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TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

A CORRESPONDENT, writing from London under date August 21, says that every effort will be made to present the report of the Joint Select Committee by the first week of November and to put the Reform Bill through by the middle of December.

* * *

MRS. ANNIE BESANT writes to *New India* under date August 14: "The Hon. Messrs. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. Ramachandra Rao were called before a tired committee, but Mr. Sastri's admirably lucid criticisms of the Bill, expressed in most polished English and showing a firm grasp of the subject and a clear insight into consequences, soon awakened and rivetted attention. The members evidently felt the statesmanlike quality of the witness before them, and treated him with marked respect. It is very regrettable that the *Times* has not reported his statement, nor his answers to questions. It gives, with conspicuous unfairness, columns to the Government witness, but could only find three lines for one of the most eminent of Indians, while it completely ignored his colleague." The London correspondent of the *Hindu* writes: "Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. Ramachandra Rao were the next to run in the double harness. On the whole I think they are giving (for their evidence is not yet completed) the best statement we have had of the Moderate case. The form of Mr. Srinivasa Sastri's opening statement was a model of conciseness and clarity of expression. He examined the Bill clause by clause in a masterly fashion, and the effect of his evidence was to show that the Bill as it stands now falls substantially short of the original scheme in many important respects."

* * *

THE light which the Hon'ble Mr. Howard threw on the exchange situation the other day is not calculated to reassure the public mind as to the policy of Government, which will await the recommendations of the Currency Committee before

making any important modifications. The Government of India, however, hope to receive the sanction of the Secretary of State to their proposal to raise their acquisition rate of gold so as to make it conform to the premium prevailing in the market. Mr. Howard made it perfectly clear that freedom of the imports of the precious metals could not be allowed and that Government control in the matter must continue for some time longer. The obligation to maintain the statutory value of the sovereign in rupees has to be squared with the necessity of supplying gold to consumers in India, and the different values that now prevail for the metal must be brought nearer to one another. It is difficult to say how far the proposal of the Government of India will prove effective. Stability of exchange and the sale of Councils on a definite scale cannot be assured to the mercantile world, which will not, therefore, be satisfied with the explanation offered by Mr. Howard in Calcutta.

* * *

WHEN passive resistance was being initiated the Viceroy promised unreserved assistance to provincial satraps in the event of disturbances breaking out, and he was as good as his word. He endorsed every act of the Punjab Government and was prepared to stand by them through thick and thin. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, with the *carte blanche* provided by Lord Chelmsford, must have surely experienced far different emotions from those described in the following utterance of Lord John Russell in recounting the woes of a Governor of Ceylon whose methods of suppressing riots with the aid of martial law were investigated by a committee of the House of Commons, who was recalled and for whose misdemeanours the ministry in power was on the point of being censured. Lord John Russell said in defence (1851): 'I believe that if at the first beginning of insurrection a Governor were obliged to say to himself, "I must take care how I crush the rebellion; I must be careful how I punish offenders; I may be brought before a committee of the House of Commons; I may be censured by the Government under which I serve; I may undergo pains and penalties of a resolution of the House of Commons, and therefore I must be careful not to extend the verge and boundary of strict law;" I believe if you teach such a lesson to your Governor' the rebellion cannot be easily repressed. Lord Chelmsford's promise of entire support must have induced in Sir Michael O'Dwyer the confidence that he may go almost any length

in transgressing the limits of "strict law," only if he thereby put down the rebellion promptly though not with equal justice.

* * *

LORD RUSSELL called attention in the House of Lords on August 6 to the sentences passed in the Lahore Conspiracy case and particularly against Lala Harkishen Lal. The only part he appears to have played in the "conspiracy" is that he was among the conveners of a meeting which recommended *hartal* to people. Lord Russell asked if the charge of conspiracy and waging war did not refer only to this and whether the sentence imposed upon him under martial law was not disproportioned to the offence. Lord Sinha, to whom it fell to reply to Earl Russell's question, was of course unable to produce any other "criminal" acts done by Lala Harkishen Lal and other leaders and to justify the orders passed by the Martial Law Commission. He said by the way that those against whom Regulation 10 of 1804 was enforced had been taken *flagrante delicto*. Evidently, Lord Sinha is not yet fully acquainted with all the illegalities perpetrated under martial law, for we wonder if it can be said with truth of any person that he was taken in the commission of an overt act of war or rebellion. The engineering or rather the advising of *hartal* or a general strike is the worst that could even be alleged against Lala Harkishen Lal, and the fact is, as Veritas has proved from the evidence in the case, that he was not aware of the happenings of 9th and 10th April and that in fact he "came upon the scene for the first time on the 11th April at the express invitation of the Deputy Commissioner."

* * *

WHEN in 1914 trade union leaders were deported under martial law from South Africa, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald called attention to it in the British House of Commons, on which occasion he contended that nothing had happened to justify the proclamation of martial law and that the preamble of the Indemnity Bill had contained nothing which could by any stretch of imagination be construed into such a grave situation as to justify the expression "a state of war." The Market Square meeting at which a resolution was carried declaring a general strike is thus described:

"The newspaper accounts of that meeting are quite unanimous in describing it as large and peaceful and the speeches as dull. Every man who addressed that meeting begged it to keep quiet, and begged it to do nothing except simply come out on strike. They told it that any display of force or any threat of violence would be immediately met by armed force on the part of the Government, and the description of its dispersal was that the people simply went quietly away, as if they had been attending some Sunday religious service and were going home to think over what they had heard at that service."

The Lahore leaders too, if they advised Satyagraha, urged with equal insistence strict abstinence from any act of violence. In South Africa the Labour leaders, supposed to be advocating civil war, actually suggested the formation of boards of manage-

ment composed partly of working men and partly of Government officials, and in some instances even voted against a strike. Well might Mr. Macdonald say that "the circumstances of the case never came within a thousand miles of justification of the proclamation of martial law."

* * *

"THE difficulty that the Government of South Africa had to face was that it had no evidence at all. Even when it got all the evidence that was at its disposal, all the books and all the private letters of the leaders of the Labour party in South Africa, it had no evidence to bring any of them before the courts. That is why they resorted to martial law." It was really a *coup de main* meant to kill the Labour movement.

"We admit that trade unionism is being very very troublesome to the present Government. Victimization has been practised by Government officials against trade unions on the railway, and men prominent in the trade union movement have been practically banished from the country by being boycotted by Government officials. Wanting to finish it altogether, wanting to make a complete job of it, and not being able to pursue the matter in the courts because they knew perfectly well that they had got no evidence upon which the courts would convict, they made up their minds that by one fell and comprehensive swoop of illegality, the executive would clear the whole thing out and crush out trade unionism on the Rand if they possibly could."

Only substitute "political agitation" for "trade unionism" in the above passage, and you get a true insight into the inwardness of the administration of martial law in Lahore.

* * *

IN 1906 Mr. Ramsay Macdonald raised the question in the House of Commons as to whether retrospective effect could be given to martial law. Said he:

"His second point was that this incident (the murder of two policemen) took place on February 8th and martial law was proclaimed on February 9th; that the incident took place at a time when there was no martial law in the colony, at a time when the civil law was still in operation, yet the natives accused of the murder of the policemen were tried by martial law. Was martial law to be made retrospective in the future? Bad as martial law undoubtedly was and unjustified as those were, as he thought, who declared it, ten thousand times more unjustifiable was it that this negation of all law should be made retrospective, and to cover acts committed previously to its being proclaimed."

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Churchill) could only answer:

"Martial law is no law at all. Martial law is brute force. The only restriction on martial law is that no more force is used than necessary, and where more force is used than necessary persons may afterwards be called to account unless covered by an Act of Indemnity. The Hon. Member of Leicester suggested it was illegal to try these men by martial law for an offence committed before martial law was proclaimed. Of course all martial law is illegal, and an attempt to introduce illegalities into martial law which is not military law, is like attempting to add salt water to the sea."

Asked if there was any precedent for the retrospective action of martial law, Mr. Churchill answered (April 11, 1906) that he was not aware.

THE Viceroy's references to reform in his speech in the Imperial Council were anything but happy. He showed great vexation that the Government of India's modifications in the Reform Scheme were being described as of a whittling-down character and protested that they were in truth inspired by the one desire to make the plan of the Joint Report workable. Whatever the intention, the effect of the alterations would undoubtedly be to rob the scheme of much of its value. If the Viceroy had designed to narrow down the scope of reform, he could not have set about in a better way. Even Sir James Meston, than whom the Government of India could not have found an abler spokesman, admitted to the Joint Committee that in several points the modifications proposed by the Government of India would result in an abridgment of democratic reform. In face of such an admission, what is the value of the Viceroy's contention that the Government of India had only substituted proposals which were "less open to objection"? The Viceroy then had a fling at those who began by bestowing excessive adverse criticism upon the Report and ended by admiring it to the point of idolatry. "I am quite prepared," he says, "if something better is suggested, to give it my best consideration." There is no one in India who regards the recommendations of the Report as sacrosanct, and there is no one who is not only prepared to consider proposals of improvement but does not require drastic improvements in it. But those improvements do not consist in depriving the council of all power over the budget, starving transferred services at the expense of the reserved, removing all safeguards against injurious legislation in the reserved field, and reducing the minister to the position of a clerk while still subjecting him to the control of the council. The improvements lie in the opposite direction.

It is suggested, in extenuation, that if the Congress deputation did not achieve a conspicuous success in its evidence before the Joint Committee it had set to itself a hard task. We quite agree. But the hardness of the task did not consist, as is fondly believed by some, in the deputation not accepting the Reform Scheme, as other deputations accepted it, and standing up for the Congress scheme, the whole of the Congress scheme and nothing but the Congress scheme. For, asked by Lord Islington whether he would work out the Bill if it should pass into law in its present form, Mr. Patel answered in the affirmative. What else is this but accepting the Bill on the present lines? There would of course be agitation for obtaining other rights not conceded therein. But this position is common to all. The Moderates too have said that if the central Government be not popularised, a strong agitation would set in. Where then is the much-vaunted superiority of the Congress position if all say—and Mr. Tilak the loudest of all—Take what you get and ask for more? When the Moderates proclaimed acceptance, the Scheme was

in imminent peril of being wrecked. The Nationalists have not even that excuse now when they repeat the Moderates' formula. The Congress deputation's difficulty rather consisted in the fact that the elimination of dyarchy which they desired could not take place without destroying the texture of the Reform Scheme.

MR. K. C. DE, Commissioner of Chittagong, has written to Mrs. Sarala Devi Chaudhuri, Pandit Rambhaji Dutt Chaudhuri's wife, heartily thanking her for her great help rendered to him in recruiting for the army in his division. Says he: "Your earnestness and fervour greatly increased the rates of recruiting in Chittagong, Sitakund and Agartola." We would ask all those who have condemned her husband as a rebel to lay their hands on their hearts and say whether the husband of a lady who has done all that the Commissioner of Chittagong says that Mrs. Sarala Devi did for recruiting, would dream of sedition, let alone waging war and open rebellion. We would ask any man who is not bereft of his senses this simple question: is it possible, is it conceivable that the lady did it without the full knowledge, sympathy, approval, and hearty support of her husband? And would not be the height of absurdity, not to say of falsehood, to suggest that he had developed into a seditionist and a rebel all of a sudden? Yet this is what the verdict of the Martial Law judges would mean. We can only hope with Mr. De, that Pundit Rambhaji Dutt Chaudhuri will be restored to liberty soon.

THE following is the verdict passed by the *Hindu's* own London correspondent on Mr. Patel's evidence, which passage the *Hindu*, with the manipulative skill of which it is known to be master, both as regards suppression and variation, omits from its columns: "Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the witness made a very successful appearance, either in his opening statement (which was too long) or in facing his cross-examiners. I do not think he really did full justice to the Congress case which, whether one agrees with it or not, is capable of concise, logical, and effective presentation." Mr. Sastri's account which the same paper has unblushingly called "a denunciation of the Congress deputation" does not differ from this version.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: Messrs. Kasturiranga Aiyengar and C. Vijayaraghavachari gave it as their deliberate opinion in the Madras Provincial Conference that it was "premature" to demand the recall of Lord Chelmsford. Do these Nationalist leaders now consider it opportune after the Viceroy's speech? The demand was again "unnecessary" and "imprudent;" a fortnight since; has it now become "necessary" and "prudent?" Or not yet? After all prudential considerations weigh with the Nationalists a good deal more than they care to avow.

THE PUNJAB ENQUIRY AND THE BILL OF INDEMNITY.

THE Viceroy's references in his opening speech in the Imperial Legislative Council to the recent disturbances in the Punjab were such as to convince every dispassionate observer that there is no statesmanship at Simla. Lord Chelmsford's idea of the origin of these outbreaks is so faulty and his conception of a Viceroy's duty in the presence of such an upheaval so essentially erroneous that it is little wonder His Excellency during all these dreadful months merely looked on while Sir Michael O'Dwyer quelled the "open rebellion" by aid of martial law and, along with it, put down all political agitation and those who were connected with it. According to the Viceroy, the "rebellion" occurred in the Punjab as a consequence of some of the members of his Council, who had uttered warnings on the passage of the Rowlatt Bill, feeling bound in honour to execute those threats. It was amply explained in the Council, and later on outside, that these were no threats but warnings, given in good faith, of what was likely to result in view of the public feeling on the matter. A Government, more responsive to public opinion than the present Government of India, would have been grateful to the people's representatives for having represented the popular sentiment in its true intensity, but Lord Chelmsford's Government has all along persisted in misconceiving the standpoint of the non-official members of its legislature. Be it so, but can the Viceroy cite any specific instance of a member of his Council having set up an agitation in the Punjab, as a result of which the disturbances may in fairness be said to have followed. There was no one but Mr. Shafi in the Punjab at the time, and he is not known to have started an earth-shaking agitation in the province. Any of the members may well have gone to the Punjab and educated the public mind on the Rowlatt Act. It was within their right to do so, but, in point of fact, none chose to exercise the right at the time, and the disturbances must surely be referred to a different cause from that to which Lord Chelmsford with unaccountable unreason has elected to refer it.

The Viceroy then dwells upon the gravity of the situation with which the Government was faced. For our part, we are not concerned to minimise the seriousness of the disorders, for the systematic isolation of the Punjab which resulted so that communication could be established with the province only by means of the wireless is a circumstance of grave import, which it will be the task of the Committee of Enquiry to explore and explain. That strong measures were rendered necessary every one would admit, but what part did the Viceroy play in the taking of these precautionary measures? What checks did he provide to insure that no amount of force in excess of what was actually needed by the circumstances of the case was employed? The Viceroy only thought it

his part of the business to support the heads of provincial Governments "unwaveringly," and no doubt this he carried out in such a way as to give no ground of complaint to Sir Michael O'Dwyer. A Viceroy divests himself of some of his most important attributes when he accounts it his duty in times of such crises to endorse everything that Governors or Lieutenant Governors may do and brushes away, as a matter of course, the most piteous complaints of their subjects. Now, at long last, the promised enquiry has been announced. If the Viceroy is so sure of the causes of the disturbances and has such perfect confidence in the measures taken to cope with them, with his sanction, where then is the need for any enquiry at all, and where is any possible use of an enquiry being instituted when the Committee of Enquiry, who receive their appointment from the Viceroy and are to submit their conclusions to him, start with the theory with which he himself has provided them? With the approaching enquiry, the Viceroy ought to have been more reticent and less anxious to justify the illegalities which have been perpetrated as required by the needs of the situation. In any case, it is clear that the Government of India, as the sanctioning authority, is as much involved in this enquiry as the Punjab Government, and it is ridiculous for the Government of India to sit in judgment over the report of the Committee which must enquire, if its enquiries are to be at all fruitful, as to whether the Government of India attempted to restrain the Punjab Government from overstraining the law beyond the needs of the case. The Viceroy has no word to say of the powers with which the Committee will be invested. In these circumstances we shall be greatly surprised if the Committee of Enquiry will inspire anything like confidence in the public mind. It is clear that this is a case of tardily and unwillingly carrying out a promise which the Secretary of State "precipitately" made.

But the most surprising part of the Viceroy's speech is the demand, coolly made, of an Indemnity Act for the purpose of relieving all officers who took part in repressing disturbances from liability to penalties for any illegal transactions of which they may be guilty. The Viceroy says that, as an invariable rule, an Indemnity Act is passed after the withdrawal of martial law, and demands the passing of such an Act in the present Council as of right. Granted that an Indemnity Act usually follows when the martial law régime ends, but when the Viceroy makes a claim that the Bill must be assented to by his Council, whatever the result of the enquiry, it is necessary to examine the constitutional character of the Indemnity Acts that are passed. Let it be remembered that such Acts are required to sanction *ex post facto* action which is not strictly legal, or to legalise transactions which are in themselves illegal. The employment of force which can be proved to have been necessary for the preservation of the State is amply covered by the existing law. It is only the use of

as cannot be similarly proved to be necessary that must be covered by an Act of Indemnity. It is idle to say that the legislature before which an indemnifying bill comes is not entitled to reject it if it so chooses; it is a preposterous claim which the Vicery makes that, whatever excesses the officers may have committed *bona fide* in the restoration of order, the Council must without scrutiny condone them and protect the officers from the consequences of all their actions. The Council has a right to know the illegalities from which the officers require to be protected before it passes an Indemnity Bill, and this information will be available only after the Committee of Enquiry carries out its investigations and comes to definite conclusions on the matter. The Viceroy says that the results of the Committee's enquiries have no bearing on the merits of the Indemnity Bill; on the contrary, they have the most intimate bearing, and it is fatuous in the extreme to ask the members of the Indian Legislative Council to vote for the Indemnity Bill before they have even a vague idea of what the officers require to be indemnified for. There is no immediate necessity for rushing the Indemnity Bill through the Council; for one thing, it would produce a most unfortunate impression upon the public mind if, even before the enquiry commences, the Punjab officials are placed entirely beyond the reach of any of its possible results. It will not fail to react prejudicially on the enquiry itself.

What the Indian public is now demanding is nothing unusual. When an Indemnity Act was being hurried through the Union Parliament in 1914, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald brought a motion in the British House of Commons to the effect that instructions be given to the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa that the Indemnity Bill shall be reserved until a judicial enquiry be instituted into the circumstances of the proclamation of martial law, etc. The motion found many sympathisers in the Commons, and was resisted by Government on the main ground that assent could not justifiably be withheld from the Bill, if the Union Parliament should pass it, because such legislation was "essentially one of the attributes and prerogatives of the responsible and popularly elected Parliament of South Africa." The Colonial Secretary, however, added that though the British Government could not intervene in the internal affairs of a self-governing colony, the democracy of South Africa, if dissatisfied with its Government, could put pressure upon its representatives to reject the Bill and to turn out the Government. Here an enquiry has already been promised, and special leave has also been granted to prefer appeals to the Privy Council in certain cases. It is clear, in these circumstances, that an indemnifying Bill should follow and not precede this investigation and the hearing of appeals. Indians will show no revengeful spirit against those officers who were obliged by the sheer stress of circumstances to adopt harsh measures; they will, however, require to be satisfied that all those

measures were reasonably thought necessary and were adopted in good faith and with a proper appreciation of the popular liberties. In any case, the legislature's consent must not be asked as a mere matter of form, but its constitutional right to consider the question on its merits ought to be recognised. Mr. Macdonald said in 1906, in respect of the disturbances in Natal: "He for one objected to this Bill of Indemnity being made a mere formal affair. A Bill of Indemnity ought not to be a mere formal affair, but His Majesty's Government out to satisfy themselves that everything that could be done to make justice possible had been done." Nor shall we, so far as we can help it, let this Bill of Indemnity be a formal affair.

THE LAHORE CONSPIRACY CASE.—V.

BY VERITAS.

INCIDENTS OF 12TH APRIL.

THE principal incidents of the day were the the second meeting at the Badshahi mosque and a conference at the residence of the Hon'ble Mian Mahomed Shafi, now Member for Education. The judgment thus refers to the first incident:

The second meeting which had already been arranged took place in the Badshahi mosque next morning. The temper of the crowd which had assembled is shown by the attack on Inspector Ali Gauhar, P. W. 46, of the C. I. D. while the mob were awaiting the arrival of the principal agitators. The story of Rambhaj Dutt, Harkishen Lal and Dunichand is that they had learnt accidentally of this second meeting and had gone to the mosque in order to do what they could in order to assist the Government. They did nothing of the kind. Rambhaj Dutt again exhorted the people to face death with fortitude.

As to this finding, the comment is that the meeting was not arranged by the leaders, as is evident from the fact that they did not go to the mosque till at a late hour of the morning. Ghulam Hussain Sahab, C. I. D. Head Constable, P. W. 40, says that "Harkishen Lal, etc., came 1½ hour after Ali Gauhar was attacked," and so the leaders could have had nothing to do with the incident. The reason why the leaders went there is explained in the written statement of Mr. Dunichand. As he says, they were advised not to go to the mosque, but considering it their duty to carry out the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner, they decided to make another effort; and advised the people to resume their business and stop the *hartal*, as deposed by Kashmiri Lal, P. W. 45, but the people would not listen to them. Finding their advice of no avail, they thought that the only way to stop mass meetings was to get some committees appointed, on the lines already laid down at the previous evening's meeting, with power to add more members, choudhries, and prominent shop-keepers of different localities in order to make their voice heard. It is hard to find how in the face of the evidence of Kashmiri Lal, P. W. 45, who appeared as a prosecution witness in other cases before the Commission and who himself removed some of the seditious posters, Ex. P. 35, Ex. P. 36, Ex. P. 37, the judgment says that "they did nothing of the kind."

It is not also quite correct to say, as the judgment says, that the defence has not put in any evidence concerning what occurred on the 12th April morning. Dr. Jowala Pershad, retired Asst. Surgeon, D. W. 18, Dr. Ruldu Rain, private medical practitioner, D. W. 16, amongst others, definitely said that at the Badshahi Mosque on the 12th April, both Mr. Dunichand and Pundit Rambhaj advised stopping *hartal* (Lala Harkishen Lal never spoke at any public meeting). After the dispersal of the meeting, the Heeramandi firing took place. It is not alleged that any of the Lahore leaders were present at the time.

The other incident of the day is the meeting held at the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi's house, where and at a subsequent meeting at the Town Hall, the accused are said to have dictated terms to Government. It would be as well to begin by precisely indicating what the alleged dictated terms were. Ex. P. 59 gives the alleged conditions drawn up at a meeting at Mr. Shafi's house on 12th April, as presented to the Chief Secretary:

- (1) Withdrawal of the military from the City including the Circular Road should be urged.
- (2) Dead and wounded to be made over to their relatives, except those who want to remain in the hospital.
- (3) All persons arrested be released on their furnishing adequate bails, if necessary.
- (4) To prevent recrudescence, there should be an advisory representative committee to advise and to maintain order. If the authorities agree to these conditions, we all present will do our best to restore calm.

In their judgment the Commissioners state that the above "conditions embodied their (*viz.*, of the accused) own ideas of what was right to demand and the plain fact is that they were quite unwilling even to attempt to end the *hartal* unless they could go back with proof of a triumph over Government." The Commission could not have had a more serious misapprehension of the situation. They altogether ignored the excitement that had been caused by the firing on the 10th April evening and 12th April morning (as to which *vide* the evidence of the Hon'ble Mr. Fazl-i-Hussain, D. W. 3, and Raja Narendra Nath, D. W. 2/6). They overlooked the statement in Ex. P. 63, prepared for the Associated Press, about the excitement caused in the city by the firing, which accounts are referred to in the judgment as "very accurate reports." They also lost sight of the fact that the so-called conditions were agreed to by all present including the leading notables and *reises*, as will appear from the following excerpts:

"When I took the conditions to the Chief Secretary, I represented that they had been approved by all the persons present at the meeting, and that in order to close the *hartal* we recommended their adoption." (*Vide* evidence of RAI BAHADUR AMARNATH, Joint Registrar, Lahore, P. W. 4.)

"I agreed to submission of these conditions as a basis of discussion, but did not mean to lay them as a *sine qua non* for ending the *hartal*. (Evidence of the HON'BLE K. B. MIAN MAHOMED SHAFI, C. I. E., P. W. 6.)

"Everyone agreed to present conditions to Chief Secretary. . . . I did not recommend that they should be rejected. . . . I must have been included in the word 'all' in

the last sentence." (Evidence of the HON.

SARAN DAS, C. I. E., P. W. 7.)

"Deputation to Chief Secretary recommended acceptance of conditions." (Evidence of NAWAB FATEHA LI-KAZLIBASH, P. W. 5.)

"I myself would have advised the withdrawal of the military and other conditions." (*Vide* evidence of the Hon'ble K. B. FAZL-I-HUSSAIN, Bar-at-Law, D. W. 3.)

"Of my own motion, I have advocated conditions 3 and 4. . . but when 1 and 2 were suggested I considered them worthy of support. (*Vide* evidence of RAJA NARENDRA NATH, sometime Commissioner of Lahore Division, D. W. 2/6.)

"I thought that if it was feasible for the Government to adopt the proposal for removing the military it would facilitate the stopping of the *hartal*." (*Vide* evidence of HON'BLE NAWAB SIR ZULFIQAR ALI KHAN, D. W. 5/1.)

After all these remarkable revelations, it was difficult even for a Martial Law Commission to expatiate upon the alleged dictation of terms. Hence the Commission observed as follows:—

"We are not, however, going to convict any one for failing to use his influence on the right side, even though we may consider that by doing so they could have restored peace in the city, and, for a like reason, we do not regard as a proper subject of a charge the action of any of the accused in laying down to Government the conditions on which they were prepared to assist. No doubt, they were morally bound to help unconditionally, but they were not legally bound to do so, and their omission was not in itself an offence. Their attitude in that matter is of course good evidence of their intentions, but so far as charges are concerned, we shall confine ourselves to criminal acts of a positive kind."

But what are the criminal acts of a positive kind that are relied on by the Commission to support the conviction of the accused? Absolutely none that is said or done by any of them. The Commission have convicted the accused, because they had taken judicial notice of the state of rebellion which existed in Lahore from 10th April onwards; because Khalasi Balwant Singh indulged some inflammatory mendacities; because a few excitable members of the crowd yelled and shouted; because a C. I. D. Inspector was assaulted in the absence of the accused at the Badshahi mosque on the 12th April morning; because a seditious leaflet, *viz.* *Danda Akhbar*, was somehow and somewhere found in the city (the Commission's judgment in the *Danda Fauj* case shows that this leaflet which is published in full in the judgment was probably the work of one Charan Din, at any rate of a hare-brained Mahomedan scribe; for the words "Raise the cry of Allah Akhbar and kill the Kafirs" and "the Prophet of God" occur there, and there could not be the remotest connection between the leaflet and the Lahore leaders); because the police found some seditious posters in the city after the deportation of the accused. (About those posters there hangs a tale. The Principal of the Dial Singh College was fined Rs. 250 by the Military Administrator, because a poster was found outside the College premises. This fine was remitted a few days afterwards, evidently because the Martial Law Administrator was satisfied about the innocence of the party fined in the matter, and also because the Administrator per-

haps came to learn that the C. I. D. men were not always above board and that one C. I. D. Sub-Inspector was sentenced to three years' imprisonment by this very Commission on a charge of attempted black-mailing.) In short, these leaders suffered, because some one else said or did things in an improper, objectionable and even inflammatory manner. The Commission have not pointed to a single act of commission, to any "criminal act of the positive kind" done by any of the Lahore leaders. It is true that the fiat had gone forth that these men were agitators and so they must be made scapegoats and be punished. Such a logic, however agreeable to the late satrap of the province, appears to ordinary minds as reminiscent of the fable of the wolf and the lamb in the nursery tales of old Æsop. Can it be that a Martial Law Commission, presided over by a High Court Judge, have yielded to this subtle influence? Let public opinion answer.

INCIDENTS OF 13TH APRIL.

The incidents of 13th April need not detain us. The Commission have held that "it is over-stating the case to term the meeting (held at the Town Hall on 13th April) tumultuous or to make it the basis of charges." The next item was a meeting held at Mr. Dunichand's house, where it is admitted by the Commission that "a decision in favour of an unconditional surrender was arrived at." The Commission also admits that "there is a great deal of evidence to the effect that when the decision was announced by Rambhāj Dutt, the leaders were accused of trucking to Government." The fact is that "the firing had created considerable excitement in the city" (*vide Ex. P. 63*). The Hon'ble Mr. Shafi and other "moderate" leaders knew it full well and so they recommended the acceptance of the conditions. As a last chance, the accused sent two of them, Dr. Gokal Chand Narang (acquitted by the Commission) and Mr. Dunichand to the Deputy Commissioner. The judgment itself thus refers to it: "On the same evening Gokal Chand and Dunichand again approached the Deputy Commissioner with a request for a concession, *viz.*, the withdrawal of the troops." The Deputy Commissioner, as we have seen in the excerpt quoted in the first article, was not altogether against the proposal, for he promised to lay their request before the Lieutenant Governor and asked them to come next day. The sequel is soon told. The mighty ex-satrap of the province would not for a moment brook the idea of any parleying with the agitators. So orders were forthwith issued for their deportation under the Defence of India Act, and next morning, when they came, they were deported. Lala Harkishen Lal was then conversing with Lala Lakhe Shah, an influential merchant who came to his place at his request, as to the best way of ending the *hartal*, and was collecting the names of 50 influential shopkeepers from all parts of the town, and forming with them a large deputation together with some of the members of the Committee and to exert all their com-

bined influence on the people to put an end to the *hartal* and in fact had prepared the list (*vide* his written statement and evidence of Lakhe Shah, D. W. 26), when he was summoned by Mr. Bull, the Municipal Secretary, to see the Deputy Commissioner at the Telegraph Office. Well, when he and his colleagues arrived, they were deported. This is the plain and unvarnished narration of the story of the "rebellion." The Lahore leaders had always offered co-operation, but the authorities would not trust them. For a parallel we must go to Ireland, the land of birth of our late pro-consul, the story of which is thus told by one of her greatest sons:

"Every remedy has been tried," said John Redmond, "except trusting the people. You have tried force in all its forms on the scaffold and in the prison-cell. You have had your twenty years of resolute government, for which Lord Salisbury asked. You have tried conciliation and reform. Your conciliation has always been ignorant and blundering, and your reform has always been too late. Further you have sent to Ireland from time to time the very best men you have. Take the list of statesmen who have gone to Ireland in the last one hundred years; you will find in that list the name of almost every great man in your history; one after another, they have been sent to Ireland. They have all come back and told you they failed, and many of them have told you also that their task was hopeless, and that the only chance of good government was in some measure or other to trust the people."

Sir Edward Maclagan's Government has made a good beginning in the right direction, and we are all grateful for it, but it is nothing more than a beginning. There can be no doubt that the best way to inaugurate a policy of trust is to release all the leaders and all the men, not convicted of actual violence, without further delay.

THE JOINT COMMITTEE.

THE Joint Committee on the Government of India Bill continues to sit. Apart from the officials, the representatives of several deputations have given evidence during this week, but many witnesses, official and non-official, have yet to appear. It is very unlikely that the Committee will be able to examine them by the end of this month. It will have either to continue its sittings next month, or, if it adjourns at the end of this month, to meet again early in October. It is highly probable that the latter course will be adopted. In that case Sir Sankaran Nair and Dr. Sapru who are on their way to England will be able to appear before the Committee. I understand that Parliament will reassemble after the recess in November. If, therefore, the Bill is to pass this year, the Committee must submit its report by the end of October or the first week of November.

A syndicate of witnesses, if I may say so, appeared before the Committee on behalf of the Moderates' deputation on Monday last. Mr. Samarth, Mr. Chintamani, Mr. K. C. Roy and Mr. Prithwis Chandra Roy were examined together. Two of them were entitled by their knowledge of public problems and their position in Indian public

life to be examined separately. But as Mr. Surendranath Banerjea had already given evidence, the Committee probably thought that it would be a waste of time to examine singly many witnesses who shared his political opinions and who would give expression to identical views on cardinal points. If unanimity of opinion on any point among a number of men of weight and experience is a test of its value, the consideration which presumably guided the Committee, however much it might have enabled it to economise time, cannot be pronounced to have been a sound one.

Mr. K. C. Roy and Mr. Prithwis Chandra Roy, although witnesses on behalf of the Moderates' deputation, did not support the representation submitted to the Committee by the deputation and took a line of their own. In reply to a question put by Sir J. D. Rees, Mr. K. C. Roy stated that he did not represent any political party or association and that he alone was responsible for the views which he has expressed. Possibly, this accounts for the fact that hardly any questions were put to him or to Mr. P. C. Roy by way of cross-examination.

Mr. Samarth and Mr. Chintamani supplemented, as they were required to do, the statement of Mr. Banerjea and pressed for the amendments urged in the Moderates' representation. As the text of the representation must have been received in India by now, it is not necessary for me to give even a summary of their evidence. It will interest you, however, to learn that Mr. Samarth, while insisting strongly on the need for the introduction of an element of responsibility into the Government of India, remarked that unless this recommendation was accepted there would be no peace in India and that an agitation might be set on foot which would "stagger imagination." These words were at once fastened on by the members of the Committee. Some construed them as a threat and one member asked Mr. Samarth if he would join in such an agitation. "I may do so," was his reply.

MR. CHINTAMANI'S EVIDENCE.

Mr. Chintamani as a representative of the U. P. Liberal Association advocated the claims of the United Provinces in regard to the position of their Governor and the financial contribution which they will be required to make to the Government of India. But the features that gave a distinctive character to his statement were different. The most important part of his evidence was that which related to the omission from the Bill of the recommendation contained in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report that, at the end of five years after the establishment of the reformed councils, the provincial Governments and legislatures should be at liberty to ask the Government of India to revise the list of transferred subjects. It has been said that the right of the legislature to ask for an increase in the number of transferred subjects was coupled with the liability to their curtailment at the request of the executive, and that as the executive has been deprived of this power and the

ministers will be made responsible to popular representatives from the start, the justification for a revision at the end of five years ceases to exist. Mr. Chintamani pointed out that the Bill contemplated that in certain circumstances the Governor should be able to assume charge of a department himself or have it removed permanently from the list of transferred subjects. The executive is thus indirectly empowered to reduce the power of the legislative council without giving it an opportunity of being heard in its defence even before the end of five years. It is all the more necessary, therefore, that the right of the legislature to approach the Government of India and ask for an enhancement of its powers should be restored.

The other point in Mr. Chintamani's evidence to which attention should be drawn related to the constitution of the electorate which would return a member to the local council on behalf the Allahabad University. He asked that the right of election should not be confined to fellows of the University, but should be extended to registered graduates who elect the fellows and quoted the opinion of the U. P. Government in support of his suggestion. The proposal is deserving of serious consideration, for unless the franchise is widened so as to include registered graduates, Indians may not have much chance of representing the University.

NON-BRAHMAN WITNESSES.

Two non-Brahman witnesses were examined on Tuesday. I shall deal only with the evidence of Rao Bahadur K. V. Reddi, who represented the South Indian Liberal Federation and who enumerated among his numerous qualifications the membership of the Madras University Board and the Madras Soldiers' Board and attendance at "some Congress sessions and several Provincial and District Conferences." Any one who has the least knowledge of Indian politics is well aware of the acute differences that prevail between Brahmans and non-Brahmans in Madras. But however high feeling may run, the responsible spokesmen of the two communities may well be expected in their own interests to conduct themselves with dignity and restraint in public. It pains me to say that Mr. Reddi's evidence was conspicuously lacking in their qualities. He spoke almost defiantly, and his defiance appeared to have an ulterior motive behind it. He ascribed all the ills the non-Brahmans were suffering from to the domination of the selfish, wily and tyrannical Brahman. Whether you take the backwardness of the non-Brahman in political matters or in education or his inferior position in regard to the public services or the insanitary condition of Panchama hamlets, the Brahman is equally responsible for them all. No one holds the Brahman blameless for the helotry which is the portion of the depressed classes in life, nor does anyone consider him to be free from the faults, little or great, which beset humanity. But to make wild statements is to prove conclusively the weakness of your case. Mr. Reddi had

hardly any answer to give when Mr. Montagu asked him why the non-Brahmans had boycotted the Franchise Committee, one of the members of which was Mr. Sastri, extracts from whose writings had been quoted by him with satisfaction in his statement. Mr. Montagu laid bare the inwardness of the non-Brahman movement when he asked, "Could you tell the Committee who Mr. Watney is who is the secretary of your deputation?" "He is a friend of Dr. Nair," said Mr. K. V. Reddi. "That is the only gentleman to whom we were introduced after our arrival here." Mr. Watney is the London correspondent of the "Madras Mail."

Lord Sinha also pilloried Mr. K. V. Reddy for the reckless statements he had made. He had to admit that the non-Brahmans were doing no more for the Panchamas than the Brahmans. He acknowledged that his complaint should be directed, not against the Brahmans exclusively, but against the wealthy classes, who were, mostly non-Brahman, and the educated community, generally, but added that the responsibility really rested on the Brahmans as the existing state of things "had its origin in the religious ordinances which proceeded from the Brahmans." He ought to have said frankly that their greatest grievance against the Brahman was that his community was called non-Brahman. One need not be an admirer of Dr. Nair to wish that he had been alive to represent the non-Brahmans. He had a personality, and his evidence would have been characterised at least with dignity.

THE MUSLIM REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Yakub Hasan gave joint evidence yesterday morning as representatives of the Moslem League. By far the greater part of Mr. Jinnah's statement was concerned with the changes which should be made in the constitution of the Government of India. It was an impressive presentation of the case for the liberalisation of the central Government, on which he laid great stress. One wishes that it had been less vague. If Mr. Jinnah had dealt less with generalities and been more concrete, his evidence would have gained considerably in value. As it is, I am afraid his clearness of mind and forensic ability did not make that impression on the Committee which they would otherwise have made. He called the scheme a product of prejudice and timidity. Mr. Montagu asked him if he considered the Congress-League Scheme which he had supported before him in India to be bold, statesmanlike and far-reaching. As the "Montford Scheme" is in some respects superior to the Congress-League Scheme, it was obviously impossible for him to answer the question in the affirmative. He said there were demerits in both—a reply which could not strengthen his case. Had he dealt more with actual facts than he did, he would have escaped the difficulty in which the enunciation of general principles involved him.

Mr. Sastri and Mr. Ramachandra Rao were examined after Mr. Jinnah. They supplemented each other's remarks. Mr. Ramachandra Rao effectively dealt with the charges brought against Brahmans by Mr. K. V. Reddi. He pointed out the genesis of the non-Brahman movement and established beyond the shadow of a doubt by quoting unchallengeable facts and figures that, whether the elections to the local bodies, the Madras Corporation or the Legislative Council were considered, the non-Brahmans had no foundation in fact for their complaints. He also showed that Brahmans were taking the lead in matters of social reform. He urged that land revenue should be a transferred subject in every province and handed in two able memoranda dealing with finance and the rules to be made under the Act.

MR. SASTRI'S EVIDENCE.

Mr. Sastri made no general statement, but took the Committee through the objectionable clauses of the Bill pointing out the modifications that were needed. There was scarcely any important point which he did not touch upon. In regard to the Government of India, he pressed that it should be made responsible to the legislature, no matter to how small an extent. He declared that so long as the Government of India remained entirely bureaucratic it could not be claimed that the policy contained in the announcement of the 20th August, 1917, had been faithfully carried out, and pointed out that the income-tax, salt tax and stamps (general) appeared to be suitable subjects to be brought under popular control. He advocated with equal earnestness that the right of controlling her tariff policy should be conceded to India and that half the members of the supreme executive Government should be Indians. Dealing with clause 28 of the Bill, he urged that it should be amended so as to include an express direction to the Statutory Commission to make proposals for the liberalisation of the Government of India. He also demanded among other things that the Assembly should be allowed to elect its own president and make its own standing orders without being required to obtain the assent of the Governor-General in Council to them.

In the provincial sphere he asked that the salary and status of the ministers should be the same as those of the executive councillors and that the power of the Governor to disregard the advice of the ministers should be governed by the same rules as those which determine his relation to the executive council. He laid the greatest stress on the acceptance of the financial provisions contained in the Joint Report and said he was strongly of opinion that if they were made less liberal the value of the Reform Scheme would be seriously diminished. Finance was the key-stone of the arch of provincial government, and on it depended the stability of the whole structure. He opposed the constitution of the Grand Committee as proposed by the Government of India, particularly the suggestion that members of the executive council should be ex-officio members of it, on the ground that the representatives of the people should have the right to be able to prevent the passage of obnoxious laws if unanimity of opinion prevails among them. This right was enjoyed by the Councils at present and had been exercised at least in Madras some time ago when the Council refused to give leave to Government to introduce a bill of which it disapproved. Mr. Sastri also pleaded that the Council should have the right to appeal to the Governor-General in Council when it thought that the power of certification had been wrongly exercised by the Governor, particularly as the power to judge the legality of the Governor's acts had been rightly withheld from the courts, and that the Governor should not be in a position to prevent the introduction or consideration of a bill at any stage. His suggestions in regard to the choice of the president and the vice-president and the making of standing orders were the same as in the case of the Government of India. There were many other points which he dealt with, but it is impossible to discuss them within the compass of a brief letter.

The effectiveness of the Bill to be a genuine instrument of progress will depend to a great extent on the rules that are to be framed under it. It is necessary, therefore, that they should be communicated to the Indian representatives who have come here to give evidence before the Committee. Technically speaking, the rules can be framed by

the Governor-General in Council only after the measure has become law, but trivial technicalities may well be ignored where vital interests are at stake. Mr. Sastri, therefore, pointedly referred to the disadvantage under which we have to labour on account of our ignorance of the rules which Government proposes to make to fulfil the obligations which the new Bill will impose on it, if it is accepted by Parliament. He desired that provision should be made in the rules for the discussion of urgent matters of public importance, that the executive should not have the power to disallow resolutions, and that the suspension of rules of business should require the sanction of the Council. But his most important suggestion was that the rules should be classified into two categories, and that those which were not of constitutional importance should be alterable by the legislature itself.

From the rules Mr. Sastri passed on to the instrument of instructions which he criticised on various grounds. His main recommendation was that it should be distinctly laid down that if a legislature which is dissolved is succeeded by another legislature which refuses to reverse or modify the policy of its predecessor, the Governor will be bound to give effect to its decision.

I am manifestly at a disadvantage in expressing my opinion of Mr. Sastri's performance. The relation in which I stand to him imposes an obvious restraint on me. Apart from this, I shall be accused of partiality if I give him the praise which I could freely give, and those who bring that charge against me will not be disposed to accept my denial of it. Nevertheless I shall break the rule which would dictate silence on my part in general and trust that there will be some who will believe that I have expressed my views with the impartiality of a critic. I believe, and I am not alone in holding this opinion, that no witness has so far impressed the Committee more than Mr. Sastri. He presented our case with equal dignity and comprehensiveness, the manner in which he stated it was not less striking than the knowledge which he gave proof of in supporting it. I do not hesitate to say that his evidence represents the greatest service he has rendered to India, and I feel that it has materially strengthened our claim.

It is impossible to prophesy what form the Bill will ultimately take. It may not be so amended as to satisfy Indian public opinion, and our hopes may be frustrated. But the indications are not unfavourable. On the contrary, I am more hopeful than I was when I wrote to you first, and outward signs at least warrant my optimism.

H. N. KUNZRU.

LONDON, AUG. 14.

A LETTER FROM LONDON.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

LONDON, AUG. 21.

THOUGH Parliament has risen, the Joint Committee is continuing its sessions during this week and next, when it adjourns until October 3. It is expected that it will then sit for another week to take final evidence, when it will prepare its report or reports. I am not going, at present, to prophesy how many of these there are likely to be, though I shall not be surprised if there are at least two, unless, as is possible, the procedure is that the Select Committee put forward only one report. Among the witnesses still to be examined are Sir Michael O'Dwyer, if he can be persuaded to shake off his shyness and give evidence on behalf of the provincial Governments, Sir William Meyer, Sir Sanka-

ran Nair, and possibly Sir Thomas Holderness, Sir Lionel Abrahams, Mr. Curtis and Dr. Sapru. The last, together with Sir Sankaran Nair and Mr. Hasan Imam should arrive here to-day.

SIR STANLEY REED'S USEFUL EVIDENCE.

Just as last week it was Mr. Sastri's splendid analysis of the Bill that held the field, so this week the best evidence that has been tendered is that of Sir Stanley Reed, who told the Committee that his experience of 22 years in India mixing closely with prominent Indians had convinced him that the political and public spirit had so largely pervaded the country that it was unsafe to delay a large measure of responsible government. On the whole he thought that the Bill was satisfactory in this respect, but he recommended fiscal autonomy and devolution in the central Government of power to ministers responsible to the popular body. Next to his evidence, the most interesting and valuable has been that of Mr. T. E. Welby, on behalf of the European Association, and Sir Harry Stephen, on behalf of the Indo-British Association; Sir Alexander Cardew, who has just been roasted alive by Mr. Montagu and Lord Sinha. I have always felt that, with a British audience—and the Committee is pre-eminently that—the most useful kind of evidence from the Indian national point of view is the thoroughly denunciatory type of which that of these two witnesses has been characteristic. I have been waiting for it and my expectation has been, I think, fully justified. Other useful evidence has been that of Mr. Chakkarai, the non-Brahmin representative of the Madras Presidency Association, who had the honesty to admit that such ill-treatment of the depressed classes as there was in Madras should be put at least as much to the discredit of the non-Brahmin higher castes as to the Brahmins. Lord Carmichael to-day compared, to the amazement of the Committee, the Brahmins to the Scotsmen and the non-Brahmins to the Englishmen. Burman and Karen delegates have spoken up for reforms on the lines of the M.-C. Scheme that would place Burma in a position not at all inferior to that of the United Provinces. In a letter to the "Times" in support of the Burman claim, our good friend, Mr. Bernard Houghton, makes a slashing attack upon Sir Reginald Cradock for the threats that he has recently been holding out and the "scheme" that he has evolved which, as Mr. Houghton remarks, "amounts, in fact, to scheduling Burma as a backward tract." The only other important evidence has been that of Sir Michael Sadler, who thinks that it would be wiser to transfer education as a whole and not in parts.

Mr. Montagu has consented to receive a deputation on the South African Indian question, and it is likely that an influential gathering of Indian and European gentlemen will meet him some day next week. I hope to write more about this matter in my next letter.

LONDON, AUG. 7.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S TRIBUTE TO INDIA.

THE Prime Minister yesterday in the House of Commons paid a splendid tribute to all ranks, all services, and all parts of the Empire for their part in the great War. The special resolution that is of interest to the people of India is the following: "That the thanks of this House be accorded to the gallant troops from the Dominions overseas, from India, and from the Colonies and Protectorates, for the promptitude with which they responded to the call of justice and freedom, and for the noble part that they have played, in conjunc-

tion with their comrades of the British Isles, in securing the triumph of right over wrong." Thanks were also tendered "to the members of the Royal Army Medical corps, and of the Indian Medical Service for the skilful discharge of their humane office, and for the unprecedented success which attended their unremitting labours, to preserve the armed Forces of the Crown from the ravages of disease." The brave lascars were included in the vote of thanks to the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine, "for the fine and fearless seamanship by which our people have been preserved from want, and our cause from disaster." Finally the House was asked to acknowledge with deep submission and reverence the heroism of those who had fallen in the service of their country, and to tender its sympathy to their relatives in the hour of their sorrow and their pride. Mr. Lloyd George offered the following splendid tribute to India: "As to India, by her remarkable contribution to our triumph, notably in the East, she has won a new claim to our consideration, a claim so irresistible that it ought to overpower, and must overpower, all prejudice and timidity which may stand in the way of her progress." The noble words should form the slogan of Indian nationalists as they march on to complete Dominion self-government. I should like to see some brave young countrymen of yours at the next sitting of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament on the Government of India Bill produce and unfurl a banner with the text of the Prime Minister's declaration emblazoned on it in letters of gold. It would doubtless create a sensation if he did, and it would probably be for the good of Lord Sydenham's soul.

THE PUNJAB TROUBLES.

I really do believe that some sort of enquiry is about to be instituted in regard to the Punjab troubles. Mr. Montagu told Major Ormsby-Gore yesterday in the House of Commons that he hoped before Parliament rose for the recess to announce, after consultation with the Government of India, the personnel of the proposed Commission of Inquiry. In the House of Lords yesterday, Lord Sinha, in answering an interpellation by Earl Russell calling attention to the sentences under Martial Law in India with special reference to the case of Lala Harkishen Lal, had the unpleasant task of attempting to defend the Government upon a state of affairs of which they cannot be very proud. However, Lord Sinha made the best of an unsatisfactory case, described briefly the incidents that had led up to the proclamation of Martial Law, explained that the sentences of the Court Martial Commissions were being reviewed by the Punjab Government, that in some cases, including that of Lala Harkishen Lal himself, these sentences had been already reduced, that others were the subject of appeal to the Privy Council, and he finally wound up with the following apologia and explanation: "You cannot have disturbances of this kind and this magnitude without an inquiry into the causes, and into the measures taken to cope with these disturbances. In circumstances of this kind the immediate and paramount duty of the Government of India was to protect life and restore order; and at the same time it must use, as it was bound to use, the exceptional powers at its disposal only so far as was necessary for the immediate purpose. Actions necessarily prompt, probably hasty, have to be reviewed and revised when order has once more been restored, with a view to ensuring the confidence of the well-disposed that the action had been adequate and not merciless, sufficient but not

excessive. The time has now arrived for this stage, and the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have been in constant communication by cable and have every hope that a definite announcement with regard to the promised inquiry will be duly made and within a short time." This so far as it goes is satisfactory, but I do hope that the rumours that I hear will be unverified, that the inquiry will be a private one accompanied by amnesty on the one hand, and indemnity on the other. So far as those who have lost their lives in these troubles are concerned, it would seem to be more a matter of re-incarnation than of resurrection. I also hear it whispered that to balance the appointment of Sir Michael O'Dwyer to the Indian Army Commission, the Government of India are being invited by the Secretary of State, to nominate an Indian member. If true, it would be some sort of tardy recognition of the political proprieties.

The delayed detachment of Indian troops that should have joined the Great Victory procession on July 19 were granted a special march through some of the busiest London streets last Saturday. They presented a splendid appearance and their picturesqueness and dignity were deeply appreciated by the great gatherings of Londoners right up to Buckingham Palace, where the troops were reviewed by the King who offered them his thanks on behalf of the British people for their loyalty, courage, and devotion throughout the war.

THE CONGRESS DELEGATES.

After all, the Congress delegates did not carry out the intention to which some members sought to commit them, to abstain from giving evidence before the Joint Committee, as a protest against the exasperation of Indian public opinion by the incidents of Martial Law in the Punjab. Mr. Patel accordingly tendered his evidence on Tuesday and was followed by Mr. Madhava Rao, Mr. Patel's manner is unfortunate, he is aggressive where he should be tactful, he irritates where he should persuade. In the course of examination and cross-examination he succeeded in creating a palpably hostile atmosphere, and I doubt exceedingly whether his evidence has done any good whatever to the cause of Indian Reform. His colleague, a man of dignified presence and manner, created a much better impression, but his tremendous indictment of British administration and of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy was greatly qualified and modified as a result of the severe cross-examination to which he was subjected. On the whole he did not succeed in supporting the Congress programme so well as was at first hoped by his colleagues.

He was followed by the redoubtable Mr. Tilak who though speaking on behalf of his Home Rule League, and not as a Congress-delegate, certainly proved superior, both in manner and in substance, to Mr. Patel. His arguments more nearly approached those of the Moderate delegation and he did not attach so much importance to a particular time limit, as to the fact that it indicated to all concerned that India would be impatient of an indefinite and protracted evolution of responsible Government.

Woman suffrage is on the way to become a fact for Indian women, Mrs. Naidu gave a new and improved tone to the proceedings of the Committee in her evidence, and I think it not improbable that some attempt will be made to confer the franchise in some way upon Indian women, leaving the details of polling to be arranged by the local authorities. To-day Mrs. Naidu is leading a deputation to the Secretary of State for India

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