

directed by the Viceroy and Governor-General in Council to forward, confidentially, copy of a despatch to the address of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, No. 56, dated 3rd March 1876, submitting, for the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, which is still awaited, a revised Table of Salutes to be given to the Native Princes and Chiefs of India.

2. The despatch may serve ^{the Government of} ~~you~~ _____ as a guide in recommending salutes for Native Chiefs whom it may be desired to honor with that distinction on the special occasion of the approaching Imperial Assemblage at Delhi.

No. 291.

No. 47, dated Simla, 5th October 1876.

From—Government of India,
To—Secretary of State for India.

WE have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Your Lordship's despatch No. 70 (Political), dated 13th July 1876, forwarding, for our information, a copy of the Queen's Proclamation, in which the assumption by Her Majesty of the title of Empress of India is notified to us, with the request that this addition to the Royal Style and Titles be proclaimed throughout Her Majesty's Indian dominions in a manner suitable to Her Majesty's gracious intentions.

2. Fully appreciating the political importance of Her Majesty's assumption of the Imperial Title with special reference to India, we shall spare no pains to carry out adequately the wishes of Your Lordship in Council. It is with satisfaction that we welcome the opportunity thus afforded us for celebrating an event of such great historical importance to this country in the manner most calculated to strengthen the ties of mutual confidence which already bind to British Rule the Feudatory Princes and Chiefs of India, and to confirm in the hearts of the Queen's immediate Indian subjects, both European and Native, those feelings of loyalty and attachment to Her Thorne and Person which found such satisfactory expression during the recent visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

3. To identify the Crown of England, as the recognized fountain of all honor, with the aspirations and interests of a powerful Native Aristocracy, thereby confirming the cordial co-operation of its Princes and Nobles; to convince the people that although we can command their obedience, it is our wish rather to rule through their affections; to surround the symbol of Imperial power with the sympathies of a united Empire; and, whilst proclaiming Her Majesty's new Indian title with all befitting pomp and splendour, to accompany its proclamation with such acts of grace and proofs of generosity as may command the sympathies of every class;—such is the task we have undertaken. If, with the assistance of Your Lordship in Council, this task be successfully accomplished, we do not doubt that the effects of it will be far reaching, and fraught with benefit to the interests of India; and we confidently hope that (the Proclamation) of Her Majesty's Imperial Title in India, if made with due regard to its political importance, may not only strengthen and elevate the influence of this Empire over its Asiatic neighbours, but also mitigate the difficulties which still beset the course of British Administration within the limits of the Empire itself.

4. Encouraged by these anticipations, we have carefully considered the best means of effectively carrying out the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, as conveyed to us in Your Lordship's above-mentioned despatch; and we now desire to describe, for the information of Your Lordship in Council, the general arrangements made by us, up to the present moment, in furtherance of this object.

5. We shall deal, in the first instance, with the ceremonial part of the arrangements we have determined upon; and then with those of a political character which we are anxious to recommend.

6. On the 18th ultimo, the Viceroy issued a Proclamation under his hand and seal,* declaring his intention, in virtue of the authority given by Your Lordship, of holding an Imperial Assemblage at Delhi on the 1st of January 1877, for the purpose of proclaiming the new Sovereign Title in a manner worthy of its historical and political importance. We are sparing no pains to ensure the complete success of the ceremonial thus announced, the preparations for which are extensive and require careful elaboration.

* Copy enclosed.

(Vide Nos. 288-290, *supra*.)

7. In accordance with the terms of the Viceroy's Proclamation, His Excellency has invited all the Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, Chief Commissioners, and other high Officers of Government to be present on the occasion. They may all be expected to attend, accompanied by those Members of their Administrations, Officials of high rank, Native Chiefs or Noblemen, and Heads of Representative Bodies under them, whose participation in the ceremonial may contribute to the dignity of its effect.

8. In the same manner, separate invitations have been issued to the principal Ruling Chiefs throughout India; and from the list appended to this despatch, Your Lordship will observe that the number of those who are likely to be present at the ceremony is much greater than could have been ordinarily anticipated. This number includes the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Gaekwar of Baroda, the Maharaja of Mysore, the Maharajas Scindia and Holkar, and other principal Chiefs from all parts of India; and, so far as our information at present extends, the Assemblage, whether in respect to the number or importance of the Chiefs, Princes and people who will be present at it, is likely to assume very large dimensions.

9. In addition to the invitations above-mentioned, similar ones have been addressed to the Governor-General of Portuguese India, the Governor of the French Settlements in India, the *Chef de Service* of Chandernagore, and the Chief Consular Officers of Foreign Powers; and the Viceroy has likewise invited to the Assemblage the Rulers of the Independent States surrounding India, from whom complimentary deputations may be expected, if personal attendance be impossible.

10. The principal difficulty with which we have had to contend, in connection with the forthcoming Assemblage, has been the question of precedence, as between the various Chiefs and Nobles of India; many of whom have never hitherto been brought together. We are most anxious, and hope to be able, to avoid questions of this kind being raised. In order, however, to settle the heavy details of the ceremony within a period sufficiently early to prevent references, misunderstandings, or mistakes, at the last moment, we have convened a Special Committee of experienced Officers, which is now sitting at Simla, for the purpose of considering and submitting for our decision all references or questions raised by Local Governments on the subject of the Assemblage, together with such suggestions or recommendations as the Committee itself may consider it desirable to make to us. In communication with the above-mentioned Committee, we have already arranged a large number of important details connected with the construction of the place of assemblage, the providing of tents, the location of the various camps, and the proper reception of the Chiefs and guests; we have likewise made careful provision in regard to the necessary sanitary arrangements.

11. The precise ceremonial has not yet been finally determined upon; but the following anticipatory description of it may give Your Lordship in Council a general idea of the manner in which we propose to carry it out.

12. The Governors and other Heads of British Administrations, together with the Chiefs, Nobles, European and Native guests, and troops, are expected to be present at Delhi by the 23rd of December, on which day the Viceroy will make his State entry into that city. The subsequent week will be spent by the Viceroy in receiving and returning the visits of the Ruling Chiefs and principal noblemen and gentlemen present at the Camp.

13. At midday, on Monday, the 1st of January, the Assemblage will meet in the open plain near Delhi. The Viceroy will take his seat on a raised dais in the centre; around him in front will be a circle of dais occupied by the Governors, Heads of Administrations, Ruling Chiefs, and European and Native guests from the various Provinces of India; the Native and the European not being seated, as in ordinary Durbars, in separate divisions, but intermingled. Behind the circle in front of the Viceregal dais will be congregated the guards and followers of the Ruling Chiefs present at Delhi. The large open space in the rear will be occupied by British troops with representative detachments from the Volunteer Corps, together with lines of elephants, and separate platforms for ladies and other spectators.

14. Ruling Chiefs and Heads of Administrations will proceed to the place of Assemblage in separate processions, and occupy the places allotted to them. The Viceroy will similarly proceed from his Camp to the Assemblage, and after taking his seat on the central dais will command that the Proclamation be read out in the English language. This will be followed by the unfurling of the Royal Standard, a Salute of 101 salvos of Artillery, a *feu de joie* from the troops, and the playing of the National Anthem by the massed Bands of the regiments present at the Camp. The Viceroy will then address the Assemblage; after which all will return to their camps in the same manner, and with the same ceremony, as they came. The Proclamation, together with the Viceroy's address, will be printed in English and Urdu, and be widely distributed as soon after the Assemblage as possible. On the day of the Proclamation, the Chiefs and their followers at Delhi will be entertained at the public expense, and a day's pay will be issued to every non-commissioned officer and soldier in India. The Camp will break up about the 5th of January, up to which time each day will be occupied in Levées, Reviews, and other spectacles and entertainments of a varied character, chiefly arranged for the amusement of the Chiefs and people.

15. Having thus briefly described, as far we are at present able to do so, our general plan for the ceremonial details of the Assemblage, we would now indicate the forms which, if sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, might, in our opinion, be appropriately given to various personal honors of a commemorative character, in order to mark the occasion in the recollection of all present as a historical event of the highest importance.

16. In the first place, wishing to avail ourselves of a favourable opportunity for discontinuing the undesirable practice of exchanging presents at meetings between Her Majesty's Representative and the Chiefs of India, we have resolved that no such exchange shall take place on this occasion; and that, in lieu thereof, every Ruling Chief entitled to a salute, attending the ceremony, as well as some of the principal British officials, shall be presented by the Viceroy, in the name of the Queen, with a gold medal (to be worn suspended from the neck by a crimson riband) on which will be engraved Her Majesty's effigy, together with an inscription, on the reverse side, in English, Urdu, and Hindee, worded "Victoria, Empress of India, 1st January 1877."* Ornamental swords and sword belts will be likewise presented to the various Chiefs as personal gifts from the Viceroy.

* This title to be translated and hereafter known in the Hindustani language as Kaiser-i-Hind.

17. To each Ruling Chief entitled to a salute, whether present at, or absent from, the Assemblage, the Viceroy will also present, or cause to be presented, in the name of the Queen, with all due ceremony, a large silken banner, on one side of which the armorial bearings of the Chief will be emblazoned, and, on the other, a suitable inscription, stating the gift to be from the Empress of India. To indicate more clearly the value we attach to these banners, the Viceroy will retain one for himself, and present similar ones to the Governors of Madras and Bombay, the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, North-Western Provinces, and the Punjab, and the Commander-in-Chief in India. The banners will be carried at all future State ceremonials. We feel

sure that these banners and medals will be much appreciated by the recipients, having regard to the importance attached by Native potentates to similar marks of distinction bestowed on them by the Moghul Emperors.

18. In addition to the gold medals above-mentioned, we propose to present silver medals to selected noblemen and gentlemen, European and Native, of each Province, and to a selected soldier of each British and Native Regiment, in India. It is intended that the medals and banners shall be the property of the recipients, but that, in the case of banners, the successor of the recipient shall be entitled to carry the same or a like banner. In anticipation of the sanction of Your Lordship in Council, we have already arranged for their preparation.

19. At the same moment as the Proclamation is being read at Delhi, it will be similarly read, with all due ceremony, in the Durbars of those Chiefs who may be unavoidably absent from the ceremonial, as well as by the principal British authority present, in the capital of every province or district, as well as in every cantonment. The effect of the ceremonial at Delhi, however impressive it may be, will necessarily be limited to the Assemblage present; but we deem it essential to the object in view, that the significance of the day shall be brought home to the heart of the whole population, leaving behind it, even in remote localities, some grateful recollection. We therefore propose that Durbars shall simultaneously be held by all our District Officers throughout the Empire; and that, at these Durbars, honorary sunnuds, or certificates of merit, shall be bestowed upon Native or European gentlemen holding such offices as Honorary Magistrates, Members of Municipal Committees, and the like. This will, we believe, mark in an appreciable manner the recognition by Her Majesty's Government of the good services rendered by these gentlemen to the State.

20. We now beg to submit our views to Your Lordship in Council, as to the more solid concessions and acts of grace which should accompany the Proclamation. This subject is at once an important and a difficult one. We have to bear in mind that such acts of grace cannot be exclusively confined to Native Chiefs and noblemen; and yet, on the other hand, it is by no means easy to suggest any form in which corresponding favors or concessions can be properly or practically extended by Her Majesty's Government to the European official or non-official portion of the Queen's Indian subjects. Still we think it of the highest importance to avoid any appearance of partiality in the distribution of favors such as to mark a separation between the British and Native Communities of this Empire at a time when our avowed object is to unite all classes and creeds in a common sentiment of enthusiastic attachment and gratitude to the Throne.

21. To commence with Native Ruling Chiefs, we propose to establish a Privy Council, directly under the Viceroy's control, to be called the "Imperial Privy Council," composed of great Princes and High officials, the range of selection being confined to Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, Commanders-in-Chief, Members of Executive Councils, selected Ruling Chiefs, and others of high distinction, Native or European, whom the Viceroy may appoint, subject to the Queen's sanction, conveyed through Your Lordship in Council. We consider that admissions to this Council, especially at the first, should be made under careful restrictions, and that the Council itself should be considered as entirely separate and distinct from any existing institution.

22. The body thus created would, of course, be purely consultative. It would have neither the function nor the power of maintaining any check upon the Supreme Authority and free action of the Executive Government of India in its dealings with the Native States or general administration of the affairs of the Empire; but we believe that, if judiciously organized and managed, the co-operation of such a Council may considerably increase the prestige, and strengthen the hands of the Government in its internal policy, as well as in its relations with the neighbouring independent States outside the Empire. Most

of the Native Princes eligible for the proposed Council are already bound to assist Her Majesty with troops in case of war. Many of them are allowed to maintain military establishments by treaty rights which could only be accorded to them as feudatory allies and loyal vassals of the Queen; all of them are directly concerned in the renown of Her Empire, the safety of its frontiers, the development of its commerce, the friendliness and dignity of its intercourse with Foreign States, and the maintenance of its peace. If any one of these Imperial interests were attacked or menaced, it would be their duty to assist us in defending it.

23. For all these reasons, we desire to submit to the consideration of Your Lordship in Council the favorable and appropriate character of the opportunity afforded by the Proclamation of the Imperial title for giving to the Head of the Executive Government of India, by means of a body constituted in accordance with our present recommendation, special facilities of convenient occasional consultation with the chief Native constituents of the Empire; from whose public co-operation, within the limits here indicated, we anticipate much advantage and no embarrassment. There should, in our opinion, be no fixed periodical assembling of this Privy Council; but the attendance of some or all of its Members, be they European or Native, should be entirely dependent on a special summons from the Viceroy, and the deliberations of the Council should not be public. We are hopeful that the effect of the establishment of the Privy Council may, to a great extent, satisfy a growing want in India, as well as public opinion in England, by associating the high English officials and great Ruling Chiefs more closely with the Viceroy, in the general guardianship of common and Imperial interests. We think that the Members of this Council should be entitled, *ex-officio*, to a salute of 15 guns, and we are disposed to suggest that they should be designated "Right Honorable," and be entitled to the same privileges as Privy Councillors of England or Ireland. The status of the Council, however, is a matter which we desire to leave entirely in the hands of Her Majesty's Government, feeling assured that they will share with this Government the sense of its importance to Imperial interests.

24. We would only add on this subject, that our proposal is limited to the creation of a single Imperial Privy Council directly under the Viceroy. We do not think it advisable at present to extend the measure to any minor Councils of a similar character in connection with local Governments.

25. It will be most desirable at the same time to initiate a Native Peerage or *Libro d'oro* for India, in which may be enrolled the names and ancestry of the Ruling Chiefs and Native Noblemen. By the establishment of an Heraldic College at Calcutta, with the object of authoritatively recording the ancestry of existing Chiefs and Princes, we have at hand a means at once of satisfying a sentiment by which the Indian nobility is strongly influenced, and of publicly associating with the Imperial supremacy of the British Crown all the hereditary ranks and titles in which the family and national pride of the Native Aristocracy is invested; but which are at present more associated than is either necessary or desirable with the records and traditions of antecedent dynasties.

We attach great importance to the development of this institution; but all we solicit at present is the general sanction of Her Majesty's Government to its initiation on the forthcoming occasion. The details of it, which will in no wise be difficult, may be conveniently reserved for more matured consideration.

26. In addition to the concessions above enumerated, we consider it would be appropriate to mark the day in the eyes of the Native Army, by the announcement of the additions of pay and other beneficial measures recently sanctioned by Your Lordship in Council. We would also recommend to the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government the proposals, herewith enclosed, for the extension of the Order of British India, which may be announced at the same time. There are many fine old soldiers await-

ing vacancies in this Order, and we feel assured that benefits of this nature will make the occasion specially memorable to the whole Native Army.

27. We have furthermore in contemplation preparatory steps for the release, on the 1st of January, throughout India, of prisoners recommended for mercy by the competent authorities, and not exceeding 10 per cent. in each Province; and we contemplate the extension of this measure to the case of prisoners confined for debt. This release of prisoners will be subject to careful preliminary examination of the circumstances of each case, and carried out in the Home Department under the instructions of our colleague, the Hon'ble Mr. Bayley. Such an act of grace is in accordance with an old established custom much cherished by the Natives of India, and will specially touch the masses.

28. In regard to other acts of grace of a more miscellaneous character, we have separately addressed the Heads of Local Administrations; and, after careful consideration of their various recommendations, we shall lose no time in submitting them, if approved by us, for the sanction of Your Lordship in Council. As this branch of our enquiries, however, is extensive and difficult to dispose of quickly, we shall hope to obtain from time to time by telegraph Your Lordship's general assent to such concessions as may require your sanction.

29. The grant of concessions to the European official and non-official community is, as before observed, a matter of considerable difficulty. Various suggestions have been made to us on this subject, and should we be able to reduce these to a practical shape, we will lose no time in laying our views before Your Lordship in Council.

30. In addition to the recommendations we have deemed it our duty to make in this despatch, we beg to submit, for the consideration of Her Majesty's Government, the desirability of the enlargement of the Order of the Star of India to an extent not less than 20 per cent. The Order is at present limited in number, the interests it has to satisfy are very numerous, and it affords to us almost the only means of conferring personal honors on the Native Princes, or of rewarding good and faithful service on the part of British or Native officials. This boon of itself would be much prized amongst the European official classes, and would be a popular announcement (even if no actual distribution take place) were Her Majesty the Queen graciously pleased to authorize it.

31. Having placed Your Lordship in Council in possession of our general views and recommendations in connection with the forthcoming assemblage, we can do no more than repeat that no effort shall be wanting on our part, or on the part of our officers, to give to the event all the importance due to it. The opportunity is one which may never occur again of satisfying claims, aspirations, and interests, by concessions which, however small, may go far to promote a healthy tone throughout India, and make the proclamation of the Imperial title a foundation of strength to British rule inside and outside the Empire. On these grounds, we do not think the present state of our finances should be allowed to stand in the way of a proper expenditure of money in giving weight and eclat to our proceedings on an occasion so exceptional in character; but Your Lordship in Council may rest assured that we shall restrict such expenditure within the narrowest possible limits compatible with the importance of the object in view.

32. We desire to add that we shall endeavour to take advantage of the presence at the assemblage of the Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, and other Heads of Administrations to confer with them personally on a large number of important administrative and financial questions, the discussion and settlement of which, in this manner, will be conducive to the general interests of the Empire.