

LONDON LETTER

(From Our Own Correspondent London, Sept. 2)

THINGS WE ARE THINKING THE PRESS AND THE BUREAU

The campaign, which is being waged against the Press Bureau the "Times" and other North-controlled newspapers in this country is in itself an interesting illustration of the horror with which we Englishmen regard all kinds of attempt at interference with the liberties of journalists. It is perfectly true that none of our newspapers have yet called upon the Government for the mere receipt of warnings that the publication of truth is "strongly to be deprecated" and has driven some of our editors to a condition bordering on fury. "I have no objection to a Press Act in India or in Egypt," said one of them to me, "but I'll be damned if I'll stand here at home in England." Unhappily for himself, the damn of the Editor has not in the least relaxed the rigours of the Censorship. He still has to submit his stories to the Bureau. To such a pitch of indignation has one all-powerful editor been driven that the following comment appeared among his items of intelligence:—"The sun rose this morning in the east as usual. The Press Bureau, while allowing my message to be printed, accepts responsibility for the accuracy of the thing contained in it."

Alas! Poor Fleet Street. Can anybody marvel that we journalists are worried?

There is only one way out of it, that we have adopted. Either we have to publish the most graphic of our "Special Correspondents' Lantry" (correspondents who, we know, are not permitted to be in the forces), or else we have fallen upon the belated despatches of John French, and the small items of intelligence which are vouchsafed by the Bureau.

The trials of an editor in these days are awful. I was sitting with a friend yesterday. A telegram arrived. With eagerness he sprang up and read it. "Curse it!" he cried. The telegram was from his "Special Correspondent" now in Paris. Thus it began:—"I motored out this morning as far as was consistent with safety. The expense of petrol is everyday more heavy. My personal expenses incurred on your behalf mount in proportion. I have sought a refuge who furnishes the following tale of his adventures. A man Ulan accosted him and asked for money. My refugee retorted that he had none. With blazing eyes and a saturnine expression, the man raised his lance etc."

FROM BENGAL

CALCUTTA, OCT. 6, 1914.

THE MEANING OF THE "RECIPROcity" PROPOSAL

WHILE THE CRITICISM OF LORD Hardinge's recent statement in Council upon the question of Indian Emigration to the British Colonies, on the ground of its inopportuneness, which we discussed in these columns the other day, seems to us to be absolutely unreasonable and unjust, and betrays a sad lack of insight into and appreciation of the present situation created by the "Kamagata Maru" affair on the one side, and the despatch of a large contingent of the very kith and kin of the men who have been refused admission into a British Colony, to the seat of war, on the other,—in His Excellency's critics; that directed against the reciprocity proposal itself, seems to call for a clearer and more convincing pronouncement from His Lordship than what was made at the last meeting of his Legislative Council. For ourselves, we never had any doubt in our mind, regarding the meaning of this proposal. We have all along understood it to mean that as unrestricted emigration from India to the British Colonies is absolutely out of the question just now, the only reasonable course that can be adopted now is to restrict it within certain prescribed limits, on both sides; and ask the Colonies to admit a fixed number of Indian emigrants into the territories, in consideration of a similar restricted emigration of their own citizens into our own territories. At present the Colonials have free access to our country, while our people are practically refused all admission into their territories. This is the real sting of the whole situation. And since free emigration from one part of the Empire to another is out of the question at present, the only way to remove this sting is to place the different countries of the Empire exactly upon an equal footing in regard to this matter. This is what we have all along understood to be the real meaning of Lord Hardinge's new reciprocity proposal. We find, it, however, that a very large section of our educated countrymen have put a different meaning upon it. They say that what Lord Hardinge proposes is really an reciprocity at all, but that the name of reciprocity, it is a sort of restricted emigration from India to

fact, but in the name and under cover of a misleading word, its only aim is to restrict Indian emigration to the Colonies in such a way as while securing admission for a limited number of our people into the Colonies, will leave the present stigma upon our national culture and character, as inferior to those of Europe or America, just as it is now. To think that Lord Hardinge is capable of such a thing is not only a libel against His Excellency's character as a statesman, but also an even greater libel against the education and intelligence of the Indian people themselves. Lord Hardinge has had sufficient experience of the country he has been called upon to rule to know that every act and word, every policy and measure of his Government is subjected to a most searching criticism by the Indian public, and though sometimes an unfavourable opinion may not find candid expression in our press or our platform, it none the less works upon the feelings of the people and thus lays in store causes of future complications. His Excellency saw it, in the matter of the Dacca University scheme. He has seen it later in the matter of the Calcutta University Professorships. And it is absolutely incredible that His Lordship should have meant by this reciprocity proposal something which the English word reciprocity does not warrant. Believing, therefore, in the keen intelligence, large experience, and far-seeing statesmanship of the present Viceroy, we still hold our original interpretation of His Excellency's statement in Council on this subject to be the only true and rational interpretation of it.

Indian Immigration into the Colonies.

APART from the merits of the case which will soon be submitted to the judgment of a court of law, there must be a general sense of regret at the recent unhappy incidents at Budge-Budge. But we are sure that they will not be permitted to interrupt the fruition of that policy which has been outlined by His Excellency the Viceroy for the final and definite settlement of the immigration question. The foul attempt at the assassination of the Viceroy was not allowed to interfere with the even course of that conciliatory and beneficent policy, whose fruits we now witness in the spectacle of a united India resolved as one man to fight for a menaced Empire. His Excellency the Viceroy has appealed to the public opinion of India to say whether it supports the

maintenance of the public tranquillity. The authorities had undoubtedly their reasons, and they probably acted upon Police reports, but we know that these reports are not always gospel-truth. We really do not think that any serious danger was likely to happen from their being allowed to go to Calcutta. Our own impression is that contact with Calcutta and the leaders of Calcutta public opinion would have exercised, especially at present, a mollifying effect upon the immigrants. Subject to the necessary precautions which might have been taken without much difficulty, the immigrants might have been allowed to visit Calcutta. The present occasion, for various causes, and especially "Pujas", is a most unfavourable season for public agitation in Calcutta; and the immigrants after a stay in Calcutta would naturally have drifted into their own villages, sobered and enlightened by the public opinion of India. Deplorable as the incident is, we feel that with tact and judgment, it might have been avoided.

The Indian Troops in Europe.

THE Indian troops are now in France; and they met with a most cordial greeting on their landing. The impression produced by their appearance and their soldierly demeanour was profound. As they defiled through the city to the rest-camp, the inhabitants were wild with delight and enthusiasm. The British people felt proud of them; and even the "Times", carried away by the prevailing popular sentiment, is constrained to say that something has to be done after the war is over to render unto India what India so richly deserves and to secure for her, her legitimate place in the Councils of the Empire. "It will be our part," says the "Times," "after we have settled our affairs with Germany to see to it that as the years pass, India takes a more ample place in the Councils of the Empire." We can only hope that after the clouds of war have rolled away and peace has been restored, the "Times" will redeem its promise and help us to obtain for ourselves our legitimate position in the Councils of the Empire. We will not forget the promise now made, and we on our part, will see to it that it is redeemed.

THE BUDGE-BUDGE RIOT.

FURTHER DETAILS.

Yesterday morning the Government Railway Police of Sealdah arrested a Sikh emigrant of the "Kamagata Maru" named Chandan Singh at Sealdah Station in the act of entering for passage to

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place the different countries of the Empire exactly upon an equal footing in regard to this matter. This is what we have all along understood to be the real meaning of Lord Hardinge's new reciprocity proposal. We find, it, however, that a very large section of our educated countrymen have put a different meaning upon it. They say that what Lord Hardinge proposes is really no reciprocity at all, but under the name of reciprocity, it means only some sort of restricted and fixed emigration from India to the British Colonies while there will be, as now, an absolutely free and unrestricted and indiscriminate influx of Colonial citizens into India. In other words, this so-called reciprocity is no reciprocity at all. It does not aim at securing the same status in regard to the regulation of immigration into India from the British Colonies, as is enjoyed by the Colonies in regard to Indian immigration into their territories; but simply to prevent the recurrence of incidents like that of the "Komagata Maru" or of troubles like those that have been temporarily settled in South Africa. We still hold to our original interpretation of this reciprocity scheme. It seems to us absolutely incredible that Lord Hardinge who have had ample evidence of the keen intelligence and the strong nationalist sentiments of the articulate Indian populations, would use plain English words, in a momentous pronouncement like this in a sense which is not found in any dictionary or lexicon of the English language. Reciprocity implies a mutual obligation. This reciprocity proposal wants to establish a new relation between India and the Colonies. At present, the Colonies have free access to our territories; but our people are denied admission into their lands. This unequal position is what hurts our dignity and causes deep discontent among the people. Lord Hardinge knows it. The whole problem is essentially one of national dignity and self-respect. Mr. Gandhi's protest in South Africa, though backed, undoubtedly, by economic considerations, for a good many of the Indian settlers there had amassed fairly good fortunes there and had given up their old occupations in India, for the more profitable business they had found in the British and Boer Colonies there, was, however, moved really by this sense of national dignity and self-respect. The treatment meted out to our people by the Boers in South Africa, as well as by the Britishers in Natal and Cape Colony was hurtful to our dignity and self-respect as an ancient and civilised people. A mere economic protest would not move the whole country from end to end in this way. It is simply inconceivable that Lord Hardinge does not know or understand this obvious fact. And in view of this inner psychology of this problem of Indian emigration to the British Colonies, it seems incredible that Lord Hardinge's proposed reciprocity scheme should be no reciprocity in

that policy which has been outlined by His Excellency the Viceroy for the final and definite settlement of the immigration question. The foul attempt at the assassination of the Viceroy was not allowed to interfere with the even course of that conciliatory and beneficent policy, whose fruits we now witness in the spectacle of a united India resolved as one man to fight for a menaced Empire. His Excellency the Viceroy has appealed to the public opinion of India to say whether it supports the policy of reciprocity which he regards as the true solution of the problem and upon the basis of which he is prepared to open negotiations. A response to that appeal has already been made through the public press. Bengal and apparently Bombay support the principle of reciprocity if it is to be free, frank and complete. Public opinion recognizes that that is perhaps the only solution of the problem, consistently with the vindication of the Queen's Proclamation and of our status as equal subjects of the Crown. But our equality of status demands that whatever restrictions are imposed upon our people by the Colonies, the self-same restrictions we shall be permitted to impose upon them in India. This may have the complexion of retaliation, of gilded retaliation if you like; but it is the only condition which provides for complete equality. Equality of status, safeguarding the national honour and self-respect must form the basis of the policy outlined by His Excellency. The details will have to be worked out. But they need cause no trouble or even difficulty, if the principle of the policy is cordially accepted by the contracting parties. For, as the "Bombay Social Reformer" points out, Canadians and Australians are permitted to compete for the Indian Civil Service. If this privilege is to continue, so far as they are concerned, then surely Indians ought to have the same right in relation to the Colonies. Furthermore, there are Canadians and Australians in the public service of the Government of India and of the Local Governments. Then there are Canadian and Australian residents in India. We presume that there is no intention on the part of any body to deprive them of their existing rights. If so, and for the same reasons, our countrymen who are now residing or serving in the Colonies should have the same rights as the Colonials. There must be perfect reciprocity here as in all other matters. That and that alone can secure for His Excellency's policy the cordial and unstinted support of Indian public opinion.

The Budge-Budge Incident.

We think that the authorities should explain why they felt it necessary to compel the Sikh immigrants to proceed to their homes and to prevent them from going to Calcutta, as some of them apparently wanted. Such a proceeding could only be justified in the interests of law and order and the

deem its promise and help us to obtain for ourselves our legitimate position in the Councils of the Empire. We will not forget the promise now made, and we on our part, will see to it that it is redeemed.

THE BUDGE-BUDGE RIOT.

FURTHER DETAILS.

Yesterday morning the Government Railway Police of Sealdah arrested a Sikh emigrant of the "Komagata Maru" named Chandan Singh at Sealdah Station in the act of entraining for Barrackpur. The arrest was made under Section 54 C. P. C. Chandan Singh was placed in the afternoon before the Police Magistrate who ordered the case to be transferred to the file of the District Magistrate of Alipur in whose jurisdiction the disturbance took place. The accused was remanded to the Alipore Jail.

No accurate report could be had of Gurdit Singh, who it is certain was not one of the sixty Sikhs who had left Budge-Budge by train immediately before the occurrence. It is stated that an eight year old son of Gurdit is in Police custody. Seventeen Indian Mahomedans who had been in the "Komagata Maru" were landed at Budge-Budge but they are stated to have left by train.

It is further reported that among those landed at Budge-Budge from the "Komagata Maru" were two Sindhi students from Japan who had embarked in the "Komagata Maru" at Kobe.

ALLEGED POISONING BY A WIFE

On the Bejoaya day the Joynagore Police received information that one Hari Charan Mistry of Bejoynagore, P. S., Joynagore, had died suddenly under suspicious circumstances. As result of Police enquiries it came to light that the young wife of Hari Charan was a woman of questionable character and was carrying on an intrigue with a neighbour. Hari Charan had taken the wife, Ganoda, to task for this. She it is alleged, mixed up a quantity of arsenic with her husband's meals. As soon as Hari Charan partook of the meals, he died. In "post mortem" examination traces of arsenic were discovered in the stomach of the deceased. The woman was arrested and will shortly be placed on her trial before the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Alipore.

GOVARDHAN SANGIT SAMAJ.

The Govardhan Sangit Samaj, (Salkia) gave a very creditable performance of Mr. G. C. Ghose's immortal epic "Jana" and the ever-green pantomime 'Aba Hossain' on the Lakshmi Puja night (Saturday) at the residence of Babu Debendra Nath Dhang of Salkia. The principal players in the role of Prabir, Vidusak, Jana Arjun and Krishna deserve special mention. The dances and duet songs were splendid and reflect great credit on the dramatic director Mr. Hari Charan Mukherjee. The dresses were good but not the scenes. Two or three actors rather 'overdid' their part and the management should see to it in future. The elite of the town attended and on the whole the function was a great success.

gram was from his "Special Correspondent" now in Paris. The story begins:—"I motored out this morning as far as was consistent with safety. The expense of petrol is everyday more heavy. My personal expenses incurred on your account in proportion. I have a letter to a refugee who furnishes the interesting tale of his adventures. A man Uhlan accosted him and asked for money. My refugee retorted he had none. With blazing eyes and a saturnine expression, the refugee raised his lance etc."

"Now what," said the Editor, the use of wiping a lie of that kind. The refugee asserts that he sprang the Uhlan's throat and so did him. Do you believe that?"

"No," said I. "But the point of the message is that your Special correspondent is living expensively in Paris and wants more money."

"Tgh" said the Editor, "ughed" in sympathy.

INDIA, MY INDIA.

I have written to you before of my own coolness in this time of trouble. But what of the nerves that I lay that coolness? To tell you the truth I knew nought of them. To-day they have tingled like electric balls through England. I could never have imagined such a revelation as this evening has afforded me. It began in the House of Commons and continues to-day throughout the length and breadth of Britain. At many breakfast tables have no strong men beat their breasts and women of England shed their tears in silence! The leading article in the "Daily Mail" itself is headed "A Day Worth Living for." as the "Daily Mail" declares goes "emotions too deep for words, a titude that no language can express is felt by all men." The Viceroy's despatch, which the same journal pares to Homer's "Iliad" here has had the effect of a trumpet on London. That much I can say for. Even I, who am not content after reading my "Daily Mail" from my bed, and hurried out in thoroughfares. The first thing I countered was an old man weeping.

"Saved! Saved!" he mumbled as he caught my hand and exclaimed "Ah!" said I. "You are braver than most of us!" I thought, of that he had a son or grandson in front who had been reported in the list of "Missing"

Feebly the old man's handkerchief did flutter. "Thank God!" he said. "That we own India."

He pointed with his finger to that noble passage in this morning's "Daily Mail" which has held all England spell-bound. "The days through which we are living," he read with trembling lips, "are days glorious in imagination and hope. They are the final justification of our work and the reward for all those who have toiled and laboured in the past. They are the days which our critics believed a vain and useless task, with no object but what they believed to be right."

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