

In Safford and Wheeler's new book on Privy Council practice, the learned authors use the following language in regard to the Judicial Committee as at present constituted ;—"With this one exception (i.e. India) it is difficult to see in what way a stronger tribunal can be constituted than the present Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Beyond including among its members all the Judges of the House of Lords, it comprises eminent Judges from the Court of Appeal and the High Court of England, from Ireland, from Scotland, and from India and the leading colonies, and certain illustrious laymen. Its authority is probably unique. Its jurisdiction is undoubtedly more extensive, whether measured by area, population, variety of nations, creeds, languages, laws or customs, than hitherto enjoyed by any court known to civilization."

The stranger seeking for the habitat of this august tribunal is surprised when directed to a low, shabby looking building in Downing Street where its sittings are held. The Court holds its sessions in a very unpretentious room upstairs, the acoustic properties of which are poor. "The Councillors present do not wear wigs or robes ; they do not sit as a bench of Judges sitting in state, but as a small group of elderly gentlemen in plain clothes on either side of an oblong table, separated from the rest of the room by a wooden barrier, in the middle of which is placed a desk (like that from which an Episcopal clergyman reads 'the lesson') and from behind this Counsel, attired in gowns and wigs, addresses the court."

This appellate tribunal sitting "in a shabby room up a dirty staircase off Downing Street" with its wide jurisdiction and complex appeals, maintains the even balance of civil procedure and criminal justice over a fifth of the human race and for a fifth of the territory allotted to man on this planet.

The following extract from a letter written, now many years ago, by a Montreal advocate, giving his impressions of the Privy Council, is still of interest :—"L'on n'est past formaliste au Conseil Privé. Les Judges siègent habillés comme de braves bourgeois, dans la vie ordinaire ; c'est-à-dire que la plupart portent des pantalons gris plus ou moins foncé. Sir Robert Collier portait une cravate grise. Tous les Juges avaient un surtout (walking coat) noir. Le greffier lui-même avait un pantalon gris. Les Solicitors assistent en cravates de couleur. En fin l'impression que j'ai rapportée du Conseil Privé, c'est que c'est un beau tribunal arbitral, éclairé par les plus hautes lumières de la science généralé, appliquée