

Wednesday, March 14, 1877

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

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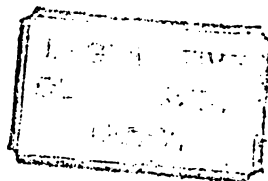
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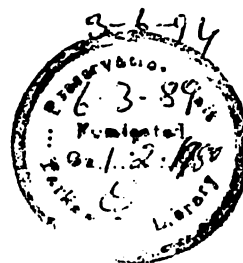
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1879.

*Abstract of the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India,
assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the
provisions of the Act of Parliament 24 & 25 Vic., cap. 67.*

The Council met at Government House on Wednesday, the 14th March 1877.

P R E S E N T :

His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor General of India, G.M.S.I.,
presiding.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, K.C.S.I.

Major-General the Hon'ble Sir H. W. Norman, K.C.B.

The Hon'ble Sir A. Hobhouse, Q.C., K.C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Sir E. C. Bayley, K.C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Sir A. J. Arbutnot, K.C.S.I.

Colonel the Hon'ble Sir Andrew Clarke, R.E., K.C.M.G., C.B.

The Hon'ble Sir J. Strachey, K.C.S.I.

The Hon'ble T. C. Hope, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble D. Cowie.

The Hon'ble Mahārājā Narendra Krishna.

The Hon'ble J. R. Bullen Smith, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble F. R. Cockercil.

The Hon'ble B. W. Colvin.

The Hon'ble R. E. Egerton, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Mahārājā Jotindra Mohan Tagore.

MILITARY LUNATICS BILL.

Major-General the Hon'ble SIR H. W. NORMAN moved for leave to introduce a Bill to facilitate the admission of Military Lunatics into Asylums. He said that it had recently been brought to notice that no legal authority existed under which European soldiers could be received into or retained in Lunatic Asylums, and His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief recommended that a Bill should be introduced to supply the omission. His Excellency also recommended that Act XXI of 1872, for lunatic Native soldiers, should be repealed, and its provisions incorporated in the Bill, and that, at the same time, a small addition should be made detailing the procedure under which any Native soldier might obtain his discharge. If permission were given, he proposed to introduce a Bill which would supply these wants.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

ACT No. XXIII of 1867 CONTINUANCE BILL.

The Hon'ble SIR EDWARD BAYLEY moved for leave to introduce a Bill to prolong and amend Act No. XXIII of 1867 (*for the suppression of murderous outrages in the Panjáb*). He had to state that the Act, which was passed on the 18th March 1867, was passed for a period of ten years only. It would in consequence expire on the 18th of the present month, and some explanation was due to the Council of the reasons which delayed the introduction of the present Bill till so late a period. The truth was that some months ago the Panjáb Government submitted a draft measure for the consolidation of several special laws, chiefly relating to procedure, which now obtained in the Panjáb, and among them Act XXIII of 1867 was included. That draft measure necessitated very careful enquiry into various subjects, and a good deal of delay had consequently arisen, more particularly with regard to certain points in civil procedure which depended very much upon the shape which the Bill now before the Council for amending the Code of Civil Procedure would assume. The consequence was that the remaining period of the currency of the Act had slipped by almost without notice, and it was now likely that the Panjáb Courts Bill, as it was called, would not be introduced into this Council and become law at least for several months to come. Moreover, on reconsideration, the Panjáb Government would prefer that this Bill, which was altogether different in substance to the rest of the Draft Bill, should receive separate consideration, and as it was of a somewhat special character, they desired that it should be introduced and considered in full assembly of this Council before it left Calcutta. This was the reason why the Bill was introduced at this late season of the year and so short a time before the expiration of the law which it was intended to prolong.

He would not detain the Council very long with an account of the policy of the Act itself, because it was very fully discussed indeed when the Bill was originally introduced. As it so happened, the Council then contained several very eminent members especially experienced in the necessities of the districts to which the law was intended to apply. He would mention the names of Lord Lawrence, Lord Sandhurst, Sir Henry Durand, Mr. Brandreth, and Mr. Riddell, who unanimously approved the principle of the measure and considered it a necessary one; and their arguments were accepted by such authorities as Sir Henry Maine, Mr. Massey, and Sir William Muir.

He would very briefly recapitulate the objects of the Act and the reasons which were given for enacting it. The first section of the old law enacted that

it should be lawful for the Lieutenant Governor of the Panjáb, with the previous consent of the Governor General of India in Council, from time to time to declare any part or parts of the territories under his government to be subject to the operation of all or any of the provisions of the Act, and also to withdraw the same. When the law should be thus extended any fanatic who should murder, or who should, within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code, section 307, attempt to murder, any servant of the Queen or other person, should on conviction thereof be punished either with death or with transportation for life, and all his property should be forfeited to Government. Then after that the chief provision was, that the person so offending should be tried summarily, usually by the Commissioner, but also in certain cases, where the Commissioner was not on the spot, under the special authority, either of the Commissioner or of the Local Government, by the Deputy Commissioner of the district. From the decision of the officer who so tried the prisoner there was no appeal, but the sentence was immediately executed. The rest of the Act consisted mainly of certain safeguards in order to prevent the measure being extended beyond the immediate necessities of the case; that was to say, the third section provided, for example, that every offence made punishable under the Act should be an offence within the meaning of the Penal Code. The object of that section was to provide for the trial separately of abetments and smaller connected offences. The effect of that clause was therefore to exclude all those minor offences, although connected with the principal offence, from the operation of the Act. It was also provided that, when it was found that a case taken up under the Act ought not to come under it, it should be remitted for trial in the usual way.

These were the provisions of the Act, and the reasons for passing it he would now briefly state. There were a great many of these offences perpetrated on the frontiers of the Panjáb. Our frontier-districts were inhabited by very wild and lawless races, and the districts beyond the border by tribes who were for the most part savage and fanatic to the last degree. Many of these men, simply to gratify motives of fanaticism, were perpetually making attacks, generally on the European civil officers, though not exclusively,—in one case, a lady was attacked. He was informed by the Foreign Department some time ago, that there were twenty-eight cases in which officers were either killed or severely wounded since the annexation of the Panjáb. There were, besides, other cases in which the attack was not successful. That would shew that these attacks were sufficiently common and numerous to warrant the special interposition of Government. As a matter of fact the one thing these people disliked was summary punishment. Sir Henry Maine quoted, in his speech on the

introduction of the Bill, a case in which a man who attacked his victim suddenly and from behind was asked by the officer who seized him why he killed him, and why, if he wanted to kill him, he did not come forward fairly and openly from the front? He said "that would never do; I might be killed myself." The officers, therefore, of the frontier had in self-defence, and practically with the approbation of the Local Government, taken these cases into their own hands, and had, in violation of the law no doubt, summarily tried and executed offenders of this class. In every case, however, a special reference to Government had been requisite for the condonation of their acts, and as Mr. Brandreth pointed out, the officers who thus executed the offenders were in the eyes of the law quite as guilty of murder as the men they executed. It was considered highly indecorous that this authorized scandal should continue to exist. Moreover, it was thought, and, as he should presently show, experience proved rightly, that the formal acceptance by Government—the regular authorization—of this summary procedure would have an extremely good effect in putting an end to these outrages altogether. For these reasons, after a very long discussion, extending over several weeks, the Council in 1867 unanimously accepted the Bill. The Government of the Panjáb now urged that the law should be continued. Their argument was, first of all, that the reasons which necessitated the introduction of the Bill in the first instance remained, it might be said, with undiminished force at the present moment. The tribes were not less fanatic than they were; they had now no more tender regard for human life than they had before; except perhaps within our own border, it could hardly be said that they were less hostile to us: nearly all the causes therefore which operated to bring about these outrages were still as active as ever. But on the other hand, there was no question that the number of these outrages had very materially diminished since the passing of the Act. He was not in a position to give exact statistics, but as he had already stated, between eighteen and twenty years there had been twenty-eight successful attacks of this sort, and during the ten years since the Bill was passed, there had been only one or two—the exact number he did not know. He hoped that he would be in a position, by the next meeting of the Council, to say exactly; but he remembered one case, the case of Dr. Mackertich, in which that gentleman was attacked and seriously wounded, and the assassin was punished under the provisions of this law. The Government of the Panjáb attributed this marked diminution in this class of offences to the existence of this law, the provisions of which were now well known. In fact many a man who would commit an outrage of this kind in the hope of escape, either by the delays of the law, or by some chance, or on appeal, now knew that, instead of having any opening of this kind, his case would be disposed

of summarily and he would be executed on the spot, and he would therefore very likely be, and in fact it would seem that many had been, deterred by the existence of this law. The Panjáb Government accordingly requested the Council to continue the law, and the Bill SIR EDWARD BAYLEY proposed to introduce would therefore be simply in the main a continuing Bill. It would provide that Act XXIII of 1867 should continue in force until the Governor General should otherwise direct. In the notice of this motion the Bill was termed a Bill to prolong and amend Act XXIII of 1867, but in reality the amendment was a purely technical one. When the Act was passed, there was no such officer as an Additional Commissioner on the Frontier; that office had since been created, and in the ordinary course of business he would in many cases be the proper person to try such offences. It was therefore proposed to amend the Act by including the term Additional Commissioner, or Sessions Judge, as might be found convenient.

These were the only remarks he had to make. He trusted that they would convince the Council that the reasons for this exceptional procedure as originally enacted were in reality, though the procedure in itself might appear severe, humane and wise, and that the Act since its passing had worked so as to repress what were very cruel outrages, and had effected a very important political object.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

CIVIL PROCEDURE BILL.

The Hon'ble SIR ARTHUR HOBHOUSE presented the final Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to the Procedure of the Courts of Civil Judicature.

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS EMIGRATION BILL.

The Hon'ble SIR ARTHUR HOBHOUSE also moved that the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to regulate the Emigration of Native Labourers from the Presidency of Fort Saint George to the Straits Settlements be taken into consideration. He said:—"I think that after what has been said on previous occasions in Council about this Bill, the very briefest recapitulation of the circumstances will suffice for taking the report into consideration. Emigration from Madras to the Straits Settlements is of old standing, dating from a time anterior to the beginning of this century. Latterly it has been carried on to a considerable extent under contracts which bind the labourer for a definite term, the customary term, I believe, having been two years. By our general Emigration Act of 1864, and again by the general Emigration Act

of 1871, the effect, the unexpected effect, was produced of rendering all assisted emigration to the Straits Settlements illegal, and it was found that it could not be made legal by the Government except by subjecting that emigration to all the provisions of the general Emigration Act. Now that is not desirable. Emigration to the Straits Settlements is of a different character to that which is dealt with by the general Emigration Act. There are two very important points of difference; one is the shortness of the distance, which makes quite unnecessary many of the compulsory and expensive safe-guards found necessary for longer distances; and another is the old standing of the emigration and the establishment of large Tamil societies in the Straits Settlements themselves. The course we took was to pass an Act by which the Governor General in Council should be empowered to relieve the Straits Settlements from the provisions contained in the general Emigration Act, and that was done in the year 1872. It was intended that the two Governments, the Government of India and that of the Straits Settlements, should arrange with one another to make the best law for governing the subject; and that has at length been done. The Straits Settlements have passed an Ordinance regulating emigration upon their side, and we have framed a law regulating emigration upon our side, which is the Bill before the Council.

“When I last addressed the Council on this subject I informed them that the Ordinance that had been passed was suspended. We have now heard within the last few days that the suspension has been removed and that the Straits Settlements Ordinance is in full work. Now that Ordinance contains two very important features. One is the establishment of a Protector of Emigrants, who is the nominee of the Madras Government. We shall therefore have an official, who may be called an Agent, within the country to which our subjects go, who will furnish us with ample detailed information as to their condition in that country. That is a thing we have desired to have in other countries to which our subjects go, but which we have not been able to obtain. We shall now obtain it in the Straits Settlements, and we hope to be able from time to time to make such arrangements as circumstances may point out to be best.

“Another feature is that the Ordinance makes illegal, according to the Straits Settlements law, every kind of contract bearing upon emigration which is illegal according to our law; so we have only got to provide by our law that certain things shall or shall not be done, and the Ordinance immediately fastens upon them and makes them a portion of the law in the Straits Settlements. In all cases we have required certain conditions as essential conditions of a contract of emigration. I explained these to the Council when I introduced the

Bill, and the Committee have made no alteration in them. The principal features are that we require that a minimum of wages shall be provided, and that a maximum of the term of labour shall be provided, which, under the advice of the Madras Government, we have fixed at three years.

“The Committee have made no material alteration in the Bill as it stood when it was introduced. I mentioned then that we had framed it on the lines drawn by the Madras Government. We have had no communication since with the Madras Government, beyond sending them notice of what we were doing, and therefore I assume that they are quite content with the Bill as it was introduced; and as we have only altered it in detail, we may proceed with confidence to pass it.

“There is only one other point which I wish to make the Council quite clear about, namely, that we are not interfering in any way with emigration not under contract; that has been going on for a great number of years. I have no doubt that it is greatly to the benefit of both countries, and we therefore do not want to interfere with it. If any person in the Straits Settlements likes to take free emigrants without contract, taking his chance of their working for him, he may do so, but he cannot compel them to work, if they will not. On the other hand if he wants a contract by which he can compel them to work for him, then he must take a contract subject to the conditions which are fixed in this Bill. With regard to the rest of India not being the Madras Presidency, there is now no emigration to the Straits Settlements; we therefore leave that in the same legal position in which it now stands.”

The Hon'ble SIR ANDREW CLARKE wished to make a few remarks on this Bill, especially as in its early history he was more or less an involuntary actor in the circumstances that led to its conception. His hon'ble colleague had mentioned that the Indian Emigration Bill in its application to the Straits Settlements was allowed to sleep from 1871 to the present time. The condition of the Tamil settlements in British territory on the mainland of the Malay Peninsula, to which it would only practically apply, was very flourishing. But at the end of 1873 a certain large estate got into excessively bad odour, and there was no doubt that in that estate great neglect had existed with reference to the sick and weak classes of labourers. Some public agitation was locally excited, and the Indian Press subsequently took the subject up. He had just assumed the government of the Settlement and on the circumstances becoming known to him, he at once deputed a special Commission to enquire into the truth of the various statements that had been made. The Commission examined witnesses and went very minutely into the matter, and

reported that, with the exception of this single plantation, there was nothing whatever to show that the coolies were not treated excessively well; that in this particular case, however, there was some apparent abuse, and that there was sufficient evidence to warrant a prosecution of the owner of the estate. The usual proceedings were then taken by the Police, and their action resulted in the manager of the estate, and several tindals or overseers, being consequently brought to trial before Sir William Hackett, now Chief Justice of Ceylon, and then Puisne Judge of the Straits Settlements at Penang. The principal, the owner, was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment with hard labour, and the manager (quite a young man) and the tindals were awarded punishments of more or less duration. For the enquiries that had been instituted, however, that, and to some extent this, Government were responsible; they showed that the province was destitute of all public means for giving relief or succour to the sick; hospitals, dispensaries, medical aid, all being practically wanting. SIR ANDREW CLARKE took steps afterwards to have this want provided for, and the Madras Government expressed themselves perfectly satisfied. They moreover complied with a requisition made to them and sent down medical men and apothecaries. Hospitals were built and things were fairly established to the interests of the coolies, when both the India and Colonial offices moved in the matter. About the same time, in the House of Lords, a noble Peer who had heard the exaggerated reports drew attention to them; and in referring to this, SIR ANDREW CLARKE hoped that he was not trespassing too much on the consideration of the Council in availing himself of the opportunity thus offered him of making a personal explanation which would remove all imputations under which he lay, and which had been more than once repeated in the Press of India. The noble Lord then, in drawing attention to what had transpired in Province Wellesley, stated that in consequence of pressure put upon him, SIR ANDREW CLARKE had released the owner and manager of the estate alluded to, before their punishment was fully completed. The facts of the case were these, that he himself did not move in the matter until the Judge, who had tried the case and who subsequently, having reason to doubt the truth of the evidence, went again over the whole of it very carefully, and advised him to remit the punishment; and on his advice and with his full approval, orders by telegram were sent to release at once the manager of the estate, who had been suffering severely in health from the punishment: he was released, but the release came too late, for the unfortunate man had but time to reach his ruined home and family to die. His own conviction was, that the man was guilty only of poverty and mismanagement of his property, but his (SIR ANDREW CLARKE'S) responsibility in the matter was simply that of acting on the recommendation of the highest

authority, that of the presiding Judge, who was convinced in his own mind that there was a case at least for the mercy of the Crown.

It would be seen, SIR ANDREW CLARKE stated, from what he had said, that the law as it stood was more than sufficient to punish in the Straits all culpable neglect or wrong-doing, and thus passing to the measure itself, he would further say that he believed that the Bill as it stood, as far as the emigrant-population of India and a flourishing industry were concerned, was in the wrong direction. If he could have had the Bill framed by his hon'ble friend the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and the Burma Bill, extended to the Straits Settlements, he believed it would have been greatly to the benefit of Province Wellesley. The practical operation of the present Bill would be to double the expenditure on the Planters; they would have to incur increased expense to bring emigrants from Madras, and on the whole the expense would be very seriously augmented by the cumbrous and involved operations of this Act. It might be said that the Planter would have this weight thrown upon him; granted: but eventually the whole weight would have to be borne by the coolies; while under the old law the coolies contracted to labour for a period of from eighteen months to two years, you now relegated them to an enforced bondage of three years or more. The effect of that would be no doubt to a very great extent, he believed, to reduce legal and under-contract emigration from the Madras Coast to the Straits Settlements, and throw us back to the very infamous system of emigration without contracts, to which his hon'ble friend had alluded.

If legislation took any direction whatever, it ought to take the direction of preventing people from going to the Straits Settlements without contracts. It was among those of the Tamil population who were induced by their own country-men to emigrate, that evils had arisen. Many of them passed into the Dutch Settlements, and it was asserted that thus many Natives were kidnapped and taken to the plantations of tobacco on the coast of Sumatra, and this could not happen to coolies under engagement with European Planters, who were restricted or who would, by respecting its provisions, suffer from the operations of this law. That blot you practically did not hit by this Bill, although he thought the Government of the Straits Settlements were alive to it and would legislate for themselves. Before he left the subject he would wish to assure the Council and those who had taken an interest in this matter, that having visited the large majority of estates, he never saw labourers more muscular and apparently well-to-do; the women covered with gold or silver ornaments, and quite sufficient to exercise the mind of any Famine Commissioner; the children even quite healthy—and there were num-

bers of them—were looking perfectly happy and contented. As to their Lines, he had the opportunity of seeing since some of the Lines of Native regiments in India, and he could only say that hints for their improvement might be taken from the Lines of the Planters of the Straits provided for their coolies. Indeed, on the estates of the late Mr. Horsman, nothing could be better built and conserved. Even our Municipality of Calcutta might take a lesson from these Lines, and improve the squalid hovels that to so great an extent existed in this City of Palaces.

This Bill would pass, and he must content himself by saying that he believed it would seriously check emigration, a result which he for one would regret, because there was no doubt that the Tamil population of the Straits were in a better condition than their countrymen whom they had left in India. Great numbers of them were well-to-do, with large properties, and any thing which would check that emigration from the coast of India was undesirable, at the same time that it would cripple and reduce the large industries in sugar and other tropical staples which were valuable to that part of the country and to interests both English and Indian.

The Hon'ble SIR ARTHUR HOBHOUSE said :—"I wish to say a few words with respect to what has fallen from my hon'ble colleague. His objections to the measure are in effect objections to the principle of the Bill—a Bill which he says truly enough has been the result of a good deal of negotiation between the Governments of India and Madras, and the Government of the Straits Settlements, the India Office and the Colonial Office. So far as my hon'ble colleague objects to the rather cumbrous formalities which our Emigration Acts throw about emigration, I am very much disposed to agree with him ; and I have said once or twice, when I have had Emigration Bills to introduce, that prior Emigration Bills have been framed, not with the view of assisting emigration, but of impeding it. I myself believe that emigration is a very healthy thing, notwithstanding there may be some cases of hardship here and there, and it is much to be desired that we should assist it. At the same time, we are making a law under which people will leave their homes and lose their liberty for a period of years, and it is exceedingly difficult to maintain such a law against hardships inflicted on the labourers, unless you take great care to throw protection around them. What has been done in this instance is, in consideration of the nearness of the country, in consideration of having a nominee of one of the Indian Governments to protect the emigrants, and in consideration of old standing practice, to make it easier to conduct emigration to the Straits Settlements than to other countries. I do not believe that other

countries find that employers of labourers are ruined by the amount of safeguards we have thrown around emigration. I dare say it is some expense to them ; no doubt it is, but still emigration goes on."

[The Hon'ble SIR ANDREW CLARKE explained that in other Colonies the State paid for the cost of emigrants, and that is the reason why he said he would prefer the Burma Bill. The State advanced the money, but in this instance the planters have to borrow it at high rates of interest.]

The Hon'ble SIR ARTHUR HOBBHOUSE resumed—"There is exactly the same arrangement in respect of labour-contracts in Assam, Káchár and Sylhet, as in respect of the Straits Settlements, and the law which regulates emigration to the provinces I have named is more stringent in respect to the protection thrown around the emigrant than the law which is before the Council to-day. But the proposed remedy suggested by my hon'ble colleague seems to be calculated to throw on the planter a great deal more burden than the law I ask you to pass. He says we ought to prevent people going without contracts. But if we say there shall be no free emigration, that not a single emigrant shall leave our shores without a contract, surely we shall create a great deal more expense than if we enact the provisions of this Bill.

"Our position is quite plain. If a man goes as a free man, so that his master takes his chance of his serving him or leaving him, he may do so to this country ; and people may assist him ; though to other countries such assisted emigration is illegal. On the other hand, if he goes for a term of years, he surrenders his personal liberty and subjects himself to a highly penal law if he does not labour in a proper way. Therefore we say certain precautions shall be taken to show that he understands the nature of his contract, and to show that he is a proper man to enter into the contract.

"The other point is that we have not provided against kidnapping. I can understand how in India we can provide against kidnapping, but how are we to provide against it in the Straits Settlements ? That should be the office of the Government of the Straits Settlements. No doubt our attention has been called recently to the fact, or at all events to the allegation, that some of the persons who emigrated from Madras to the Straits Settlements were carried over to Sumatra and other countries beyond the dominions of the Straits Settlements. We do not know the details of these proceedings very well, or what became of the people ; but we rely on the new agency to be established to be fully informed of these matters, and we have decided to hold our hands from any further arrangement with the Government of the Straits Settlements in these

matters until we get that information which we expect to get from the Protector of Emigrants, who no doubt will send full reports on the matter.

“On these grounds I think the Bill is one which the Council may fairly accept, and I trust that the ominous forebodings of my hon’ble colleague in respect of the effect it will have on the planters of the Straits Settlements will not be fulfilled.”

The Hon’ble SIR ANDREW CLARKE was alluding, with reference to kidnapping, to the 40th and 41st clauses of the Bill, which made provision for its suppression within British waters in the Straits: but kidnapping might go on without the Straits Government knowing of it, in the case of its taking place outside their territory.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon’ble SIR ARTHUR HOBHOUSE then moved that the Bill as amended be passed.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

OPIUM ACT POSTPONEMENT BILL.

The Hon’ble SIR J. STRACHEY moved for leave to introduce a Bill for postponing the day on which the Opium Act, 1876, is to come into force. He said that the object of the motion might be stated in a very few words. The Opium Act, which received His Excellency’s assent on the 14th December last, provided that the Act should come into force on the 1st of April of the present year. It was provided by section 8 of the Act that rules on various matters of importance should be made by the Local Governments, and these rules required the sanction of the Government of India. The Act was so drawn that it was, he might say, impossible for it to come into operation until the rules had been passed. But unfortunately the framing of these rules had taken up much longer time than was anticipated, and we were now in this position, that rules had been submitted by only two or three Governments, and it had become plain that there was no chance whatever that before the 1st of April the Government of India would even have received the draft rules, much less have had time to consider and sanction them. Under these circumstances, it had become essential to ask the Council to postpone the date on which the Opium Act should come into force.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon’ble SIR JOHN STRACHEY said that he ought to have stated just now that it had not been thought necessary or desirable to name any specific

date on which the Act should come into force, but to say that it should come into force on such day as the Governor General in Council might by notification direct on that behalf. This would remove all chance of a similar mishap to that which had occurred occurring in the future. As it was important that the amendment of the Act should take place as soon as possible, and that we should be able at once to inform the Local Governments that the operation of the Act had been postponed, he would now apply to His Excellency to suspend the rules for the conduct of business.

THE PRESIDENT having declared the Rules suspended—

The Hon'ble SIR J. STRACHEY introduced the Bill, and moved that it be taken into consideration.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon'ble SIR J. STRACHEY also moved that the Bill be passed.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT would adjourn the Council to an earlier date than usual. He wished to adjourn it; if convenient to hon'ble members, to tomorrow the 15th of the present month at the customary hour of assemblage. And his reason for doing so was that he hoped the hon'ble member in charge of the Financial Department of the Government would be able to take that opportunity of making to the Council his Financial Statement. He thought that hon'ble members would probably feel that it would not be convenient, and indeed would not be practicable, that the Financial Statement should come immediately under discussion on the same day that it was made. He had no doubt that it was a statement which would require the attention of the Council some time, and he proposed at the close of the Council tomorrow, either to adjourn the Council to the customary weekly day of meeting, or to some other day which he hoped to be able to name tomorrow. In the meantime the Council was now adjourned till tomorrow at 12 o'clock.

The Council adjourned to Thursday, the 15th March 1877.

CALCUTTA, }
The 14th March 1877.

WHITLEY STOKES,
Secretary to the Government of India,
Legislative Department.