

*Tuesday,
23rd February, 1915*

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Council of the Governor General of India,
LAW AND REGULATIONS

Vol. LIII

April 1914 - March 1915

ABSTRACT OF PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA

ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING

LAWS AND REGULATIONS,

From April 1914 to March 1915 .

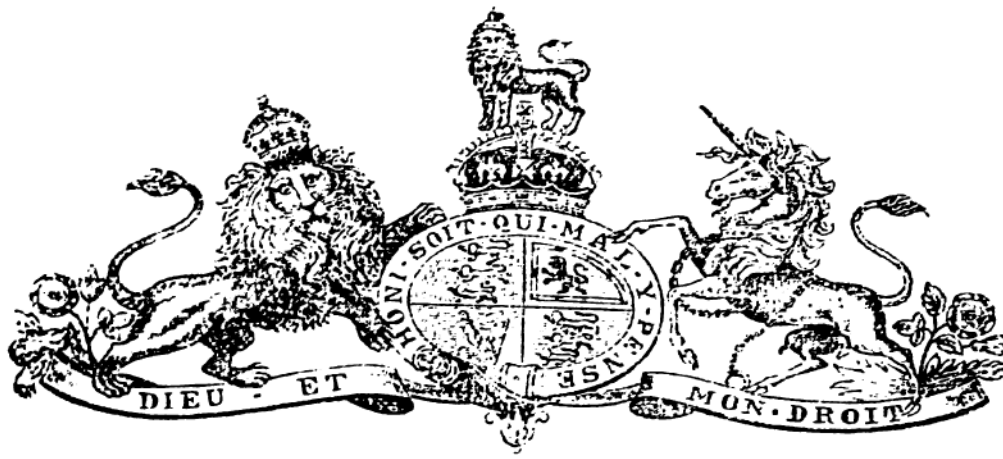
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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

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, 1831 to 1901
(24 & 25 Vict., c. 67, 55 & 56 Vict., c. 14, AND 9 Edw. VII, c. 4).

The Council met at the Council Chamber, Imperial Secretariat, Delhi, on
Tuesday, the 23rd February, 1915.

PRESENT :

His Excellency BARON HARDINGE OF PENSHURST, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.,
G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., I.S.O., Viceroy and Governor General, *presiding*,
and 54 Members, of whom 46 were Additional Members.

**DEATH OF THE HON'BLE MR. GOPAL KRISHNA
GOKHALE, C.I.E.**

His Excellency the President :—“ It was with deep regret that on the morning of the 20th I received the sad news of the premature death during the previous night of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, Member of this Council. I had heard that he had been compelled by indisposition to delay his arrival in Delhi, his intention having been to come in time for the meeting of Council today, and it was a great shock to me, as it must have been to us all, to learn that he had quietly passed away.

“ The Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born at Kolhapur in the year 1866. I need not go into the details of his earlier life beyond mentioning that Mr. Gokhale took his degree as Bachelor of Arts in 1884, in the University of Bombay, of which university he subsequently became a fellow. Almost immediately afterwards he began to devote himself to the cause of education. For 20 years he served as a lecturer at the Fergusson College, Poona, specialising particularly in History and Economics, a subject into which he threw himself with so much fervour and zeal that he became an acknowledged authority; and at the same time giving much of his time to establishing the college on a sound financial basis. During this period of his life, he began to take a

[*His Excellency the President.*] [23RD FEBRUARY, 1915.]

prominent part in public life and was for four years Secretary to the Provincial Congress of Bombay; in 1895 he was one of the Joint Secretaries of the Indian National Congress and continued for many years to labour in that capacity. In 1897 he went to England as one of the witnesses before the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure and gave evidence which was of great importance and value. In 1900 he was elected a Member of the Bombay Legislative Council and in 1902 he was elected as a representative of the Bombay Council on the Imperial Legislative Council. This office he continued to hold until the date of his death.

“ In 1904 he was made a Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. In 1905 he was President of the Indian National Congress and in the same year founded the Ranade Economic Institute and the Society of the Servants of India. Later on he paid several visits to England and toiled ceaselessly for the various causes he had so much at heart, and I have always understood that he took a quiet but active part in the conversations that led up to the reform of this and other Indian Councils. Finally in 1912 he was appointed a member of the Royal Commission on Public Services in India.

“ Such are some of the very distinguished services of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale but not all, for in Council he was well-known as a speaker of conspicuous ability and wonderful eloquence, while his earnest enthusiasm and sound judgment secured for him a commanding position among the public men of this country. He was a loyal supporter of British rule in India, but nevertheless was also on many occasions a fearless critic of the administrative methods and policy of Government and never hesitated to draw attention to any measure or action which, in his opinion, was improper or open to censure. In regard to financial and educational questions in particular his attacks were frequently most forcible and incisive, so much so indeed that the abilities of his opponents were frequently taxed to the utmost to meet his arguments. Though, however, a severe critic of those who opposed him, he was always dignified and courteous in debate, and even when unsuccessful in securing his object impressed all who heard him not only with his skill, but with his intense earnestness and desire to do what was in his opinion right. He took a prominent part in all debates of importance during his period of office in Council, especially in those relating to financial, educational and administrative questions.

“ During my period of office the most important measure in which Mr. Gokhale was interested was the Bill to make better provision for the extension of primary education. Though he failed in inducing the Council to accept the Bill, all those who heard him will remember the extraordinary force and ability with which he pressed his views.

“ It is also right that on this occasion I should refer to the important part taken by Mr. Gokhale in emigration questions, and in particular that relating to Indian immigration into South Africa. In this question, as in all other political questions, Mr. Gokhale strove ceaselessly for the amelioration of the condition of Indians and for the promotion of their welfare, and in my opinion it was largely due to him and his tactful and statesmanlike attitude during his visit to South Africa that this thorny question eventually received a satisfactory solution.

“ In my personal relations with Mr. Gokhale I have always regarded him not merely as an important Member of my Council but also as a friend. On more than one occasion he has given me advice which I found to be both sound and useful, and I may mention that in the South African Immigration question he rendered me most loyal and helpful assistance. It was only six months ago that I recommended to His Majesty the King-Emperor the appointment of Mr. Gokhale as Knight Commander of the Indian Empire as a mark of recognition of his valuable services, but Mr. Gokhale, with that simplicity of nature which characterised him, gratefully acknowledged the intention, but asked to remain as he was.

“ He has now left us and we shall feel the void he has created, for one may truly say that it will be almost impossible to fill his place in Indian public

life. I understand that the Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis desires to say a few words on behalf of non-official Members of my Council and after that I propose to adjourn Council till tomorrow as a mark of sorrowful respect towards our late friend and Member, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. May he rest in peace."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis :—" My Lord, the occasion is painful. As the spokesman on behalf of the Hon'ble Members of this Council I must express our profound sorrow at the death of Mr. Gokhale. Every word that has fallen from Your Excellency strikes a sympathetic chord in our hearts ; indeed, it is difficult to convey in suitable language the depth of our feeling on this sad occasion.

" My Lord, to me personally, as to many others on this Council, the loss is very great and very painful. Mr. Gokhale was a friend with whom my relations were always cordial and intimate, and the friendship formed in our youth was cemented and strengthened by years of close association in public work both on this Council and outside. His death has on this account been a great blow to me.

" But the removal by death from the scene of his activities of a man like Mr. Gokhale is far more than a personal loss to his friends. It will be difficult to fill up the void created by it in Indian public life. The " Pioneer " has well said that the death of such a man is a national misfortune. Mr. Gokhale combined under an unassuming exterior so many rare qualities of head and heart. It was remarked sometime ago that Mr. Gokhale was sacrificing his life on the altar of the Motherland. This description is absolutely true, not only with reference to any particular period of his life, but also to the whole of his life. There was hardly a moment when he was not doing something or other with the sole object of helping in the amelioration of the Indian people. And he always applied himself to his work with characteristic zeal, earnestness and tenacity. If he had been less hardworking in the public cause and more careful of his health, he would, I am sure, have been spared long to cheer us with his genial presence. His splendid talent and unsparing industry were alike applied to the service of his country, the country he loved most and the political advancement of which he so capably advocated. When the future history of a progressive India comes to be written Mr. Gokhale will stand out in bold relief as a strong advocate of political measures to which a good deal of that progress is due. Mr. Gokhale's deep study of public affairs made his services invaluable, and his tactful handling of them saved many a difficult situation. His participation in the settlement of the South African Indian question has been acknowledged by all to have been productive of solid results with Your Excellency's whole-hearted and sympathetic support ; and his later services in the cause of Indian education shed lustre on a life begun as a philanthropic and self-sacrificing worker in that cause. My Lord, if Mr. Gokhale is remembered for his varied and unwearied public activity, his work in this Council will form a brilliant page in its history. Those among the non-official members who had the privilege to be his colleagues here cannot fail to miss him very much, especially for the acumen he always displayed in the discussion of the various subjects and his splendid powers of debate. But, my Lord, his brilliant example will be with us to inspire us in our humble work. Mr. Gokhale had quite a passionate fondness for Council work, and even in the last days of his serious illness he was anxious to join us here. Indeed, he was only prevented from making the attempt by his medical advisers. We owe it to our departed and worthy friend to pay this humble tribute to his memory.

" I will here, with Your Excellency's kind permission, read a telegram which has been received from Mr. Vijiaraghavachariar associating himself with this resolution of sympathy.

[*Sir Gangadhar Ohitnavis*] [23RD FEBRUARY, 1915.]

Telegram from the Hon'ble Mr. C. VIJARAGHAVACHARIAR, Salem, to the Hon'ble Sir WILLIAM VINCENT, Delhi, dated 22nd February, 1915.

'Honourable Mr. Gokhale's sad untimely death has naturally caused deep universal sorrow. Loss to both Council and country, great, irreparable. Desiring to associate myself with resolution of sympathy in Council tomorrow.'

"I have also received a telegram of sympathy from the Hon'ble Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, our late Finance Member, in connection with Mr. Gokhale's death."

The Council adjourned to Wednesday, the 24th February, 1915.

W. H. VINCENT,

*Secretary to the Government of India,
Legislative Department.*

DELHI :

The 26th February, 1915.