my answer No. 9 (3) above.

16. No. The discretion with District Local Board should remain as it is.

17. The appointments of non-officials by nomination are necessary to secure representation of special communities and interests.

18. As to qualifications I have said above that the minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 24. The minimum value of immovable property (clause 2) should, I think, be reduced to Rs. 1,000, for in rural areas the number of persons who own such immovable property of the value of Rs. 5,000 and above are very few. In the case of pensioners I would propose the limit of Rs. 20 for the very reason. I do not think that any alteration is necessary for persons in clause (3).

Mr. J. B. Garde, Mamlatdar, Karwar.

1. The present constitution of the Board has been in existence for the last 30 years: it was fully tried and there need be no hesitation in pronouncing upon its success or otherwise now: education has advanced considerably during these 30 years. Only elected members may now safely be entrusted with management of the board without any guiding force: so long as officials, and the nominated are kept in the board, the elected have reason to evade work: how and what to do they well know after so full an experience: it is not unfair to leave the entire management of the board in non-official elected hands. They are competent to work.

Local self-Government of diluted form may now be abandoned: opportunity to show real ability with unfettered independence may be given to the board.

Influence of officials is felt in spite of the majority or no majority: a trial to a new scheme of managing these Local Boards by independent element may be introduced.

2. Trade, Bar, moneyed interests, landed interests, backward classes—may be the units of election. The old geographical ward system may be replaced.

The present number is also large: it may be reduced.

The Karwar Taluka Board may compose of the following:—

- (1) Mr. V. A. Coelho, representing trade.
- (2) Mr. D. B. Nadkarni or any other pleader representing the Bar.
- (3) Khan Sahib Dadabhai or some other Sawkar representing moneyed interest.
- (4) One of the Habbus or a good gentleman of the Mahomedan community be for the backward classes.
- (5) Mr. Murari Malla Naik of Kinnar may represent the Maratha Landlord.
- (6) Mr. Kaikini may represent general common sense and tact.

This number is sufficient: the allotment usually conceded to a Taluka Board is not more than Rs. 2,000 and the fewer the gentlemen authorized to spend it, the better. Each of the above members spends ten times two thousand in his own concerns annually and he may be depended upon to spend the small amount of the board well. Fifteen members certainly are not required to discuss how Rs. 2,000 should be spent.

3. Presidents and Vice-Presidents should both be non-officials and elected.
4. Only buildings and structures costing more than Rs. 500 should be submitted for plan and estimate system: all smaller works should be left to the common sense of the board for execution.
5. The District Board should keep a share say one-fourth of the total revenues of a Taluk Board for through-roads and larger buildings: beyond this they should not interfere or control the work of the Taluka Boards.
6. Primary education may now be taken over by the State direct: it has grown to a proportion when it is beyond the funds of the board to meet. Almost every village has a school: and pay of the teacher alone is sufficient to absorb the whole Local Fund.
7. Nothing to say.
8. No The education share is spent direct by the District Board without reference to the taluka
9. (1) Increase of Local Fund from one to two annas, was recently raised as a question and abandoned: the addition will be unpopular. It is not desirable to revive the abandoned idea.
(2) Forming of larger villages as notified areas means imposition of octroi and other taxation: any scheme involving additional taxation in any form is inadvisable.
(3) Cess may be levied on income tax, abtari and forest revenue. The better course would be to spare a small part, say a sixteenth from the above revenues for the benefit of the board. Customs, salt and post may be added to the above list. The Post Office especially is a mercantile department of lucrative profit. Its runners and cars freely use our roads: in the case of ferries especially their requirements are held as demanding price urgency. Special fast boats are held in readiness at all times of the day and night: temporary bridges on nallas are especially put for the postal necessities: under these circumstances the post office may well be called upon to pay a contribution to the board.
10. Non-official members do evince want of active interests. It is apparently due to the active interest the officials take in the work of the board. Just as when the father is living, the son does not care to take interest in the family concerns; but as soon as the father leaves for good and the son is obliged to assume responsibility: not that the son does not possess the required ability but that he is confident there is a better man. So in the case of boards: so long as the work is being done by the officials, the nons must remain inactive. There is no question that they have ability but it is allowed to rot. The only remedy is to let the whole responsibility devolve upon the nons and the officials should retire from the concerns of the board.
11. It will not improve matters to lower the statutory minimum: even now the Local Board election is the most slipshod business imaginable: it is to be doubted if the voters know what they sign to. The advanced people look towards the election with indifference: the ordinary voters do not understand it: election principle is foreign to India and it is not assimilated though in vogue for 30 years: instead, therefore, of lowering the minimum, it may even be raised. But I advocate election by interests and not by geographical wards.
12. Nothing to say.
13. Presidents are generally Prant officers for 3 or 4 boards: they only control: the bulk of the actual work falls upon the Vice-President if he be a non official and the Mamlatdar an ordinary member, the position is awkward. I myself know such a thing in Mangaon. The Vice-President proved to be simply a figurehead: the *de facto* Vice-President was the Mamlatdar to control subordinates, to tour, to conduct correspondence, to keep accounts, &c., there is no better agency, if the present constitution of the board is to remain radically unchanged, than the Mamlatdar: a non-official does not succeed: if the non-official Vice-President is not pliant, unwelcome hitch is probably unavoidable.
14. Nothing to say beyond what is said in No. 11.
- 15 to 18. Nothing to say.

Mr R. N. Pandit, B.A., Mamlatdar, Kumta.

1. The inhabitants of this taluka are not sufficiently advanced in point of education to properly appreciate the system of election. The franchise is not much cared for by the village people who take very little interest in the elections. As a rule, there is no competition for membership. The subjoined table, the figures in which relate to the latest election, in the taluka, speaks for itself:—

Name of group	No of candidates for membership	No of qualified voters in the group.	No of persons who actually voted at the election
Holangadde	1	87	13
Gokarn	2	64	43
Hegde	1	43	4
Murur	1	36	6
Hiregutta	1	33	9
Kujalli	1	28	12
Total	7	291	87

Generally speaking the elected members are of an inferior stamp and the deficiency has to be made up while selecting persons for nomination. Nomination is, in my respectful opinion, necessary not only to secure the due representation of minorities and of official experience, but also to find place on the board for men of education, intelligence, influence and ability. In these circumstances it will serve no useful purpose to increase the number of elected members. The object is better attained under the present system than it is likely to be under a system of elected majorities.

2. It is, no doubt, necessary to secure the due representation of communities on the board, but I do not think that the time has come to have recourse to any special provisions in order to achieve this object. It would be enough if, as at present, this point is considered while selecting persons for nomination.

The present number of members of the Taluka Local Board which is 14 (exclusive of the President) is quite sufficient and need not be increased.

3. It will not be desirable to have a non-official President either for the Taluka Local Board or for the District Local Board. It cannot possibly be denied that the boards owe the degree of success in their administration which they have been able to attain; in a large measure to the association of these officers as their Presidents.

4. The condition that detailed estimates for works should be ready before they are provided for in the budget may, in my humble opinion, be relaxed so far as works of current repairs of roads, dharmashalas, tanks, wells, &c., the estimate for which does not exceed Rs. 50. There will be no difficulty in estimating the amount necessary for the work for being included in the budget without having recourse to a detailed estimate. At present the estimates are invariably stereotyped and are often mere copies of the estimates in the previous year. Between the passing of the budget and the beginning of the year to which the budget relates, there is ample time for preparing the estimates, so that they might be more in accordance with the actual state of repairs of the works at the time when the repairs are executed, than is the case at present. In other respects the limitations should remain as they are.

5. The work of the Taluka Local Board is in no way hampered by the fact that the appointment and control of its superior servants (the mautry and the karkun) rest either with the District Local Board or the Collector. I own, I am unable to see the advantages of allowing a Taluka Local Board free hand in appointing its own servants. In that case the help for promotion would be restricted and service will be rendered less attractive. But for the present system it will not be possible for the board to secure the services of an efficient qualified hand to serve as a karkun on Rs. 15 per mensem.

The Taluka Local Board may, however, be permitted to sanction its budget and re-appropriation of it subject to the approval of the District Local Board within the amount allotted to it by the District Local Board after reserving with it an amount sufficient to meet the charges in connection with establishment, education, medical aid, works in charge of the District Local Board &c.

6. I have no opinion to give on this point as I have no experience of the working of the District Local Board.

7. I do not think that it is necessary to modify the rules in any way.

8. My answer to this question is in the negative.

9. As I am not in favour of any suggestions which will entail extra expenditure, I do not think it is necessary for me to deal with this question. I, however, beg to state that any attempt to raise the present Local Fund cess is likely to be regarded with disfavour by the general public.

10. There is no doubt that there is a general lack of interest in the work of the board on the part of non-official members; but so far as this taluka is concerned I am glad to state that a majority of them especially from the nominated section of the board, take interest in the work of the board and actively co-operate with the Vice-president.

11. No additions need be made to the qualifications of voters.

12. It is not necessary to have recourse to any special provision for securing the presence on the board of members from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10, for, nominated non-official members are selected generally from classes referred to in clauses 4, 5 and 6 of this section and those referred to in clauses 2 and 3 find their way into the board by election. No modification of the electorate is necessary to secure the representation of any particular class. An attempt in that direction will have the effect of introducing unnecessary complications in the system.

13. It will not be desirable to make it a rule that in the event of the President of Taluka Local Board continuing to be official, the Vice-President should invariably be a non-official. It is conceded on all hands, so far as I am aware, that the administration of a board is more successful under an official Vice-President than under a non-official. I do not mean to under-rate the capacities of non-official members; what I mean to say is that the Mamlatdar as a touring officer has better opportunities of having an intimate knowledge of all the different parts of the taluka and their requirements and can exercise better general supervision over the works of the board which are scattered all over the taluka. If, however, the board thinks that there is among the non-official members a suitable man for this post, it has the option of electing him as its Vice-President. Such a contingency will indeed be a welcome relief to the Mamlatdar who is over-burdened with his own duties but in the interest of the board itself, it will not be desirable under the present circumstances to fetter its discretion in any way.

14. While on the one hand the number of voters is likely to have decreased with the introduction of the Record of Rights owing to the treatment of actual occupants as holders of land and the consequent division of some of the holdings of Rs. 48 and above into small holdings of less than Rs. 48 each; on the other hand, it is equally likely that the number may have increased owing to a holding of Rs. 100 and above, having been split up into two or more holdings of Rs. 48 and above or on account of the amalgamation of the different shares amounting in the aggregate to Rs. 48 and more of a person who was not a Khatedar formerly. This is what has actually taken place in some of the villages of this taluka of which I give below a few instances:—

Name of village.	No. of holdings assessed at Rs. 48 and above.	
	Prior to the introduction of Record of Rights	Subsequent to the introduction of Record of Rights
Midadalgazni	1	9
Masurkurva.	1	5
Kelginsthal	2	3
Halkar	2	3

The exact effect of the introduction of the Record of Rights in all the villages of this taluka can be ascertained by a reference to the village accounts, but I regret to say that I could not do so within the short time at my disposal.

However this may be, so long as the fact remains that about 66 per cent. of the total number of voters do not show any inclination to exercise the franchise, it cannot be said that the necessity has arisen to reduce the present minimum

15 and 16. I do not feel competent to give an opinion on these points.

17. My views on this point are given in paragraph 3 above. It will be seen from it that I am not in favour of abolishing the system of nominating non-official members.

18. For the reasons given at the end of paragraph 16, I do not see the necessity of reducing the limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2 and 3 of section 10. I would, however, favour the reduction of the limit prescribed in clause 4 to Rs. 30.

Mr. G. K. Kumble, B.A., Mamlatdar, Sirsi.

1. There is no elective franchise conferred on this Taluka Local Board and time not yet arrived to secure the privilege.

2. No. There are no communities which require special representation in Local Board affairs and therefore no communal election is called for for the present. The number of nominated members may be increased from 9 to 12.

3. Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be official as before.

4. The plans and estimates should be got prepared and reviewed by the Executive Engineer as hitherto, as the Local Board is not in a position to employ experts for the purpose, but the charges thereof should be reduced by $\frac{1}{2}$ of the present scale laid down in rules under sections 57 and 61 of the Local Boards Act, as they tell heavily on the finance of the board.

5. It is desirable that the Taluka Local Board servants should be engaged and paid by the Taluka Local Board only, with the exception of the Taluka Local Board karkun who may be lent from the Revenue Department as hitherto.

The Taluka Local Board budgets may be sanctioned and revised by the District Local Board as before.

6. Time has not yet come, I think, to transfer the control of primary schools to District Local Board, as the Taluka Local Board has not sufficiently advanced to take up the management of educational institutions.

7. As the Local Board is not competent enough to manage the school affairs independently of the Educational Department, no alterations nor modifications seem necessary for the present. The rules are known to work well so far.

8. No such cases seem to have occurred so far as my knowledge goes. Moreover, this Taluka Local Board is too poor to spare any revenue for being spent on education in areas outside the taluka.

9. No additional expenditure is required to be incurred in consideration of the suggestions made above and I have no proposals to make in this connection.

10. It is true that the majority of the non-official members of the Taluka Local Board do not take much interest in Taluka Local Board affairs and the Taluka Local Board suffers thereby. This is due to want of sufficient education and public spirit. If the majority of the educated and influential members be secured, I think, the defect can be remedied to a great extent.

11 and 12. No. The elective system is not in force here.

13. It is desirable that a Vice-President should be non-official, as far as possible, in case where there is an official President, but it is difficult to secure persons fit to hold the post always. In places where they can be available they may be appointed.

14. As there are many small holdings here on account of sub-divisions of holdings as per Record of Rights Act, Rs 3 may be fixed as the limit.

15. I am not in favour of such division.

16. At least $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of the amount leviable on account of one anna cess should be usually given to the Taluka Local Board and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd should be kept by District Local Board for educational purposes. This proportion need not be fixed by law. In this Taluka Local Board the amount of one anna cess is not large and even if the whole amount is allotted to the Taluka Local Board, as is usually done now, it is not sufficient to meet the Taluka Local Board requirements.

17. The present system of appointing at least half of the nominated members as non-officials is known to work here well. There are no elected members in the Taluka Local Board and the number of officials too, is not out of proportions (*viz*, 2).

18. The election franchise is not given here. However I may suggest that in (1) the minimum land revenue necessary to qualify a member may be taken at Rs. 36 (please *vide* answer to 14).

Mr. N. A. Nadkarni, Mamlatdar, Yellapur.

1. In District and Taluka Local Boards, it is desirable that the majority of members should be nominated, as unworthy persons at times succeed in elections by unfair means.

2. Election should not be by communities, nor is it necessary to secure due representation of any special communities or interests. A really worthy man, no matter what community he belongs to, is sure to be nominated. A non-official member is expected to take interest in the management of the Local Board and not to do any good to his own community or villagers.

The present number of members seems to be sufficient.

3. The Presidents of the District Local Board and Taluka Local Board should be officials and nominated. Non official Presidents will not be much cared for, nor will they be able to exercise such a control as official Presidents can.

4. The present limitations on the preparation of plans and estimates and the execution of public works should stand and no modifications in them seem to be called for.

5. The control of the District Local Board should continue, as Taluka Local Boards cannot be expected to exercise the power with that efficiency as the District Local Board can.

6. Time has not come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. It is still necessary to maintain the authority of the Educational Department in the matter of teaching, discipline, management and direction of schools and the appointment, promotion, dismissal, &c. No change in the existing arrangement is desirable.

7. No change is proposed.

8. No.

9. (1) Any attempt to raise the Local Fund cess to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee will cause much discontent, as most of the cess payers are poor cultivators.

(2) Notified areas where they exist have a very small income by way of house-tax, wheel-tax, &c., which is scarcely sufficient for sanitary arrangements, without grants from the District Local Board or Government. They cannot be burdened with expenditure on educational and medical matters, which is impossible for them to bear. Establishing notified areas will not, therefore, afford much relief to the Local Board.

(3) Local Boards may be permitted to levy a cess on (a) incometax, (b) abkari revenue and (c) forest revenue, if that can legally be done.

(4) It does not appear necessary to increase the provincial subvention.

10. It is quite true that the failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members. Most of them are incapable of realizing their responsibilities and even try to derive any pecuniary advantage whenever they can. If there is any real work to be done they expect the official members to do it. They try to be members for honour's sake and not with any public spirit. There is no remedy for this in places which are backward in education.

11. No change is necessary.

12. No.

13. There is no guarantee that competent and worthy non-official Vice-Presidents for Taluka Local Board can be secured in all talukas. Vice-Presidents should not, therefore, be invariably non-official members simply because that there is an official President.

14. The results of the Record of Rights has been the disappearance of the "Poklist Khatedar" and the word 'Khatedar' now means an occupant who is actually in possession of land recorded in his name. This may be said to have improved the position of the Khatedar and does not call for any change in the minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 fixed to entitle a land-holder to be a voter.

15. I have no opinion to offer on this point.

16. The present arrangement is working satisfactorily and no change is desirable.

17. Administrative efficiency of a board is sure to suffer if it is constituted of elected members and nominated officials for reasons given above.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1 to 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

Mr. V. D. Yennamadi, member of District Local Board, Kanara.

1. From my experience of the District and Taluka Local Boards I do not consider it desirable that the District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities, for the present. As matters stand at present the body of electors cannot be expected to make the best selections. The vote of an elector is more influenced in many cases by the moral pressure brought to bear upon him by the candidate or election than by any desire to contribute towards the successful administration of Local Funds. It will however be well to grant elected majority to the District Board of any particular District or Taluka Board of a particular taluka where past experience shows that the people of the district or taluka have long been accustomed to take good interest in the Local Fund administration.

2. I see no need for election to be by communities. In making nomination, care is taken under the present system to select men for nomination from special communities if members of which have not happened to be elected. In the generality of cases the interests of one community are not conflicting with those of another in the case of Local Fund works.

3. I am of opinion that the Presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards should continue to be Collectors and Sub-Divisional Officers. To decide to have non-official Presidents will be to deprive the District and Taluka Local Boards of the support and assistance of experienced and influential officers of high position.

4. It seems desirable to move the restrictions contained in sections 57 and 61 of the Act. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have full powers in the allotment of funds and the passing of estimates for works within their respective charges. They should have the right to call upon the Public Works Department to furnish advice and assistance in respect to the preparation of estimates or otherwise whenever it is found to be desirable to do so. In the matter of execution of works it may be left to the discretion of Local Boards to decide by what agency the works should be executed.

5. I am not in favour of Taluka Local Boards being freed to any extent from District Local Boards' control in matters referred in the question.

6. Time does not appear to have come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted entirely to the District Local Board, although it is desirable that the wishes of the Local Board should be respected by the Educational Department and they should be consulted when changes are sought to be introduced. The experiment may be, however, tried in any particular district where the intellectual and moral advancement afford a safe-guard for efficient management.

7. I do not consider any alteration or modification of rules to be necessary if the management of the primary schools is to remain in the hands of the Educational Department.
8. I am not aware whether Taluka Local Boards are being consulted or not as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.
9. It appears from para. 3 of the Commissioner's letter that this question is intended for Government officials.
10. The number of members of every Taluka Local Board in this district who take real interest in Local Fund work and in other matters connected therewith is very small. This may be due to want of self-sacrificing spirit and imperfect sense of duty. With the growth of education things are likely to mend themselves.
11. The limit of Rs. 48 in clause 1 of section 10 of the Act may be reduced to Rs. 25. The limit of Rs. 50 in clause 4 may similarly be reduced to Rs. 25. To section 10 pleaders and graduates of any University may be added as persons eligible for election.
12. For purposes of election each taluka is now divided into groups. If necessary they can conveniently be altered.
13. It will be desirable to have a non-official Vice-President if one is available. This is now done.
14. *Vide* answer to question No. 11.
15. Division alluded to seems desirable. I am unable to say what should be the share of the Local Board as I am not aware to what figure the grants made now and then by the Local Government come at present.
16. No hard and fast rule is desirable. The Taluka Boards should have a fair share.
17. No change seems necessary.
18. *Vide* answer to question No. 11.

Mr. D. K. Upponi,

1. I am not in favour of having elected majorities, in District and Taluka Boards, indiscriminately in all districts, because having regard to the circumstances which influence the elections I am not sure that all competent men will be elected. Advanced districts may be granted this privilege. As to what districts are so advanced will depend upon the number of educated people, who are able and willing to devote a portion of their time for public good. In that sense I do not think that Kanara may be regarded as an advanced district.

2. Election should never be by communities, nor to any extent should it be so. No provision need be made to secure the representation, of any special communities or interests. Because, the interest of the efficient administration, should be held to be supreme, to which should be subordinated the interests of any class or community. A person should not be nominated merely because he professes a certain religion or belongs to a particular caste. Competence should be the only qualification.

The second part of the question requires no answer on account of my reply to the first part of it.

3. I think it is advisable that District Board should have an official nominated President as at present.

Taluka Boards may have non-official elected Presidents.

4. I have not got sufficient information to enable me to hazard an opinion on this point.

5. My reply is in the negative. The present practice should continue so long as the Taluka Boards cannot be entrusted with independent management of their own affairs.

The management of the primary schools cannot be made over to the District Local Board, unless the inspecting staff are placed under the control of board. It is a question of some difficulty as to how far that staff should be maintained from the provincial revenues and how far the District Board should contribute for that purpose. In any case, unless the revenues of the board are considerably augmented, no greater responsibility should be thrown upon the board. Otherwise, I may say time has come for the purpose mentioned in the question.

7. The answer to this question will depend upon the answer to question 6. If the whole management of the primary schools is to be made over to the Local Boards, the rules will have to be so altered as to give effect to the changed condition. The inspecting officers of the Educational Department will then be under the authority of the District Local Boards. At the same time, some means will have to be devised to define and regulate their relation with the Educational Department. This will be something like the case of officers lent to the Native States.

Otherwise, no change need be made in the existing rules.

8. I have got no sufficient information on this point.

9. I am not to answer this question.

10. This is a very broad question going to the root of the Local Self-Government in India. A good deal may be said on both sides, official and non-official. Sympathetic encouragement, courtesy and toleration on the part of official will stimulate co-operation on the part of the non-official, and crediting the officials with a desire to do good to the people and respect for authority, on the part of the non-official, will bring about the desired result. Oral or written instructions on this subject are as useless as instructions how to swim. It will depend upon the tact and pleasant individuality of the officers concerned.

11. University graduates may be held to be qualified to be voters or members of the boards irrespective of other qualification in section 10.

12. I do not answer this question because it is not clear to me how men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10, who hold themselves back, will come forward if separate groups of electors are formed

13. Yes.

14. The present statutory minimum of assessment of Rs. 48 need not be reduced.

15. I think it is desirable that provincial share of land revenue and income tax should be divided between the Provincial Government and Local Boards, but I am not able to say what should be the Local Board's share. It will depend upon the amount the boards are expected to spend without having recourse to fresh taxation.

16. The proportion need not be fixed by law.

17. Yes; I think the administrative efficiency will suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished, because there are several non-officials who will not like to stand for election and canvass for votes. My poor self is one of such men. Therefore, the latter portion of the question needs no answer.

Mr. J. S. Pandit, Pleader, Kumpta.

1. My answer to question No. 1 is in the negative. In my opinion I think that time has not yet come to give elected majorities to the District and Taluka Local Boards. The ignorant and uneducated masses are yet quite unable to realize the responsibilities of voting in favour of worthy candidates and appreciate the privilege. The Government may be trusted in this matter to nominate only such as are worthy to hold such position.

2. In answer to question No. 2 I should like that no special representation should be allowed to any communities or any section of a community. If separate communities are allowed to be represented by separate members, the very principle, underlying the theory of election, will be subverted

By the principle of election from among general people irrespectively of the question of communities whither people will be elected. Otherwise the broad way of general election will be narrowed.

3. In answer to question No. 3 my views are that the present system of having official Presidents works satisfactorily. So no change is necessary. The official Presidents are generally more efficient than the non-official. They keep in touch with the wants and needs of the villagers while on tour and bring to bear all their official information at their command in all cases of hardship.

4. In answer to question No. 4 my view is that the amount limit mentioned in section 57 (b) of Local Boards Act may in case of roads be raised to Rs. 100 per mile and in case of other works it may be raised to Rs. 1,000.

5. My answer to question No. 5 is that the District Local Boards should exercise some control over matters of framing Taluka Board budgets. But such control is not necessary in the matter of engagements and payments of Taluka Board servants, because the Taluka Board knows more about the merits of such candidates for employment.

6. I answer question No. 6 as follows:—Time has not yet arrived to entrust the management of primary schools to District Local Boards. There won't be proper supervision over the staff of such schools and the chief need and efficiency of primary education will lamentably suffer.

7. In my opinion no modification is necessary for the present

8. As far as my limited experience goes I answer question No. 8 in the negative.

10. To question No. 10, my view is that official and non-official members do generally co-operate with each other

11. In answer to question No. 11, my opinion is that voter's franchise should be brought up to the level of District Municipal franchise. Consequently in addition to the qualifications named in section 10 of Local Board Act, fellows, graduates of any University, pleaders, jurors and assessors who are residents within the Local Board area for an uninterrupted period of 6 months may also be qualified to vote. This change will bring in an intelligent and educated element into the voting circle.

12. In answer to question No. 12, my opinion is that no separate election is necessary for classes 2 to 6 specified in section 10 of Local Boards Act

While I hold this view the first part of this question does not arise for any consideration.

13. On question No. 13, my view is that it should not be made compulsory for any board to have non-official Vice President only. So, no hard and fast rule should be promulgated in this respect. The question should be left open for the members to decide according to their good sense of discretion as occasion arises.

14. My view on question No. 14 is that the assessable minimum should be brought down from Rs. 48 to Rs. 32. This opinion of mine is based not on the ground that may be due to the introduction of Record of Rights which may sometimes increase and sometimes decrease the number of voters, but on the principle considered in entitling the taxpayer of Rs. 2 instead of Rs. 3 and above to become a voter in the municipal election as per recent amendment of municipal election rules.

15 and 16. The principles involved in questions Nos. 15 and 16 are of a far reaching consequence and therefore require a close study of the subjects. So any opinion given on these questions will only amount to haphazard answers. Frankly I must say that I have no opinion to give on the subject without proper study.

17. In answer to question No. 17 my opinion is that there should be in every board a preponderance of non-official members whether nominated or elected.

18. In answer to question No. 18, no further changes are necessary except those mentioned in answer to question No. 14.

Rao Sahèb G. R. Masur, Member, District Local Board, Kanara.

1 and 17. I am firmly of opinion that the abolition of the law providing for the appointment of non-officials by nomination will mean a disastrous blow to the efficient administration of Local Boards. Under the existing law, the ex-officio members and nominated non-officials form the majority, and the elected members, the minority on the board. I think this is only as it should be and I am of opinion that the present arrangement must continue until more educational progress and increased interest in Local Self-Government in villages can justify our claims for an elected majority on the board. For, if the administration of Local Boards has not been a failure, it is, I believe, mostly on account of the nominated non-officials and the official Vice-Presidents and Presidents. When the official element has ensured regular and systematic working, the nominated non-official element has made the administration what success it is, by its useful help and guidance, based upon acquaintance with the merits and defects in the system of working of the boards.

I am also of opinion that earnest workers may be found among the nominated non-officials, as some of them at least do feel the responsibility resting upon them, created by the sense of trust reposed in them by officers responsible for their nomination and they, therefore, try to justify the choice that is made. But the same cannot be said of the elected members in general. Among these, there are not, so far as my knowledge goes, many who considered either in respect of their education or their consciousness of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, are competent to give useful guidance and benefit the administration. There are, also, not many among them who feel that there is any responsibility attached to their membership and desire to help the administration to secure better work by interesting themselves in the affairs of the boards. I do not, however, mean to say that among nominated members too, there are not some of the type of such elected members, but this, I think, would be unavoidable so long as the boards have to be made sufficiently representative in the nomination.

The reason of the vast difference in point of usefulness as between the elected and nominated non-official members, is simple to explain. The nomination of non-officials, depends on the recommendation of responsible officers, and as recommendations are made by them with a view to securing help for efficient administration, there is only the probability, as often happens, of competent persons getting their seats on the boards. In the nomination, therefore, in most cases the competency of a person is often the factor which determines the choice made. But in the election it is not the same thing and I think it cannot be so until education has made considerable advance in the villages and produced men with ideas of common interest, desiring to study and exercise the privileges of citizenship. However, as matters stand now, there is a woeful lack of such men in villages and it may be, even in some towns. Under these circumstances, I am of opinion that if we seek to have elected majorities, it may not be in the interest of the administrative efficiency.

2. I do not see any need for election being made by communities, as any deficiency in the boards, which detracts from its representative character, is remedied in the nomination.

3 and 13. The answer to the third question depends upon whether we want official or non-official Vice-Presidents on the Taluka Local Boards. If we cannot do without official Vice-Presidents, the Presidents must be officials too; otherwise it would be a peculiar and uncomfortable position for Vice-Presidents to have to work under non-official Presidents and the administration, in consequence, might be a failure.

I shall now discuss whether in the interest of efficient administration of Taluka Local Boards, we want official or non-official Vice-Presidents. My opinion is that without the former, the administration is bound to fail. As we have it now, the Mamlatdars are invariably the Vice-Presidents. These are important executive officers of the talukas and as such they carry much

weight and influence. Even with these officers as Vice-Presidents, it is often found difficult to have quorums at the boards' meetings. It is almost under their pressure that meetings become successful; otherwise most of them would be failures. If then such difficulties present themselves when Mamlatdars are Vice-Presidents, the situation cannot but be worse when the Vice-Presidents will be non-officials.

This is one aspect of the question. There is another and it is this. If non-official members are found to be so reluctant to be regular at meetings, we should in vain expect non-official Vice-Presidents to wake up to the sense of their responsibilities in the matter of execution and supervision of work going on in the talukas every year. It is certain, therefore, that under non-official Vice-Presidents works will suffer considerably for want of inspection and proper supervision. But when Mamlatdars are Vice-Presidents, they find opportunities of personally inspecting all works in their respective talukas, being circuiting officers. In short, what I want to say is, that the time is yet very far when we may hope that we can have on our boards, members who would act with an eye to the importance of public service and realising the responsibilities resting upon them as members. Till then, if the administration should not suffer, we should have, without an alternative Mamlatdars as Vice-Presidents. If this should be so, we should have official Presidents only for the reason explained above.

10. I am not prepared to think that District Local Boards and Taluka Local Boards could be failures everywhere. So far, at least, as our own District Local Board is concerned, I know, as a matter of course, that it is not so, and I am able to say the same thing about the Kumta Taluka Local Board. However, when Local Boards are a failure, I can say it must be owing to a combination of several causes. To think that lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members, are the only causes of failure cannot, in my opinion, be wholly true. A comparison between the past and the present state of affairs of the Kumta Local Board, affords me sufficient material to trace some of the important causes that lead to Local Boards being either failures or successful. The administration of the Kumta Local Board was not known to have been so good as it has been for the last three years. So far as I have been able to observe and know, the causes appear to me to be:—

(1) The example of the Vice-President and his intelligent and keen interest in the affairs of the board.

(2) The President and the Vice-President's appreciation of the duties discharged and help rendered by some of the members. When, on the board, there are some members with a sense of duty and responsibility, the first of the two causes mentioned above serves a good deal to awaken in the minds of such members an interest in the honest discharge of their duties and the second cause supports and develops such interest. Under these circumstances, non-official members gladly co-operate with the official members, the administration becomes successful and an atmosphere congenial to the growth of co-operative spirit is also created. Then we may find, as in Kumta, even some of the elected members beginning to realise their responsibilities.

Among other things, therefore, the existence of a sufficient number of competent and earnest members, is an important factor in successful administration. Such members, I think, can be possibly brought on the board in any district. But this rests principally on the selection of proper persons by the Vice-Presidents and Presidents. And the right selection will depend on the close acquaintance of the Vice-Presidents and Presidents with the capabilities of qualified men, in their respective jurisdictions. The condition of successful administration, as I find it, is the existence in an unbroken string of all these circumstances. It is now, needless for me to say that the reverse of these conditions is the cause of failure. And such conditions may exist in certain talukas, inspite of all that the Vice-Presidents and Presidents would do to secure a better administration, i.e., when in those talukas competent persons with a desire to render public service are not available.

As for the means to remedy the causes of failure, I shall not enumerate them separately here as I think they are suggested in my explanation of the conditions that lead to successful administration.

SIND DIVISION.

KARACHI DISTRICT.

Replies received from—

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.

„ G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Tatta.

„ Menghraj H. Kalwani, Deputy Collector, Kotri.

„ M. Hesketh, Educational Inspector in Sind.

„ F. C. D'Abreo, Huzur Deputy Collector, Karachi.

„ W. N. Richardson, City Magistrate, Karachi.

Khan Saheb S. G. Haji, Deputy Superintendent, Civil Veterinary Department in Sind.

Mr. Dipchand T. Ojha.

„ Sheyaram Dewannal.

Saiyed Najafalishah, Zamindar of Tatta.

Mr. Walimahomed Hassanali.

Question No. 1.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—Before answering this question I would say that in my opinion any changes made in the administration of the local boards must not be of a peremptory character, i. e., a consideration of local conditions is essential before changes are introduced. I have had some experience of the working of the local boards of the Upper Sind Frontier District where the District Local Board is entirely worked by the Deputy Commissioner and all the members are nominated. The system works well enough at Jacobabad; but it is unlikely that it would be suitable for Poona or Ahmedabad and conversely whatever changes are found to be suitable for those districts would in all probability be out of place in a backward district like the Upper Sind Frontier. I am not aware whether any of the changes proposed are to be optional, but the need of working to the peculiar constitution of Sind Society is, I venture to think, patent. It is therefore necessary to bear in mind, as Mr. Carter has pointed out in his answer to this question, that the Sind polity is an aristocracy, and the raj is a complete expression of this. Much therefore that appears backward or conservative may be explained, and some times justified, by a recognition of this fact. In view of these considerations, I see no advantage in district and taluka boards having elected majorities. The natural persons to be members of the local boards in Sind are the zemindars, and where they are not elected, Government are only too glad to nominate them. It is a fact too that nomination is considered a greater honour than election. A tribal chief or Wadero does not care to offer himself publicly for the approval or otherwise of his social inferiors.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter—The question presupposes that election will be a desirable thing and insinuates that an elected majority will therefore be more desirable. One must therefore first consider whether under the present circumstances election is or has been productive of or accompanied by such results as would justify the acceptance of the first proposition and the consequential consideration of the second.

In areas where the irrigational settlement is enforced the nett result has been a swelling of the voters' lists because of the apparent heaviness of the rate per acre of the assessment. In spite of this very wide franchise experience has shown only in the current year that all except a very small proportion of the voters take absolutely no interest in the exercise of their privileges. In one rural ward in Ghorabari taluka there was not even a candidate for election. In one ward in Sakro taluka there were 3 candidates, one of whom withdrew at the last moment and another who withdrew during the day when his opponent had polled 10 votes. Out of the 15 wards in the sub-division there were contests only in 2 wards.

So far then as Taluka Local Boards are concerned, the question of granting them the privilege of having for the major part elected is quite premature.

On the District Local Board the majority is in essence already an elected one, when one considers that each Taluka Local Board elects its own representative to it. The correct interpretation of this kind of election must depend entirely on the local circumstances of the province or geographical merit. The zemindar-hari system of agriculture inevitably results in the local polity being an aristocracy and in Sind the raj is a complete expression of this. The present constitution of District Local Boards is thus an adequate parallel of local life and calls for no change.

On grounds therefore of both experience and practical consideration it is impossible to answer this first question in the affirmative.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—Yes. The proportion of elected members should be $\frac{2}{3}$ rds.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—The constitution of district and taluka boards should be assimilated to that of municipal boards, which have been arrived at in the light of experience

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—Both District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities in the proportion of 2 : 1.

K S Haji.—Yes. Two-thirds of the total number should be elected and one-third nominated on the principle followed in municipalities.

Mr. Dipchand.—Both the District and Taluka Local Boards should have a majority of elected members. The number of elected non-official members on the board should not be less than $\frac{2}{3}$ rd and salaried servants of Government should not be more than $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, exclusive of the President.

Mr. Shewaram.—Both the District and Taluka Local Boards should have large elected majorities; $\frac{2}{3}$ rds of the total number of members of each district and taluka board elected and nominated should be elected non-official members.

Mr. Najafalishah.—District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—Sind as a province has not yet sufficiently advanced and in my opinion it is not fit for an enlargement of the franchise. What is perhaps complained of is that there is more of official control than necessary and if this is removed the boards may be allowed to work more independently for some time. It will then be known if they are fit to have an elective majority. At present it is too early to judge if they are prepared for such a concession.

Question No. 2.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—There is no necessity for this: the services provided by the local boards are enjoyed by all committees alike. If the management of primary education were handed over to the District Local Board, it might be necessary to have some form of communal election. I am, however, opposed to the local board assuming any responsibility for education.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter.—For rural councils this question is unnecessary. The principal interests in agricultural areas which come before rural bodies are principally the maintenance of communications, the spread of a knowledge of simple hygienic rules and the provision of opportunities for education. There is little opportunity for a conflict between communities with regard to these matters and where a district is not homogeneous, as for instance in Karachi the barani lands differ in all respects from the Indus alluvial lands, the respective interests of these 2 parts are already secured by adequate representation on the District Local Board. The answer to the second question, therefore, is that the present method of election satisfactorily secures representation of all communities.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—No. There is no need of representation of any special community to interests. There is only one Taluka Local Board for the whole Kotri Division. I would prefer a separate board for the Kotri Taluka, Kohistan Mahal and Manjhand Mahal each;

	Elected members.	Nomiated members.
Kotri Taluka to consist of	8	4
Manjhand Mahal do.	6	3
Kohistan Mahal do.	4	2

The present board consists of 12 members for the whole division.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—No.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—Election by communities is not feasible. It has not been possible to evolve a working scheme for such elections in the case of municipalities. Representative public bodies should, however, be allotted seats in boards. The present numbers are sufficient. Large committees are obstructive.

K. S. Haji.—With regard to part 1 a certain proportion of the elected members should be Mahomedans. It is found from experience that notwithstanding a majority of Mahomedan voters, the non-Mahomedan opponents secure a large number of votes. As a concrete recent case I give the example of the Tata Taluka Local Board—consisting of 5 Mahomedans and 2 Hindu members; which elected a Hindu representative on the Karachi District Local Board. The due representation of the Mahomedan community can only be secured by the introduction of communal election. With regard to the concluding portion of the second part of question No. 2 the number should be increased according to local circumstances.

Mr. Dipchand.—I am not in favour of election by communities. At any rate in the Province of Sind with which we are mainly concerned, such a system will not be of any practical use but with regard to the due representation of any special interests *vide* my remarks on question No. 12. The present number of members should be increased having regard to the answers to the other questions.

Mr. Shewaram.—Election should not be by communities; due representation of any particular interests could easily be secured by nomination, as is done in the case of municipalities. The present number of members on both the District and Taluka boards is not sufficient. The number should be largely increased. At present each taluka board elects one member out of their number to the district boards. This should be doubled and each taluka board allowed to elect two representatives for the District Local Board. Similarly the number of the taluka board members should also be increased. This will facilitate work and also give opportunity to deserving members should also be in the work and to enlist as members.

Mr. Najafalishah.—The elections should be according to the qualifications laid down in sections 6 and 7 of the Local Board Act.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—A few years back almost everywhere in Sind there was a Mahomedan majority because Hindu landlords were few. Of late, however, a large class of Hindu zemindars has sprung up and everywhere there is a tendency of them ousting out Mahomedans. This is due to several causes. The principle of which is the power of the purse which they yield. In some cases it is complained that Hindu officials secretly interfere and succeed in bringing about a Hindu majority to serve their own ends; and it is a well-known fact that no one dare vote against the wish of, not only a Mukhtyarkar but even of a Tapadar or a Supervising Tapadar without detriment to his own private interests. I would, therefore, advocate that election be by communities. Each community to have a certain number of seats reserved for which each community should vote independently without any competition between a Hindu and a Mahomedan.

I do not advocate any increase in the number of members of a district or a taluka board in-as-much as members live at considerable distances from the headquarters of a district or that of a taluka and any increase in the number of members would increase the difficulty of a quorum. As I have said above, they must exhibit sufficient public spirit and administrative ability or capacity before they can ask for any extension of the franchise. At present the administration is almost entirely inofficial hands; therefore the non-official members have little chance of proving their capacity.

Question No. 3.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.O.S., Collector of Karachi.—For the present the Presidents of the District Board and Taluka Local Boards should be officials. I see no objection to non-officials being Vice Presidents of the Taluka Local Boards provided that they are nominated. The Vice-President of the District Local Board should continue to be an official. He is responsible for the finance of all the boards, and may be described as the permanent staff of the district board. An untrained and often changing non-official in control of the office would probably reduce it to a state of chaos in very short time.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.O.S.—The office of the President of the rural councils involve so much office work and so much work of inspection that no private person under present circumstances is likely to undertake the task and to be able to carry out his duties satisfactorily. When officials hold the post, there is a great probability, possibly only chance, of more satisfactory work being carried out. In so far as the question has been raised that Government Revenue officials are unable to devote sufficient time to local board work one obvious remedy is to appoint a wholetime official corresponding with the Municipal Commissioner in urban areas.

Mr. Menghraj Kalwani.—No.

Mr. F. C. D' Abreo.—The President of district as well as taluka local boards should be nominated, especially as it would be difficult to get men of sufficient education and independence in taluka headquarters to be at the head of affairs.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—The Presidents should be nominated. The Revenue Sub-Divisional Officers should be Presidents in rotation of the District Local Board, each officer holding office for one year, and the Mukhtyarkar should be the President of the Taluka Local Board.

K. S. Haji.—It is not advisable that Presidents of District or Taluka Local Boards should be non-officials.

Mr. Dipchand.—So far as Sind is concerned the Presidents both of the District Local Board and the Taluka Local Board should be officials and they should be nominated by Government. The Assistant Collector to be the President of the Taluka Local Board and the Collector to be the President of the District Local Board. The Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board who often performs the duties of the President may be a non-official elected by the members of the board as is done at present. The Mukhtyarkar may be nominated as a member of the board.

Mr. Shewaram.—As the majority of the people likely to come on the boards are not sufficiently educated, I am not in favour of Presidents of district and taluka boards being non-officials. With non-official Presidents Local Boards are likely to lose in prestige and status and what is more important in efficiency and broad outlook on the questions before them.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—The Presidents of district and taluka boards should be officials.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—It is certainly desirable that Presidents of district and taluka boards should be non-officials. But the privilege should be very carefully and slowly granted and gradually extended. A beginning might be made in the case of taluka boards only and that too in a few selected ones; as I do not consider the majority of talukas in Sind are ripe for the privilege. There are a few exceptions such as Karachi, Hyderabad, Naushahro, Sukkur, Larkana, Shikarpur, &c., where the experiment may be introduced tentatively. At first nomination must be resorted to. It will be a long time before the country is ripe for election.

In regard to district boards I would not advocate any change until such time that the experiment in regard to taluka boards proves a decided success.

Question No. 4.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—This is entirely a question of finance. At present the boards of this district could not afford to pay higher wages for their engineering and supervising staffs. The more efficient the staff the less strict the control of the Public Works Department need be. The time may come when the country will produce a class of engineers who will meet the requirements of local board work. At present the smaller municipalities experience considerable difficulty in securing competent men for a very similar kind of work.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—During the last few years the general tendency has been for the district boards to employ more highly paid Overseers in the talukas on whatever units have been fixed, though there has been no corresponding relaxation of the provisions of sections 57 and 61 of the Act. Such relaxation cannot, I think, be advocated even in view of this supposed progress because there has not been the marked improvement in local work which might have been expected. The payment of low "real" wages has always been admitted by economists to be a fault and the payment of such to responsible officers is still more so. I do not think that a local board should be emancipated from the provisions of these sections until it provides for itself a District Engineer of the same qualifications as Government requires in their own Executive Engineers. With the employment of such District Engineers the responsibility on the Overseer will be greatly decreased. In fact the Local Board Overseer would become but a maistry or foreman and partly from saving in the pay of such officials, partly, and to a great extent, from the savings on the works actually carried out there would be sufficient money at the disposal of the District Local Board to pay such a District Engineer without his salary being a burden on the general fund.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kulvani.—Only when the cost of a work exceeds Rs. 2,500 or in the case of a road Rs. 250 per mile, should the plans and estimates be prepared and approved by the Executive Engineer. When the cost exceeds Rs. 250 in case of other works in each case, should the works be executed through the P. W. D.

Mr. C. F. D'Abreo.—The question is whether the local board can afford the cost of a District Engineer, and if such an officer were of the rank of an Executive Engineer there might be a collision between him and the Executive Engineer, P. W. D., when the plans came to be reviewed. The object will be met by the appointment of an officer of the rank of a Sub-Engineer with a few Supervisors under him. If this scheme were accepted, then I would propose that the limit up to which local boards could draw up plans and estimates and execute works should be raised from Rs. 2,500 to Rs. 5,000 and that in the case of works costing over Rs. 2,500 the boards may be authorized to have their own plans and estimates prepared, instead of having them prepared and approved by the Government Executive Engineer and the approval of plans and estimates or works exceeding Rs. 500 be done away with and the limit of the works requiring the approval of the Executive Engineer be raised to Rs. 2,500 and in the case of roads to the limit of Rs. 250 per mile.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—The present limitations on the preparation of plans and execution of the public works should be retained until the boards are in a position to entertain competent staffs; but when such staffs have been entertained they should be abolished altogether.

K. S. Haji.—In this respect the views contained in Mr. Younghusband's No. 1165 of 24th June 1912 will adequately meet the question of giving a free hand to local boards and affording relief to the P. W. D.

Mr. Dipchand.—This question more or less involves a question of routine work and those who have served long as members of the District or Taluka Local Board will be in a better position to answer the question more precisely. But having regard to what one sees as to the way in which public works in the taluka are done, the local boards should have larger powers to get the works done without the unnecessary control and supervision of the P. W. D. The local boards should get their own plans and estimates made of all the works. A District Engineer may be appointed by the District Local Board who should supervise all the works, prepare plans and estimates and the Executive Engineer should approve of the plans and estimates over Rs. 3,500 and approve of the work costing Rs. 3,500 and upwards and if necessary a percentage might be fixed as remuneration to the P. W. D. for the approval of plans and estimates and of the work done under the supervision of the District Engineer to be employed by the district boards. I believe at present some supervision work is done by the Mukhtyarkar as Vice-President of the board and as he is layman and always with his hands full with other work the present kind of supervision may not be satisfactory but the District Engineer will be able to do the work much better and with greater promptitude.

Mr. Shewaram.—There should be absolutely no limitation on the powers of the District Local Boards by the P. W. D. in these respects. The District Local Boards should be left unfettered to manage their own affairs. To safeguard their interests and to carry on the works the District Local Boards should engage a competent and well-paid Engineer of their own who should be styled Secretary and Engineer of the District Local Board. He should be subordinate to the board and work under their orders, prepare plans, estimates and carry on all important works of the district. The Overseers employed by the taluka boards have at present practically no expert supervision over them, in many cases their works are inspected by Mukhtyarkars and members who are laymen. The proposed Secretary and Engineer will be board's servant and could tour about in the district and inspect their works and also advise the taluka boards and exercise thorough supervision generally. The Secretary and Engineer should be at least of the grade of Sub-Engineer or Assistant Engineer and should have sufficient staff under him. The check of the P. W. D. will be there all the same, as the Government Executive Engineer is invariably a member of the board and while on tour in the district may occasionally inspect District Local Board works. Thereby the Local Board Engineer will always feel the wholesome check of the inspecting officers and consequently himself exercise the same over his subordinates and the local board works will thus be maintained in the highest standard of efficiency.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—The present limitation on the preparation of plans and estimates, and the execution of public works can safely be modified by amending section 57 of the Local Boards Act which should enact that the road of which the cost is to exceed on an average Rs. 100 per mile or any other work of which the total cost is to exceed Rs. 2,000 and all work requiring professional skill should be approved and executed by the Government Executive Engineer of the district.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—In-as-much as local fund agency at present is inefficient and the boards cannot afford to have competent District Engineers as in other presidencies, I would deprecate any change being made until such time that the boards can afford to have a competent

P. W. D. establishment of their own. Under present circumstances, what a board can afford to have is an Overseer on Rs 50 to Rs. 100 a month whose plans and estimates have frequently been pronounced as defective or incomplete. But what I would strongly advocate is that all service by the Government P. W. D. should be rendered free of charge. A certain percentage is charged by Government now which in my humble opinion is entirely out of place.

Question No. 5.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I. C. S., Collector of Karachi.—I should prefer not to leave the appointment of Taluka Local Board servants to the Taluka Local Boards; but in view of the class of men now secured, I do not think that it would matter much. The district boards control over the budgets is essential.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—Experience can only lead to the answer of this question in the negative.

Mr. Munghrāj H. Kalwani.—The scale and pay of the Taluka Local Board establishment should be fixed by the District Local Board. But the power to appoint, fine or dismiss should be left with the Taluka Local Board. Every Taluka Local Board should have power to sanction and revise its own budget but should be required to submit forthwith a copy of its original or revised budget to the district board. As the district board distributes Government grants, it will be able to regulate the vagaries, if any, discovered in a Taluka Local Board Budget.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—Taluka Local Board should not be freed from the District Local Board control, as in the case of contiguous boards, there might be friction between them over a through road. Their budget too should require District Local Board's sanction, specially in view to aid being given by the District Local Board in case of need. As regards servants there is no objection to Taluka Local Boards appointing their own menial establishment. In the case of Overseers it is desirable that the appointment be made by the District Local Board as there are better opportunities for selection at district headquarters.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—Taluka Local Boards should be freed from the District Local Board's control in the matter of the engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants and preparation of budgets; but the engagement of local board servants should be subject to the sanction of the Collector.

K. S. Haji.—The engagement of servants and their payment by Taluka Local Boards need not be controlled by district boards; but the control of district board over the taluka board budgets appears desirable from certain points of view, and should not be relaxed.

Mr. Dipchand.—The Taluka Local Board should be given the power to engage their own servants and officers as it will lead to the efficient discharge of their duties and the supply of the wants of the Taluka. The budget of the Taluka Local Board should not be revised by the District Local Board but a supplementary budget prepared by the Taluka Local Board may be submitted to the District Local Board for approval. As regards the reappropriation of moneys from one head to another the restriction of Rs 200, as the balance in hand should be retained.

Mr. Shewaram.—The control of the District Local Board in matters of appointment and payment of taluka local board servants, sanction and revision of their budgets is simply nominal and may safely be done away with. In practice the Taluka Local Boards appoint their servants and pay them direct; prepare their own budgets but simply submit them for formal sanction to which the District Local Board in almost all cases accords sanction without any change.

Mr. Najaf-ushah.—The engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants should be controlled by Taluka Local Boards themselves. Taluka Local Board budgets should be sanctioned and revised by the District Local Board.

Mr. Wali Mahomed.—So far as I am aware the only establishment the Taluka Local Board employ is:—

(a) A local fund maistry on a miserable pittance one who is generally and frequently a protege of the Mukhtyarkar.

(b) Darogas and mallhis for road repair work or road side trees.

I am of opinion that taluka boards might well be permitted to make these appointments themselves. But in regard to taluka budgets I am of opinion that the district board should have a certain amount of control thereon as at present of approving of the same. This would be all the more necessary if the scheme of removing official control is adopted and the appointment of non-official Presidents is sanctioned.

Question No. 6.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I have nothing to add to the replies of Mr. Hesketh with which, I am in entire agreement.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—The question opens out the whole theory and practice of education. The three principal points for consideration are (1) supply of teaching staff, (2) organization within the district, (3) supervision of the work done by the school masters.

(1) The supply of the trained masters must remain in the hands of a professional trained body. Whether the Educational department or some such body as the National Society which carried out the pioneer work in England is to undertake the task is immaterial. The work is entirely beyond the scope of the local board activities.

(2) Perhaps it is in this respect only that the question has been raised as the Commissioner, S. D., refers to the fact that the Educational Inspector in each division is responsible for postings to 14,000 schools. It is, however, a fallacy, I think, to suppose that this work can be decentralized by making each District Local Board responsible for postings within its own limits. The clerical work will be taken from the Educational Inspectors' office but disproportionately more work will become necessary in the District Local Board offices. Further the interests of the masters will be very seriously prejudiced. Even at present it is extremely difficult to get trained men or untrained men of intelligence to serve in the mofussil villages. To restrict the field of service will prevent many transfers being effected which suit the convenience of the masters without prejudice to their duties, and will restrict opportunities for promotion and will limit the whole outlook of the profession. From the point of view of the District Local Board it would increase the burden of the revenue officials who are already (see question 3) hard pressed in performing all their duties. If, as is suggested, Deputy Educational Inspectors are transferred to serve under the District Local Board, the Educational Department might as well be abolished.

(3) Adequate supervision can only be carried out by men who are able to devote their whole time to the work. The transfer of the Educational Inspectors, district officers to the District Local Board would in a sense leave the district arrangements unchanged. In fact, however, members of the local boards from being honorary visitors of the schools would become persons in authority not to the advantage of the cause of education. Educational policy must be guided by the State and in the absence of any private supply of trained teachers the State must undertake to supply such and must maintain its own staff of Inspectors. Whereas in India, the state has created all the schools, it cannot escape its responsibilities. In England, where the cause of education was well advanced before the State undertook the burden of compulsory education, State interference has been most marked since the controversies over Mr. Balfour's Education Bill.

The time has certainly not arrived for entrusting the management of private schools to District Local Board.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—Yes.

Mr. M. Hesketh.—As regards question No. 6 which contemplates the entrusting of the management of primary schools to the District Local Board, my answer is emphatically no. If the District Local Board assumed the management of primary schools one of two things must happen. The actual control must fall into the hands either of the revenue officers or of the elected members. I have little doubt that the former would be the case in Sind. I do not see that this would result in any progress in Local Self-Government, nor would it be likely to improve the efficiency of the schools or stimulate the progress of education. In this connection I may refer to G. R., E. D. No. 830 of 25th April 1907, which deals with certain proposals made by Mr. Orr for modifying the Local Board Rules dealing with educational matters. These proposals had in view the entrusting of Taluka Local Boards with greater powers in regard to the opening and closing of schools. Government did not consider that any change in the Rules was necessary. If the administration of primary schools, as regards teaching and discipline, the appointment, punishment and dismissal of masters, the fixing and payment of master's salaries &c and the grant of leave of absence—I quote from Rule 7 of the Rules prescribed by Government in accordance with section 48 (b) of the Act—were handed over to a committee of the District Local Board on which the elected members had a preponderating voice, I am afraid the results would be anything but satisfactory. Before pursuing this question further, I would point out that Mr. Lawrence in para. 12 of the note contemplates the transfer of several Deputy and Assistant Deputy Educational Inspectors to the District Local Boards. I venture to quote from para. 82 (page 33) of the Sixth Quinquennial Review of the progress of education in India 1907-12. "The period under review has seen the transfer of Sub-Inspectors in Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam and of supervisors of elementary schools in Madras also the retransfer to the department of Deputy and Sub-Inspectors in the United Provinces. Previously these officers were the servants of local bodies." A perusal of the reports of the Director of Public Instructions, United Provinces, will show that the experiment of making inspecting officers the servants of the District Local Board was a hopeless failure." In view of the fact that the tendency throughout India is to transfer inspecting officers from Local Board Service to the Educational Department it is difficult to believe that the reverse process is desirable in Bombay.

It is necessary, therefore, to limit the proposals of Mr. Lawrence and probably the most that could be reasonably suggested is the setting up a system of school administration similar to that devised for municipal schools. We may safely assume that the management of the schools in smaller Municipalities is mainly in the hands of the official President or Vice-President.

In the larger towns, the elected members have a good deal more weight, but the schools are not as efficient as the local board schools.

The conditions in the large towns are quite different from those in local board areas. In a place like Karachi there is not much difficulty in finding a number of educated men who are prepared to serve on the School Board, and one or two will usually give up a good deal of time to the work. There is also a highly paid Chief Officer who is usually Secretary of the School Board.

I doubt very much whether the same can be said of the local board areas. It is clear that the members of the educational committee must ordinarily be men residing outside municipal towns or they cannot be conversant with local conditions. Personally I do not know where they are to be found.

Another important point is that the number of schools in a district is very large in comparison with those in even the largest municipal towns. It is one thing to administer 17 schools with 2,000 pupils in Shikarpur and another to deal with 180 schools and close on 8,000 pupils in the Sukkur district

The administration of Local Board Schools is any thing but a simple matter and it is becoming more complicated every year. The detailed administration of a large body of schools cannot be conducted by a committee of amateurs and the real control would inevitably fall into the hands of the permanent official. At present the permanent official is the Educational Inspector and his staff. In Mr. Lawrence's scheme it would be the Secretary of the District Local Board (para. 14 of his note) or the Secretary of the school committee. The Educational Department would, of course, continue to inspect the schools and to see that the rules of the various codes issued under the authority of Government were carried out. I foresee, however, that any attempt to insist on a strict adherence to rules would lead to constant correspondence and frictions. There are many questions also which are not exactly covered by any rules, *i. e.*, the transfers of masters, and the award of promotion. I am afraid that, human nature being what it is, there would be an opening for intrigue and backstair influences and that, rightly or wrongly the masters would believe that their prospects depended less on their work than on their relations with one or more members of the committee. I am afraid that the satisfaction which the District Local Board might feel at being entrusted with the management of primary schools would be more than counterbalanced by the irritation caused by the interference of the Educational Department, and there is no doubt that constant interference would be necessary if the schools were to be maintained in an efficient condition. At present there is little or no friction between the department and the District Local Boards, and I think I may say that there is cordial co-operation between them.

I have, therefore, no hesitation in giving my opinion that the time has not yet arrived to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards in Sind. My view is that primary education is the last thing which should be made the subject of experiments in Local Self-Government. I believe that Lord Sydenham expressed a similar opinion in reply to a letter from the Government of India, but unfortunately I have not been able to verify the reference. In question of appointment, promotion, transfer &c., it will be very difficult to ensure equal treatment for Hindus and Mahomedans. I am gradually increasing the number of Mahomedan masters, but this can only be done slowly and provided competent Mahomedans are available. I doubt whether a committee of the District Local Board could carry out such a policy successfully. It needs an absolutely unprejudicial controlling power.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—Primary education may be taken over by the local board provided that the pay and scale of teachers and curriculum are fixed by the educational department.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—I do not think that the time has come or will be ripe for many years when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to District Local Boards. It will be a retrograde step. The education of children is expert work. An increase of Educational Inspectors in each division is needed. There should be at least two in Sind.

K. S. Haji.—It is true that the educational needs of District Local Board areas are now considerably expanding, and cause congestion of work in Government Educational Offices, but local boards have not still arrived at a stage to assume the entire responsibilities of this important branch. However, the control may be given over to local boards by stages to the same extent as is taken over by large municipalities subject only to the supervision of the educational department.

Mr. Dipchand.—So far as Sind is concerned, the time has not come when the management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards. In order to enable the Taluka Local Board or the District Local Board to exercise proper control over the education of children in the taluka, a school committee may be appointed which should bring to the notice of the Educational Department the wants of the taluka so far as education is concerned and the Educational Department should not unnecessarily refuse to meet with the wishes of the committee. No doubt, as at present constituted, the educational department has the full control of the education of the children in mofussil and the result is that the people in the mofussil take very little interest in the education of their children, but if they are given some kind of control and their wishes or suggestions are not altogether ignored the results may still be better and more satisfactory.

Mr. Shewaram.—It is time enough that the District Local Boards managed their own schools. From amongst their number they could appoint a school committee which would as in the case of municipalities look after the schools. The members being always on the spot will be able to exercise greater supervision over the teaching staff and in the management of the schools generally. The school committee should be empowered to appoint their own teachers. They may also, if necessary, appoint their own paid agency to supervise and inspect their schools. But the supervision of the Government Educational Department should be maintained. Occasional inspection by the department would greatly assist and guide the work of Local Board Committees.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—The management of primary schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—So far as Sind is concerned time has not come yet for district boards to assume all control over the education of the district. But at present the District or Taluka Boards have practically no responsibility once they have set apart the usual one third of the cess, beyond perhaps recommending where a new school is to be established when consulted, or again occasionally making a recommendation to the Educational Department which that department may or may not adopt. The Educational Budget is passed by the District Board but it is usually a very dry mass of figures which is not infrequently an unintelligible document. In days gone by, the Educational Inspector used to attend budget meetings to introduce his budgets, but of late years even this is a rare occurrence. In my humble opinion the district and taluka boards ought to have some extended power in regard to education such as criticizing the budget and the

policy of the department, the posting of head masters, what is to be taught, what kind of schools are to be maintained and where &c. This would throw some responsibility on them and would afford them a training ground to assume full control hereafter. At the same time it would afford much needed relief to the Educational Department.

Question No. 7.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—In view of my opinion on question 6 I do not think that any modification of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act are called for.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—In so far as question 7 is consequential on question 6, I do not consider in view of my answer to question 6, that the rules under section 48 (b) require amending.

Rule 13 has resulted in a complete lack of elasticity in the matter of the erection of school buildings. All buildings are ordinarily speaking based upon if not actual copies of standard plans. The present Educational Inspector in Sind is indeed particularly broad minded in his conception of designs for school buildings, but in the Deccan, I remember, that the public ideals seemed to be limited to the provision of a specified number of windows 3' x 2' in size. The provision of educational facilities is considerably handicapped by this lack of elasticity. District Local Boards have not sufficient money to provide school houses of standard plans for all the schools in their charge. The result is that many schools are housed in absolutely unsuitable buildings. The experience of two thousand years shows that in the Indus delta the most suitable form of architecture for general use is that of wattle with or without mud daubing. At the present moment there are only 2, and those unimportant, public buildings of this type in the whole subdivision, and in common with that of other departments the work of the Educational Department is hampered by cast iron rules. Rule 13 should, I think, be amended in the light of these remarks, as there is no guarantee that all Educational Inspectors will take the interest in the subject that Mr. Hesketh does.

Mr. Menghruj H. Kalwani.—The rules under section 48 (b) of the Act may be altered as follows:—

(a) Rule 7.—The administration of Local Board Schools as regards discipline, the prescribing of curricula and the fixing of masters' salaries, allowances and pension contributions, should be conducted by the Government Educational Department. The power of appointing duly qualified teachers, of punishing, dismissing and granting them leave should vest in the District Local Board.

(b) Rule 9.—The District Local Board should be authorized to engage its own inspecting staff also, thereby enabling the Educational Department to effect reduction in its subordinate inspection staff.

(c) Rule 13 and 14 should be cancelled, and the District Local Board should have power to construct school houses in the same way as other buildings. The board can safely be trusted to make a proper choice of a site for a school building.

Mr. M. Hesketh.—As regards question No. 7, I do not advocate any material modification of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act.

Mr. F. O. D'Abreo.—In view of the answer to the preceding question no alteration is needed.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—Rule 5 should be altered to provide for the appointment each year of visitors for each school or group of schools. It should be the duty of these visitors to visit each school once a month, and to record their impressions in a visitor's book. Extracts from the book should be forwarded to the District Local Board, Taluka Local Board and the Educational Inspector.

K. S. Haji.—In view of answer to question No. 6 the rules may be gradually modified so as to meet the demands of the progress.

Mr. Dapchand.—No modification of the rules is necessary. Under the present masters' code there are certain grades fixed for trained and untrained teachers and if the Educational Department has the absolute power of appointing to or transferring from any school any teacher of any grade high or low the Local Board should be consulted as to the appointment or transfers of such teachers as the schools in a particular taluka may not need the services of any highly paid teacher or teachers or may not approve of the transfer of any particular master from or to the school on grounds other than monetary.

Mr. Shewaram.—In rule 7 of the rules (*vide* appendix B of the Act) in place of the words "The Government Educational Department" I would substitute the words "the school committee" as suggested above.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—The rules under section 4 of the Act should be modified by directing that the administration of the Local Board Schools should rest with the District Local Board and not with the Government Educational Department.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—I do not think the rules need be altered or amended at present. But what is required is a liberal working of them. As soon as the non-official element come into office, so to say, and work the taluka boards it will soon be known in what direction these rules require alteration.

Question No. 8.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—The reply of the Huzur Deputy Collector and Vice-President of the District Local Board is in the negative.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—I am unable to give any information on this point.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—No. At the same time I do not think that District Local Boards have ever made a capricious use of the authority exercised by them.

Mr. M. Hesketh.—My answer to question No. 8 is that as far as I know no Taluka Local Board in Sind has been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas. In the year 1913-14, Government contributed 68 per cent of the cost of Local Board Schools in Sind as against 29 per cent. derived from the Local Cess. The accounts of Local Board are not kept by taluka, but it is doubtful whether any of the revenue raised in one taluka was available for other talukas.

Mr. D'Abreo.—No.

K. S. Haji.—No. It is contrary to the provisions of section 48 (a) but no harm has arisen.

Mr. Dipchand.—As the section lays down the Taluka Local Board ought to be consulted if it has not been hitherto consulted at all. The provisions of the section ought not to be deviated from.

Mr. Shewaram.—In practice, I do not think the taluka board are ever consulted.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—Taluka Local Board has never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—Not in my experience. But I consider the provision a hard one and is not required. There is no harm if the income from one taluka is spent on education of another taluka if it cannot be spent in the first named.

Question No. 9.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S. Collector of Karachi.—As is customary when more money has to be raised, every one wishes it to be raised from some source with which he has no connection. It is to be noted that while the replies of the non-officials indicate their desire for the development suggested in the previous questions, as zemindars and tax payers they oppose the suggestions of the committee for increasing the board's incomes, and favour assistance from the provincial revenues. It is safe to say that in the present state of the world's finance the provincial revenues will not be able to do anything, and it is further a question whether any expenditure on anything but the barest necessities is justifiable.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter I.C.S.—In the present form of this question it is assumed that the preceding questions are all acceptable and therefore, being accepted, will entail extra expenditure. I should however, prefer to treat the question on its own merits. Of the proposed means of raising money No. 1 is, I think, very bad in its simple extravagance. The committee in its memorandum pointed out that in the matter of incidence of taxation the village bunya contributes practically nothing to the public income but obtains the maximum benefit from such advantages as are provided by the District Local Board. The means suggested for remedying this difficulty are the extension of the principle of village self-government and taxation and the levy of cess on income tax. With regard to the latter I myself recommended it giving reasons in my No 2494 dated 15th June 1915. The former would, I think, be very difficult to work and, as notified areas must be situated within 1 mile of the Railway, cannot be treated very seriously.

I can see no reason for recommending the proposal to levy a cess on forest revenue.

There is *grim idea* underlying the suggestion that Local Board should be permitted to levy a cess on abkari revenue being of course the idea that part of the profits on allowing the exercise of human weakness should be spent in the locality for encouraging human virtues. To permit a Local Board to levy a cess on this revenue is, however, most impolitic and cannot but raise fanatical and factious feelings. The only possible way in which abkari can contribute to Local Board revenue is for government to enunciate the principle that some definite fraction of abkari revenue is to be hypothecated for local needs. This, I believe, is the practice in England. There is no indication as far as I know of the Government of India having enunciated such a policy.

The proposal that provincial subventions should be increased must depend entirely on the amount of money at the disposal of Government and must depend finally on the decision of Government. The committee admits that Government is progressively admitting liabilities. For myself I should like to refer to the suggestion already made as to the employment of district engineers and to add that until District Local Boards show more real economy in spending money Government cannot be blamed for not increasing their subventions to a greater extent than they do now.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—(1) To meet the increased expenditure, every District Local Board should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess upto a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee. But this maximum need not be reached in every district and the cess need not be uniform throughout the Presidency or the province of Sind.

(2) It is desirable to establish as many "notified areas" as possible. But as the law at present stands the notified areas so established are not calculated to afford an appreciable measure of relief to any Local Board.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—The share which local fund gets i. e., one anna on all land revenue is not sufficient and may be raised to at least two annas or 1/8th of the land revenue if the enhanced expenditure cannot be met by increased subvention from Government.

It is a question whether notifying areas will be productive of much good in Sind as almost all taluka towns are already municipalities.

As agriculturists are already exempted under the Income Tax Act, a cess on income tax will fall heavily on those who are already over taxed in several ways and besides this, difficulties will arise as to adjustment of the tax. To give one instance, it would be difficult to allocate the proper amount in the case of profits of a trading concern which pays the tax at the head office of the concern in another Presidency, on the entire profits in India.

As regards abkari and forest revenue sufficient reasons have already been given against the cess in the Commissioner's joint report.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—I am in favour of increasing Local Board revenue in the manner suggested in No. (1) and (3) in this question, provided that no increased taxation is involved.

I would allot the revenue raised under (3) *pro rata* according to the population of each taluka. This is, in my opinion, the best basis of distribution. There is no reason why, because more liquor is drunk in Tatta than in Kohistan, Kohistan should get less than Tatta of the abkari cess.

K. S. Han.—(1) No.

(2) Yes, if possible.

(3) Yes. (a) No. (b and c) Yes; but the difficulty pointed out in the joint report of the Commissioners deserve consideration.

(4) Yes.

Mr. Dipchand.—The Local Cess should not be increased so far as the Karachi district is concerned for the conditions of the land-holders in the district are not satisfactory. Generally there are heavy floods or draughts in Lower Sind and the zemindars are not able to make two ends meet.

I am not in favour of the application of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act with a view to establishing "notified areas."

As to the levy of cess on income-tax, abkari revenue and forest revenue I understand that what the question means is that it is suggested that this cess may be levied from Government on the three items (a) income tax, (b) abkari revenue and (c) forest revenue collected by Government in the taluka and if the income-tax and the other two items are not in any way increased by Government the Local Board may be permitted to levy this cess from the Government, but it should not be levied from private people.

I do not know how much is paid by the Provincial Government to the Local Boards and if the present grant is not sufficient more revenue should be paid to local bodies which should also, if possible, be relieved of any burden of expenditure which can fairly be taken over by the Provincial Government.

Mr. Shewaram.—I am not in favour of the raising of the Local Fund Cess any further.

It would be a considerable relief to the Local Boards if "notified areas" are established in large villages. I do not think it would be just to levy cess on income-tax. The income-tax payers do not derive sufficient benefit to warrant the imposition of such a cess but (b) and (c) if necessary, cess may be levied on abkari and forest revenues.

Provincial subventions should be raised considerably. At present the provincial subventions are not adequate. Local Boards looking to the scope of their utility should certainly be financed more liberally by the Provincial Government.

There are certain very important works such as roads which should be provincialized so that Government should maintain them and relieve the already overburdened boards. In my district for instance the Jungshahi Baghar road should be taken over by Government, thus relieving the District Local Board, of a considerable burden which they are undertaking year after year.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—Local Board should not be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee.

2. No.

3. Yes.

4. Yes.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—1 No. The zemindars will resent. Nor does it seem politic.

2. There does not seem to be any objection to this being done. But I doubt if the income from this will be considerable as such large villages within rural areas are not many where there are no municipalities. Again I doubt if such notified areas will be able to raise sufficient income to maintain their own institutions. Next, the one anna cess such areas pay at present to the District Boards will have to be withdrawn.

3. (a) No. Nor do I think the income derived will be great inasmuch as income tax collections from rural areas are comparatively small.

(b) There seems no objection though it is doubtful if the income will be large.

(c) No. Because the cess will fall generally upon the poor like graziers and the like.

4. Yes. The Provincial revenue at present contributes to Local Boards in the shape of grants for public works and for village water-supply. These grants should be substantially increased.

Question No. 10.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I C S., Collector of Karachi.—This question presupposes that District and Taluka Boards are a failure. I am not prepared to admit this fully. But the discussion of the question, and of the causes and the remedies for such alleged failure is impossible in a short note.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—The statement is generally speaking true, but to discuss causes and remedies in a short note is impossible. Euphemistically one might suggest that the intense individualism of persons and of castes and of local interests is the principal cause. The remedy is obvious but the means for achieving it must be left to the imagination of idealists.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—The lack of interest and active co-operation on the part of non-official members is a fact, and is due to the absence of a sense of civic responsibility in the members who look upon the membership as an addition to their "abru" rather than from the point of duty. The remedy is education in the widest sense and the imposition of responsibilities.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—The lack of interest may be ascribed to want of sense of responsibility which could be insured by giving the boards wider powers and scope and this might be effected by having non-official Vice-Presidents wherever possible.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—It is due to the fact that the official members do all the work and there is not much scope for non-official members. The Vice-President should be a non-official and there should be sub-committees to whom the supervision of the works, duties in connection with roads and road-side trees, hospitals and dispensaries, and other similar duties should be delegated.

K S. Haji.—Yes, it is true.

The main causes are want of education in some cases and want of sense of responsibility in others. The most practical and effective remedy lies in appointing non-official but capable and influential Vice-Presidents.

Mr. Dipchand I have already suggested that the Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board should not be official. I have also stated that the elected element should be $\frac{2}{3}$ rd and the nominated $\frac{1}{3}$ rd, of this $\frac{1}{3}$ the Mukhtyarkar should be one as a member only. By giving people in the taluka an increased franchise the people will be induced to take more interest in the work and will also at the same time begin to realize that the official element will not have the sway of the whole work and the responsibility thus thrown on the elected majority will arouse in them the interest which they have failed to take hitherto in the affairs of the Local Board. It is almost certain that in course of time the elected majority will feel their responsibility more keenly and will begin to take more interest.

Mr. Shewaram.—Yes, in a great measure the failure of the District and Taluka Boards is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members who however, it must be said, possess no scope in the management of the affairs of these bodies as at present constituted. At present the whole of the management is practically in the hands of the officials, other members rarely knowing anything about the real state of affairs and merely attending meetings and passing resolutions offered to them by official Presidents and Vice-Presidents. To remedy this state of affairs official control should be considerably lessened and a freer scope and a keener incentive offered to the non-official members by way of reserving the appointment of Vice-Presidents for them as suggested in my reply to question 13. Another remedy would be the creation of a preponderance of elected non-official over the official members. Official recognition of good work on the roads will also prove beneficial.

Mr. Najafalishah.—The work of Karachi District and Taluka Local Boards is being carried out satisfactorily as will be evidenced by the remarks on the administration of the Local Boards in Sind.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—Yes. It is chiefly due to want of education among some members and a sense of irresponsibility in others. At the same time the administration being almost exclusively in official hands even educated and intelligent members do not take much interest for fear of offending the officials by their interference. The meetings are complained to be a mere matter of form, and altogether insipid for want of any discussion. Some men complain that they hardly follow at meetings because the information they get is very meagre and they cannot ask for more. I am of opinion that the Mukhtyarkars at all events should have very little to do with the local fund administration in as much as it is complained that so far as Taluka Boards are concerned they rule the roast. In some cases it is complained that while road repairs are done by zemindars at their expense the local fund money finds its way into private pockets. At this moment one Mukhtyarkar is under suspension on account of local fund mal-administration.

The appointment of non-official Vice-Presidents is the first step I would propose for the present. I am of opinion that this step will give impetus to non-official members to work. For the present so far as Sind is concerned I would not advocate any other remedy until experience is gained how the boards act under non-official Vice-Presidents.

Question No. 11.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I consider that the franchise is already sufficiently wide. This is peculiarly a case where the character of the electorate is of primary importance in determining its size.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—In view of the facts quoted under question No. 1, I see no necessity of increasing the voters' list.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—Additions to the qualifications of voters may be made as follows:—

- (1) The minimum of Rs. 48 in the case of landholders may be reduced to Rs. 20.
- (2) Persons holding immoveable property valued at Rs. 2,000 may be constituted voters.
- (3) Pensioned Government servants drawing not less than Rs. 25 per mensem as their pension should be qualified to vote.
- (4) University graduates should similarly be entitled.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—In clause 4 of section 10 instead of the limit of Rs. 50 per month in the case of pensioned Government servants I would propose Rs. 20 per month. In clause 5 I would add all pensioned Magistrates irrespective of the pension drawn by them.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—If a cess on income tax is introduced I should add persons paying income tax." I would increase the pensioners' qualifications altering in section 10 (4) the words "whose pensions are not less than Rs. 50 per mensem" to "whose * * * 15 per mensem."

K. S. Haji.—Graduates and retired Magistrates residing in the taluka (*vide* also reply to question 18).

Mr. Dipchand.—I do not think any additions to the qualification of voters are necessary. Under clause 7 of the section the Governor in Council has the power to notify the names of other persons as fit to vote. This power should be freely exercised and persons otherwise respectable living in taluka should be registered as voters so that zemindars only be not returned as elected members.

Mr. Shewaram.—In clause 1 of section 10 instead of the limit of Rs. 48 I would suggest Rs. 20. In municipal districts Rs. 20 tax payers are voters. Why should the same standard be not adopted here.

In clause 2 the figure of 5,000 should be reduced to Rs. 2,500. I would further suggest that all graduates of any university, pleaders, registered medical practitioners should also get the franchise.

In clause 3 of section 10 instead of the limit of Rs. 50 it should be Rs. 25 so that the head munshis who are in addition Magistrates in a taluka and command certain position on retirement should have the privilege of voting.

Mr. Najafali Shah.—No.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—No.

Question No. 12.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I do not think any amendment in this direction is necessary in Sind. The predominant element both in the electorate and in the country side is the zemindari and its position is amply secured.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—Nil.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—No separate groups of electors are necessary.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—No.

Mr. Richardson.—No.

K. S. Haji.—No.

Mr. Dipchand.—In Sind generally the majority of voters are landholders defined by clause 1 of section 10. They are generally Mahomedan zemindars who are not sufficiently educated. The zemindars have always to do with the officials of the Revenue Department and if the majority of the elected members be Mahomedan zemindars only, the object of local self-government will not be achieved though there may be some useful Hindu zemindars: experience has shown that they are not elected as a rule. If increased franchise is given most of the members elected will be Mahomedans in Sind. Therefore in my opinion persons of classes 2 to 6 in section 10 should be given some right to have a representation on the board, though I am not in favour of any right of representation being given to any particular caste or creed.

Mr. Shewaram.—It is most desirable to have some men from classes 2 to 6 who could strengthen the boards, but the chances of whose election otherwise would be very remote.

A proportionate number of representatives on the boards could without much difficulty be allotted to a group or groups of voters formed from such classes on the same principle as in Bombay the Justices of the Peace elect their representatives on the Municipal Corporation.

Mr. Najafalishah.—Not necessary.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—No.

Question No. 13.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I do not think that this necessarily follows. I have already stated that I see no objection to non-official Vice-Presidents if suitable men are forthcoming.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—The answer is certainly in the negative, because suitable non-official Vice-Presidents are not invariably forthcoming.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—Yes, wherever a non-official is willing to serve as a Vice-President.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—It is desirable that the Vice-Presidents should be non-officials wherever possible.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—It is desirable in my opinion that the Vice-Presidents of Taluka Local Boards should be always non-officials.

K. S. Haji.—Yes, it is desirable to appoint non-officials as Vice-Presidents of Local Boards wherever non-officials of sufficient capacity and influence are available.

Mr. Dipchand.—Yes, I have suggested that in my reply to question No. 3.

Mr. Shewaram.—It is most desirable that the Vice-Presidents of Taluka Boards should invariably be non-officials. They will realize the responsibility of their position and take active interest in the affairs of the boards and being local men can better deal with rural matters, supervision of works, &c. This step forward will serve the double object of placing the non-official members in positions of trust and responsibility thus enabling them to successfully fill still higher positions and at the same time relieving the busy Mukhtyarkar the present Vice-President of a part of his no less important duties.

Mr. Najafalishah.—In the event of Presidents of Taluka Local Board continuing to be official, it is desirable that the Vice-President should invariably be non-official.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—Please see answer to 10 above.

Question No. 14.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—In Sind the present figure may well continue to stand.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—I am not quite sure that I understand this question. From one or two cases which came to one's notice this year of the creation of "faggot" votes one might suggest the raising of the statutory qualifications.

Mr. Mengharaj H. Kalwani.—Rs. 20.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—The minimum figures of assessment should, in my opinion, be Rs. 25 to enable small holders to participate in Local Board work.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—I think that the minimum should be Rs. 20.

K. S. Haji.—The minimum should be Rs. 12 only.

Mr. Dipchand.—In my opinion the statutory minimum assessment should not be reduced in Sind, as it may lead to mal-practices. With regard to assessment and irrigation in Sind the circumstances are different from those elsewhere in the Presidency.

Mr. Shewaram.—I have already suggested the minimum of Rs. 20; *vide* reply to question No. 11.

Mr. Najafalishah.—Rs. 25 should be adopted as the minimum of assessment in place of the present figure, Rs. 48.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—I would not recommend any reduction inasmuch as the conditions of Sind are such that respectable zemindars and others will not come forward to offer themselves for election if the class of voters are much below their own status.

Question No. 15.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I agree with Mr. Carter's reply to this question.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—This question appears to be a development of Mr. Anderson's proposals for collecting land revenue and Local Fund Cess in a lump sum to save clerical establishment. So far as Sind is concerned the proposal was rejected. The suggestion is, I think hopelessly impracticable as the settlements under which land revenue is raised vary much from province to province. A further bone of contention would arise as to whether all the District Local Boards joint are to get a share of the General Provincial Funds or whether a district is to get a share of the Provincial Funds raised there. These are, however, but trivial difficulties compared with the fundamental one that the question suggests a profound ignorance of the respective functions of Government and the District Local Board. There is no need to enlarge upon this difference. I only suggest that Government must be left unfettered by any such limitation of its financial resources in its task of governing the country.

Mr. Mengharaj H. Kalwani.—Local Board share should be 25 per. cent. and allotted to the province of Sind or a Division as a whole (1), the Commissioner should be empowered to distribute the amount according to the need of each district.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—The point will have to be considered in connection with the subvention to be given by Government. If Government agree to the principles of such subvention the amount would have to be fixed with regard to the financial needs of the several Local Boards in the Presidency, in regard to which I have no information at hand; but it seems to me that the fixing of a definite percentage or receipts to be given to the Local Boards will be open to the same objections as have been urged in the joint reports of the Commissioner in reference to forest and abkari.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—It will be sufficient if a 2 anna cess is levied on the provincial shares of land revenue and Local Cess collected in Local Board areas.

K. S. Haji.—The suggestion of the division of land revenue and income tax is of great value, inasmuch as it will maintain the principle of "helping those who help themselves." Since zemindars contribute a Local Cess of an anna after each rupee of their land revenue, it is but fair that Government should also be pleased to help the zemindars at least to that extent. If this principle is accepted by Government then the Local Boards Share should be one anna in the rupee.

Mr. Dipchand.—If by the extension of the principles of the Local Self-Government in regard to Local Boards any extra expenditure is entailed and the Local Boards are not relieved by the Provincial Government of any burden or if provincial subventions are not increased, there ought to be a division of the land revenue and income tax between the provincial Governments and Local Boards. With regard to the share to be paid to the Local Boards I am not in a position to say what share should be paid to the Local Boards.

Mr. Shewaram.—If provincial subventions are not largely increased, I would favour the division of the provincial share of land revenue and income tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. As to the Local Board's share in the absence of facts and figures I am not in a position to fix.

Mr. Najafalshah.—The provincial share of land revenue and income tax should be divided between the Provincial Government and the Local Boards, and the Local Board shares should be 2 annas in the rupee.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—I have already said [Answer No. 9 (4)] that Government have been making grants to Local Boards from its revenues, and that these grants should be largely increased. So also Government make grants to some municipalities. Not to all. The question as to what share should Government contribute towards the funds of Local Boards is not an easy one, as this answer would depend upon so many factors. Again some boards may be rich and not in need of assistance, others would need more assistance than others. In Sind so far as my experience goes all boards need material assistance. The Thar and Parkar Board had large balances one time but they have all been depleted now. In view of varying requirements of various boards I would not fix any fixed proportion but it would be enough if the Government extends its bounty according to the requirements.

Question No. 16.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I consider that the present system, which is an elastic one, should continue.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—I do not see how any such proportion can be fixed by law. It is the duty of the District Local Board to provide for the whole district and if, say, in any one year any important line of communication is washed out it is absurd to suggest that the District Local Boards should have to go begging from Taluka Local Boards because of the hypothecation of its funds. If such a contingency happened, the District Local Board will probably find that the Taluka Local Board had already spent all the money at its disposal.

Mr. Mengharaj H. Kalwani.—There is no need to amend the existing law on the subject.

Mr. F. C. D'Abreo.—I am not in favour of any proportion being fixed by law, for example in the Karachi district the whole of the one anna cess after defraying the portion to be devoted to educational purposes is given to Taluka Boards and it may be left to the discretion of District Local Boards to do so, whenever they find that the Taluka Boards are in need of more money.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—It is not desirable to fix the ratio. Of all the functions of Local Boards, education is the most important.

K. S. Haji.—Experience has shown that the present system is convenient and requires no change.

Mr. Dipchand.—I regret I cannot answer this question properly as I do not know how the present practice has worked.

Mr. Shewaram.—No limits should be fixed by law. It should be left to the discretion of District Local Boards to apportion sums according to the requirements of different talukas.

Mr. Najafalshah.—In this district the District Local Board hands over entirely $\frac{2}{3}$ of the proceeds from one anna cess after deducting its educational portion to the taluka boards. But in the event of District Local Board being inclined to divide the $\frac{2}{3}$ of one anna cess between taluka and the district board it is advisable that a proportion should be fixed by law and the proportion to be taken by the district board should not exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the $\frac{2}{3}$ of one anna cess.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—I deprecate fixing any proportion as one board may require a larger amount according to local circumstances. The present system had better continue.

Question No. 17.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.C.S., Collector of Karachi.—I am emphatically of opinion that in Sind the efficiency of the board would suffer by the abolition of nomination for non-officials. There are many gentlemen who will not submit themselves to popular election.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.C.S.—If a board is efficient and is to maintain its efficiency it is essential, under present circumstances, that Government should retain the right of nominating

non-officials. There are many good men in the mofussil whose persence on the board is desirable and who for personal grounds are unwilling or would find it difficult to secure election.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—The propotion of elected to nominated members sould be 2: 1. Proportion of nominated officials to elected members should not be fixed by law, but be left to the discretion of the Commissioner of every division.

Mr. F. O D'Abreo.—See reply to question No. 1.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—Please see the reply to question No. 1.

K. S. Haji.—*Vide* reply to question No. 2. Of the nominated members at least one half should be non-officials.

Mr. Dipchand.—No. It will not suffer. *Vide* my reply to questions Nos. 1 and 10.

Mr. Shewaram.—I am not in favour of totally doing away with the appointment of non-officials by nominations. In many instances most deserving individuals who for some reasons or other do not offer themselves for elections can only come in by nominations. The total abolition of the proviso will in my opinion be detrimental but the ratio of non-official members to be nominated may, in view of the larger number of non-officials coming in by election, be reduced to $\frac{1}{3}$ rd instead of $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total number of nominated members.

The total abolition of the provision for the appointment of non-official members by nomination would debar some deserving as aforesaid and the administrative efficiency of the board would consequently suffer.

Mr. Najafalishah.—The proportion of nominated officials should be 2 to 3 elected members.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—Nomination of non-officials cures vagaries of election almost everywhere. I do not consider therefore that at present at all events any change is needed.

Question No. 18.

Mr. J. W. Smyth, I.O.S, Collector of Karachi.—The present limits should stand.

Mr. G. E. L. Carter, I.O.S.—No. I have already given some reasons suggesting that the limit might be raised though I do not actually propose this. There is certainly no reason for reducing the limit.

Mr. Menghraj H. Kalwani.—This has been answered already, *vide* answer to question No. 11.

Mr. F. C D'Abreo.—See reply to questions Nos. 11 and 12.

Mr. W. N. Richardson.—The following alterations are suggested :—

- In section 10 clause (1) alter Rs. 48 to Rs. 30
- (2) alter Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 2,500
- (3) alter Rs. 50 to Rs. 15.

K. S. Haji.—The limits may be reduced as under :—

- Clause (1) to Rs. 12.
- (2) to Rs. 1,250.
- (3) to Rs. 360.
- (4) to Rs. 12.

Mr. Dipchand.—I am in favour of reduction of qualifications prescribed in clauses 3 and 4. In the former the value of the immoveable property should be Rs. 2,500 and in the latter the amount of pension should be reduced to Rs. 30 per mensem.

Mr. Shewaram.—Refer to my reply to question No. 11.

Mr. Najafalishah.—I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

Mr. Wali Mahomed Hassanali.—I deprecate any lowering of the limits until we see how these boards work under non-official Vice-Presidents.

HYDERABAD DISTRICT.

Khan Bahadur Mirza Kalich Beg Fardun Beg, Retired Deputy Collector.

It may be remarked at the outset that although at the recommendation of the Decentralization Commission, the Government have very kindly shown their readiness to give the Local Boards a more liberal organization with greater powers and a freer scope and re-responsibility in the management of their affairs; the past experience of years has shown that generally speaking those bodies have not yet shown proper aptitude and ability to have and exercise those powers. The cause of the lack of interest, apathy and indifference of the members of the boards (both non-official or elected) is not the limited scope of their functions, but for several reasons they are naturally slow and careless in such matters. Take the instance of education or sanitation or vaccination, &c., that are of easier development than the Local Self-Government. We still find that our people do not care about their usefulness, and it is mostly under official pressure that their advantages are, as it were, "thrust upon them." This means that time has not yet come and the people are not quite ready yet to receive and exercise satisfactorily the full powers that are necessary for effective administrative development, which, therefore, should be conferred on them hesitatingly and with great caution and consideration. The difference of religious, tribal and social ideas among the different communities is another strong reason for this hesitation. Why are not municipalities with elected non-official Presidents working well generally? Why is not the freedom of press or the concession of arms more liberally granted to the people? The reason is the same, *viz.*, that the people are not yet quite prepared for it. My views may appear pessimistic and perhaps suicidal too in the eyes of my countrymen, but yet the experience of 30 years' Government service has taught me these views, which are more applicable to guide, and I must honestly give expression to them.

In the light of the above remarks I shall now try to answer the proposed questions briefly:—

1. In my humble opinion, the district and taluka boards should not have elected majorities unless the election be by communities, as in the second question. Under the present system, half the number of the members should be elected and half selected or nominated. Because the elected members would necessarily belong to the more powerful or influential class or community. So, to keep up the balance of power it is necessary that the other half be composed of the official and of less powerful community or minorities.
2. The election should be according to communal population or by communities in proportion to their population. For instance, in one of the talukas of the Hyderabad district, where chief communities are Mahomedans and Hindus, and the proportion of population is, say 1 : 3. Then out of 12 non-official members for example, 3 should be Hindus and 9 Mahomedans, and from 3 to 9 members more may be official or nominated. It is for this very reason that election by ward system of municipalities is not liked by minorities. Votes may be taken for election as is done now, or the communities may be asked to hold their own meetings and return so many members by a majority of votes. When village Panchayets are sanctioned this work would be easier and more systematic, and those Panchayets would be feeders of the taluka boards as the taluka boards would be feeders of the district boards. By this arrangement advantage can be taken of many useful and respectable persons, who at present do not come out to stand candidates for election. From the taluka boards, thus constituted, members may be elected for the district boards still keeping the said proportion in view.
3. The Presidents of district and taluka boards should be officials, *viz.*, the Collectors and the Assistant Collectors, and not elected non-officials.
4. The taluka boards should have more discretionary powers in the allotment of funds and the passing of estimates for works, but they should have the right to consult the Government P. W. D. officers freely and to take their assistance in the preparation of estimates superintendence &c. Otherwise the work should go on as it does now, under the present rules and orders under the Act.
5. The Taluka Local Boards should have full power to pass their own budget, but the fixed minimum balance should not be touched without the sanction of the District Local Board or the Commissioner in Sind. The power to engage and to pay servants sanctioned by the District Local Board should be entrusted to Taluka Local Boards up to a certain limit of pay, say 20 or 30 or 50 rupees, according to the importance of the board. Otherwise the present rules should be followed.
6. It would be better to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards, which should have a right to consult the Government Educational Inspector and his subordinates, who should inspect the schools and advise in educational matters.
7. The powers under rules 2 and 3 of the rules made under section 48 (b) should be entrusted to the Taluka Local Boards instead of the District Local Boards. In the case of primary schools, other rules may be followed as they are now.
8. So far as I know, the Taluka Local Boards are never consulted by the District Local Boards as to the appropriation of funds raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas under section 48 (a) of the Act. It is necessary that they should be consulted.
9. If the suggestions made above are carried out carefully, there will not be much need for additional establishment and expenditure on that account. But should there be any, the same may be met by having recourse to methods (2), (3) and (4), but not to (1), *viz.*, raising the Local

Fund Cess, as the Government assessment together with the present Local Fund Cess is already believed to be pressing hard on the landowners, who are generally poor and do not care for education and they should not be further discouraged.

10. I have already answered this question in the preliminary part of my previous letter.
11. Such other persons should also be considered qualified, as, on account of their reputed education, respect, position or otherwise, are considered to be heads or leaders of certain communities, tribes or sects living in the talukas and to have great influence with the people, and whose advice would be useful for public good.
12. The best way is that persons of the classes 2 to 6 of section 10 should be shown in separate list and each may select a certain number of members out of themselves.
13. The Vice-President, may in certain important and selected talukas be a non-official.
14. The qualifying minimum should be reduced to Rs. 20.
15. The division should be half and half.
16. The proceeds from the Local Fund Cess after deducting the educational portion should be divided between a taluka board and a district board in the proportion to be fixed after considering the amount of Local Fund income of different talukas in the district.
17. The appointment of non-officials by nomination is necessary, or else, under the present circumstances, the administrative efficiency will suffer.
18. As shown in answer 14, in (1) the qualifying minimum should be Rs. 20, in (2) it should be Rs. 500, in (3) Rs. 200 and in (4) all pensioned Government servants above the menial list.

Rao Bahadur Bulchand Dayaram.

1. Only a few select taluka boards may have elected majorities. As a rule the present constitution should be maintained except in talukas where the taluka head quarters is a district town or town of considerable importance. As for district boards, it is desirable to have elected majorities for them.

2. Election should not be wholly by communities but provision should be made to secure the due representation of special communities or interests.

3. In the case of my District, Hyderabad Sind, I would suggest the following constitution of the District Local Board.

Total number of members	32
No of official members	6
No. of non-official and nominated members to represent special communities or interests	8
No. of elected members	18
and the following constitution for the taluka board, Hyderabad	
Total No. of members	16
No. of official members	3
No. of nominated members	3
No. of elected members	10

The No. of elected members where elected majorities are provided should be roughly about $\frac{2}{3}$ ths of the total number.

3. It is advisable to have an official President of the district board, but the President of the taluka board should be a nominated non-official.

4. I am unable to answer this question.

5. Yes.

6. Yes, if the Educational Inspector or the Deputy Educational Inspector is made *ex-officio* member of the district board.

7. If the management of primary schools is entrusted to Local Boards the rules under section 48 will have to be revised. It is not necessary to revise them otherwise.

8. Seldom.

9. The increase in the establishment necessitated in carrying out the

(1) Suggestions will not be such as to necessitate the increase of the Cess to more than 1 pice or 3 pies in the rupee.

(2) Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on medical matters such as dispensaries which should be financed from provincial funds.

(3) A cess on forest revenue may be levied.

(4) Yes, if Local Board dispensaries are not taken over by Government and made provincial.

10. Yes. The causes are want of education and training in the work of administering the boards the predominance of official influence, hereditary and traditional desire to follow official wishes and guidance, the infrequency of meetings, the absence of committees or sub-committees of non-official members entrusted with executive or super-sessional powers.

The remedies are the spread of education and enlightenment, the devising of a system that would allow the members greater scope and power in the work of administration as distinguished from deliberative or advisory work.

11. All graduates, all title-holders, persons who have been Magistrates, persons exempted from the operation of the Arms Act should also be entered in the list of persons entitled to vote at the taluka board election.

12. No.

13. Yes.

14. Rs. 24 should be adopted as the statutory minimum.

15. I am not in favour of it.

16. Yes, the proportion should be fixed to enable the taluka boards to make progressive improvements in their areas, $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of the amount left after deducting the "Educational" portion should be divided between the different taluka boards in proportion to their population or the Local Fund Cess assessed for each taluka.

17. The proportion of elected members may be increased, but there should be a certain number of nominated non-officials in addition to the nominated officials, otherwise there will not be due representation of certain necessary interests and talents, as there are non-officials who, however competent or well qualified, shun the contest of an election or consider it derogatory to their dignity. The administrative efficiency of the board will not suffer to any material extent by their exclusion or non-appointment, but the boards will not be so representative. The proportion of such non-official nominated members may vary from $\frac{1}{5}$ th to $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the whole number.

18. Yes. Section 10 (1). The limit to be 24 rupees per annum.

(2) The limit to be Rs. 2,500 (two thousand five hundred).

(3) The limit to be Rs. 25 per mensem.

Rao Bahadur Teckchand Udhavdas.

1. All the District Local Boards should have elected majorities and Taluka Local Boards at some important centres only may have elected majorities.

2. Election should not be in my opinion by communities, but provision may be made to secure due representation of special communities. I am unable to answer the last portion of this question.

3. The district board should have an official President while the taluka board should have a nominated non-official President.

4. Unable to answer this.

5. Yes.

6 to 9. Unable to answer.

10. Generally speaking want of sufficient training and want of a proper system to make the members take interest in the administration of their board are the chief causes. The remedy lies in educating the people to make use of the opportunity given them of taking their proper share in the administration of their affairs.

11. Title-holders and retired gentlemen who have exercised Magisterial powers might be added.

12. Unable to answer.

13. Yes.

14. The present figures might be reduced to one half *i. e.*, 24 rupees.

15 to 17. Unable to answer.

18. In clause 1 (section 10) the sum should be Rs. 24.

In clause 2 it should be Rs. 2,500.

In clause 3 it should be Rs. 30.

THAR AND PARKAR DISTRICT.

Mr. G. E. Chatfield, Collector, Thar and Parkar.

1. It is a matter of no importance whether members are elected or nominated. The members are in any case zamindars who desire to be on the board for the sake of their own prestige, but beyond that have little interest in the work of the board. The whole conduct of affairs is left to the President and Vice-President who are officials.

2. Election by communities is not required. The outside public are absolutely indifferent to the work of Local Boards and within them, as already stated, the whole power rests in the hands of officials. There is no danger of any one community grasping and abusing power.

3. Impracticable and undesirable. Non-official members are neither desirous nor capable of doing the work of the President, and the experiment would end in a fiasco. Among other objections, the non-official members live in their own villages far from headquarters, where the office is kept.

4. The alternative to supervision by the P. W. D. is that boards should combine to maintain an Engineer and establishment of their own. This would involve too much expense for a district like Thar and Parkar, but where boards are wealthy and engaged on a number of big schemes the plan would probably be a sound one.

5. I am of opinion that the District Local Board must continue to sanction and revise the Taluka Local Boards budgets as long as it apportions their shares to the Taluka Local Board, as in my opinion it should do. As to the engagement and payment of servants, I think that this might be left to the Taluka Local Board.

6. With few exceptions no body cares a rap for education in this district and nothing would be gained by putting the Primary Schools in the control of the District Local Board. It would mean putting them in the control of the Collector instead of the Educational Inspector, and I see no reason for that.

7. I see no reason for such alterations or modifications.

8. The answer is in the negative.

9. I am not in favour of increasing the Local Board establishment, but I admit that the Local Boards are short of funds. The doubling of the Local Fund Cess would be intensely unpopular. No board would pass it except under duress though it is probable that the non-official members are too weak-kneed to stand out against official pressure. As to villages we have few of these in this district and nothing can be effected in the way of notifying areas.

I am in favour of the cess on income tax and abkari (we have no forests); the former would be exceedingly popular amongst zamindars—needless to say—and in my opinion equitable. The trader and money-lender pay nothing at present while their sons derive most benefit from the Local Fund schools. As for provincial subventions the larger they are the more welcome they will be to the Local Boards.

10. I do not admit that the District Local Board and Taluka Local Boards are failures in the sense that they do their work inefficiently. If on the other hand they are criticized for having failed to educate the people in Self-Government, this must be admitted. The causes are obvious and there are no remedies. The agricultural population of Sind is largely Mahomedan and the great majority of zamindars, the natural leaders of the people, are also Mahomedans. For the zamindars as a class, I have a profound respect. Their influence with the people and their willingness and eagerness to assist Government in every department are the pillars on which our administration rests in Sind. Every revenue and police officer will acknowledge his enormous debt to the Sindhi zamindar, through whom in a great sense the country is ruled. But the zamindar who generally places his whole time at the service of the Police or with a large body of retainers labours for whole days over the closure of a breach, has no taste whatsoever for sitting round a table and discussing a budget or the money to be spent on road repairs. This sort of thing is not to his taste; he is not interested in it. He prefers that matters of this sort should be settled by an official and his only object in becoming a member of the board is to obtain prestige. As to the work of the Local Boards he is not interested in it, and the perusal of the agenda of a Local Board meeting is sufficient to account for this. After all a District Local Board member comes to about two meetings in the year, generally from a great distance, and hears matters discussed of which he has no personal knowledge and which are in themselves usually dry and uninteresting. It must also be remembered that education (as provided by the Educational Department) arouses no interest whatever in the zamindar. The whole apparatus of a board of meetings and discussions are alien to the Mahomedan spirit; the zamindar likes personal Government and not talk; and for his share in the administration, he likes to feel that he is a man of influence in his own neighbourhood and that as such he is put on to do something. There is no remedy for this. Unless his whole nature is changed, the Mahomedan zamindar will never take to this sort of Self-Government. Even in big municipalities the Mahomedan members are visibly ill-at-ease compared with the Hindus. I may add that I do not think the worse of them for this; it is merely that this form of Self-Government does not suit them.

11. Modifications of the qualifications for a vote are not required and will do no good.

12. Not necessary, or desired by any one.

13. Impossible. The Vice-President of the District Local Board is the Huzur Deputy Collector and no non-official could do the work properly even if one could be found who consented to do so. The Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board is the Mukhtyarkar, who runs the whole of the boards affairs and could be less easily spared than the President himself.

14. This is a matter of little importance; wherever the limit is put the most influential local semindar will certainly be elected; why not leave the figure as it is.

15. In my opinion it is preferable that Local Board should continue to receive grants-in-aid from provincial funds. Presumably these would cease if a fixed share of the latter went to the former; and the present system has the advantage of elasticity.

16. I am not in favour of fixing this by law, as the needs of various talukas are different. Not all require an equal proportion.

17. As stated above, so long as the President and Vice-President are officials, it little matters how other members are appointed. In practice they count for little or nothing.

18. I am not in favour of such reduction, as I consider it would have no practical result.

Mr. H. Dow, Assistant Collector, Mirpurkhas.

It is true that not much improvement in the efficiency of works undertaken by Local Boards can be expected until or unless their financial position is improved. But in Sind there is at present very little demand for increased efficiency by the people principally interested and there is certainly very little of the "demand for social reform in the widest sense" mentioned in para. 2 of the Commissioner's letter.

As regards the suggestion made in para 4, I would say that—

(1) It is no use empowering Local Boards to increase the Local Fund Cess, for they would certainly not avail themselves of the power.

(2) I believe that in Sind practically all villages which would be important enough to be declared notified areas are already municipalities. I think there are very few towns in Sind other than the municipalities that could be left to levy taxation, or fairly be asked to contribute a greater portion of the cost of their schools &c.

(3) The proposal that Local Boards should be allowed to levy a cess on income tax would be popular with Local Boards, simply because the members of the boards are usually zamindars and not traders. But it would be much better to make such a levy general rather than leave it to the discretion of Local Boards to raise it or not.

(4) There is no objection to the increase of provincial grants. As regards para. 5, I am not of opinion that District Local Boards should take over the management of primary education. In Sind "the details of unimportant work" which would be left to an education committee of the District Local Board would in practice be left entirely to the official member or members of that committee, who might be harassed but would seldom be helped by the others. The result would conduce neither to the efficiency of the work done, nor to the advance of Local Self-Government.

More discretion might be left to the Local Board in the matter of execution of public works. Undoubtedly the feeling exists that to have work carried out by the Public Works Department certainly means a large increase in its cost, while there is not the same certainty about the improvement in the work. It would probably be practicable and cheaper for a group of Local Boards to maintain a qualified engineering staff of its own.

Answers.

1. At present in Sind it does not matter in the least whether the majority is selected or not. The District Local Board is carried on by the Collector, and the Taluka Local Board by the Mukhtyarkar with more or less supervision by the Assistant or Deputy Collector, and these officers owe their supremacy not to the fact that they have official majority behind them, but to the fact that other members have very little interest in the work and do not wish to find themselves in opposition to the officials mentioned.

2. There is no point in holding elections by communities. If the number of the members of one community elected is considered to be excessive, it can be redressed by nomination. The present number of members is sufficient.

3. It is not advisable that the Presidents of the Local Boards should be non-officials. The work of the boards has to be done.

4. Groups of Local Boards could maintain their own engineering establishment and the restrictions be done away with entirely.

5. Taluka Local Boards might with safety be freed from any control exercised by the District Local Board under section 38 and section 55. In the latter case, as recommended by the Decentralisation Commission, full power to pass their own budgets should be given to Taluka Local Boards subject to the maintenance of a prescribed minimum balance.

6. I do not think the management of Primary Schools can be left to the District Local Boards at present.

7. No modifications are at present required.

8. Not so far as I am aware.
9. I have already answered this question in detail in my No. 1291 of today's date.
10. This question assumes that the District and Taluka Local Boards are failures, which I do not admit. Generally they are managed as completely as is possible with their limited resources. Generally the work is done entirely by the official members. By non-officials membership of the Local Boards is regarded simply as an honour, whereas from the actual work there is not such 'Ab:u' to be gained, and its details are irksome or trivial. Members are important and perhaps intelligent zamindars, but they are for the most part uneducated. Smaller matters are beneath their dignity, and greater ones are beyond their comprehension.
11. No additions are necessary.
12. There are already some men from these classes among the electors, and no action to increase their influence is necessary.
13. No; because in Taluka Local Boards it is the Vice-President rather than the President who actually carries on the work of the board. In Sind it would seldom be possible to find a non-official willing to undertake the work, and still harder to find one who would do it.
14. The present figure of Rs. 48 does not require to be changed.
15. I am not in favour of such a division.
16. I am not of opinion that the proportion of one anna cess to be given to the Taluka Local Boards should be fixed by law. The needs of all Taluka Local Boards do not necessarily bear the same fixed relation to income. I am not aware of instances in which trouble has arisen between the District Local Board and the Taluka Local Boards over this question.
17. The administrative efficiency of Taluka Local Boards in Sind is not likely to suffer as long as the Presidency and Vice-Presidency is held by the same officials as at present. Beyond this it does not matter who the other members are or how they are appointed or how many of them are there. In fact, the practical connection of Taluka Local Boards with Local Self-Government is extremely slight. On the District Local Board it is more important that an official and nominated majority should be maintained. This is because when politicians in Sind begin to think District Local Boards worthy of their serious attention, as they may soon do, they will probably consider themselves successful in proportion as they are able to obstruct business and put difficulty in the path of officials.
18. I am not in favour of reducing the standard of the qualifications for voters. The question is at present quite unimportant in Sind.

Mr. N. B. Mahomed Husain, Deputy Collector, Nara Valley.

It is true that the financial position of the District Local Boards needs improvement. But I am not in favour of raising the Local Fund Cess. It would lead to general discontent among the land holding class. The levy of a special railroad or tramway cess under contemplation by Government will help the District Local Boards to a certain extent.

2. The extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act is not required in Sind. Almost all the important towns here are constituted into municipal districts. The few that may have any importance cannot singly bear the strain of expenditure on matters contemplated by the District Municipal Act. The Sanitary Committee and Panchayats are already looking to the sanitation and lighting of these towns. To include two or more such towns in a notified area would again be an impossibility as they are separately situated.

3. The levy of a cess of 2 annas in the rupee of income tax will be received with dissatisfaction, but Government might contribute a portion of the income tax to the District Local Boards in lieu of license tax.

4. Any increase in the Provincial subventions is very necessary and will be greatly appreciated by the public.

As regards paragraph 5 of the report I am in entire accord with the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission that the management of primary education should be left to the District Local Boards.

If the restrictions imposed by sections 57 and 61 of the Local Boards Act in regard to the preparation of plans and execution of works are removed, it will be necessary for the District Local Boards to entertain additional staff. The expenditure involved thereby will not be very heavy since there will be clear saving of the supervision charges paid to the Public Works Department. But at the same time it will be necessary to have an efficient engineering agency as is the case in the Punjab.

Answers.

1. Time is not yet ripe in Sind for giving elected majorities to the District Local Boards. But there appears to be no objection in giving elected majorities to Taluka Local Boards. The proportion may be $\frac{1}{3}$ rd nominated and $\frac{2}{3}$ rds elected.

2. It is not necessary to elect by communities. If any community is not adequately represented on the Local Board, the needful could be done by nomination.

3. Time is not yet ripe to do away with official presidentship of District and Taluka Local Boards in Sind.

4. All the restrictions in regard to the preparation of plans and execution of works should be removed. The Local Boards can have these duties performed by their own professional staff. The supervision charges that are paid to the Public Works Department for this purpose will go a long way to meet the expenses involved in engaging the additional establishment which will be necessary.

5. The Taluka Local Boards may be freed from the control exercised by District Local Boards under sections 38 and 55.

6. I entirely concur in the recommendations of the Decentralization Commission that the management of the Primary Schools should be entrusted to the District Local Boards, as this will give the educational system large elasticity to suit the local requirements.

7. Rules 7 and 8 should be modified to confer the powers on the District Local Boards.

Rule 13 should be deleted leaving the matter entirely in the hands of District Local Boards.

In Rule 14 the word 'Sanitary Engineer to Government' should be substituted for 'Government Educational Inspector.'

8. I know of no instance in which a Taluka Local Board has been so consulted.

9. (1) No.

(2) The extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act is not required. In Sind only a few important villages remain which have not been constituted into municipal districts. These remaining ones will not be able to bear the entire strain of expenditure. They are already contributing towards the sanitary expenditure.

(3) (a) No.

(b) Yes.

(c) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. There is no doubt that a majority of non-official members do not take proper interest in the Local Fund matters, but this is simply due to want of education. Educated members do take interest in such matters.

11. Yes. The following addition may be made to the qualifications of voters and members:—
'Every fellow and every graduate of any University.'

12. Separate groups of electors to secure men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10 do not appear necessary.

13. It is very difficult in Sind to find a local member with requisite education and qualifications to fill the post of Vice-President. Moreover, the Taluka Local Board offices generally form part of taluka offices. If the elected Vice-President is not a resident of the taluka headquarters there will be great delay in the disposal of correspondences. If, however, a Vice-President is to be an elected non-official, there should be a provision in the Act constituting the Mukhtyarkar of the taluka to be *ex-officio* Secretary of such boards.

14. No alteration in the figure of assessment is called for.

15. No prescribed division appears to be necessary. Local Boards already receive provincial grants in aid.

16. It is not desirable that the proportion of one anna cess to be allotted to Taluka Local Boards should be fixed by law as it will depend on the wants of each taluka and may fluctuate.

17. The nomination of non-official members to the Taluka Local Boards serves the purpose of giving representation to such communities as are inadequately represented by election. The abolition of this provision will therefore be harmful.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1 and 3 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act. In clause 2, however, the qualifying value of immovable property other than a holding may be reduced to Rs. 3,000 and in clause 4 the amount of pensions may be fixed at Rs. 25 per mensem. In Sind the majority of educated persons is found in Government officials. As it is necessary for public interests that Local Board members should be men of wisdom it is fair that the retired Government servants should have a wider qualifying field.

Mr. Narainsing, Huzur Deputy Collector, Mirpurkhas.

It is true that much improvement cannot be expected in the efficiency of works undertaken by Local Boards until their financial position is improved. With regard to para. 4, I have the honour to state, that—

(1) The Local Boards will not generally like to avail themselves of the power even if it is conferred on them.

(2) The extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act does not seem to be required at present.

(3) The proposal that Local Boards should be allowed to levy a cess on income tax would be popular with Local Boards simply because the members of the boards are usually zamindars and not traders. But it would be much better to make such a levy general rather than to leave it to the discretion of Local Boards to raise it or not.

(4) There is no objection to the increase of provincial grants.

As regards para. 5 of the Commissioner's letter under reply I have the honour to state that the management of the primary schools should not be left to the District Local Boards as time is not yet ripe for it.

The restrictions imposed by law on the execution of public works by Local Fund agency might be removed.

Answers.

1. There seems no objection to allowing District and Taluka Local Boards to have elected majorities.

2. Election should not necessarily be by communities. If any community is not adequately represented on the Local Board, the need can be supplied by nomination. The present number of members is sufficient.

3. It is not advisable that the Presidents of District and Taluka Local Boards should be non-official as time is not yet ripe for it.

4. The restrictions specified in sections 57 and 61 of the Local Boards Act might be done away with and the Local Boards can then employ their own staff competent to attend to all their works. If this is not feasible the limit of the Local Board works by their own agency should be raised to Rs. 5,000 which is the limit of minor works. The rates have risen considerably since the present limit was fixed and the boards have been employing their professional agency and can safely be entrusted to carry out works to the proposed limit. In the case of review of plans and estimates of buildings and roads however the limit might be raised to Rs. 1,000 and Rs. 2,000 a mile respectively.

5. The Taluka Local Boards may have free hand in the matter.

6. The management of the primary schools should not be left to the District Local Board at present.

7. No modifications are at present required.

8. The Taluka Local Boards are not consulted in the matter.

9. (1) No.

(2) The extension of the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act is not required.

(3) The proposal that District Local Boards should be allowed to levy a cess on income tax would be popular with Local Boards simply because the members of the boards are usually zamindars and not traders. But it would be much better to make such a levy general rather than to leave it to the discretion of the Local Boards to raise it or not.

(4) Yes. (c) Yes.

4. There is no objection to the increase of provincial grants.

10. Mostly non-official members do not take sufficient interest in the Local Fund matters which is simply due to want of education in them.

The educated members do take interest in such matters.

11. No additions are necessary.

12. Separate groups of electors to secure men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10 do not appear necessary.

13. No, because in the Taluka Local Boards it is the Vice-President rather than the President who actually carries on the work of the board

14. I can give no opinion in the matter.

15. No. prescribed division appears desirable.

16. The proportion of one anna cess to be allotted to Taluka Local Boards should not be fixed by law as it depends on the wants of the Taluka Local Boards and may vary.

17. The committees which are inadequately represented by election could be represented by nomination to serve the purpose. The existing law need not therefore be abolished.

18. No.

Mr. N. B. Mahomed Husain, Deputy Collector, Thar and Parkar.

The raising of the Local Cess would be unpopular and the boards would not be inclined to raise it. It is, therefore, no use giving power which is never likely to be exercised.

2. All important villages in Sind are constituted Municipalities. There are a few towns which are not Municipalities and which have population between 1,500 to 2,000 souls. In these towns it is generally observed that the sons of traders take the most advantage without contributing to the cost of education, &c. If a notified area be constituted without there being any municipality in the taluka, the constitution of such a notified area would be equitable.

3. This involves a consideration whether the cess on income tax is to be general or will exclude areas not under the control of the boards. In other words whether the municipal areas would be excluded from the operation of the tax or that the tax collected from such areas would be credited to the municipality concerned or to the Local Board. If the municipalities are all excluded then the cess will be almost a negligible quantity. Excluding 3 or 4 large towns in Sind the income tax in any taluka is not more than Rs. 6,000. If the municipal town in the taluka which usually contributes at least one-third, if not more, is excluded, the cess on the tax at this proverbial one anna would not be more than Rs. 250 per annum in any taluka. The income tax though justified by its universality and long usage is not a popular tax. Considering the negligible amount which would accrue it would not be advisable to increase the unpopularity.

4. There is no objection to the increase of provincial grants.

5. In Sind there is a lack of interest especially in matters educational, that the handing over of the management of primary schools to committees would practically be undoing the work of the Educational and the Revenue Departments in encouraging the spread of such education. The whole burden of managing would eventually fall on the Chairman of the Local Board. There is good reason to think that a large number of obstacles would be put in the way of such Chairman without any help towards a successful arrangement.

6. There is no objection to giving the proposed powers to the Local Boards in regard to their public works.

Answers.

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities.

2. The matters within the general scope of the Local Board are of such general utility as not to need the additional safeguard of communal representation. Anything that is done is sure to be to the advantage of all communities. The strength of any faction could be made good by nomination.

3. The Presidents of the boards should be non-official. These questions have been framed with a view to find out ways and means to create an interest in the administration of the Local Funds on the part of the rate-payers. At present the District Local Board is carried on by the Collector and the Taluka Local Board by the Mukhtyarkar, now and then supervised by the Divisional Officer. The members are invariably of the zamindar class who do not wish to find themselves in opposition to the officials and therefore take no interest. A nominated member has more or less to think of his re-nomination at the next sessions and is, therefore, bound to take a lukewarm attitude. It is on this ground that point No. 1 has been answered.

The President should be nominated. In elections there is always danger of getting an influential but an unenergetic man. This should be guarded against.

4. In cases where grants from Government have to be received for works, the present rules should be maintained. In other matters the restrictions be done away with and well paid and sufficiently well qualified engineers be maintained at the expense of the Taluka Local Boards grouped together for the purpose.

5. Yes, subject to the condition of meeting a minimum balance. The objection may be raised that the district board will then not be in a position to carry out or maintain works of large dimensions and universal utility to the district or that some talukas would be too poor to be in running. For instance famine in the desert would cause complete suspension of all the Taluka Local Boards for that year. Government subventions would be handy in those cases.

6. Primary schools should be managed as heretofore. Such institutions are better managed by one hand than by many. Throughout Sind I have often heard the remark from municipal masters that the rule of one is better than the rule of many and in practice it has appeared so.

7. No modification is desired.

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. Reply to this has been submitted in this office No- 108 dated 16th October 1915.

10. The District and Taluka Local Boards are not failures as regards the carrying of their duties is concerned. They are failures from the point of view of Local Self-Government in as much as the non-official element does not take interest for the reason stated above (para. 3); want of education is also a factor but the uneducated have begun to give way to the educated and the drawback is not serious.

Remedies.

Leaving them to their own deliberations and to do things by themselves just as they do their own individual things. They are able to manage their own large properties and *a fortiori* they will be able to manage the little things of the Taluka Local Boards. This state of things will be only when the matters are resolved upon by their own majority without the guiding hand of an official Chairman or executor.

11. No additions are necessary.
12. Not necessary.
13. I think a nominated Vice-President would be able to carry out the board's duties.
14. The figure Rs. 48 needs no change.
15. Blank.
16. No trouble has arisen in the past so as to necessitate the fixing of a proportion by legislation. However one-sixth of the balance after deducting the educational charge would be a fair sum all unexpended surpluses at the end of the year being taken up by the District Local Board to supply the needs of poorer talukas if necessary.
17. If there is no nominated non-official on the board then all the one-third must be officials.
18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits under any head.

The Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Bhurgri, Bar-at-law.

1. Yes. The time has come when, in the best interest of the Local Boards, there should be elected majorities. This step would ensure a freer mind and hand to the Local Boards. I would propose elected majorities of three-fourths of the total strength of the boards. I would also urge that nomination be made with greater discrimination so as to ensure the presence of more competent and useful men on the boards.

2. It is absolutely necessary that the interests of the minorities be secured. This could be effected by the reservation of a certain fixed number of elective seats for the minorities on one or more of various bases. The District Municipal Act makes provision for the interests of minorities though that provision has so far been a dead letter. Whatever opposition there might have been, against the above proposal in some quarters has almost completely died down, and it is now for Government to see that early effect is given to a proposal which, while it is perfectly equitable, is also so pregnant of good to the Mahomedan community in Sind.

3. While having unqualified leanings to the appointment of non-official Presidents on the Local Boards, I am afraid that the time has not yet arrived when such Presidents would be either advisable or practicable. The backward state of education and the general lack of administrative knowledge and experience on the part of people are obvious impediments in the way of securing competent and useful non-officials for the post of President. Hence, official Presidents will, I think continue for some time to come, to be desirable and even necessary, equally in the interests of the boards and the people.

As a set-off, however, to this retrograde proposal I would suggest that the Vice-President of the Local Boards be non-officials. The post of Vice-President will, I think, be a useful school for the people in the difficult and responsible functions of Self-Government. Vice-Presidents will in the process be Presidents in the making, and they will not be the less qualified and competent to act in the latter capacity when their own time comes—as come, I believe, it must—because they passed through the preliminary stage of evolution.

4. I am of opinion that present provisions regarding the preparation of plans and the execution of works by the Local Boards had better continue.

5. Yes. I think the Taluka Local Boards could well be emancipated from the control of the District Boards in the matters proposed. They should be allowed to frame their own budgets, and their specific allotments should be, at least, three-fourths of the funds raised from the taluka.

6. The scheme may be tried in one or two districts as an experiment, and its results watched before its general adoption is decided upon. I have my misgivings regarding its success in Sind.

8. I do not know that the Taluka Local Board has ever been consulted in the matter referred to. The Act, no doubt, makes clear provision in this direction, and very rightly. For I certainly think that the Taluka Local Board should, in all reason and fairness, be consulted in any such contemplated diversion of the revenue of the taluka.

9. (1) I am prepared to consent to empowering the Local Boards to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee, only on two distinct conditions:—(a) that at least one fourth of the proceeds of the cess levied in each taluka be set apart for education, primary, secondary and higher, in that taluka in the first instance; or, with sanction of the District Local Board outside the taluka but within the district or, if outside the district, with the sanction of the Commissioner in Sind. In this connection it will not be out of place to invite attention to some such provisions contained in the Bombay District Education Bill which was proposed by Lord Sydenham's

Government. (b). That other sources of income specified in 9 (2) (3) and (4) are provided and assured. And here I would protest that it is but fair and proper that all sections of the people should contribute to the fund, which is intended and spent on the common good, on the equitable principle that, as all are equally interested in and equally benefitted by the tune, all should equally pay the piper.

In conclusion I would take this opportunity of making the following suggestions with a view to making the Local Boards more attractive in the eyes of the people.

(1) That all the members of the District and Taluka Local Boards, be treated as Durbaris of the Commissioner and Collector respectively during the term of their office. This would enhance the prestige of the boards considerably.

(2) That Benches of Magistrates, with powers to deal with minor offences, be formed from the Taluka Boards. This will, I think, not only make the boards more attractive, but will also help the police and the authorities in checking the growth of crime. Further, the system proposed will be an excellent practical lesson in the act of Local Self-Government. For if a sense of responsibility is to be created, it can only come with grant of power. These Benches may also be usefully entrusted with petty civil powers—say the power to try summarily suits to the extent of Rs. 50.

UPPER SIND FRONTIER.

Mr. Chinrai, Deputy Collector, Kandkot.

I do not think that the revenue constituting Local Funds is insufficient in Sind. It is levied in this province not only on land revenue proper but on water cess too on account of the prevalence of the Irrigational Settlement System. An average taluka with two lakhs of revenue will yield a sum of Rs 12,500 yearly for the Local Fund. This sum receives besides material aid from provincial moneys yearly which may be taken at Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 4,000 a year. In my humble opinion therefore it is not quite necessary to impose more than one anna on every rupee assessable to land revenue, though there would be no objection to empowering the Local Boards to raise the cess to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee and this only in cases where the Taluka and District Local Boards both agree to its levy and are able to make out a good case for the sanction of the Commissioner in Sind (of the Divisional Commissioners) thereto.

The idea of extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act, 1901, to important villages is worth some consideration. These are often aided from the Local Funds in constructing and maintaining well, musafirghanas, &c., and in the supporting of their sanitary committees and schools. I should not, therefore, object to the insertion of sub clause *iii* to clause 3 of section 157 of that Act "or *iii* of which the population is one thousand or more."

Anna cess or even two anna cess on the income-tax for Local Funds will not yield any very large sums in the mofussil places and it is doubtful if its levy will be worth the discontent, however little it be, an addition to a direct tax is bound to give rise to. The income out of this tax is large only in big towns that are served already by municipalities and the injustice of imposition of this cess on persons who are in no way to be benefitted out of it is self-apparent.

At present I believe nearly one-fortieth share of land revenue is being annually given as provincial subvention. This is a fair share and it comes to nearly 25 per cent. of the land cess. It is not quite necessary to fasten down Government to any particular share; it may be rather desirable to have the rule elastic enough to permit of diversion of any sums to purposes of greater urgency, when necessary.

In Sind the responsibility for promotion of primary education already falls on the Local Board as laid down in Special Circular No. 31. Yet the inspectorial work is not in their control, the share of the Local Funds that is reserved for educational purposes is virtually administered by the Educational Department of Government, and the masters in charge of these schools do not consider themselves subordinates of the Local Boards. This dual control is not satisfactory at all. It may be a good thing to leave the whole management to the Local Boards and it may therefore be more desirable for each District Local Board to have its own inspecting staff. Government, it is hoped, will continue the usual favour of grants and therefore the Educational Inspector may well be empowered to occasionally inspect any schools or to permit his subordinates to do so on his behalf, and his remarks and his suggestions will, of course, carry great weight.

On the subject of execution of works I always thought the best plan to be either to have the work executed exclusively through the P. W. D of Government, or to let the Local Boards have sufficient establishment of their own to carry out those works independently of that Department. The latter will not be possible perhaps because the Local Boards may not be in a position to stand all the expenditure that the permanent maintenance of the necessary establishment would entail, and therefore I would suggest the first being pressed on Government. The usual charges leviable on that account will, of course, have to be paid.

So far I have dealt with the joint letter of the Divisional Commissioners generally. I now take up the 18 questions raised in connection with the subject and reply to them *seriatim*.

1. In this district election has not even been introduced and so the question of elected majorities hardly arises. But even where election system prevails, I am humbly of opinion that time is not yet ripe for allowing elected majorities.

2. I am personally opposed to election by communities.

The present number of members on the Taluka Local Boards in my sub-division is 6 including two Government officials. I think it may well be raised to 10 thus providing for two more non-official members, and 2 more official members who may be the Sub-Divisional Officer of the P. W. D. and the Sub-Assistant Surgeon:

3. No.

4. My reply to question No. 4 is covered by what I have already submitted in paragraph 4 of this report.

5. My reply to both the parts of this question is in the affirmative.

6. Yes, please see paragraph 3 of the report.

7. I have suggested the lines already in paragraph 3 of this report.

8. No.

9. Please see paragraph 2 of this report. I should not be in favour of levy of any cess on abkari revenue or forest revenue as they will not be capable of distribution among the several districts proportionate to their income.

10. I regret to have to answer to it in the affirmative. But partly this state of things is due to the support Government has given them in the official members; this has given them the idea of

'non-responsibility' and 'inertia' that is the worst defect in man and prevents them from taking any active interest in the affairs of the Local Board. I am therefore of opinion that this prop may be removed or weakened to some extent, and self reliance will prevail and its exercise will improve the conditions gradually. And I should propose that to make a beginning a non-official should invariably be the Vice President of the Taluka Local Boards, and where an educated and intelligent non-official is not available for the post the Mukhtyarkar of that taluka should be the President. The ^{Assistant} _{Deputy} Collector should have the powers of a Collector under the Local Boards Act as regards matters dealt with by Taluka Local Boards.

11. It is not necessary to make any additions.
12. Not necessary. Such persons may well be nominated wherever and whenever that may be advisable.
13. Please see my answer to question No. 10.
14. No change is necessary.
15. Please see paragraph 2 (c) and (d) of this report.
16. I do not think any ratio need be fixed. Sister talukas in the same district should not mind any little diversions of money, otherwise due to them, to the urgent needs of the other talukas in that district.
17. Please see my reply to question No 2, second part
18. No.

Mr. Djalma Doulatram, Zamindar.

1. Yes
2. I am not in favour of election by communities. Religion can never be a correct basis for election. The basis should be classes representing different occupations, trades, or other interest as mentioned in reply to question No. 12. If this is conceded the number of members may be regulated with reference to such electorates.
3. I think the District Local Board may continue having official Presidents, while the Taluka Boards may be given non-official Presidents who may be elected.
4. All works may be executed by boards themselves through their agencies, except perhaps those costing Rs. 5,000 and over which may continue as at present, being done through the Executive Engineers. Such works will not be many and therefore the subjection to the Public Works Department will not be serious.
5. The Taluka Local Board may be empowered to engage and pay their servants without the control of the District Local Board. The Taluka Boards can thus exercise greater control over their establishment. In case of dismissal a right of appeal to the District Local Board may be allowed as a check upon the Taluka Boards. The preparation of budgets may be left wholly to the Taluka Boards. It will give the members a greater sense of responsibility.
6. I think the present system of control of the primary schools by the Educational Department is wholesome. The same standard of efficiency is maintained throughout all the districts.
7. I have been unable to get a copy of the rules.
8. I am given to understand that the Taluka Boards are not consulted.
9. (1) Local Board may be empowered gradually to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee, as their wants may increase.
- (2) It will be advantageous to form notified areas of important groups of villages.
- (3) Local Board may be permitted to levy a cess upon income-tax as in the case of land revenue but not on abkari and forest revenue.
- (4) Instead provincial subventions should be increased. Although power may be taken to increase the cess up to 2 annas maximum, it may not be necessary in some districts if a 25 per cent. contribution is made by Government.
10. Yes. The chief cause is the absence of the sense of responsibility among the members who continue in the leading strings of the official members. To remedy that evil it is necessary to reduce official members who may be confined to those who are experts and whose advice may be useful in technical matters.
11. (2) I would suggest that property limit should be one thousand in place of 5,000.
- (3) And the earnings be reduced to Rs. 200 that fairly correspond with the position in life of an agriculturist paying Rs. 48 land revenue per annum.
- (4) The pension per month may be Rs. 10 to include men of the Tapadar class who would be valuable both as voters and members having revenue and executive experience which they can bring to bear upon Taluka Board affairs.

12. The electorates may be made by classes without regard for their creed. For instance, school masters may be given a seat from among themselves, the grain dealers as a class, so also village shopkeepers having the income qualification. Post pensioners may form another distinct group in their capacity as such. To each such class one or two seats may be given. In case more than one seat be allowed, each voter may have as many votes as the number of members to be elected and he may have the option to give all his votes in favour of a single candidate.

13. As a forward step it is essential that official interference should be reduced to a minimum. Mistakes will perhaps be made but people cannot be trained so long as they remain under the direct guidance of officials and feel their inferiority. If officials be content as Presidents, non-officials may always be elected as Vice-Presidents and most of the work may be got through the non-official Vice-Presidents.

14. I am of opinion that the minimum of Rs. 48 may not be reduced. In paddy areas it represents assessment on an average upon less than 10 acres if we take into account the second crop usually raised in such areas. At the rate of Rs. 200 an acre it would represent a value of Rs. 2,000 which is the limit of property suggested under clause 2 of the section 10. In dry crop areas cultivated every third year the amount represents an average area of 36 to 40 acres. At about Rs. 50 an acre (which will be a fair average price) the value will come to about the same amount.

15. I am in favour of larger provincial subventions, see answer to question No. 9.

16. I am of opinion that the proportion may be a paid one. In no case may the proportion be less than one half the total collection of each taluka. It sometimes happens that Taluka Boards are starved for the benefit of the District Boards.

17. I venture to believe it will be preferable to have elected members in place of the present nominated unofficial element. The officials nominated by Government may be only such officers whose expert advice may be useful to the administration of the boards. Their function should be consultative not administrative. If that were accepted I venture to believe that the proportion of nominated officials to elected members need not exceed one-tenth.

18. See reply to question No. 11.

Wadero Chakarkhan Suhriani.

1. There is no election system in this district but the system is good. The people are unaware of the system. If it is introduced, it will be beneficial after some time.

2. If the election system may be introduced, there is no necessity to do it by communities. It should be done by wards by votes. Election system, if introduced, should be applicable both for District and Taluka Local Boards.

The members should be increased.

3. No, as non-officials will not be able to do the work in this District.

4. I propose that the limitation be extended as the Local Boards have one or two qualified Overseers. It is desirable—

(1) That plans and estimates of works costing more than Rs. 1,000 may be sent for preparation or check to the Public Works Department and any work estimated to cost more than Rs. 5,000 should be carried on through the agency of the Public Works Department, otherwise it will be said that the expenditure of the Public Works Department is unnecessarily borne by the Local Boards. Besides the board will have more power in their hands.

5. In this district, the District Local Board has generally been agreeing with the recommendations of the Taluka Local Boards. I, therefore, do not think it reasonable that the amendment proposed in this question be effected and that the power should remain with the District Local Board.

6. I am not aware of the report made by the Commissioner nor have I seen it, but the time has not yet come to entrust the management of the primary schools to Local Boards.

7. I have not seen the rules framed under section 48 of the Local Boards Act, and therefore cannot frame any opinion regarding this question.

8. It is nearly 20 years that I am working as member, but I do not remember if such a consultation has been made.

9. If the suggestions made in the foregoing questions are carried out, there will, indeed, be a necessity for additional Local Board establishments entailing extra expenditure on boards:—

(1) One anna Local Fund Cess is enough as the zemindars have been impoverished owing to the heavy demands on them on account of land revenue. They have not even been able to contribute a single pie towards the promotion of Mahomedan education.

(2) I have not seen or read the District Municipal Act, hence I cannot offer my opinion on this point, but it appears that if notified areas are established, there will be a decrease in the Local Board expenditure and the savings, thus saved, can safely be utilized by them in some better way.

(3) Yes. Local Boards should, by all means, be permitted to levy such cesses.

(4) Yes.

10. As far as possible the members have been working honestly, but generally they are illiterate and hence their work does not appear in broad light. It cannot, however, be said that the members are not enthusiastic in the performance of their duties.

11. I feel that there is no necessity for any addition being made to the qualifications of voters.

12. Punchats and traders come within the scope of these classes. It is not desirable that a separate group be formed for them for, by doing so, there will on the contrary be a confusion.

13. The President of the District Local Board is the Collector or the Deputy Commissioner of the district concerned. In that case if the Vice-President is a non-official, there is no harm in it. But the President of the Taluka Local Board is the Deputy Collector and the Vice-President the Mukhtiyar. The Deputy Collector is not always present in the Taluka Local Boards, therefore the Mukhtiyar, who is also a Vice-President, conducts the business meetings.

In these circumstances the Vice-Presidentship will be a different task for a non-official to conduct

14. In my opinion the figure of Rs. 48 is sufficient.

15. I do not know anything as to how land revenue and income tax is divisible between the Provincial Governments and the Local Boards, hence I cannot opine on this question.

16. There is no use to fix the proportion because the District Local Board has been spending more or less money on educational works according to the circumstances of the respective cases.

17. There is no objection if $\frac{1}{3}$ the number of members are nominated, but all of them should not be Government officials, i.e., one half of the whole lot should be elected and the remaining half nominated; but again out of the nominated lot $\frac{1}{3}$ should be officials and $\frac{2}{3}$ non-officials. In this way the Local Boards will be benefited.

But if the election system is introduced in this district, I do not think a Hindu will succeed in getting a seat. It is, therefore, desirable that nomination be only continued in the interest of administration.

18. I understand that the qualifying limits are sufficient and reasonable and no change in them is necessary.

*Wadero Dimmurad Khan, Seth Assardas, Seth Manghamal, Wadero
Abdullahkhan Osto, Members of the Taluka Local Board, Jacobabad.*

1. There is no election system in this district, but it should be introduced now. $\frac{2}{3}$ rds should be elected members and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd officials.

2. If election system be introduced it should be only by communities. If not, a provision should be made to secure the due representation of any special communities.

3. The President should be an official.

4. No change should be made in the present system.

5. Taluka Local Board should be free from the District Local Board by giving them authority under both the sections

6. The management of primary schools should be entrusted with the District Local Board.

7. No change should be made in the rules under section 48 (b).

8. There is no objection if one Taluka Board may assist another Taluka Board in time of need.

9. It does not seem reasonable to increase the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas. Due consideration should be given for obtaining broader powers to Taluka Local Boards.

10. Non-official members have been assisting and will assist in future to whatever they hold in their power.

11. No additions be made to the qualifications of voters.

12. There is no necessity for keeping separate groups of electors.

13. In the event of the President being an official the Vice-President should be non-official.

14. The existing figure of Rs. 48 should continue to remain as it is.

15. Provincial share should be fixed on the consideration of expenditure.

16. The District Local Board after deducting Educational share should give $\frac{2}{3}$ rds to the Taluka Local Boards

17. In boards there should be non-official members as people do not receive proper benefit from official members

18. Qualifying limit of voters should be the same.

NAWABSHAH DISTRICT.

Mr. A. W. W. Mackie, Collector of Nawabshah.

1. Yes ; a bare majority.

2 (i) The answer depends on the proportion of elected members. If there is a bare majority of elected members, the due representation of all communities can be secured by an intelligent choice of nominated members ; and election by communities is unnecessary

If, on the other hand, the board were to consist of (for example) elected members and nominated officials, as suggested in question 17, then election ought to be by communities.

(ii) In this district the men who secure election are those with most influence, who merely seek a seat as an honour, and have no intention of doing any appreciable Local Board work. The amount of active work done here by members is less than in any district, I have been in, in the Presidency proper. In these circumstances there must be here a considerable proportion of nominated members so that an element of useful workers may be introduced ; and at the same time the due representation of communities can be secured.

3. As things are at present here, certainly not.

Nor need it be supposed that, by extending the board's power and responsibilities and enlarging its resources and staff, the members will be at once or in the near future metamorphosed into interested and useful workers. If such action is taken the only way the board could be run would be by the appointment of a highly paid executive officer, with competent staff, to supervise and carry out all the work under the general control of the Collector as President.

Here and there a suitable non-official might be found fit to be President of a Taluka Local Board or even of the District Local Board ; and I should have no objection to such men, when available, being nominated to these posts.

4 This depends on the staff with which the Local Board is provided. With the existing staff, any relaxation of the limitations referred to is impossible. In fact no relaxation would be possible, even with an increased and more competent staff, unless a man of sufficient status, not only in technical knowledge, but in personal integrity and reliability, is put at the head of the staff.

5. Yes ; the Taluka Local Board might be allowed to appoint certain inferior servants and to pass finally its own budget, subject, of course, to maintaining a fixed minimum balance. This would give the Taluka Local Board members a feeling of their responsibility in running their own taluka.

6. No, not here. But there are some District Local Boards, which, with a properly enlarged staff, might be entrusted with this work. Even here, provided a staff, which could do all the work, is engaged, this idea might be carried out, but it would simply be a case of the staff running the schools. In course of time, the grip of the board would, it is hoped, gradually become stronger.

7. As things are, not at all, of course.

With extended staff and resources, the District Local Board might have all the management transferred to it, except that the inspection of schools would be carried out by Government inspectors and that the District Local Board would work under rules laid down by Government. I do not think I can with advantage be more explicit till the extent and increase of the staff and resources of the District Local Board are fixed.

8. No.

9. Assuming that a great increase in the resources of the District Local Boards is decided on, I think all the ways suggested for increasing Local Board resources might be open to the Local Boards, but under considerable Governmental control. Also I doubt whether a uniform system of taxation can be maintained in all districts, and I do not think such uniformity essential.

I think that suggestion No. 2 should be brought into effect, provincial subscriptions increased, and a cess levied on income tax.

Should still more funds be required, such of the remaining suggestions as are most suitable for each particular district might be brought into force.

10. It is true that the failure of District and Taluka Local Boards here is due to lack of interest on the part of non-official members. I know no particular cause except the character and traditions of the people. I know no general remedy. But a good deal has been done in various districts to cure this by distributing the supervision of the various works amongst the members. In this, however, as in many other Local Board matters, I have found that all depended on the degree of control which the Assistant Collector found it possible to exercise.

11. No suggestions.

12. No such formation of groups is called for in this district where the Hindus, who generally fall in classes 2 to 5 secure more than adequate representation.

13. I should say no ; specially in Sind. But the answer must depend on the scheme as a whole finally adopted

14. I suggest rupees 30.

15. I am against the proposed division. Each body should bear the odium or otherwise of its own taxes.
16. I am not of opinion that the proportion should be fixed by law.
17. I am against this. As I have already remarked, in this region any non-official workers there are generally obtained by nomination. Please see reply 2 (ii).
18. Except the reduction already referred to in answer 14, I have no suggestion to make.

Mr. D. MacLachlan, I.C.S., Assistant Collector, Nasushahro.

1. Yes.
2. The election should not be by communities. The only special communities of interests in the sub-division that might be considered are the Hindu income tax payers. The suggestion made by the Mukhtyarkar of Nasushahro that these men should be given a right to elect their own members separately in each ward does not appear to me to be either necessary or equitable. When these form any reasonable proportion of the electing community, their method of close co-operation gives them a greater share than their number or importance warrants in the elected members. The present number is quite sufficient and there is no necessity of an increase.
3. The time has not yet come when the President or the Vice-President of either the District or the Taluka Local Board can, with advantage, be chosen from non-officials except in such rare cases as may at present be left out of practical consideration. If the President or Vice-President is a non-official, he should certainly be nominated.
4. I do not consider that the present limitations imposed by sections 57 and 61 of the Act can be removed, so long as the Local Board cannot afford to retain for its own purposes an Engineer who is much better qualified than the present Local Fund Overseer.
5. The Taluka Local Board may be given full powers to appoint and provide for petty servants such as beldars, malhis, jamadars, &c. Servants drawing higher pay should be appointed by the District Local Board but provided for by the Taluka Local Board. The Taluka Local Boards may have full powers to pass their budgets on condition that the President of the Taluka Local Board is present at the budget meeting and with a proviso that they shall maintain a prescribed minimum which should not be touched without the previous sanction of the President of the District Local Board. This should only be allowed when, as it happens at present, the District Local Board gives the total amount to be expended. If this power is granted to the Taluka Local Board, the broad general lines of policy to be followed in expending the money might be laid down by the District Local Board when the figures are being sent on. The complete budget should also be laid before the District Local Board for information.
6. The present system should not be changed. The appointment of examiners or school staff and laying down general lines of policy cannot safely be wholly entrusted to the hands of the District Local Board.
7. I do not consider that the time is yet ripe in Sind for any modifications in rules under section 45 (b) of the Act.
8. No. The District Local Board in apportioning the sum of primary education considers the district as a whole and the consent of the Taluka Local Board is not asked for any amount of the sum appropriated to education collected within the taluka and spent outside.
9. (1) The Local Board may safely be entrusted with powers to raise one anna cess up to a maximum of two annas in the rupee.
- (2) Provisions of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act should be applied to any villages in the taluka that can fulfil conditions of law.
- (3) (a) Yes. The big shopkeeper who is not a zamindar and who, through his trade with the neighbouring towns and the Railway, is directly responsible for a large amount of expenditure on roads, and whose children get the benefit of education and other facilities at the expense of the Local Board, should be made to pay directly for his benefits.
- (b) No.
- (c) Yes. Wood and other commodities sold from forests are more responsible than any other form of traffic for the cutting up of a road and at present they give nothing towards the repairs of such a road.
- (4) If the Taluka Local Board is not permitted to levy a cess on income tax and forest revenue the Provincial Government should do so and increase its grant by the amount realized.
10. The statement is, on the whole, true. The cause is that the Local Board members look on their appointments purely as a mark of distinction and always forget their responsibility with regard to the duties of their appointment. The remedy, in my opinion, lies in amending the Act so as to hold them more directly and individually responsible for the various works undertaken by the Local Board.

11. I have no suggestions to make. If notified areas be increased as suggested above, one or more, as might seem reasonable, might be formed for this purpose, into an elective body, which might be allowed the privileges, under the Municipal Act, of sending representatives to the Local Board.

12. I do not consider it necessary that any separate groups for this purpose should be formed. As already mentioned in this report, clauses 2 and 3 are generally Hindus and they form such a close corporation that they usually obtain more members than they deserve. Clauses 4 and 5 are in as favourable a position as any other candidates, if not more so.

Clause 6.—I do not consider that an increase of this class of members would be in any way desirable.

12. No. I do not consider that it would be a satisfactory arrangement in Sind to have Mukhtyarkars who usually are the official Vice-Presidents, in a meeting presided over by a non-official.

14. Rs. 30.

15. I am not in favour of this division of land revenue and income tax. Under section 9 (4) above I have mentioned my opinion that the Provincial Government should make a grant and I consider that they are the only suitable authority to decide how much and what share should be granted.

16. No. I consider that the District Local Board is alone in a position to settle the respective amounts required for district and taluka boards' needs. It is impossible to make a definite ratio laid down by law as what may suit one district will be impossible for another.

17. Yes. The present system of nominated non-officials gives an opportunity to Government to get the best Administrators from all classes, both from those who are not sufficiently represented and those who elect members on other qualifications than administrative ability.

18. As mentioned above. I am in favour of reducing the limit prescribed in clause 1 from Rs. 48 to Rs. 30. In the other clauses no amendment is necessary.

Mr. Y. W. M. Sheikh, B. A., Deputy Collector, Nawabshah.

1. There is no need to have elected majorities in the district and taluka boards. The law already provides for an elected majority. The condition of Sind is quite different from the Presidency proper. People are less educated and require official assistance in almost every phase of life. As yet they have not adapted themselves to representative institutions. They take no interest in the Local Board meetings and seldom assist in the administration of Local Fund.

2. Election need not be by communities. Provision may be made to secure due representation of any special community. Four fifths of the population of Sind is Musilman Rural population is entirely Musilman, therefore, there wont be any need of election by communities in Sind. I think the present number of members is sufficient. No good would come out by increase of numbers unless people desire for more representation and feel keen about the Local Fund affairs.

3. The Presidents of District and Taluka Boards should not be non-officials. Experience has shown that many members have not got the knowledge and sufficient qualification to conduct the affairs. In Sind there are very few such non-official members who can conduct the work of Presidents.

4. No serious difficulty is felt at present by the limitation on the preparation of plans under section 57. Nevertheless the limit of works to be approved by the executive Engineer should be raised to Rs. 1,000 instead of Rs. 500.

5. The Taluka Local Boards may be empowered to appoint their servants up to Rs. 20 p. m. There is no need to free the taluka board in the matter of sanction and revision of Taluka Local Board budget.

6. I do not consider the time has come, when the management of primary schools be entrusted to District Local Boards. Most of the machinery of the boards is run by officials who cannot afford any time to share this additional burden. Under the conditions prevailing in Sind it is safe to entrust the education to the Educational Department.

7. These rules require no modification.

8. No.

9. I have not made any suggestion which would entail extra expenditure on the boards therefore—

(1) There is no need to raise the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas;

(2) There are no such places in this division where the scope of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act be extended.

(3) There is no need to levy cess on income tax, but abkari and forest revenues may be so assessed. There is need of provincial subventions to be increased, because a greater proportion of Local Funds is taken away by the Educational Department and very little is left for roads and communications. Good roads are badly needed in Sind, besides Sind being an irrigational country, many bridges and culverts are required to be built on public roads. The tree-less nature of the country demands that arboriculture should be freely extended. All these suffer for want of funds.

10. It is a fact that District and Taluka Local Board members do not take any interest in the management of Local Funds. The causes are that the majority of non-official members are simply steeped in ignorance and have no requisite educational qualification. Generally men of influence secure the memberships. In some cases Taluka Local Board membership is considered to be a stepping stone to a chair in the Collector's Darbar, and District Local Board membership to that of the Commissioner's Darbar. The only remedy is to secure more educated members on the board who would take keen interest in the welfare of the public.

11. Sub-sharers in a holding paying Rs 48 annual assessment ought also to have a vote.

12. In bigger towns it would be necessary to have a separate group of electors to secure men from clauses 2 to 6 in section 10, but in this division there is no difficulty felt on this account.

13. It is not desirable that Vice-Presidents be non-officials. It would be difficult to find out a person well qualified for Vice-President's post.

14. The minimum of assessment may with advantage be reduced to Rs. 30 instead of Rs. 48.

15. I am not in favour of such a division. There is no need of such a division at present.

16. The provision of law as stands at present needs no modification.

17. Half of the nominated members must be non-officials. Experience has shown that elected members are generally influential men without any other qualification. To represent special interests and to appoint duly qualified persons from amongst non-officials, it is necessary that such a proportion be maintained.

18. Yes.

(1) Rs. 30 land revenue.

(2) Rs. 2,500.

(3) Same.

(4) Rs 20.

Rao Bahadur Diwan Kauramal C.

1. Yes.

2. No.

3. No.

4. Plans and estimates should be prepared and approved and works should be executed by the district boards when the cost does not exceed Rs. 1,000. In the case of works costing between Rs. 1,000 and Rs 2,500 the plans and estimates should be prepared and works be executed by the district boards but the plans should be approved by the Executive Engineer. When the cost exceeds Rs. 2,500 the plans and estimates must be prepared and the works executed by the Public Works Department.

5. Taluka Local Boards should have the power to appoint their own servants when monthly pay does not exceed Rs. 10 and they should have full power to pass their budgets but they should forward them to the Collector for information.

6. No.

7. No alteration or modification appears necessary.

8. I am not quite sure if the Taluka Local Board is consulted as regards the appropriation of revenues.

9. As far as I can see there will be no need of any additional establishments and there will therefore, be no increased expenditure. So the question of levying a cess on (1) income tax, (2) abkari (3) forest revenue will not arise.

10. The lack of interest and active co-operation on the part of the non-official members is due to some extent to absence of their participation in the affairs of the boards. If they are taken into confidence and allowed to have, a share in the management of its affairs no such complaint will arise.

11. Pensioners drawing Rs. 20 and above per mensem, Barristers and Vakils and school masters should be allowed to vote.

12. In order to secure some men from clauses 2 to 6 in section 10 separate groups of electors can be formed by the agency preparing the lists of electors.

13. Vice-Presidents should be non-officials whenever practicable, that is, where capable men are available.

14. I would allow the present minimum of assessment to remain as it is,

15. I am not prepared to answer this question.

16. After deducting the "Educational" portion the proceeds of the one anna cess should be divided as follows.

Twenty per cent. should go to the District Board and the remaining 80 per cent. should be given to the Taluka Board.

17. I do not think that efficiency will suffer if the present arrangement for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished and a board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. The number of such nominated officials should in no case exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the total number

18. The qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act should be as follows :—

1. To remain as it is.
2. Rs. 4,000
3. Rs. 400
4. Rs. 20 and above.

Seth Perozshah Merwanji, Zemindar, Nawabshah Taluka.

1. No, half the number should be elected and half nominated. The election is more due to influence of the candidate than merit of the individual member, and time has come when Government should require more of merit than mere personality of the individual member. In all elections candidates aspire to a seat more out of personal consideration than for a regard to do any useful work, and if proficiency is the factor, this is obviously wanting in a majority. This leads to precisely the same result as if no representation existed.

2. The election should be made by due representation of communities; if in such representation communities are not represented the requisite number should be increased.

3. The Presidents of the District and Taluka Local Boards must be officials and they must be nominated by Government, if it is intended to secure the due fulfilment of the responsible punctual and efficient discharge of their duties.

4. The work of preparation of plans and execution of major public works should be conducted in consultation with P. W. D. and under their supervision exception may be made in case of petty works involving no great skill or expenditure and may in cases of emergency be undertaken departmentally subject to the approval of the President, District Local Board.

5. The engagement and payment of Taluka Local Board servants may be made by Taluka Local Board and to this extent the Taluka Local Board may well be trusted but the sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budget prepared by the Taluka Local Board should be made by the District Local Board.

6. No. The District Local Board can hardly be expected to exercise an effectual control over the management of the primary schools and the management and supervision far from being real and promoting the policy of Government is likely to be frustrated. It is advisable that the management of the primary schools should rest with the Educational Department. Of course, this does not interfere with the contributions made by the District or Taluka Local Board to the primary schools.

7. The revision of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act may be deferred for the time being.

8. No, as far as I am aware, but it is objectional to appropriate the revenues raised by one taluka to be spent on education in other areas. The revenue of the particular taluka should be appropriated to the upkeep and improvement of the primary school of that taluka and they cannot be expected to allow the margin for other areas without impairing utility or the work of their own schools. The deficiency in areas outside the particular talukas should be met from the other sources, and not by appropriating the funds and revenues of any one taluka. If however, there are surplus funds available (which cannot be legitimately spent) then in that case with the previous sanction from the District Local Board not more than one-third of the surplus revenues thus saved may be so appropriated in any one year, though this should be avoided as far as possible and any allotment so sanctioned by the District Local Board may be permitted in exceptional cases only.

9. To question 9 the answer is in the negative. No further establishments are necessary and the proposed revision of the scale from 1 to 2 annas per rupee is obviously undesirable (no further burden should be put on the municipalities, the municipalities have enough burden of their own to be able to undertake fresh burdens: as to clause 3 all the three species of taxation enumerated in this question are not necessary, the income tax is sufficiently heavy). Any further increase weighs heavily on the people who feel the weight of it even in its present form. Local Board should expect the income tax from its revenues, and so the abkari and the forest revenues are equally adequately taxed and no further addition seems called for at the present moment. The answer to clause 3 of question 9 is also in the negative.

10. It is true that failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to lack of interest and absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members. The causes are manifest; a majority of the members aspire to a seat more for honour than with a desire to do any useful work, the remedy lies in their supersession when there is continued neglect.

11. The standard of qualification of voters does require revision.

12. Representation by communities is carried out; it will not be necessary to form separate groups of electors.

13. The Vice-President should be a non-official member.

14. Rs. 25 only.

15. It is not desirable to make the provincial share of land revenue of income tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards.

16. The proportion should be left to the discretion of the District Local Board and not fixed by law.

17. The administrative efficiency of a board will not suffer by abolishing the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nominations. There should be elected members and the proportion of nominated officials should be $\frac{1}{3}$ rd to $\frac{2}{3}$ rd of elected members, the latter should be capable men of merit.

The qualifying limits laid down in clauses 1 to 4 need not be reduced.

Mr. Kirpaldas Lakhmal, Zamindar, Shahdadpur.

1. The elected member's number on Taluka and District Local Boards is already sufficient but there is no objection if the same is increased.

2. Election by communities should be resorted to in any cases where there is a large No. of communities. In Sind there are only two principal communities viz., Hindus and Mahomedans. Under these circumstances there is no need for such elections. The present number of members is sufficient, but there is no objection to an increase if need be.

3. It is not advisable to have non-official Presidents in Sind as otherwise disorganization will be the inevitable result as in municipal administrations. But if it is proposed to have non-official Presidents then it is necessary that they be nominated. Lot of jobbery and partiality would prevail in the elections whereas due care and caution will be exercised in nominations, regard being had to the fitness and ability of the members to be nominated.

4. The work of preparation of plans and the execution of public works should be entrusted to the Engineering Dept., as the same is mismanaged at the hands of Local Board Overseers.

5. No. All work of the Taluka Local Boards should be under the direct control of the District Local Boards

6. Yes.

7. The present state of affairs warrants no need for any alteration.

8. May have been at times.

9. In case of carrying out the above suggestions increased expenditure will be necessary, which should be met by empowering the Local Boards to increase the Local Fund Cess upto the maximum of 2 annas per rupee.

Para 2 of question 9. Yes

Para. 3 of question 9. Yes.

10. Government officials especially President and Vice-President, Taluka Local Board, and the President, District Local Board, should, during the touring season watch the Local Fund works. If any member is found indifferent, an example should be made of him so that the other members may work well

11. The persons who have a right to vote are generally illiterate and they, therefore, require much time to gain experience. Education is spreading all over the country and it is hoped they will soon improve.

12. It is very difficult to form separate groups of electors in this country.

13. There is no objection to the appointment of a non-official Vice-President, but the work cannot go on so smoothly, efficiently and according to law as with an official Vice-President.
14. The same rule should continue according to which a man paying Rs. 48 assessment or above has a right to vote.
15. The old rule should continue. No change appears to be necessary.
16. The same rule should continue.
17. The Government do not stand to lose if half of the number of members is officials. But if the number of official members is increased, the number of elected non-official members should also be increased in proportion thereto.
18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in section 10 of the Local Boards Act. Old rule should continue.

Mr. Tekchand Hassasing, Zamindar.

1. District and Taluka Boards should have elected majorities.
2. The election should not be wholly by communities. The provision should be made to secure the due representation of special communities or interest.
- In the case of my District, Nawabshah, I would suggest the following constitution of the District Local Board :—

Total number of members	...24
No. of official members	...3
No. of non-official nominated members to represent special communities or interests	...6
No. of elected members	...15

And the following constitution in case of Taluka Boards of Nawabshah :—

No. of official members	...2
Do. nominated members.	...2
Do. elected members	...6

Total ...10

The number of elected majorities provided should be roughly about 3/5ths of the whole number.

3. In the case of District Local Boards it would be advisable to have an official President, but in the case of Taluka Boards to have a non-official nominated President.
4. The work costing Rs. 5,000 or under should be executed by Local Board's own agency and above that by Government Executive Engineer. The plans and estimates of works costing over Rs. 1,000 in case of buildings, &c., and over Rs. 100 per mile in case of roads should be approved of by an Executive Engineer.
5. No modification is necessary.
6. The present system should continue.
7. The rules under section 48 (b) require no modification.
8. The Taluka Local Boards have never been consulted as to the appropriation of revenue raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.
9. (a) Local Boards should not be invested with powers to raise the Local Fund Cess up to the maximum of annas two in the rupee.
- (b) The Local Boards should be relieved of a part of the expenditure on educational, medical, sanitary and other matters.
- (c) Local Boards should be permitted to levy a cess on income tax, abkari revenue and forest revenue.
- (d). Yes, provincial subventions should be increased.
10. The causes are that most of such members are not sufficiently educated and trained in the work of administering the board and the customary desire to follow in the foot steps of the official members.
- As for the remedies I would suggest that the education and necessary training should be spread among such members, and such a method should be adopted whereby the members should have a greater power in the administrative work.
11. All title-holders, graduates and persons exempted under the Arms Act should be entitled to vote at the Taluka Board election.

12. No.
13. Yes, the Vice-President should invariably be an elected non-official member.
14. The statutory minimum adopted should be Rs 24.
15. I do not approve of such division.
16. Yes, the proportion should be fixed by law. $\frac{8}{8}$ ths the amount left should be divided between the various Taluka Boards in proportion of the Local Fund Cess raised by each taluka.
17. The proportion of such nominated officials to elected members may be $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the whole number.
18. Yes.
 - (1) The limit to be Rs. 24.
 - (2) The limit to be Rs, 2,500.
 - (3) The limit to be Rs. 500.
 - (4) The limit to be Rs 50.

Mr. Gurumkhsing Parumal, Local Board Member.

1. Yes.
2. There should be no communal representation. The arrangement would be a failure and likely to result in mischief in the long run. The number of members should be increased.
3. Only the Vice-President should be non-official at present. After another 10 years or so even the President might be non-official.
4. In my opinion the present provisions are suitable.
5. In my opinion the present check is wholesome.
6. No. Not yet. After another 10 years or so things might become ripe for the purpose.
7. No change is necessary.
8. No, I am not aware of this procedure.
9. (1) No increase in the cess is called for. On the contrary the present cess should be done away with
- (2) Yes. There should be more notified areas. The limits of population should be 2,000 or 3,000.
- (3) No.
- (4) Yes. The Local Boards should get a share of the provincial revenue, say $\frac{1}{8}$ th, for their purposes.
10. Yes, to a certain extent this is true. Very few members take real interest. The causes are :—

Most of the members come from uneducated Mahomedan zemindars as Taluka Board members and they do not trouble themselves about Local Board matters. They only get themselves elected or nominated in order to gain status and keep up their "abroo." They follow the few educated members (officials and non-officials) and ditto all that they do.

(c) Most of the zemindars (who are Taluka Local Board members) do not understand the principles of Local Self-Government and attend the Taluka Local Board meetings only as a matter of form.

The only remedy to improve this state of things lies, in my opinion, in an amendment of the Act (section 10) and in appointing non-official gentlemen as Vice-Presidents and Presidents.

11. Yes, the scope of the section should be very wide with the view of securing the service of all educated residents of the Local Board area who can assist in the betterment of the present conditions.
12. This can be done but there are practical difficulties in the way. The elections should be open to all residents of the Local Board area.
13. Yes, certainly. I have said this above.
14. No minimum need be fixed. In my opinion section 10 requires modification.
15. The present share is inadequate. At present the Local Boards get one anna in the rupee as Local Fund Cess plus a particular assignment from Government. My opinion is that no separate Cess should be levied. Out of the present provincial revenue $\frac{1}{8}$ th should be assigned to the Local Boards.

16. No. The District Board should have a free hand in this matter. Difficulties would otherwise crop up.

17. On the contrary the greater the number of non-officials the better, provided they come from a desirable class (of educated persons); $\frac{2}{3}$ rds should be elected and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd nominated officials.

18. Section 10 should be re-enacted.

Mr. Jiwatram, Mukhtyarkar of Nawabshah.

1. It is not at all necessary to have elected majorities for District and Taluka Local Boards. Section 5 of the Local Boards Act already provides that the number of elective members shall be not less than one-half of the whole board and this is a sufficient safeguard. The election in the mofussil does not go side by side with the popularity and stuff of the person elected, but it is regulated by the influence and the power that a man exercises in the locality. Experience has shown that the elected members of the Local Boards are always men of influence and generally they do not take much active part in the administration of Local Fund affairs.

2. The election should be by communities.

The Taluka Local Board, Nawabshah, consists of 13 members, including the President, six of whom are elected. The number is quite sufficient and there is no necessity of increasing the number. In case of election by communities the taluka should be divided into three groups instead of six, each group to return two members, the election being made by the two principal communities of the taluka, *i. e.*, Hindus and Mahomedans. There should be no restriction about the nominated members. It would be thus entirely in the discretion of the head of the district to supplement the members of the different communities, by recommending the nomination of a candidate from the community, which, in his opinion, contains more population of whom a sufficient number of members is not returned by election.

3. In my opinion, it is not advisable that the President of a District Local Board or taluka board should be non-official. Experience has shown that unlike big municipalities, the members of these boards do not take active interest in the management of Local Fund affairs. These boards are generally composed of members who do not possess many educational qualifications. As an experiment, however, one or two talukas in each province may be selected for this honour. Talukas which boast of educated men in the mofussil eligible for election as members may be taken first for experimental purposes.

4. Section 57 of the Local Boards Act provides that no budget shall be "sanctioned, unless for every work, whether of first construction or of repair; there is attached to the budget estimate a detailed estimate of the cost of such work."

These budgets have to be submitted before the 10th of December, *i. e.*, the budget for 1916-17 has to be prepared and estimates prepared before 10th December 1915.

It is not possible to correctly estimate at this time the amount of repairs that will be required to a certain building in the next year. The next abkalan and rainy season might change the state of the building altogether. The section might, therefore, be amended by the omission of the words "of repair". Amount may be provided in lump sum for repairs and at the time of the preparation of the estimates for repairs, a fair distribution could easily be made according to the requirements of each building.

(2) Wider powers should be given to the local bodies, in preparing estimates for new works. Under the law, as it stands at present, the estimates of works, the total cost of which is to exceed five hundred rupees, have to be approved by the Executive Engineer of the district. The limit should, in any case, be raised to Rs. 1,000. The board has always got its own staff of Overseers who could conveniently deal with these questions, under the control of the President or Vice-President of the board.

The limit of Rs. 2500 up to which the Local Boards can execute their works under Government Resolution, P. W. D. No 254-A 318 of 4th December 1885, is quite reasonable and fair and does not require any amendment.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should be empowered to sanction the appointment of all servants whose pay does not exceed Rs. 20. At present the Taluka Local Board establishment, generally consists of servants drawing a pay of Rs. 20 and less, excepting the appointment of Overseers and maistries. These latter appointments should be controlled by the District Local Board as it would be advantageous to sometimes change these hands from one taluka to the other.

The budget estimate should continue to be approved by the District Local Board (section 55 of the Act).

6. The time has not yet come when the management of primary schools could be entrusted to the District Local Boards. The District Local Boards, as at present constituted, consist of officials who are already overworked and non-officials who generally do not take much active interest in the administration of Local Funds. The supervision will be incomplete.

7. The rules framed under section 48 (b) do not require any alteration.

8. The Taluka Local Board has not been consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. To meet the increased expenditure, I cannot suggest at present the delegation of power to the Local Boards to raise the Local Cess up to the maximum of two annas in the rupee.

(2) Local Boards may very well be relieved of expenditure on educational and other objects by extending the scope of Chapter XIV of the Municipal Act and increasing the number of towns with "notified areas."

(3) Abkari and forest revenue could conveniently be assessed to Local Cess also, but not the income-tax.

10. It is a fact that the non-official members do not take much interest in the administration of Local Funds. The reasons for this is clear. The elected members are generally made up of influential men without possessing many educational qualifications and they have got many of their private duties to attend. To remedy this state of things, it would be worth while to make an experiment by rewarding in a suitable manner the services of those who render conspicuous services in this branch of the administration and in some cases to fix some educational test as one of the qualifications for making a candidate eligible as a Local Board member.

11. The following amendment may be made to the qualification of voters under section 10(e) clause 1—

"In the case of a petty sharer who, according to his share, as entered in the Record of Rights, is assessed to the land revenue at not less than forty-eight rupees per annum."

12. If the suggestions given in reply to question No. 2 are carried out, it will not be necessary to form separate groups of electors.

13. In the case of a Taluka Local Board, all the accounts, registers, &c., are prepared by the Vice-President. As pointed above the Taluka Local Board generally consists of persons who do not possess good educational qualities and who cannot spare much time to devote to the duties of the Vice-President. The idea of having a non-official Vice-President for these mofussil boards, though praiseworthy, cannot under present conditions, be of much usefulness. The experiment may, however, be tried in one or two selected talukas and the result watched.

14. The minimum of assessment should be reduced to Rs. 25.

15. It is not desirable to make the provincial share of land revenue and income-tax divisible between the Provincial Government and Local Boards. To meet the increased expenditure the remedy has been suggested in reply to question No. 9.

16. It is not necessary that the proportion of dividing the proceeds from one anna cess between the District Board and Taluka Board, should be fixed by law. The District Board could very well be entrusted with this discretion.

17. It is very necessary that at least one half of the nominated members should be non-officials. As pointed above, the elected members are generally made up of influential men only and to make up the deficiency of qualifications, &c., the Local Government should have the discretion of nominating some capable non-official men. If all the nominated members are officials, the result will be that the board will be entirely under official control, a policy which has been denounced by Government.

18. The qualifying limits may be reduced to the following limits without in any way diminishing the status of the voters:—

1. Rs. 25 land revenue.
2. Rs. 2,500.
3. Rs. 500.
4. Rs. 20.

Mr. Atmaram, Mukhtyarkar of Naushahro.

1. Yes.

2. Election should not be by communities but as Hindus are not properly represented on the taluka and district boards, I would suggest that income tax payers may be given right of electing their own member separately in each ward. The present number of members should be increased.

3. The time has come when the President of district board and taluka board should be non-officials but he should be nominated from among the members.

4. If the district board can afford Executive Engineer of their own, there should be no limitation on these things and all the works ought to be left in the hands of the district board entirely;

but they should consult Sanitary Commissioner for certain works, otherwise the provisions may remain as they are because the Local Fund Overseers are, as a rule, not competent enough to carry on those works.

5. Yes, the Taluka Local Board may appoint petty servants, say, maistry, jamadars, beldars and malhis and they have to look to their allotment. Similarly the Taluka Local Board may have full power to pass their budgets since the District Local Board gives the figures in the first instance.

6. Yes, I should think so.

7. These rules may be so amended as to bring the administration of Local Board schools solely in the hand of District Local Board and in certain matters the educational authorities may be consulted.

8. No. The taluka board is not being informed at all in what ways the income of Local Cess is distributed. Only some figures are given simply for the preparation of budget.

9. (1) Certainly

(2) Time has come when provisions of Chapter XIV of the District Municipal Act be applied to all important villages by establishing notified areas in them. By this arrangement Local Board will be relieved of much of these expenses.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes. It ought to be at least 10 per cent. on the total provincial revenue.

10. There has been no failure of these boards but it is notorious that non-official members do not take any interest in any of the works as they do not consider their responsibility about it. I think the law ought to be so amended as to awaken them to their responsibility.

11. The members of Sanitary Boards or notified areas might well be added to the list of qualification of voters.

12. Each ward should return two members one by those persons as shown in clauses 3 and 2 (relating to immoveable property) and one by those mentioned in clauses 3 to 6.

13. Yes.

14. Rs. 30.

15. Provincial Government $\frac{9}{10}$ and Local Boards $\frac{1}{10}$ shares be fixed.

16. Yes. I think $\frac{1}{10}$ be fixed for district board.

17. I do not think so. The proportion of nominated officials to elected members should be one-third.

18. Yes, I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clause 1 from Rs. 48 to Rs. 30 only, but in other clauses it is not necessary to reduce any limit.

Dewan Chandumal Gopaldas, Retired Deputy Collector.

1. Not in Sind where, especially in rural areas, education has not yet made sufficient progress. In larger municipalities, where education is advanced, this privilege has been given, but in my humble opinion it has generally not produced satisfactory results. Much less is it likely to do any good in rural areas which are subject to district and taluka boards.

2. No. The only chief communities are Mahomedans and Hindus and no separate election among them is needed or is desirable either wholly or partially. Nor is there any need of increasing the present number of members.

3. No. People in rural areas are mostly uneducated and there are very few non-officials who can be safely entrusted with that power.

4. No modification appears to me to be needed.

5. No, except that in regard to reappropriations of budget items I would respectfully suggest that Taluka Local Boards may be authorized to reappropriate items up to the limit of Rs. 100 according to their needs without previous sanction of District Local Board, provided that in no case is the total budget grant exceeded and intimation of reappropriation is sent to District Local Board in due course.

6. No. Proper supervision will be very difficult especially in respect of schools away from the taluka and district headquarters.

7. No alteration or modification in my humble view is needed.

8. No. Never so far as I know. Section 48 (a) requires Taluka Local Board's consent to be taken in such cases. I venture to think that such consent should be taken to enable the Taluka Local Board to see whether it would be benefited directly or indirectly by such appropriations.

9. I am humbly of opinion that no increase is needed as I do not propose any increase in expenditure.

10. I venture to submit that, in my humble opinion, the management of district and taluka boards is not a failure. District and taluka officers' supervision is fairly efficient under the present conditions. It is true that non-official members do not take much interest and the chief reason of that is that they are mostly ignorant and almost uneducated. I think if their services are appreciated by introducing a system of public recognition by giving deserving members certificates of merit in Durbars and giving them travelling expenses for extraordinary journeys in connection with Local Board works better men will try to get themselves elected as members.

11. No addition is needed in my humble opinion.

12. I feel unable to suggest any practical means.

13. Presidents of Taluka Local Boards are usually Sub-Divisional officers and in their absence, which is constant, Taluka Local Board affairs are managed under the supervision of Mukhtyarkars as Vice-Presidents. I do not think that non-official Presidents will be able to manage affairs well in the present state of education in Sind.

14. Rs 48 limit is in my humble opinion the extreme limit. Any reduction in it will cause confusion—holders of sub-divisions of holdings being mostly illiterate and ignorant may not be expected to be good and intelligent voters.

15. I am sorry I do not know what the provincial share of land revenue &c., is but considering that Local Boards have heavy responsibilities on them and their funds are limited I would humbly venture to suggest that some assistance should be rendered to Local Boards by Provincial Government. At present some grants are sanctioned by Provincial Government to Local Boards, but there is no fixed rule regarding such grants. I would respectfully suggest that one anna in the rupee of the provincial share of revenue might be assigned to Local Boards. One-third of their present revenue is spent on education. The remaining two-thirds is not sufficient for their other needs. Their roads, bridges and sanitary improvements in villages are often neglected.

16. Yes, I am respectfully of opinion that the proportion should be fixed by law. It should be fixed at $\frac{2}{3}$ ths for the taluka board concerned and the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ th for the District Local Board, subject to the proviso that if on account of urgent needs $\frac{2}{3}$ ths does not suffice in any year the proportion may be increased for that year. In the Hyderabad District I understand that $\frac{2}{3}$ ths share is assigned to the Taluka Local Boards but in Shahdadpur, I believe, the share assigned to the Taluka Local Boards is less than even $\frac{1}{2}$ ths or even $\frac{1}{3}$ rds, while the need of funds there is great.

17. I venture to think that the existing law needs no change.

18. I would respectfully suggest that the limit of monthly pension should be Rs. 20 p.m. instead of Rs. 50 p.m. (clause 4). Rs. 50 is too high. I am not in favour of reduction in any other clause.

Mir Ghulamshah, Jagirdar, and Member, District Local Board.

1. The district and taluka boards should not have elected majorities unless the election be by communities as in the 2nd question. Under the present system half the number of the members should be elected or half selected or nominated. Because the elected members would necessarily belong to the more powerful or influential class or community. So to keep up the balance of power it is necessary that the other half be comprised of the official and of less powerful communities or minorities.

2. The election should be according to communal population or by communities in proportion to their population. It is for this very reason that election by ward system of municipalities is not liked by minorities. Votes may be taken for election as is done now or the communities may be asked to hold their own meetings and return so many members by a majority of votes. When village panchayets are sanctioned this work would be easier and more systematic and those Panchayets would be feeders of the Taluka Boards as the Taluka Boards would be feeders of the District Boards. By this arrangement advantage can be taken of many useful and respectable persons who, at present do not come out to stand candidates for election. From the Taluka Boards, thus constituted, members may be elected for the District Boards, in the same proportion.

3. The President of District and Taluka Boards should be officials and not elected non-officials.

4. The Local Boards should have more discretionary powers in the allotment of funds and the passing of estimates for works, but they should have the right to consult the Government P. W. D. officers freely and to take their assistance in the preparation of estimates, superintendence &c., otherwise the work should go on as it does now under the present rules and orders under the Act.

5. The Taluka Local Boards should have full power to pass their own budget, but the fixed minimum balance should not be touched without the sanction of the District Local Boards or the Commissioner in Sind. The power to engage and to pay servants sanctioned by the District Local Boards should be entrusted to Taluka Boards up to a certain limit of pay, say Rs 20 or Rs. 30 or Rs. 50 according to the importance of the boards, otherwise the present rules should be followed.

6. It would be better to entrust the management of primary schools to the District Local Boards, which should have a right to consult the Government Educational Inspector and his subordinates, who should inspect the schools and advise in educational matters.

7 The powers under rules 2 and 3 of the rules made under section 48 (b) should be entrusted to the Taluka Local Boards instead of the District Local Boards in the case of primary schools. Other rules may be followed as they are now.

8. It is necessary that Taluka Local Boards should be consulted by the District Local Boards as to the appropriation of funds raised by the taluka to be spent on education.

9. If the suggestions made above are carried out carefully, there will not be much need for additional establishments and expenditure on that account. But should there be any, the same may be met by having recourse to methods (2), (3) and (4) and not to (1), *viz*, raising the Local Fund Cess; as the Government assessment together with the present Local Fund Cess is already believed to be pressing hard on the land owners who are generally poor and do not care for education, they should not be further discouraged.

10. I do not think so.

11. No addition is necessary except with regard to clauses (1), (2) and (4), *vide* Paras. 14, 18.

12 There is no necessity for forming separate groups of electors with a view to secure some men from classes 2 to 6 given in section 10.

13. It is not desirable that the Vice-President should be non-official. Both the President and the Vice-President be officials because the time has not yet come and the people are not quite ready yet to receive and exercise satisfactorily the full powers that are necessary for effective administration development which, therefore, should be conferred on them hesitatingly and with great caution and consideration. The difference of religious, tribal and social ideas among different communities is strong reason for this hesitation.

14. In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights and consequent divisions of holdings, the statutory minimum of assessment should be Rs. 20.

15. I am not in favour of dividing the provincial share of land revenue and income tax between the Government and Local Boards.

16. The present arrangement is satisfactory and there is no use of fixing the ratio of dividing the proceeds from one anna cess.

17. The administrative efficiency of Local Boards will not suffer if the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is abolished and the board is constituted of elected members and nominated officials. The proportion of nominated officials to elected members be 1 to 2.

This is to be read along with paras. 1 and 2.

18. I am in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2 and 4 of section 10 of Local Boards Act.—The limits be as follows

Clause 1: Rs. 20

Clause 2: Rs. 2,000 (Two thousand).

Clause 4: Rs. 20.

LARKANA DISTRICT.

Mr. C. H. Blathwayt, I.C.S., Collector, Larkana.

1. There is no objection if there is a small elected majority. An elected majority is permissible under the existing law, which merely prescribes the *minimum* proportion of elected members. As a matter of fact, the Labdaria Taluka Local Board has now 10 elected members to 4 nominated, and it works as smoothly as the other boards of the district. At the same time I should be opposed to any great reduction of the number of nominated non-officials; these are on the whole better and more useful men than the elected members.

2. There is no need for any election by communities so far as this district is concerned. The statement of the number of Local Board members I have forwarded separately (with my No. 1108 of 1st October 1915) shows that Hindu and Mahomedan communities are represented exactly in equal proportion to their respective populations. The system of nomination can always correct any undue proportion there may be at any time.

3. Quite impossible.

4. This depends on the qualifications of the staff that the Local Board is able to employ. Some advance has been made in this respect of recent years, though there is plenty of room for more. If a thoroughly qualified and highly paid engineering staff could be employed, there would hardly be need for any limitations at all such as are prescribed in sections 57 and 61 of the Act. As it is I think the limits might be raised, the Rs. 500 of section 57 being raised to Rs. 1,500, and the Rs. 2,500 limit (above which all works must be executed by the Executive Engineer) being raised to Rs. 5,000. A great deal of correspondence would be saved by this, and also there would be a considerable saving of Public Works Department review and execution charges.

5. I think the Taluka Local Boards might engage and pay their own servants, such as mallis, well-workers, watchmen for dharamsalas, &c. A limit of Rs. 25 pay per mensem might be laid down. As to the budgets, the District Local Board's sanction is largely nominal and it very seldom interferes, but I would not advocate that it should be deprived of this power which is a salutary power for it to possess.

6. I must answer this question in the negative.

7. The answer to this depends largely on the answer to question 6. But if there is to be no change in the existing system, I would advocate that it should be clearly laid down in the rules that contributions which the District Local Board makes to the educational institutions outside the district, or to secondary schools and Madressahs within the district, should be paid out of educational funds (*i.e.*, out of the $\frac{1}{3}$ share allotted to education) and not out of general funds. This District Local Board pays more than Rs. 8,000 a year on such objects from general funds and the money can only with difficulty be spared. Applications for increase of such grants are frequent and the educational authorities, if asked to provide for them, out of their funds, refuse on the ground that they want all their spare funds for primary education. The sanction of the educational authorities is at present necessary to the payment of these grants from general funds. It seems fair either to do away with this sanction or that the educational authorities should provide for these grants from their own funds.

8. Never to my knowledge. The provision in section 48 (a) might well be dispensed with. The educational accounts are kept for the whole district and it is not possible to ascertain what amount was spent in each taluka.

9. (1) I should be opposed to the proposal to raise the Local Fund Cess to 2 annas in the rupee. The measure would be most unpopular.

(2) I am not in favour of "Notified areas" in this district.

(3) (a) I should be in favour of levying 1 anna, or better 2 annas in the rupee, as a cess on income tax. It would, of course, be unpopular but, as it is, bannias, who own no land, pay nothing towards Local Funds and therefore nothing directly towards the provision of schools for their children. But the cess thus levied will be very small. The income tax of this district amounts to Rs. 33,000 roughly. A cess even at 2 annas in the rupee would produce only Rs. 4,125 yearly.

(b) Cess on excise revenue is already leviable under the present law (section 3 of Sind Local Funds Act, section 6 of Bombay Local Funds Act). Apparently the cess was actually levied up to 1873, when it was stopped as interfering with imperial excise revenue, and the Government of India, as a compensation, directed that a sum equal to the then average income of the cess should be added to the provincial allotment. For this district we have been getting Rs. 1,700 in this way every year, but the amount was fixed in 1874-75 and excise revenue has greatly increased since then.

(c) On forest revenue, cess is leviable under the existing law from all sums paid to the Forest Department on account of grazing fees, &c., in the case of all forests except imperial reserved forests (page 190, Cummings' Manual).

(4) This seems the only course by which the incomes of the boards can really be satisfactorily increased. We are most grateful to Government for the grants they make already; in fact it is really only the Government grant that enables us to undertake any *new* works of importance, the Rs. 41,000 in all as Government grant, but this was cut down by Rs. 8,000 when the district of Nawabshah was formed.

10. I should deny entirely that the District and Taluka Local Boards are failures. I think they do their duties as well as can be expected with the limited means at their disposal. It is true

that the non-officials do not take much real interest but this is true only in a general sense. Members take a very real interest in and important new work such as a bridge, school, or hospital, that is under proposal in their immediate vicinity. We must trust to the spread of education for further improvement.

11. I can suggest none except that perhaps graduates might be added to the electorate. These already have votes under the Municipal Act. The limits prescribed in clauses 2, 3 and 4 might also be slightly reduced without objection, and I think that the limit in clause 4 might certainly be reduced to Rs. 25 so as to include, *e.g.*, retired Head Munshis.

12. I see no way of doing this, and think it is better to trust to nomination.

13. I cannot hold that it is desirable, under present conditions, that Vice-Presidents should be non-officials. The great difficulty (there are also minor ones) is that no such non-official could be found in a taluka who could undertake the constant touring, inspection, &c, which is now done by the Mukhtyarkar in addition to his ordinary duties. The difference between a Municipality and a Local Board in this respect seems to me to be vital.

14. I see no reason for changing the figure Rs. 48. But, if anything, it should be slightly increased as, although a certain number of voters lose their vote by the division of holdings, the electorate is probably increased on the whole by the process of division, as, *e.g.*, in place of one holding paying Rs. 210 there might be 3 of Rs. 70 each, the holder of each of which would have a vote.

15. I do not see how it can be arranged.

16. I do not think any proportion should be fixed by law, and the District Local Board must be trusted to treat the Taluka Local Boards fairly, as in my experience is the case.

17. I am strongly against doing away with nominated non-official members. These are on the whole more useful than elected members and nomination is a valuable means of giving representation to an unrepresented community.

18. I have dealt with this under No. 11 above.

Mr. A. S. R. Macklin, Assistant Collector, Sehwan.

1. Yes: the majority should be slightly on the side of the elected members

[*Note.*—This answer assumes the meaning of this question to be "should the number of elected members be greater than the number of nominated and ex-officio members?"]

2. The only communities worth considering here are those of Hindus and Mussulmans. So long as an equal number of each is secured among the non-ex-officio members, no special provisions are required. In commercial centres it would be advisable to secure an adequate representation of the commercial community as such but this is a question that is not likely to arise except in connexion with Municipalities as distinct from Local Boards.

3. No.

4. The present restrictions could safely be removed in the case of any Local Board which was in a position to maintain a qualified engineering and sanitary staff.

5. (a) All Taluka Local Boards should be free to choose their own servants. In the case of the higher and more responsible appointments their choice should be liable to veto by the District Local Board or by the President of the Taluka Local Board.

(b) Taluka Local Board budget estimates should continue to be subject to District Local Board's control.

6. Yes: but only in districts where the Mussulman population exceeds the Hindus. In districts where Hindus are everywhere in the ascendant, Mussulmans will require Government protection.

Government should always be allowed to interfere in the educational policy of a District Local Board, if it appears that education is neglected or that the District Local Board is abusing its powers; and all Local Board schools should be liable to inspection by Government officers.

7. *Rule 2.*—A District Local Board should be allowed to defray all charges on account of salary and other items mentioned in the existing Rule 2 at a rate higher than the rate prescribed by Government; but they should not be allowed to do so at any rate lower than the prescribed by Government.

Rule 7.—Local Boards should be free of Government control, save in the sense of the suggested amendment to Rule 2.

Rule 8.—Government should not interfere.

Rule 11.—This rule should be so amended as to secure adequate independence to the Local Board.

Rule 13.—Add 'Provided that in cases where the Local Board maintains a qualified engineering and sanitary staff, it shall be free from Government interference.'

Provided also that the Local Board has received no grant-in aid from Government for the work in question.'

Rule 14.—Add 'Provided that in cases where the District Local Board maintains a qualified engineering and sanitary staff, it shall be free from Government interference.'

Note.—The Mukhtyarkar does not suggest any modification of rules 2 and 11

8. No.

9. (1) Yes.

(2) No: at present the balance is sometimes against the municipality, if for example it is the municipality which provides funds to which a large contribution might justly be paid by the Local Board (*e. g.*, the Sehwan Dispensary).

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. If by 'the failure of District and Taluka Local Boards' is meant 'the failure of the members of a Local Board to show public spirit,' the question is self-evident. The cause is too much Government interference.

If the meaning is 'failure to carry out their work as efficiently as it could have been done by Government,' the question implies an untruth.

The question does not seem capable of bearing any other meaning.

11. No addition to qualifications is required. But the following suggestions are offered:—

(a) Section 10 (6) should be deleted.

(b) No woman as such should be disqualified, provided that she is in other respects qualified and that she does not follow the *parda* system. The results of admitting women to a seat on the boards in England have been excellent, and the mere electoral qualification could certainly do no harm in India.

12. Separate grouping appears to be unnecessary.

13. Except in very special circumstances (*e. g.*, the presence of an able, honest, and energetic non-official member), the Vice-President should invariably be official.

14. Rs. 48-0-0.

15. There should be no division.

16. Each case should be considered on its merits. The proportion should be determined by the Commissioner each year. This is a case which should not be left to the uncontrolled decision of the Local Boards themselves.

17. No change should be made in the constitution of Local Boards.

18. The qualifying limits should not be reduced except in the case of section 10 (4) In this case the qualification should be reduced to Rs. 25 to enable retired Head Munshis and Magistrates to vote at elections; their experience will be useful to the boards.

Mr Jagatsing Je'ilmal, Deputy Collector, Mehar.

1. They may well have them; though, in my opinion, it serves no useful purpose to have elected majorities in the present state of civilization of the mofussil man. From experience, I can say that nominated members of Taluka Local Boards are, as a rule, better men and prove more useful than the elected ones. It is not always the best men that get elected.

2. No. Election by communities is not suitable, particularly in Sind.

3. It is most inadvisable to have non-officials as Presidents of district and taluka boards. Chaos and confusion would be the result; and affairs of the boards will not be properly managed.

4. So long as the boards are not in a position to employ qualified men on high salaries as Engineers, it would not be desirable to modify, much less to remove, the present limitation on the preparation of plans and execution of public works. So far as I know, only unqualified men (who have acquired some experience in the preparing of estimates) are employed at present as Local Fund

Overseers in the whole of the Province. With higher salaries, services of men of the qualifications of higher grade Overseers or Supervisors of the Public Works Department can certainly be secured. If such men can be employed by the boards it would, in my opinion, not be necessary to have plans and estimates prepared by the Public Works Department. Those for works costing more than Rs. 1,500 should only be approved by the Government Executive Engineer in that case; and no work should be executed by him, which does not cost more than Rs. 5,000.

5. Yes, for both parts of the question as in the case of rural municipalities which employ and pay their servants and pass their own budgets. The general control should rest with the President, District Local Board.

6. No. Time has not come for it.

7. No alteration or modification in the rules is, in my opinion, necessary

8. Not to my knowledge.

9. To meet increased expenditure, if any, my views are as under.—

(1) No Raising the Local Fund Cess would be a most unpopular measure.

(2) Yes.

(3) No. The measure would be even more unpopular than the increase in Local Fund Cess.

(a) Yes.

(b) No.

(4) Yes.

10 I will not say that there is failure of the District and the Taluka Local Boards. Non-official members, particularly elected members, do not, as a rule, take enough interest in the working of the boards. With their active co-operation, the boards would work more efficiently and be able to show better results.

The absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members is due to their natural apathy to concern themselves with affairs which are not their own and from which they personally gain nothing. This apathy is chiefly the result of lack of education. Education itself and the consequent formation of individual character and awakening to a sense of duty in regard to neighbours, citizens and countrymen are the remedies.

11 It does not appear necessary to make any addition to the qualification of voters (section 10). All persons of respectability fit to be voters come within one or another of the classes under the section, e.g., pleaders worth the name must come within class (3).

12. In order to secure men from classes 2 to 6 (*vide* section 10) each taluka should be divided into at least two separate groups for these classes only, in addition to ordinary groups in respect of landholders.

13. No. No step would be so detrimental to the interests of the mofussil taluka boards as to give them non-official Vice-Presidents in the present state of civilization. It is far more necessary to have an official Vice-President than having even an official President.

14. The present figure of Rs. 48 should remain unaltered. While on the one hand there will, owing to division of holdings, be reduction in the number of persons (qualified to vote) at present paying just the minimum of land revenue or a little over it, there will be a proportionate increase, owing to the same cause in the number of persons paying larger assessments. To illustrate Rs. 50 when sub-divided will be less than the minimum figure; but Rs. 556 when sub-divided may be 12 times 48.

15. It seems desirable to give a share of provincial revenue to Local Boards. I am not in a position to say, without knowing facts and figures, what the share should be.

16. It is not necessary to fix by law the proportion according to which proceeds from one anna cess should be divided between the district boards and taluka boards. District boards should continue to exercise free discretion in the matter of division of funds, in view of the needs of itself and the taluka boards.

17. Besides officials, there should be some other (non-official) nominated members as well, on local boards. Administrative efficiency is likely to suffer by abolishing nomination except in the case of officials. Nominated non-official members prove generally more useful than elected ones.

18 I would propose reduced limits as under:—

Class 2, Rs. 2,500 instead of Rs. 5,000.

Class 4, Rs. 15 instead of Rs. 50.

The proposed reduction in the two classes will have the effect of increasing the number of voters among middle class mofussilites and educated pensioners. In no other class is reduction called for.

Sahebzada Sardar Mahomed Khan, Deputy Collector, Larkana.

1. Yes, it should.
2. I am in favour of election by communities, because it is only then that a due representation of their interests (special or otherwise) could be secured. But the strength of the respective members should be in proportion to the strength of the communities.
3. Not Yet.
4. If a Local Board is rich enough to afford the employment of a qualified man, say, not below the qualifications of a Sub-Divisional Officer, then I am inclined to modify the limitations as follows:—

All the work costing not more than Rs. 1,000 and roads, the cost of which does not exceed, on an average, Rs. 100 per mile, to be disposed of by the board, without the intervention of the official Executive Engineer.

But where a board can afford a man of an Executive Engineer's qualifications, then, of course, there is no need of any limitations.

5. I agree with the views of the Mukhtyarkar of Larkana.
6. Not yet.
7. No alteration appears necessary at present.
8. Not to my knowledge.
9. (2) (3) and (4) Yes.
(i) Yes, but as suggested by the Mukhtyarkar of Kambar.
10. The meaning of this question probably is:—
"The lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation, in the affairs of the board, on the part of the non-official members—Causes and Remedies"—The spread of education (which is an end obtainable not within a few years but in many decades) will cure this.
11. I agree with the views of the Mukhtyarkar of Kambar.
12. *Vide* answer No. 2.
13. Not yet—let them get a bit more educated.
14. Reduction in this does not appear to me necessary at present.
15. I think Government do extend pecuniary help towards the Local Boards, in sanitary and water supply projects; and the boards may request the Government to extend their help in other branches of the works also; but it appears absolutely undesirable that the Government should be legally bound down to share to provincial revenue with a Local Board.
16. I agree with the Mukhtyarkar of Larkana.
17. I am not in favour of doing away with the provisions for the appointment of non-officials by nomination. To my thinking, this is a useful provision.
18. *Vide* answer 14.

Mr. G. M. Isani, Deputy Collector, Ratodero.

1. Yes. Natural development of Local Self-Government required that eventually elected majorities should be given to district and taluka boards. Time is ripe for such a step. It is true that as a rule Government make very happy selections while nominating the members of these boards. But nominated members do not feel completely independent and often times do not command the confidence of the people to the same extent as the elected members do.
2. Communal representation is not at any rate called for in the rural life of Sind. This question only arises here in connection with the municipalities.
3. No. It is inadvisable at present to give the right of nominating Presidents to the district and taluka boards.
4. The Local Boards are in a position to secure a qualified engineering and sanitary staff. The special agency now being engaged by them insures efficient performance of the above works. It is high time that the present restriction should be removed.
5. (a) Taluka Boards should be given choice in the selection of their servants. But in the case of highly paid officials such as Overseers, which would be unnecessary for and beyond the power of a single Taluka to entertain, it would be better if the general control is vested in the District Board.
(b) Time has arrived for the partial emancipation of the Taluka Local Board budgets from the control of the district board. The taluka board might be allowed to budget for works costing Rs. 200 without the previous sanction of the District Local Board.

6. In regard to education time has also arrived when the management of primary schools, as is the case with the municipalities, can be conveniently entrusted to the District Local Boards, with the usual safe guard of Government interference in case of negligence in educational matters.

7. No change in the rule is, in my opinion, called for.

8. The Taluka Boards are not consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the talukas for expenditure on education in areas outside their limits.

9. A critical period has been reached when it is incumbent to deprive the Local Board revenues of their inelasticity and to impart gradual growth to these finances so as to enable them to keep pace with the rising expenditure of these times. It is only consistent with the contemplated increase of power of the Local Boards and extension in their sphere of activity and usefulness that the public should pay more for these enlarged benefits. Importance and responsibilities of the village Government in its narrowest sense, as distinct from that of the district, province or country at large, are every day on the increase. People would cheerfully bear the necessary financial burdens if only they are assured stronger voice in the management of their local affairs —

(1) The Local Fund Cess should be raised to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee.

(2) Bigger villages where there are no sanitary boards should be constituted as village Panchayats. Already they are independent in their sanitary matters. The agency also is there. All that is now needed is to give over to the same agency the charge of medical and educational affairs of their village with extended power of self taxation. This will tend to the progress of village Self-Government in its truest sense.

(3) (a) The trader derives greater benefit from the existence of good roads than any other class taken singly. Easy communication means payment of smaller fare on his part. Up to this time, singularly enough, he has never been made to pay for the comforts spread for him by the Local Boards. It is no longer possible to extend to him the exemption enjoyed by him in the past. Cess should be levied on income-tax.

(b) Abkari and forest revenues should logically pay the cess which the land revenue bears.

(4) Yes. Provincial sub-ventions should be increased.

10. Failure of District and Taluka Local Boards is due to the insufficient importance and independence vouchsafed to their members. Many of the members of Taluka and District Local Boards intellectually can bear comparison with the members of some of the municipalities with the added advantage that Local Board members are, as a rule, village magnates and as such already trained for the conduct of the affairs of their village organizations. By becoming Local Board members they are required only to extend abruptly their activities from a group of villages to a taluka. But it needs some inducement in the shape of increased importance and responsibilities to make it worthwhile for them to take proper interest in the affairs of Local Boards.

11. The franchise can conveniently be enlarged by reducing the minimum of assessment which would qualify a land holder as a voter to 25 rupees.

12. Separate grouping, as is the case with the communal representation, appears unnecessary.

13. In the interest of Local Self-Government, it will not only be desirable but necessary to have the non-official Vice President. Only in very exceptional circumstances when a deserving non-official member is not available for the position of Vice-President, the official should be the Vice-President.

14. In view of the recent introduction of the Record of Rights and consequent division of holdings, it has become indispensable to reduce the statutory minimum of assessment of 48 rupees to 25 rupees.

15. I am in favour of division of land revenue and income tax between the Provincial Government and Local Boards in proportion of 30 to 1 and 16 to 1 respectively.

16. Each case should be considered on its own merits. It is not necessary to fix by law the share of proceeds from one anna cess to be given to Taluka Local Board. District Local Board should be left as has been the case in the past, as the ultimate authority which should judge of the necessities of the subordinate boards.

17. If a board be constituted of elected members and nominated officials, it would command the confidence of the public at large more securely. Consequently, the administrative efficiency instead of suffering in any way would rather increase. With only this difference to the administration that some of the non official members instead of being nominated by Government would be returned by the people.

18. I am in favour of lowering the qualifying limits as under —

In clause I. Statutory minimum to be Rs. 25 ;

In clause II. Rs. 2,500 instead of Rs. 5,000 ;

In clause IV. Rs. 15 instead of Rs. 50 to enable retired subordinate Government servant to vote at election.

This reduction in the qualifying limits would popularise the Local Boards which, as it is, are a distant affair to the people in general.

Mr. Ganshamdas, Muktyarkar of Larkana.

1. Yes.
2. There is no necessity for securing due representation of special communities but provision may be made for securing due representation of special interests
3. The President should be non-official. Some boards may be given the right to elect their own President and others should have a nominated President.
4. All works should be done by the board except those costing more than Rs. 5,000. The work of roads should be done by the board.
5. The Taluka Local Board should be free to engage their own servants and pay them. The budget should be passed by the District Local Board
6. The Primary Schools should continue to be under the Educational Department.
7. No alteration or modification is necessary.
8. No.
9. To meet extra expenditure—
 - (1) Local Fund Cess may be increased up to a maximum of 2 annas in the rupee.
 - (2) Local Boards should be relieved of some expenditure by establishing notified areas.
 - (3) Provincial sub-ventions should be increased.
10. It is true that the non-official members do not take much interest

The causes are :—

- (1) Proper persons are not returned.
- (2) Official control removes responsibility from the non-official members.

The first will be removed by providing of representation of special interests. The second by relaxing official control and throwing responsibility on the non-official members.

11. (1) The limit of immovable property may be fixed at Rs. 500 only.
- (2) The limit of pension may be fixed at Rs. 10 only.
12. The number of members should be allotted in proportion to the voters. Some men from classes 2 to 6 will then come in.
13. Yes.
14. The minimum of Rs. 48 should remain as it is sufficiently low to include almost all suitable men.
15. I cannot suggest anything.
16. The proportion should be fixed. The Taluka Local Board should get at least half of its income.
17. No. The nominated officials may be 2 men on the board.
18. See replies 11 and 14.

Mr. Gokaldas, Muktyarkar of Kambar.

1. The district and taluka boards may have elected majorities.
2. I am not in favour of election by communities, but I think some provision should be made to secure the due representation, on the district and taluka boards in Sind, of Hindus, who form a community next in importance in point of both population and land owning to, and who are more generally educated than, Mahomedans, from whom the Local Board members are almost entirely recruited.
I consider the present number of members sufficient.
3. It is not at all advisable, under the present conditions to have non-official Presidents of the district and taluka boards.
4. In past years when the district boards did not entertain any qualified men and the work of the preparation of plans and estimates was entrusted to unqualified maistries, the existence of the limitations provided in sections 57 and 61 of the Local Boards Act was very necessary. This necessity no longer exists. All the district boards now entertain District and Divisional Overseers, who are qualified men and these officers could safely be trusted to prepare plans and estimates for works costing Rs. 2,500, without the same being scrutinized and approved by the Government Executive Engineers, and supervise the execution of works costing Rs. 5,000. To that extent, therefore, I propose the limitations to be modified.

The Local Fund works individually, seldom if ever, cost more than Rs 2,500 and therefore there will be very few occasions for referring the plans and estimates to Government Engineer for his approval; while if an officer of a Sub-Engineer's grade is employed by the district board for the whole district, the chances of mishaps or mistakes in plans and estimates will be greatly reduced, and, at the same time, supervision of the more important works will be more intelligent and efficient.

5. Yes. The Taluka Board might safely be given a free hand to engage and pay their own servants when such a step would involve an extra expenditure to the extent of Rs. 30 a month. Beyond this figure sanction of district board should be obtained in the first instance.

As regards the District Local Board's control over the budgets prepared by the Taluka Local Boards, the fact is, that, the District Local Board every year allots a fixed sum to the Taluka Local Board for expenditure by the board, and the Taluka Local Board budget is prepared on the basis of the figure thus communicated. The needs and requirements of the Taluka Local Board and their order of urgency, are best known to that board and therefore the budget prepared by the said board is seldom interfered with and its sanction by the District Local Board is consequently a formal affair. This control, therefore, by the District Local Board could be safely done away with.

6. In my opinion the time has not yet arrived for entrusting the entire management of Primary Schools to the District Local Boards in Sind. It is an admitted fact, that with a very few exceptions, the elected and nominated non-official members of these boards are either uneducated or semi-educated men, and it will be quite a retrograde step to leave the entire management of the Primary Schools, in the hands of an 'Educational Committee' formed of these members. In the interests, therefore, of the efficiency of these schools, and of keeping them abreast of the times, and for the introduction and the successful working of the improved methods suggested by the educational officers from time to time, it is desirable that the administration of these schools, so far the teaching in them is concerned, should continue to remain in the hands of the Government Educational Department. The questions of the appointment, punishment, and dismissal of the masters, the fixing and payment of the master's salaries, allowances and pension contributions and the grant of leave of absence to them might be entrusted to the District Local Boards.

7. Rule 7 of the Rules framed under section 48 (b) should be modified in the light of the above suggestions.

8. Taluka Local Boards are never informed how the share of their revenues, set apart for educational purposes, is actually spent. It cannot, therefore, be said with certainty that there have been instances of diverting portion of the revenue raised by one Taluka Local Board, for expenditure on education in other areas. If there have been any such instances, Taluka Local Board has not been consulted as regards such appropriations.

9. To meet the increased expenditure entailed by the appointment of additional establishment I think that the measures, suggested in the four causes, should be adopted. I would, however, submit that the levy of Local Fund Cess in excess of one anna in a rupee should be resorted to only when the income realized from other sources suggested in this para. is found insufficient to meet the increased expenditure.

10. It is true, as far as my experience of the working of the Local Boards in Sind goes, that their failure is due to lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of non-official members. It cannot be denied that it is the education which gives a person a clear conception of his duty as regards various matters in which he is concerned, and which befits him for independent thought and action. This education most of the non-official members lack in. With very few exceptions, these gentlemen are either illiterate or they only know how to read and write their own vernaculars. A seat on the board is thus sought by them more, as conferring some distinction on them in the eyes of the officials and the public, than as a position involving trust and responsibility.

Again these non-official members are almost invariably zamindars who mostly belong to the Mahomedan community. These men are generally known to be not quite mindful of even their own private interest. With a few honourable exceptions, they would seldom give that degree of thought and care, or undergo any exertion, that would be necessary for the preservation of their very estates which are the only source of their living. As long as these conditions prevail and no radical change is effected in them, it would be idle to expect the non-official members to take that interest in their work on the boards which alone can prove them to be a success.

The only remedy for the removal of this cause, is spread of education amongst these men. Happily the future is not without a ray of hope in this respect. Education is now gradually and more rapidly, than was the case some years ago, spreading amongst all classes and even the zamindars are coming under its influence. It will, however, take several years before the effects of this process will be perceptible in the working of the boards.

Another remedy that I would suggest is that some well educated men should be brought on the boards who would devote some of their time and thought to the affairs of the Boards and thus become an example to these zamindars of self-sacrifice, and thus arouse a sense of responsibility and a spirit of emulation amongst them.

Much can also be done in this direction by the private associations or highly educated members of the different communities by organizing measures for the training of their less fortunate fellow brethren in the principles of Local Self-Government and thus befitting them for their work on the boards.

11. I cannot suggest any substantial additions to be made to the qualifications of voters under section 10 of the Local Boards Act. Graduates of the recognized universities might however, be included in the list of voters just as they are eligible under the Municipal Act.

12. Persons mentioned in clauses 2, 5, and 6 are practically non-existent in the rural boards in Sind. Very few men outside the municipal towns own immovable property worth Rs. 5,000 and over besides the arable land. Similarly a few localities only have got Honorary Magistrates and these are invariably large land-owners, while there are no revenue or Police Patels in Sind. The number of voters under clause 3 is, however, fairly large in each taluka but they are so distributed in the groups, as at present constituted, that their number is always in minority, compared to the number of voters appearing under clause 1 of the section and, therefore, they are unable to affect the elections on their own account.

While I am against the elections by communities, I would advocate that a separate electorate of these men should be formed and they should be given the privilege of returning one or two members as their own representatives on the board.

13. It is not desirable to have non-official Vice-Presidents for the Taluka Local Boards, even though the Presidents continue to be officials. The President of the Taluka Local Board, who is invariably the Assistant or Deputy Collector in charge of a division, is always moving from one place to the other in his charge and is hardly able to attend one or two meetings of the board in the whole year. This being so and the non-official members being what they are (*vide* answer No. 10) it will not be conducive to the efficient administration of the board if the official Vice-President is supplanted by a non-official Vice-President.

14. In view of the introduction of the Record of Rights the statutory minimum of assessment should be Rs. 30.

15. I am not in a position to give any useful opinion on this question.

16. My experience is that the District Local Board, after deducting its 'Educational' portion, divides the proceeds from one anna cess almost equally between the District and Taluka Local Boards. The share thus allotted to the taluka boards, I have invariably found to fall short of even their urgent requirements. The result is that the taluka board is obliged very frequently to request for grants from the district board to carry out urgent works. The district board is always generous to make such grants whenever an urgency of it is fully explained to them, and in this manner several thousands are got from them, but the process necessarily entails correspondence and not unfrequently it becomes a cause of delay in the carrying out of urgent and important works.

To minimize all this, it would be desirable that the division should be in the ratio of 2 to 1 between the Taluka and District Local Boards and this might be fixed in law as has been done in the case of 'Educational' portion of the proceeds from one anna cess.

17. I do not think that the administrative efficiency of the Taluka Local Boards in Sind will suffer if the proposed change is adopted, but I am afraid the representation of the various communities which is already unequal will thereby become still more unequal. And therefore, I am not in favour of the proposal.

18. I am in favour of reducing qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act. I have already submitted in my answer to question No. 14 that the minimum assessment qualifying under clause 1 should be Rs. 30. Under clause 2 this limit should be reduced to Rs. 2,000. The present figure of Rs. 5,000 under that clause is excessive, and in rural areas there will be found very few men possessing so much property besides arable land.

So also the qualifying limit under clause 4 is excessive and it should be reduced to Rs. 25. Persons getting Rs. 25 as their pension allowance per month, must be drawing Rs. 50 or over when in Government service, and as such they must have held responsible posts under Government. They should, therefore, be considered respectable men and fit to hold seats on the Local Boards even after retirement from Government service.

Mr. Dingmal.

* * * * *

2. No, because it would introduce an element of discord and disunion. Such provision is already made by nomination. The present number of members is sufficient.

* * * * *

5. Taluka Local Boards should have a free hand in engaging and paying its servants. They should have power to pass and revise their budgets subject only to the maintenance of a prescribed minimum balance. They should forward a copy of their budget for information to the District Local Board.

6. Time has come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Board. But there should be a further inspection of such schools on behalf of Government.

* * * * *

7. *Rule 13.*—Plans and estimates of school buildings should be approved by the District Local Board and not by the Educational Department.

Rule 14.—Sites for school building, should be approved by the District Local Board and not by the Educational Inspector.

* * * * *

10. No.

11. No.

* * * * *

16. The proportion should be fixed by law. It should be half to half.

Sirai Shah Mahomed Lahori.

1. Yes, the district and taluka boards should have elected majorities.

2. No. I deem no necessity for that

3. That there is lack of education in the mofussil cannot be denied and consequently we cannot have a jump of having non-official Presidents at once. However I think the appointment of Vice-Presidents by nomination will be a step forward and consequently most desirable.

4. To the extent of Rs. 1,000 the work should be executed by the Local Boards and beyond that the Public Works Department should be entrusted.

5. The District Local Board office for the budgets, &c., should continue but Taluka Local Boards should be empowered to appoint, suspend or dismiss any servant drawing salary up to Rs. 30 per mensem

6. and 7. The present system may continue but, the District Local Board should be consulted in all matters contained in rule 7, section 48, Appendix B, page 179 of Cumming's Local Board Manual.

8. No

9. My answer to question No. 6 is in the negative hence no answer is called for with respect to the question

10. Yes, the board as at present constituted ungrudgingly leaves all matters to the Mukhtyarkar who is the sole master of the situation. Any member having a sense of some independence also thus remains obscure.

Much improvement is expected if the Vice-Presidents are nominated from among the non-official members and the qualifications of the electors and the elected are improved.

11. The limit of Rs. 50 may with advantage be reduced to Rs. 20, this will admit many literate, experienced, Government servants on the board and also on the list of voters.

12. There is no objection to having a separate group.

13. It has been replied above, *vide* question 3.

14. Should be raised to Rs. 80—

15. There should be a fixed share from the provincial revenues and income taxes, the present grants being insufficient for the betterments of the Local Fund important works.

16. The proportion should be fixed; in my opinion $\frac{1}{4}$ th may be retained with the District Local Board and the rest $\frac{3}{4}$ th be given to the taluka boards to enable the latter to carry out their important and immediate works without anxiously waiting for the District Local Board's deliberation.

17. The appointment of non-officials by nomination should not be abolished, but the number of officials be restricted as I have already said on the 1st question that the board should have elected majority if $\frac{2}{3}$ rd be elected members and out of the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ rd members the officials should be $\frac{1}{3}$ rd this will virtually keep the same number of officials on the local boards as at present.

18. I have already replied to this question in my answer to the question No 11.

Mr. Hardasmal Kimatra Zamindar.

1. The boards should not have done so, as no good will result from such elections.

2. There seems to be no need for election by communities. All the communities here are in my opinion duly represented under the existing law. The present number of members is therefore, quite adequate and should not be increased. However if any special communities elsewhere are not properly represented, a special provision may be made to nominate a member or members from them.

3. I think these Presidents should not be non-officials. Though theoretically it is desirable that they should be such, yet practically the administrative efficiency will have to suffer for two reasons. (1) It is next to impossible to secure the services of any well qualified influential and impartial gentlemen everywhere—gentlemen who can devote their time gratuitously with keen interest in the discharge of their duties. (2) It is feared that all the concerned parties may not have much regard for such Presidents and would not like to act in concert with them in respect of the Local board's matters. It is, I submit, only a little tinge of the official power that makes the board's affairs go on ordinarily under the law in force.

4. To me the limitation imposed by sections 57 and 67 of the Act appears quite reasonable and should not be removed or modified.

5. It is advisable that the Taluka Local Board should for the sake of convenience and to save delay be freed from the District Local Board's control in matters shown in the questions.

6. In my opinion the time has not yet come when the management of Primary Schools can be entrusted to the District Local Boards with success.

7. I can see no reasonableness of suggesting any way for the modification of the rules under section 48 (b) of the Act. These rules seem to me very sound.

8. I have no personal knowledge of any consultations referred to in the question, hence I can say no more than this that the Taluka Local Board should be consulted in such matter.

9. Looking to the views I have expressed as aforesaid, there will be no need for additional establishment entailing extra expenditure on the boards, but even if all or any of the suggestions referred to in the questions be adopted and carried out, the means suggested in clauses 1-4 of this question, should not, I submit, be had recourse to, to meet any extra cost, as the people here are not in a position to bear it.

10. I have little knowledge of the fact incorporated in this question. I am, therefore, unable to say any thing regarding it.

11. No addition can in my opinion be made to the qualifications of the voters effectively.

12. I can suggest no means for forming separate groups of electors, as I can see no need for it. Besides if such measure be given effect to, it will, I think, entail unnecessary expenditure on the boards in publishing many lists &c. :—

13. The Vice-Presidents too should not be non-officials. My reasons are the same as given in my reply to question No. 3.

14. I think no statutory minimum of assessment is necessary in consequence of divisions of holdings. The divisions have not affected the qualifications of the voters in any way.

15. My reply to this question is in the affirmative. I am in favour of such division but being unacquainted with the facts and figures of the matter I am unable to suggest what share should fall to the Local Board's lot on such division.

16. I am in favour of this proportion being fixed by law, but I am unable to suggest the extent of any ratio. The reasons of my inability are the same as given in the above reply.

17. I am clearly of opinion that the provision for the appointment of non-officials by nomination is essentially necessary for the proper working of the system and should not be abolished. It has been observed that the non-officials of better qualifications and capacities are generally nominated to complete the whole required number and therefore, they are more useful in matters of giving advice and making suggestions &c., in respect of the Local Board's affairs. Besides, it is but fair that such gentlemen who are not elected members for some or other inherent causes unknown to us should in equity be invariably nominated to have the chance of working on the boards and not left out of consideration. However, if the abolition of the provision be thought desirable at all, I would like to suggest that the number of the nominated officials should not exceed 3 in all and all the rest should be elected ones.

18. I am against reducing the limits of qualifications prescribed in clauses 1-4 of S. 10 of the Act. I think the law with regard to it should remain in force as it is.

Mr. Lalchand Navalrai, Pleader, Larkana.

1. Yes

2. Part I No.

Part II. In case of failure at election of any community, representation should be secured under special provisions of law by nomination from amongst that community. In my opinion there is no complaint on the ground of number and hence there is no necessity for increasing it.

3. As the education in Mofussil has not much advanced and in consequence thereof there is a regrettable paucity of literate men, it is yet too early to advocate the appointment of non-official Presidents of either the District Local Board or the Taluka one; but I am of opinion that an advance should be made in this direction by appointment by election of non-official Vice-Presidents.

4. The preparation of plans and execution of public works costing up to Rs. 500 should be entirely left to the Taluka Local Board.

5. The Taluka Local Board should have the power to appoint, suspend or dismiss officers or servants drawing salaries up to Rs. 25 subject to the right of appeal to the District Local Board by the persons aggrieved. As to the budget, the present system of its being sanctioned by the District Local Board should continue.

6. With respect to this question, I have not been able to get the benefit of paragraphs 751 to 754 of the report of Decentralization Commission. I am told that it is not available in the Collector's Library. However, considering the lack of interest on the part of the non-official members in Local Board matters, I do not think that time has come when the management of Primary Schools should be entrusted with the District Local Board.

7. At present the Taluka Local Board feels itself unconcerned with the Primary Schools and in order to create interest in them, rule 7 printed at page 178 of Cumming's Local Board manual may be altered to this extent that in the matters covered by that rule, the Local Board should be consulted and in case of difference of opinion the procedure laid down in rule 11 may be followed. This alteration is likely to awaken the non-official members of the Local Board to their sense of duty of having proper supervision over Primary Schools.

8. My information is that Taluka Local Board is never consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. My answer in the negative on question 6 makes it unnecessary for me to make any suggestions re : this rule.

10. Yes it is true that the failure is due to lack of interest and absence of co-operation on the part of the non-official members. The reason lies in the backwardness in education of non-official members and their consequent lack of independence. They will ill afford to differ in any matter from the Mukhtyarkar who is their immediate administrative head in all matters concerning their welfare and whom they dare not displease. The remedy lies in electing non-official Vice Presidents and in making improvement in the qualifications of voters and the members of the board.

11. In clause 3 of section 10, Local Board Act, the figure of Rs. 500 should be raised to Rs. 1,000. This clause was enacted when an income of Rs. 500 was taxable. Since then the minimum income tax of Rs. 20 is being assessed on an income of Rs. 1,000 and hence this suggestion.

In clause 4 the limit of the pension of Rs. 50 p. m. may be reduced to Rs. 17-8 only. I beg to make this suggestion with a view that the Taluka Local Board may have the benefit of having pensioned officers, such as supervising Tapedars, police Head Constables and Head Masters of vernacular schools on the list of voters and on the board. The lowest grade supervising Tapedar gets Rs. 25 as his pay and the half of it is usually his pension and hence this suggestion.

Introduction of more literate men is absolutely necessary and I have, therefore, made this suggestion and would further propose that a clause enabling registered medical practitioners and qualified legal practitioners to be amongst the electors and the elected, should be added to section 10.

12. I think a separate group of electors from clauses 2 to 6 may with advantage be made.

13. Yes. I have already said about this in answer to question No 3.

14. The division of holding, consequent on the introduction of Record of Rights, has created a vast number of holders of land paying assessment of Rs. 48. This is sure to complicate the list of voters. In my opinion, therefore, the figure of Rs. 48 should be raised to that of Rs. 60.

15. In order to better the condition of the present Local Boards, it is desirable, in my opinion, that a portion may be fixed for the Local Boards from the Provincial revenue and income tax. With the present income of the Local Boards many improvements are being hampered.

16. In my opinion the proportion after deducting $\frac{1}{3}$ rd for education should be divided between the District and Taluka Local Board in the ratio of $\frac{1}{4}$ th and $\frac{3}{4}$ th respectively. With the present discretionary powers of the District Local Board, the Taluka Local Board is handicapped. The result being that several necessary and immediate improvements remain in abeyance for a long time.

17. The appointment of non-officials by nomination should not be abolished. I have already said in reply to question No. 2 that the due representation of any special community could be secured by nomination of some non-official members from amongst that community, and hence no change as suggested in this question is necessary.

18. I have already answered this question under question No. 11.

Mr. Bhojraj Parumal, Member, District Local Board.

1. No. The present system appears to be satisfactory.

2. Election should not be made by communities; the required provision is already made while nominating members. With regard to number of members the present number of them appears to me to be sufficient.

3. It is not advisable at this time that the President of our district board and taluka boards should be non-officials.

4. The present limitation on the preparation of plans and execution of public works should be wholly removed. In that case it would be desirable for the District Local Board to employ qualified persons such as Overseers and Supervisors.

5. I think that the Taluka Local Board should be freed from District Local Board's control in the matter of engaging and payment of Taluka Local Board servants (*vide* section 38); but as regards the sanction and revision of the Taluka Local Board budgets (section 55) should be under the control of the District Local Board.

6. Yes, the time has come when the management of Primary Schools can safely be entrusted to Local Boards.

7. The whole management of Local Board schools should be given over to the District Local Board.

8. No.

9. Yes

(1) Yes.

(2) No.

(3) Yes.

(4) Yes.

10. No.

11. No.

12. No.

13. No.

14. I see no reason why the present assessment should be reduced.

15. No such division is desirable.

16. The discretionary power of District Local Board may stand as it is and I am of opinion that the proportion should not be fixed by law.

17. I think that the administrative efficiency is likely to suffer if the provision in the existing law for the appointment of non-official members by nomination is abolished.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

SUKKUR DISTRICT.

Mr. C. S. Campbell, I.C.S., Collector of Sukkur.

1. The matter does not seem one for *general* order; but for *special* observation and application. (*vide* Mr. A. E. Conning's Note 6 under section 5 of the Act.) This district (Sukkur) may be ready for a beginning soon.
2. Representation by communities seems unnecessary; and present numbers appear sufficient. Local Boards think in divisions of land rather than of people.
3. No.
4. Roads up to Rs. 100 per mile and works up to Rs. 1,000, may be left entirely to "Board" estimates and works up to Rs. 5,000 may be left to the "Board's" execution with a proviso regarding sufficiency and efficiency of establishment.
5. (a) Yes; for servants drawing Rs. 30 or under
(b) No.
6. District Local Boards ought to begin now to take up the management of their primary schools. Any how, there should be closer contact between board members and school arrangements.
7. Rules 7 and 9 may be modified so as to give more opportunity to indigeous spirit, and less absolute control to a foreign body (like the Educational Department). The clumsy provisions of Rule 11 (especially the second para. thereof) may then be amended or removed.
Rule 16 may also be made more elastic; and less curt towards Local Boards.
8. Apparently not.
9. (1) No.
(2) Not ready yet here to any appreciable extent.
(3) Certainly
[The argument of inequality between districts does not appear, it is very humbly suggested, a strong one. If "local option," "Local Government" and "Local Boards" mean anything, it seems fairest to let them thrive on local resources. The fact that others do not similarly thrive seems, it is again humbly put forward, to lead to a rather deadening (*s.g.*, dead-levelling) policy of administration.]
(4) Yes.
10. "Failure" is a strong word; but certainly more honest and active co-operation from non-official members is desirable. It rests with them to give it and with sympathetic officials to draw it out.
11. Section 10 may be modified as under:—
 - (1) No
 - (2) Reduce to Rs. 3,000.
 - (3) Raise Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000
 - (4) Reduce to Rs. 30.
 - (5)
 - (6) (in Sind—"Waderos"?)
 - (7) The following may be added specifically:—
 - (i) Title holders (including Collector's "Durbaris").
12. Seems unnecessary.
13. No: certainly not "invariably."
14. No reduction appears necessary.
15. "Subventions," whatever their source, are necessary (*vide* No. 9 above). The present share of land cess is, apparently, entitled to automatic increase.
16. Discretion preferred.
17. Nominated "non-officials" make good members. Worthy men of the old school have not yet succumbed to the "election" system.
18. *Vide* answer to No. 11 above.

Rao Bahadur Assardass Motaram, Deputy Collector, Rohri.

1. There is no necessity for taluka and district boards having elected majorities; but there should be no objection to their being given such majorities.

2. There are no special interests or communities and therefore, there is no necessity for having election by communities.

* The present number of members of the different Taluka Local Boards in this division is sufficient.

3. It is not advisable to have non-official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards as such an arrangement will precipitate failure of taluka boards.

4. It is not necessary to have estimates of repairs or of new roads or of raising of existing ones prepared or counter-signed by the Government Executive Engineer whatever be the cost. The present limit of Rs 500 as regards original works beyond which estimates are to be counter-signed by the Government Executive Engineer, may be raised to Rs. 1,000. Similarly in the case of obligation to have works estimated to cost more than Rs. 2,500, carried out by the Government Executive Engineer, the limit may be raised to Rs. 5,000 : district boards have better trained and qualified establishments of their own and therefore, the above mentioned changes will not tell on the satisfactory performance of works by Civil Agency.

5 Taluka Local Boards should have their own establishments independent of the district board.

Submission of Taluka Local Board Budget estimates to the district board may be compulsory, but the district boards should have no power to interfere with or suggest modifications in Taluka Board Budgets.

6 The management of primary schools should continue to remain with the Educational Department with the present control of district boards

7. The only suggestion I would make with regard to the rules under section 48 (b) of the Local Boards Act is the cancellation of rule 8 subjecting Local Fund grants-in-aid to private schools to the rules to be prescribed by the Government from time to time.

I would also do away with the interference of district board with the Taluka Local Board's suggestions in respect of educational matters referred to in rule 11.

8. To my knowledge Taluka Local Boards are never consulted as to the appropriation of revenues raised by the taluka to be spent on education in other areas.

9. (i) In my opinion the carrying out of any of the suggestions will not necessitate large additions to Local Board establishment, and therefore, there will be no necessity for enhancing the Local Cess from one anna to 2 annas per rupee. Any such enhancement would be highly impolitic and unpopular.

(ii) If the grant equal to 25 per cent. of the Local Cess now made by the Government of India for expenditure on communication as well as on account of one anna cess on excise revenue were discontinued and in lieu thereof Taluka Local Boards were relieved of the obligation to contribute $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of their Local Cess towards primary education and the primary education was wholly taken up by Government, the arrangement would be welcome.

This would enable Taluka Local Boards to maintain medical and sanitary institutions, keep their roads and buildings in a fairly good condition as well as provide for their establishments. In my opinion, time has come—time when rural people should be freed from obligation to pay partially for the education of their children in the shape of deduction from the Local Cess of Taluka Local Boards.

(iii) (a) Levy of Local Cess on income tax, while bringing in a small revenue, would be highly unpopular and would create unmerited discontent. (b) Government already pays Cess on abkari revenue of which mention is made in the reply to sub-para. (ii). (c) As Local Boards spent not a little on the up-keep of roads used by carts, &c, carrying forest produce, it is but fair that one anna cess should be levied on forest revenue.

(iv) If Government took up primary education there would be no need for increase in provincial subventions.

10 The statement regarding failure of Taluka and District Local Boards is not correct. Non-official members take more interest in Local Boards than before, and the drawbacks still existing will disappear gradually with progress of time and spread of education. No radical remedy is called for.

11. I would make the following additions to the qualifications of voters given in section 10 of the Local Boards Act.

(a) Persons on whom any title has been bestowed by the Government of India.

b) Military pensioners in receipt of an allowance appended to any order of Merits bestowed by the Government of India.

12. The suggestion to form separate groups of electors with a view to secure some men from class 2 to 6 given in section 10 is a good one but there is hardly any necessity for it

13. It is not desirable or necessary to have non-official Vice-Presidents where there are official Presidents of Taluka Local Boards.

14. It is not advisable to reduce the minimum of assessment below Rs. 48. The separation of sub-divisions, according to the Record of Rights will not reduce the number of voters or of persons eligible for membership.

15. I am not in favour of division of provincial share of land revenue and incometax between Government and Local Boards.

16. With primary education taken over by Government and with Local Board establishment and medical and sanitary institutions maintained by Taluka Local Boards as per my opinion expressed above, there should hardly be any necessity for the formation of large District Boards Funds. I would, therefore, where necessary, limit the taluka boards' contribution towards the district boards' funds from 10 to 20 per cent. of the one anna cess.

17. By doing away with non-official nominees, minorities would suffer, and services of several useful members who do not care for election will be lost.

This would tell on the efficiency of the boards.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits prescribed in clauses 1, 2, 3 and 4 of section 10 of the Local Board Act.

*Khan Bahadur Mian Peerbux Mian Mahamud,
Retired Deputy Collector, Sukkur.*

1. The District and Taluka Local Boards should have majorities by $\frac{2}{3}$ rds elected and $\frac{1}{3}$ rd nominated members, the latter to be without limitation as to the particular number of officials or non-officials.

2. The present law is sufficient and gives opportunity to every community to have representation on the board. No special law is called for. Though I would add that in the case of Municipal Boards such special law is inevitably necessary to enable several communities to secure respectively their representatives on the Municipal Board. In a municipal district there are several communities some of which are not fully represented while others are not represented at all.

3. It would be a great mistake to have the Presidents of the boards to be non-officials. Without official interference the general administration is bound to suffer and this needs no quotation in Sind.

4. In my opinion the estimate for roads which costs more than Rs. 100 per mile and that for other work which costs more than Rs. 1,000 should be prepared or approved by the Executive Engineer of the district, the former would require no professional skill.

5. The Taluka Local Board may engage, &c., servants drawing Rs. 30 and under, but the sanction and revision of budgets to rest with the District Local Board as heretofore.

6. I have not seen the paragraph of the report of Decentralization Commission quoted in this question but from my experience I can safely say that the time has not yet come to entrust such management to the Taluka Local Board.

7. No modification is necessary at present, but I would respectfully add that the number of Mahomedan Deputy Educational Inspectors in Sind is very low compared with the number of schools or Mahomedan students therein. Arrangement to increase Mahomedan Deputy Inspectors is very necessary.

8. No Taluka Local Board is ever consulted on the subject and I fail to see why the board should not have voice in matters connected with the revenue levied in their area.

9. I have suggested no such change above as would need extra expenditure. I am therefore not in favour of raising Local Fund Cess up to two annas in the rupee. But as the wants and needs of the Local Board are daily increasing the Local Funds require to be replenished and, therefore, I would suggest that one anna cess per rupee be levied on:—

- (a) Income tax.
- (b) Abkari revenue.
- (c) Forest revenue.
- (d) Opium revenue.

The expenditure on medical, sanitary and other matters is greater than what it was some 15 or 20 years ago when the people were ignorant of the benefits of Western Science of Medicine, &c.

10. Yes it is true that non-official members of Taluka Local Boards do not take interest and it is due in some cases to lack of sense of responsibility and in some cases their suggestions or opinions are not given attention to or their interference is not liked. As regards District Local Board there is no failure in the administration.

11. The following addition and alteration be made in the qualification of voters:—

- (1) Pensioners drawing Rs. 20 and upwards.
- (2) Jurors and assessors of Sessions Courts.
- (3) Title-holders.
- (4) Chair holders in the Commissioner's and Collector's Darbars.
- (5) Persons paying land assessment amounting to Rs. 30 and upwards.
- (6) All income-tax payers.

12. There is no necessity for forming separate groups of electors.

13. Official Vice-President is invariably necessary.

14. As said above, the minimum assessment to be fixed at Rs. 30.

15. I believe out of provincial revenue, ninety per cent. goes to the Irrigation Department, the remaining 10 per cent. is assigned to provincial share. In my opinion 1/16th of the provincial share should be given to the Local Boards. As regards income tax I have already said in para. 9 ante.

16. After deducting the educational share from the proceeds of one anna cess of a Taluka Local Board, $\frac{3}{4}$ ths should be given to the Taluka Local Board and $\frac{1}{4}$ th to the District Local Board.

17. The administrative efficiency of a board is not likely to suffer if one half of the number of nominated members be non-official and only the other half official

18. (1) I have replied above as to the minimum land revenue as qualifying a voter, *vis.*, Rs. 30.

(2) In my opinion the prescribed amount of Rs. 5,000 in the case of immoveable property be reduced to Rs. 1,000.

(3) Requires no alteration.

(4) As said above the minimum pension allowance of a Government servant be reduced to Rs. 20.

Khan Saheb Shah Nawaz Khan, District Local Board Member.

1. Yes; district and taluka should have elected majorities, *i.e.*, two-thirds elected and one-third nominated.

2. Yes, by communities, *i.e.*, Hindus and Mahomedans as (including zamindars); these number in Sind 4 times as many as Hindus. The existing constitution of the district and taluka Boards is adequate. The present number may be increased in view of the area of the board and the work executed. In my own taluka increase is not required.

3. The district board President should remain an official. But in taluka boards men can be found who can serve as Presidents. There is, therefore, no objection if a non-official is made a President but he should be elected.

4. No change is necessary. The existing arrangement will do.

5. Taluka board should have the power to appoint and dismiss servants drawing pay up to Rs. 30. The district board's sanction should be required in the case of those drawing more than Rs. 30. As regards budgets the present system will do.

6. No. The time has not yet come when the management of schools should be taken away from Educational Department.

7. No change is necessary in the rules made under section 48 of the Act.

8. Taluka boards are not consulted. They ought to be consulted and their advice followed.

9. (1) There will be no great increase in expenditure. One anna cess levied is already too much.

(2) There is no necessity for extending the scope of chapter XIV of the Municipal Act. Villages outside the municipal limits are inhabited by zamindars, who are already burdened with the cess.

(3) Since Local Fund institution including roads and bridges are serviceable to income tax payers and forest and abkari department, cess may be levied on these incomes.

(4) Yes, provincial subvention should be increased liberally.

10. Yes, because interest and responsibility go with official members, non-official members depending upon them cannot safely act independently of them in Local Fund matters. It is, therefore, desirable that non-officials should have the responsibility.

11. No change is necessary in the qualifications of voters.

12. No necessity of a change in clauses 2 to 6 of section 10.

13. Yes, in every case; but the President should be Assistant or Deputy Collector, but not a Mukhtiarkar.

14. The present figure Rs. 48 holds good. As voters can also be members they should be of some worth.

15. Yes, they should be divisible and Local Funds taking from 6 pies to one anna per rupee.

16. Yes, in consideration of the obligations of the District and Taluka Boards respectively.

17. One third of the members should be nominated; of which half officials and half non-officials so that in the event of the election failing to bring about the communal proportion nominated non-official members may make up the deficiency.

18. I am not in favour of reducing the qualifying limits. I have explained myself in the reply to question 14.

Diwan Naraindas Motaram, Retired Deputy Collector.

1. Yes.

2. The conditions of Sind do not allow of election by communities. The Hindus form the minority. In my opinion, then interest would be adequately served by the enhancement of qualifications, which I shall deal with in my answer to question No. 18. So far as the requirements of Sind are concerned, I think the number of the members for Taluka Local boards should be increased at the rate of one member for each Tapa. As regards the District Local Boards, it must be remembered that the size of districts has been materially curtailed after the first constitution of the boards in 1854; and considering that according to my proposals the number of members for the Taluka Local Boards is to be increased, I am of opinion that each Taluka Local Board should return two members, except in cases where owing to the smallness of talukas or mahals, two or more Taluka Local Boards are united into a joint board under clause (a) of section 7 of the Bombay Local Boards Act, 1884.

3. No.

4. I am of opinion that the provisions of clause (b) of section 57 of the Bombay Local Boards Act should be amended by substituting the figure "100" in place of "50". I am also of opinion that the following proviso should be added to this section.

"Provided that where the circumstances require it, plans and estimates may be revised and any additional funds that may be required may be met by re-appropriation or otherwise. My reasons for the above mentioned proposals are as follows:—

(a) I have often found that the first construction or the repairs of a road cost more than Rs. 50 per mile. In the case of these works, no professional knowledge is required. The agencies at the disposal of the District and Taluka Local Boards are quite competent to deal with such works.

(b) While it is a healthy provision that the detailed estimate of the cost of each work should be appended to the annual budget, it must be remembered that a long time including the inundation season passes before the time for the actual execution of works arrives. The inundation and rain fall change the circumstances so materially as to render the remission of the plans and estimates a *sine-qua-non*. As a matter of fact plans and estimates are actually altered. But the law does not permit it and therefore requires amendment.

5. No.

6. No. I am strongly of opinion that the Government Educational Department is the best agency to be entrusted with the management of primary schools. Neither the District and Taluka Local Boards, which are at present ably managed by Collectors and their subordinates—and they must continue to do so—have the special agency for this kind of work, nor are the members so advanced as to interest themselves in it.

7. I am against the alteration of these rules.

8. No.

9. In view of the answers to questions Nos. 6 and 7 being in the negative, an answer to this question is not required. But apropos of this I venture to submit that the time has come when the District Local Boards may be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to a minimum of 2 annas per rupee according to their requirements and the condition of the people in any particular year. At present owing to want of funds it is not possible to maintain the roads and bridges in a state of repair all the year round; and the results are extremely unsatisfactory. If funds could be raised, the roads or at least the principal ones of them could be raised and metalled in rotation. This would in the long run be more economical than the present arrangement, under which a lot of money is necessarily spent on grassing. All over the district, horse carriages have taken the place of bullock carts for the conveyance of passengers, and they are entitled to have such roads as can be used by them without injury to them or to passengers. Many Karias are in want of bridges, and with the expansion of irrigation their number is increasing every day. More schools are required every where, and if funds could permit it tramway or motor service could be established on important roads like those from Nandera to Rato-dera or from Larkana to Kambar.

10. Yes, this is true. The principal cause is the natural habits of the Sindhi zamindars. But it must be admitted that if greater confidence is placed in them, they will prove themselves worthy of it. Taluka Local Board members render valuable assistance in formulating and inspecting Local Fund works. Education is advancing and the eagerness for the fostering of Local Self-Government and the extension of democratic idea is patent every where. My own opinion therefore, is that the Taluka and the District Local Boards should be allowed to elect two-thirds of their members.

11. I cannot think of any.

12. No.

13. No. The guiding hand of the Mukhtiarkar, who is invariably the Vice-President of the Taluka Local Board, is indispensable. But for him, the Local Boards would cease to exist. Moreover the zamindars, who form the members, are often so hostile to one another that combination among them is at present out of the question. Nor do I think that the general welfare of the public would be served by adding a feather to the zamindars cap by elevating him to the position of the Vice-President. Moreover, the bulk of the work is at present disposed of

by the Mukhtiarkar. If a zamindar be appointed or elected as Vice-President, he would require a separate establishment which would be an additional burden to Local Funds, and even then the work would be far more unsatisfactory than it, at present, is under, more often than not, a well educated and an able Mukhtiarkar.

14. The present minimum of Rs. 48 is ample.

15. I think one-sixteenth of the land revenue and of income tax may well be made over to Local Boards.

16. No. I think the District Local Board should be allowed a free hand as hitherto. The District Local Board is the best Judge of its own requirements and of those of the Taluka Local Board, with reference to the conditions of each taluka and of each season.

17. *Vide* my answer to question No. 10. I am of opinion that when two-thirds of the members are elected, two thirds of the remaining one-third should be the officials. It is the official agency that has hitherto led to the success of Local Boards. Any weakening of this agency is bound to end in disastrous results.

18. Yes, to the following extent.

2. Five thousand rupees is much too high. Hardly any zamindar or 'Showcar' has a house property worth Rs. 5,000 in any village. I think the limit should be reduced to Rs. 1,000.

3. I think this should be reduced to Rs. 300. This would considerably enlarge the elective franchise, which is the *raison d'être* of Local Self-Government.

4. I think this should be reduced to Rs. 10. The number of pensioned Government servants residing within the taluka whose pensions are not less than Rs. 50 per mensem is very limited. Indeed they can be counted on the finger.

Mr. Murlidher Jeramdas, Pleader, Shikarpur.

1. My opinion is that District and Taluka Local Boards should have elected majorities. The zamindar of to-day is a different man from the zamindar of old days. Though not yet well advanced in education, the zamindars are now well acquainted with the machinery of Government and can feel their responsibilities, and do properly appreciate their rights. If given the right to elect their representatives, they are in a position to exercise that right in a proper manner. The elected representatives enjoy better confidence of the electors and take more interest in the affairs and form their own independent opinions. According to the prevalent ideas a nominated councillor as well as the people are under the impression (though erroneously) that the nominated councillor's vote belongs to the officials; and he accordingly votes blindly after the officials and therefore takes no real interest in the affairs.

The Government generally nominates the same fit persons who would probably be returned in election, but the way in which they are returned makes all the difference. A nominated councillor always thinks that if in any matter his vote clashes with that of the officials, he would lose his seat in the next term which will mean great disgrace for him in the sight of his co-villagers, neighbours and others. He therefore quietly follows the officials under the firm impression that his seat for the next term is thus secure. Knowing that he owes his seat to the Government nomination and not to the people, he takes very little interest in the wants of the people of his ward or the improvement of the villages therein. Indeed he is afraid even to expound his views freely or to draw attention to various grievances even when his people bring them to his notice.

2. Election should not be by communities as that will be sure to lead to ill-feelings between communities and do no good even to the communities who are given the franchise. On our side, the land-owners are mostly Mahomedans and there are only few Hindu Zamindars. Each community is able to take care of its interests. If, however, any community is not properly represented in any Taluka or District Board, the deficiency should be made up by nomination. That system is being worked in the case of municipalities and with very good results.

I am strongly of opinion that the present number is not sufficient specially in the case of Taluka Boards and should be increased. The present wards are very extensive and should be divided into small areas. The result will be that each elected member will be then able to well look after his beat and every zamindar of respectable position will be able to get on the board, take interest in the affairs of his ward, and get good training in the working of Local Self-Government.

3. The President of the District Local Board should at present be an official but the President of the taluka board should be a non-official. Whether he should be elected or nominated must depend upon the conditions of each taluka. It should be left in the power of the Commissioner in Sind to nominate a non-official President in any particular taluka or to confer upon any Taluka Board the right to elect their own non-official President.

At present the Mukhtyarkar is generally the Vice-President and the Assistant Collector the President of every taluka board. Both these gentlemen are, however, so overworked that it is impossible for them to devote adequate energy or time to the affairs of the board. At a meeting of the board things are rushed through or they are mostly left to the Local Board Munshi or the Tapadar. The members simply attend as figure heads. If the Mukhtyarkar happens to interest himself in any particular thing, it is done, but otherwise no notice is taken of even the most pressing wants, not because the Mukhtyarkar is against it but because he has no time left from his other multifarious duties. The work of the taluka board is carried on by the managing committee of which the Mukhtyarkar is the Chairman. The whole committee is therefore looked upon as a department of the Mukhtyarkar's office. The relations between the Mukhtyarkar and the zamindars are such that the members, out of respect for the Mukhtyarkar, think that they must implicitly obey him in every matter coming before the board. It will be a great relief both to the Mukhtyarkar and the Assistant Collector if the taluka boards have non-official Presidents; and the former can then use their time and energy to better advantage for the people of the taluka and the division in their respective charge. I think time has come for introducing this reform and I am sure gentlemen of sufficient integrity and straightforwardness can be found in each taluka to fill the responsible post of the President. I do feel that in the beginning there will be some honest mistakes and there might even be some failure, but that should not deter the making of the experiment altogether.

4. In view of my proposal that taluka boards should be given non-official Presidents, the restrictions and limitations on the preparation of plans and the execution of public works contained in sections 57 and 61 of the Bombay Local Boards Act 1 of 1884 should not be removed or modified in any way, as they will operate as useful and necessary checks.

5. In view of my above proposals, I must answer this question in the negative.

6. I am sorry I am unable to obtain a copy of the Report of the Decentralization Commission. I am, however, of opinion that it is not quite desirable to wholly hand over the management of the primary schools to the District Local Boards.

Time has, however, come for the appointment of school board committees by each taluka board from among its members. These committees should be given some powers over the schools within the taluka and should be assigned certain duties in connection therewith. The present rules are such that the District Local Board has only to provide funds for all the requirements of the schools, but there is nothing to induce the members to take real interest in the working of the institutions or to make them feel any responsibility therefor. They are given no voice in the management and that makes them feel that it is no business of theirs. The annual inspection visits of the Educational Officers are certainly not sufficient and leave much to be desired. As the rules stand at present, the members of the Taluka Local Board consider it an interference on their part to take any interest in the management, &c., of the school even in their own village.

8. So far as I know my answer to this question is in the negative.

9. In order to increase the income so as to carry out the necessary sanitary improvements, so urgently required, in villages and to do other necessary works, I would make the following suggestions:—

(1) Local Boards should be empowered to raise the Local Fund Cess up to one anna and six pies in the rupee.

(2) A cess of one anna per rupee should be levied on (a) income tax, (b) on abkari revenue and on (c) forest revenue of each taluka and handed over to the Local Board of that taluka. In order to harmonise the levy, similar cess should be introduced in the municipal districts also for the benefit of the municipalities.

The condition of villages on our side is most insanitary in consequence of which malaria is always found raging. There are absolutely no arrangements for the draining of storm water, nor for the removal of filth, sweepings, and dirty water. All these collect in front of houses and lie there all the year round and are perhaps partly removed whenever any high official is expected to visit the village. Though at first it might appear hard to the people and they might even grumble at the introduction of these new taxes, but they are sure to bless Government after they enjoy the benefits of the improvements which would be carried out by means of the additional income. Moreover these are not direct taxes nor will they fall so much upon the poor.

I am also in favour of establishing 'notified areas' with a view that the necessary sanitary improvements may be carried out more easily and promptly and that proper medical relief should be provided on an organised system. Each notified area should have a Health Officer and a Sub-Assistant Surgeon.

10. It is perfectly true that the failure of the District and Taluka Local Boards is due to the lack of interest and the absence of active co-operation on the part of the non-official members and the reasons therefor have been given by me above. The remedy is to have more elected members, to have a larger number of members than at present, to give the Taluka Local Boards non-official Presidents and to provide for the appointment of committees, with some powers, in each taluka board, for each department, such as School Board, Sanitary Committee, Public Works Committee, as there are in the municipalities. This division of work will lead to speedy disposal and satisfactory results and the members of each committee, while exercising the powers, will feel their responsibilities and will be bound to take interest.

11. Not at present. I am, however, of opinion that in cl. (2) of section 10, the property qualification should be reduced to Rs. 1,000.

12. I have above advocated that the number of members should be increased. In order to enable all classes to receive the benefit of this franchise, it should be provided that each of the existing or newly created wards should return two members, one to be elected by voters qualified under cl. (1) of section 10 and the second to be elected by the group of voters qualified under clauses 2 to 6 of the same section.

13. Certainly. If the President remains an official, the Vice-President should be a non-official, otherwise, how are the non-official members to get training and there will be no inducement for them to take interest.

14. I would propose no alteration.

15. The Provincial Government should give one anna per rupee to the Local Boards, on income tax levied from the taluka (excluding towns where there are municipalities), on land revenue, on abkari revenue and forest revenue.

16. I have not studied this point.

17. I would propose that in every Local Board, there should be two-thirds elected members and one-third nominated. The official members should be among the nominated third. The real administrative efficiency will not in the least suffer by this change.

18. I propose the following reductions

(1) No change.

(2) One thousand rupees as property in villages is not so valuable, on account of insanitary conditions, insecurity of life and property, &c.

(3) Rs. 200 should be substituted for Rs. 500. Compare cl. (1). A man paying Rs 48 as land revenue cannot have an annual income of Rs 500. To put both these qualifications on equal footing, the reduction should be made.

(4) The pension amount should be Rs. 10. Even in big municipalities Rs. 15 is the qualifying limit. In talukas Rs. 10 is quite sufficient.