

Honey-export Control Act, 1924.

The Honey Control Board constituted under the Honey-export Control Act, 1924, purchased certain supplies of Australian honey for export purposes without authority of law, and the vouchers covering the purchases could not therefore be passed by the Audit Office. On an assurance having been given by the Government that validating legislation would be provided the vouchers were passed.

Native Housing Act, 1935.

In July, 1937, an advance of £1,000 was made to the Native Trustee for the purpose of erecting houses for Natives, but the payment was without statutory authority. On an assurance having been given by the Prime Minister that the necessary validating legislation would be provided the Audit Office passed the expenditure.

**Failure to promote Validating or Amending Legislation in Terms of
an Undertaking by the Government.**

It has been fully realized that inherent dangers exist in following the practice referred to under the previous heading, and I have to place on record the fact that until recently the Audit Office has had no cause for complaint in respect of any failure on the part of the Government to carry out its undertakings. In my last report I included a record of the cases in which the Audit Office had acted in accordance with this practice, and I regret to have to report that in the following five cases the promised legislation has not yet been introduced :—

1. *Creation and Issue of Adhesive Stamps.*—In the report for the year ended 31st March, 1936, reference was made to the fact that it had been decided to place the responsibility for the creation of stamps with the Post and Telegraph Department instead of with the Stamp Duties Department, and to the fact that the then Prime Minister had given an undertaking that any legislation required to give effect to this decision would be submitted to Parliament in due course.

In my report for last year attention was again drawn to the matter, but the required legislation has not yet been placed on the statute-book.

2. *Unauthorized Expenditure Account.*—Attention was drawn in my last report to the fact that the Prime Minister had given an undertaking that any issue during the year ended 31st March, 1937, beyond the limit of “unauthorized” fixed by section 58 of the Public Revenues Act, 1926, would be validated. The fact that £10,959 19s. 9d. was issued in excess of the legal limit was apparently overlooked when section 17 of the Finance Act, 1937, was drafted.

3. *Traffic Regulations 1936 and Motor-vehicles Fitness Fees Regulations 1937.*—The Traffic Regulations 1936 and the Motor-vehicles Fitness Fees Regulations 1937 were found to conflict with the provisions of section 24 of the Motor-vehicles Act, 1924. As stated in my last report, the Audit Office, on the grounds of equity, agreed to raise no objection to the regulations provided an assurance was given that the necessary validating legislation would be obtained. This assurance was duly given, but the legislation was not introduced.

4. *National Provident Fund Act, 1926.*—In my last report I drew attention to the fact that, contrary to law, certain contributors to superannuation schemes inaugurated for local authorities under the provisions of the National Provident Fund Act who were subsequently employed under the Crown in State institutions were allowed to continue such contributions and were not compelled to join the Public Service Superannuation Fund as required by section 17 of the Public Service Superannuation Act, 1927. The legislation dealing with the matter which was promised has not yet been enacted.

5. *Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1936.*—In my last report I pointed out that section 32 (3) of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal Act, 1936, did not confer the authority necessary to enable the Trustees of the Flock House property to sell the chattels thereon to the Crown. The promised validating legislation has not yet been enacted.