

*Friday,
5th September, 1902*

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Council of the Governor General of India,

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Vol. XLI

Jan.-Dec., 1902

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA:
ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING
LAWS AND REGULATIONS

1902

VOLUME XLI



Published by Authority of the Governor General.



CALCUTTA
PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF GOVERNMENT PRINTING, INDIA,
1903

Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 and 1892 (24 & 25 Vict., c. 67, and 55 & 56 Vict., c. 14).

The Council met at the Viceregal Lodge, Simla, on Friday, the 5th September, 1902.

PRESENT:

His Excellency Baron Curzon, P.C., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., Viceroy and Governor General of India, *presiding*.

His Honour Sir C. M. Rivaz, K.C.S.I., Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab.

His Excellency General Sir Arthur Power Palmer, G.C.I.E., K.C.B., Commander-in-Chief in India.

The Hon'ble Mr. T. Raleigh, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Major-General Sir E. R. Elles, K.C.B.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. T. Arundel, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Mr. Denzil Ibbetson, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Mr. J. F. Finlay, C.S.I.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. L. Tupper, C.S.I.

DELHI CORONATION DURBAR.

Before the business of the Council was proceeded with His Excellency THE PRESIDENT addressed Hon'ble Members as follows:—

“I desire to take advantage of the present occasion to say a few words about the great function, or combination of functions, at Delhi, which will fill so large a part of our attention during the next few months, and which will bring together so immense, and probably unprecedented, a concourse of the Indian peoples at the old Mogul capital in January next. His Majesty the King has already been happily crowned in England; and he is as much already our King and Emperor as he was the day after the death of the late Queen-Empress. No ceremony can increase his titles or add to the legality of his position. Why then, it may be asked, should we have in India a celebration of his Coronation at all? Public opinion has, I think, already answered this question to its own satisfaction. But perhaps I may also be permitted to contribute a few words to the reply. To the East there is nothing strange, but something familiar and even sacred, in the practice that brings Sovereigns

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into communion with their people in a ceremony of public solemnity and rejoicing, after they have succeeded to their high estate. Every Sovereign of India, or of parts of India, did it in the old days. Every Chief in India—the illustration may even be carried as far as the titled noblemen and zamindars—does it now; and the installation durbar is an accepted and acceptable feature of ceremonial life from one end of the country to the other. If this is so in all the grades of our social hierarchy, how much more important and desirable it is that it should obtain in the highest. I find, for my part, in such a ceremony much more than a mere official recognition of the fact that one monarch has died and another succeeded. To millions of the people in their remote and contracted lives this can make but little difference. But the community of interest between a Sovereign and his people—to which such a function testifies, and which it serves to keep alive—is most vital and most important. Society in all ages has sought a head to whom it has been prepared to pay reverence, and kingship is the popular form that has been assumed by this almost universal instinct. But it is in proportion as the superiority thus willingly acknowledged by the subject ceases to be merely official and titular, and as the King becomes the representative as well as the figure-head of his people, that the relationship is of value to both of them. The life and vigour of a nation are summed up before the world in the person of its Sovereign. He it is who symbolises its unity, and speaks for it in the gate. Here in India, it is for the first time under the British Crown that this unity has been attained, and that the entire Continent has acknowledged a single ruler. The political force and the moral grandeur of the nation are indisputably increased by this form of cohesion, and both are raised in the estimation of the world by a demonstration of its reality. There is another point of view from which I regard such a display as having far more than a superficial value. In all our various divisions in this country—divisions of race and class and custom and creed—the one thing that holds us together, and subordinates the things that make for separation to the compelling force of union, is loyalty to a common head, membership of the same body politic, fellowcitizenship of the same Empire. The more we realise this, the happier will be our individual lives, and the more assured our national destinies. It is, therefore, as an act of supreme public solemnity, demonstrating to ourselves our union and to the world our strength, that I regard the Delhi ceremonial, and certainly as no mere pageant, intended to dazzle the senses for a few hours or days, and then to be forgotten. To my mind Lord Lytton, who was the first in British times to inaugurate such an Imperial Durbar as we propose to hold, though in different circumstances and on a smaller scale, set an example

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[*The President.*]

characterised both by statesmanship and imagination. I have not a doubt that much good flowed from the Imperial Assemblage of January 1st, 1877; and, under the blessing of Providence, I firmly believe that similar and even larger results will follow from the ceremony of January 1st, 1903.

“Of course the occasion would be made both more solemn and more historic if the King-Emperor were able to be present in person and could place the Crown of all the Indias upon his own brow. Long ago, when we were first formulating our plans, I ventured to present this aspect of the case to His Majesty. The idea was most agreeable to him, and he would have greatly rejoiced to be able to carry it out. His love for this country has always been great, and I venture to affirm that he is as proud to be the first Emperor of all India as the late Queen Victoria was to be its first Empress. But the duties of State are too absorbing to permit His Majesty to be absent from England for so many weeks as would have been required, and he was compelled to desist from gratifying a wish that would otherwise have had for him the greatest attractions. In these circumstances, the news will be received with delight that His Majesty has deputed his brother, the Duke of Connaught, to represent the Royal Family at the approaching Durbar. The presence of the Duke and Duchess, who have already spent so many happy years in this country, and who are so universally loved by all classes of the people, will lend to our proceedings a distinction that they would otherwise have lacked, and will bring home more directly to all India the vivid personal interest of the Sovereign. We shall feel that the King is in a certain sense with us in the person of his brother, and that, as it was not in his power either to attend himself, or to depute the Heir-Apparent, whom we all hope to welcome at a later date, His Majesty has taken the best means of testifying to India his profound sympathy and regard.

“There is another point of view from which I think that such a gathering as that which will take place at Delhi will be of value. The weak spot of India is what I may call its watertight compartment system. Each Province, each Native State, is more or less shut off by solid bulkheads even from its neighbour. The spread of railways and the relaxation of social restrictions are tending to break these down. But they are still very strong. Princes who live in the South have rarely, if ever, in their lives, seen or visited the States of the North. Perhaps among the latter there are Chiefs who have rarely left their homes. It cannot but be a good thing that they should meet and get to know each other and exchange ideas: and yet no opportunity of meeting

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on a large scale is possible, unless it be afforded by a State occasion such as this. If we look at the Continent of Europe, we shall see what immense strides have been made in the development of common interests and in the cause of peace, since the European rulers have taken to meeting each other on important occasions. Where they used in the old days to set their armies in motion upon the slightest breath of suspicion, they now have a talk and exchange toasts at official banquets. Greece did the same thing in ancient times, and in a way peculiar to herself: for it cannot be doubted that the national spirit, which held all those little States together and enabled them to stand up against the greatest military empires of the old world, was largely bred and nurtured at the Pan-Hellenic gatherings known as the Olympic Games.

“Again, in this country I think that it is an equal benefit to the British administrators from different Provinces to meet. There is many a man in Madras who has never seen the Punjab, or even in Bombay who is wholly ignorant of Bengal. The Viceroy is almost the only man in India who has the chance of knowing the whole country and of applying the comparative test. People are apt to complain of uniformity in government. I can assure them that the differentiations of system and plan in India are amazing. I am not the person to wish to blot them out; but I do say confidently that an occasion like the Delhi Durbar, when soldiers and civilians from all parts of India will meet, not for a few hours or a day, but for a fortnight, and can compare notes and exchange ideas with each other, will be fraught with incalculable advantage both to the participants and to the administration which they serve.

“These appear to me, apart from the act of homage to the Sovereign, to be the principal benefits that will accrue to India as a whole from the Durbar. I have, as is known, endeavoured still further to utilise the opportunity in a practical spirit by arranging for a great Exhibition of Indian Art Manufactures to be held at Delhi at the same time. I confidently assure the public that they will be greatly astonished at the range, the variety and the beauty of this Exhibition. Whether it is true that the old Indian arts are being killed by European competition—a charge that is frequently brought by those who do not make the smallest effort to keep them alive themselves—or whether they are perishing from this apathy, or whether India merely provides, as I suspect, an illustration of a world-wide law—the fact remains that the process of extinction has not been carried nearly so far as many suppose, and that the artificers still exist in India, even in these days of commercial ideals and debauched taste, who are capable of satisfying the demand for the artistic and beautiful and rare, if such a demand there be. I

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cannot pretend by a single Exhibition to create it; but if it already be in existence—as I cannot but think—though perhaps dormant and abashed, then we may do a good deal by an opportunity such as this to revive and stimulate it; for we shall, I hope, both advertise to the world what we are capable of turning out, and also—which is much more important—encourage the aptitudes and educate the taste of our own people.

“ And now I wish to say a few words about an even more practical aspect of the case, *vis.*, the charge that will thereby be imposed upon the revenues of India. I have seen statements made about this subject that have startled even my hardened mind. It seems to be quite a popular thing to allege in certain quarters that the Durbar is going to cost India at least a crore; while in one responsible organ I read that Lord Curzon was going to throw away upon senseless pomp and show a sum of two millions sterling. Of course, too, our old friend Nero, who is alleged to have fiddled while Rome burned, has often been brought out for my special delectation. Personally, I deprecate the tendency to apply to every act of State, great or small, the sordid test of its actual equivalent in pice, and annas, and rupees. There are some things for which no expenditure can be too great, just as there are others for which none can be too small. But I quite recognize that these abstract considerations will not appeal to everybody, and that there is both seriousness and sincerity in the contention that, desirable and even necessary as the function may be, the public money should not be needlessly squandered upon it. This plea seems to me to be so reasonable that I propose to give to it the answer that it deserves.

“ It emanates, I think, from two classes of persons, from those who think that no money ought to be spent at Delhi at all while parts of India are suffering from drought or scarcity, and from those who are anxious that, while some money is spent, it should not be too much. I will deal with the first class first.

“ A few weeks ago it is true that we were in the greatest anxiety and trepidation as to what might be in store for us in Guzerat, in parts of the Dekkhan, in Ajmer, and in portions of the Central Provinces and the Punjab. But I can truthfully say that the past three weeks have been, on the whole, the happiest that I have spent since I came to India; for by the merciful and continuous fall of rain in those tracts where it was most needed, we have, I believe, escaped all chance of real or widespread famine in the forthcoming

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winter ; and though here and there we may be confronted with distress, yet nothing in the shape of a national calamity is to be feared. But even supposing that this rain had not fallen, or that I am all wrong in my prognostications now, does anyone suppose for a moment that because we are going to expend a certain number of lakhs of rupees at Delhi, one penny less would have been devoted to the relief and sustenance of the destitute in other parts of India ? At the beginning of the Famine of 1899, I gave the assurance on behalf of Government that not one rupee would be stinted or spared that could be devoted to the alleviation of distress and the saving of human life. That promise we faithfully fulfilled ; and even if famine burst upon us now, or while the Durbar was proceeding, we should not take from the public purse a single anna that would otherwise be consecrated to the service of the poor. They have the first claim upon our consideration ; and that claim we should regard it as an obligation of honour to discharge.

“ Then there is the second class of critics, who recognize that the Durbar must cost something, but are apprehensive lest it should be run on too exorbitant a scale. I am old enough to remember that the same criticism was rife at the time of Lord Lytton's Assemblage in the autumn of 1876. Famine was at that time abroad in the land, and loud were the denunciations, both in the Indian Press and even in Parliament at home, of his alleged extravagance and folly. And yet I have seen calculations made by Lord Lytton which show that, when all recoveries had been made, the net cost to India of the Delhi Assemblage was only £50,000, and of the entire rejoicings throughout India, Delhi included, £100,000.

“ In one respect we are in a somewhat different position now. The Assemblage of 1877 was an almost exclusively Official Assemblage. I have tried to gather at the impending Durbar representatives of all the leading classes of the community from every part of India. I want to make it a celebration not of officials alone but of the public. This means that we shall have at Delhi in the forthcoming winter larger camps, more guests, and, as a consequence, greater outlay than in 1877. Quite apart from our own arrangements, the improvement in communications and the social progress that have taken place in the last twenty-five years will bring together a much larger concourse of persons. Nearly everyone would like to be present ; and the number who will actually be present will be very large. All these features will tend to increase the scale of the proceedings.

“ Notwithstanding these considerations, I desire to assure the public, who have a right to know, that the proposed arrangements are being run on

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strictly businesslike and economical lines. I remember hearing Lord Salisbury, in a speech at the Mansion House before I left England, eulogise our future Commander-in-Chief, Lord Kitchener, for his ability to run a campaign on commercial principles. I think that in respect of the Durbar we may lay a similar flattering unction to our souls. The whole of the buildings and structures at Delhi that are being erected for the special purposes of the gathering are being made of materials that will retain their value after their preliminary use, and will be offered for public sale. In many cases recoveries of from 60 to 80 per cent. of the initial outlay are thus expected. The tents, and carriages, and horses, which have had to be made or collected in such enormous numbers for the convenience of visitors, will be similarly disposed of; and here in many cases I expect that we shall retrieve 100 per cent. of the value. The entire electric plant for lighting the camps and the Fort is part of the machinery that has been ordered by the Military Department for instituting the great experiment of ventilating and lighting the barracks in India by electricity. Down to the smallest detail, we are so arranging that the money will not be thrown away, but in some form or other will come back. Then I take another form of recovery. As we all know, railways are, for the most part, Government property in this country; and whether we work them ourselves or through others, the whole or a considerable proportion of the profits come into our hands. I think that the critics may be invited to pause and wait to see the traffic receipts of December, January and February next before they continue their lamentations. I shall be very much surprised if these returns do not put back into the pocket of Government the major portion of what it has spent. There are also the Postal and Telegraphic services, the profits of which pass into the Government chest, and from which we shall receive largely increased returns. Finally, I would invite those who are so fearful of an unremunerative outlay to open their eyes to what is going on, and has been going on for months past, in all parts of India. I assert that hundreds of thousands of Indian workmen and artisans are receiving full employment and good wages in preparing for this Durbar. Go to the cotton-mills of Cawnpore and Jubbulpore and Lahore, where the tents are made; to the factories, where the harness and saddlery are turned out; to the carriage-builders, where the landaus and victorias are being built by the hundred; to the carpet-factories where the durries and rugs are being woven; to the furniture-makers, where the camp equipage is manufactured. Go to every Native State, where the durzis and embroiderers will be found working double time. Go to any town or even village in

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India where a Native art-industry exists, and has perhaps hitherto languished, but where you will find the coppersmiths and silversmiths, the carvers in wood and ivory and stone, the enamellers and painters and lacquerers, hard at work. Go to all these places, and then form an opinion as to the effect upon Indian labour of the Delhi Durbar. Supposing we were to follow the advice of some of our friends and to issue a proclamation suspending the entire proceedings tomorrow, I predict that a cry of protest and of appeal would be heard from one end of the country to the other, and that, without benefiting a single individual, we should deprive the Indian artisan of one of the greatest opportunities that he has enjoyed for generations, and inflict upon him a cruel and senseless injury.

“I have thus argued that a large portion of the expenditure to be incurred at Delhi will be nominal only, and that we shall take back or give back to India with one hand what we expend with the other. Let me deal with the actual figures. In the Budget of last March we provided for an outlay of 26½ lakhs upon the Durbar. This is the sum that in the fertile imagination of some writers has been magnified to one crore, and even to two millions sterling. I do not include in this outlay the sum of 4 lakhs which have been devoted to the Arts Exhibition, because I do not suppose that anyone will be found to argue that that is an expenditure of public money upon the Coronation. The greater part of it will be recovered, and in any year, Coronation or otherwise, it would have been a prudent and remunerative expenditure of the public money. Neither do I take the 8½ lakhs provided for the troops. For we should not of course have expended that sum in bringing so large a number of troops to Delhi for the Durbar alone. It is being expended in the main upon the great military manœuvres that are an inseparable feature of modern military training, and that will take place during the month preceding the Durbar, in the same way as the manœuvres held by Lord Dufferin in the same neighbourhood, independently either of Durbar or of Coronation, in the year 1886. There remain then the 26½ lakhs, supplemented by such local expenditure as may be imposed upon Local Governments by their preparations: and of the total sum, as I have pointed out, the greater part will most certainly be reimbursed. The actual net cost of the proceedings at Delhi it is of course impossible at this date to calculate or forecast, but I hope I have said enough to show that it will be almost immeasurably less than the dimensions which a too tropical imagination has allowed it to assume; and that a great State ceremonial will never have been conducted in India upon more economical lines.

“I cannot help thinking that the sensitiveness about expenditure here, which I hope that I may have succeeded in allaying, has been to some extent

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fomented by the impression that prevailed till a little while ago that India might also be called upon to pay for a portion of the entertainment of the Indian visitors and Military Contingent, who recently proceeded to England to take part in the Coronation festivities there. This was a subject upon which the Government of India placed themselves some time ago in communication with the Home Government; and, as a sequel to this exchange of opinion, it was with pleasure that we heard that the Secretary of State had persuaded the Imperial Exchequer to assume the entire cost of all charges that had been incurred in England in connection with the Indian visitors. These include the entertainment of the Indian Chiefs and representatives, and of the Contingent representing the Army and Volunteers, as well as the entire cost of the India Office ceremony. The principle that each country should pay for its own guests is, in my opinion, incontestably right; and it will, I hope, be accepted and acted upon in the future.

“I have now said enough. I hope to show that neither is Rome burning—on the contrary I believe that she stands on the threshold of an era of great prosperity—nor, most certainly, is Nero fiddling. I do not indulge much in prophecy in India; and I cannot say what unforeseen vicissitudes, internal or external, may lie in store for us. But, humanly speaking, we need not anticipate anything that is likely, during the few months that intervene between now and January next, to prevent us from joining in the Delhi gathering with clear consciences and joyous hearts. It only now remains for us to endeavour to make our celebration in India not less successful than that which has just been carried through in England. A good many eyes in a good many parts of the globe will be directed upon Delhi in January next; and we shall have an opportunity, not merely of testifying the enthusiastic loyalty of India to the King-Emperor, in the presence of his brother, but also of demonstrating to the world that India is not sunk in torpor or stagnation, but is alive with an ever-expanding force and energy. That all India should approach these ceremonies with one heart and mind and voice is my most earnest prayer; and that those who cannot take part in them at Delhi should hold similar rejoicings and be similarly entertained in the neighbourhood of their own homes, it is our hope and desire to arrange.

“There is one small matter personal to myself, which I may perhaps be allowed to mention before I conclude, because it also has a wider bearing. I have seen it assumed in many quarters that as soon as the Durbar is over,

[*The President; Mr. Ibbetson.*] [5TH SEPTEMBER, 1902]

and this anxiety has been removed, I am likely to resign my office and to flit away to England, in the pursuit of personal or political ambitions there. Indeed, I scarcely know how many times during the past two years similar stories have been flying about. Both the authors of these rumours and those who give credit to them do me an unconscious injustice in assuming that I could think of taking my hand off the plough before the end of the furrow is in sight. Not once since I have been in India has any such idea entered my mind. Barring contingencies which cannot be foreseen, I have no intention whatever of so acting. Much of the work to which my colleagues and myself have set our hands is still incomplete. So long as I receive from them an assistance which has never swerved or abated and so long as health and strength are given to me to pursue the task, I should regard it as an abnegation of duty to lay it down. Whether the work be worth doing for the sake of the country, it is not for me to say. But I may be permitted to add that to me, at any rate, it appeals as the highest and most sacred of trusts."

PROVIDENT FUNDS (AMENDMENT) BILL.

The Hon'ble MR. IBBETSON moved for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Provident Funds Act, 1897. He said:—"Some time ago the Government of Madras brought to our notice that the provisions of section 4 of the Provident Funds Act, as it stands at present, are insufficient to secure one of the main objects with which those Funds are maintained: that object being to ensure that, in the case of a subscriber dying while in the service, his accumulated subscriptions shall pass to his widow and children as a provision for their future support. They pointed out that it was desirable to place the moneys thus accumulated as far as possible upon the same footing with pensions payable from the Family Pension Funds, which, upon payment, become the absolute personal property of the recipient, and are not liable for the debts of the deceased subscriber to the Fund.

"The suggestion commended itself to the Government of India and to all the Local Governments, and has been approved of by the Secretary of State; and the Bill which I now ask the permission of the Council to introduce has been framed to give effect to it in the manner explained in the Statement of Objects and Reasons."

The motion was put and agreed to.

[*Mr. Ibbetson ; Sir Edmond Elles.*] [5TH SEPTEMBER, 1902.]

The Hon'ble MR. IBBETSON introduced the Bill.

The Hon'ble MR. IBBETSON moved that the Bill, together with the Statement of Objects and Reasons relating thereto, be published in the Gazette of India in English, and in the local official Gazettes in English and in such other languages as the Local Governments think fit.

The motion was put and agreed to.

INDIAN WORKS OF DEFENCE BILL.

The Hon'ble MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDMOND ELLES moved for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for imposing restrictions upon land in the vicinity of works of defence in order that such land may be kept free from buildings and other obstructions. He said :—" The Statement of Objects and Reasons clearly indicates the necessity for the Bill, and I would only add that a strong guarantee against any reckless application of the Act is afforded by financial considerations which in practice will limit its operation. It will be readily understood that when Government have spent large sums on defensive works they cannot tolerate the waste of public money caused by such works being rendered useless for the purpose for which they were erected. In framing the Bill the rights of owners have been fully safeguarded in so far as is compatible with attaining the object in view."

The motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon'ble MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDMOND ELLES introduced the Bill.

The Hon'ble MAJOR-GENERAL SIR EDMOND ELLES moved that the Bill, together with the Statement of Objects and Reasons relating thereto, be published in the Gazette of India in English, and in the local official Gazettes in English and in such other languages as the Local Governments think fit.

The motion was put and agreed to.

The Council adjourned to Friday, the 26th September, 1902.

SIMLA ;	}	J. M. MACPHERSON,
<i>The 5th September, 1902.</i>		<i>Secretary to the Government of India, Legislative Department.</i>