

Wednesday, December 13, 1876

**COUNCIL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL
OF INDIA**

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ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

1877

OF THE

Council of the Governor General of India,

ASSEMBLED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING

LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

1876.

WITH INDEX.

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1877.

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 13th
December 1876.

PRESENT :

Major-General the Hon'ble Sir H. W. Norman, K.C.B., Senior Member of
the Council of the Governor General of India, *presiding*.

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

The Hon'ble Arthur Hobhouse, Q.C.

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

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

The Hon'ble R. A. Dalryell.

The Hon'ble T. C. Hope.

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

The Hon'ble F. R. Cockerell.

LAND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

The Hon'ble MR. HOBHOUSE moved that the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to amend the Land Improvement Act, 1871, be taken into consideration. He had next to no remark to make about this Report, He had explained fully to the Council what the object of it was, namely to put the relations of lenders and borrowers on a clear footing, and on the footing which was intended when the Act of 1871 was framed. That had been done, and in that part of the Bill, which was the only important part, the Committee had made no alteration. They had made two small alterations in two other sections of the Bill, both of which were mentioned in the Report, and he need not trouble the Council with any details with regard to them.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon'ble MR. HOBHOUSE also moved that the Bill as amended be passed.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

INDIAN MUSEUM BILL.

The Hon'ble MR. BAYLEY moved that the Reports of the Select Committee on the Bill to provide for the management of the Public Museum at Calcutta

be taken into consideration. He had already explained the objects of the Bill, which were, in the first place, to give effect to the arrangement whereby the Government was relieved from the necessity of providing accommodation for the Asiatic Society in the new Museum building according to a mutually satisfactory arrangement between the Government and the Society; the second object being to define the legal position of the Government; and the third, to improve the constitution of the body of trustees itself and to facilitate their work. The Bill as amended provided, he hoped, satisfactorily for these objects.

The Hon'ble MR. HOBHOUSE begged to express his satisfaction, he being one of the trustees of this institution, at the alterations made by the Bill in the constitution of that body. For some years of his life it was a principal part of his duty to watch the operation of bodies of trustees, and to find the best modes of constituting them. And the conclusion he came to about *ex officio* trustees was that the best of all trustees was an *ex officio* trustee whose office connected him with the institution of which he was a trustee; but that an *ex officio* trustee whose office had no connection with the institution of which he was trustee, was the worst of all trustees. He did not then think that he should live to exemplify part of his own theory. But it so happened that the Governor General in Council thought fit to appoint him Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta. Then he found that he was summoned to a meeting of trustees of the Museum. At first he thought they had done him the honour of electing him a trustee without his consent, and he asked to be relieved from the office. But he was informed that by accepting the office of Vice-Chancellor of the University he had become a trustee of the Museum. He ventured to say that a more inefficient and in every respect a worse trustee of the Museum could not be found. He knew nothing of the business, and from want of leisure could not learn about it by study. He was only a useless encumbrance on any discussion that might arise, and his signature to papers he did not understand was a sham. The consequence was that he was obliged to excuse himself from attending the meetings of the trustees, and he had in fact taken no part except a passive one in business of the trust except such business as was connected with the preparation of this Bill.

The Bill proceeded on the ground that it was not desirable to have a number of *ex officio* trustees who were unconnected with the business of the Museum. If the trustees appointed under the Act wanted some official, such as the Vice-Chancellor of the University or any other, it would be easy for them to elect him. The Bill conferred on them the useful power of cooptation into their body to the extent of three members. Consequently if hereafter the trustees desired the presence of some person whose appointment was not pro-

vided for by the Charter of the institution, but who appeared to them to be a useful addition to their body, the Bill provided for the appointment of such person. That was the new constitution under the Bill; and MR. HOBHOUSE had no doubt that it would be found much more effectual, because, owing to the constitution of the present body of trustees, it was often difficult to get a quorum at meetings of the trustees.

The Hon'ble MR. BAYLEY had only to say that, as far as the Hon'ble and learned Member had taken a share in the deliberations of the trustees of the Museum, the assistance which he had rendered had been very great, and MR. BAYLEY was able to say that the amendments in the Bill were due to the Hon'ble Member's advice: it was only to be regretted that his other avocations had prevented his taking a larger share in the other business of the Museum.

He wished to explain another point. The Bill recited that the trustees had signed the lists of collections of the Asiatic Society which was required by law. It had been found impossible to get the signatures of all the trustees, as one of the present *ex officio* trustees, the Bishop of Calcutta, was not in India, and another member was at present away from Calcutta. But the lists had been signed by a majority of the trustees, far larger than was necessary to constitute a quorum.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Hon'ble MR. BAYLEY also moved that the Bill as amended be passed.

The Motion was put and agreed to.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.

CALCUTTA,
The 18th December 1876. }

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