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# The Daily Record

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## INDIAN AFFAIRS.

During the six months that separate us from the riotous and ineffectual meeting of the Indian National Council in December of last year events in India have gone from bad to worse. Seditious speeches and writings have become more widespread; in spite of the measures of the Government, gross misbehaviour in schools and colleges has gone unpunished; instances of riot have been followed by attacks on prominent officials; and, worst of all, it would seem that a systematic conspiracy of violence is afoot which includes in its armoury all the resources of the most vindictive and unscrupulous European agitation. Such methods have been hitherto unknown in India, and they indicate clearly enough how vastly the conditions of government have changed during the last fifty years. As Lord Minto said the other day, the Indian races are impressionable and imitative; we might add that in argument they tend to leap a stage or two beyond the just conclusion. It is a quality that has prompted them to abuse the political education of the last few decades and to confound the cause of freedom with that of anarchy. Meanwhile the attitude of the Government has met with severe criticism at the hands of experts on Indian politics. It has been maintained, notably in the vigorous letter of Sir Bampfylde Fuller in a recent copy of the *Times*, that, to use a happy phrase out of that journal's comments, the action of the Government has been "strangely timorous and apologetic." The native agitators have been construing a cautious policy as a symptom of fear, and have taken courage from the hesitation of their rulers to adopt strong executive measures. Sir Bampfylde Fuller's letter gives ample evidence that his removal from the position of Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal and Assam was a mistake; that the firm attitude he took up two years ago against the incipient agitation had the full justification of subsequent events. Since his retirement the Lieutenant-Governor had maintained an almost unbroken silence on Indian affairs, and the present communication was only made at the request of his friends at a time when public opinion seems to be veering round completely to his own standpoint. But, apart from its importance as a personal document, the letter displays a grasp of means and ends such as only springs from close intimacy with the political character of a people. There are pertinent phrases in which he sums up the specific requirements of Indian policy. "A people harassed by picketing and counter-picketing does not appreciate a spirit of philosophic detachment in its rulers. . . ." Or again, "Words count for little in the East; merely awaken speculations as to what they are intended to conceal." Sir Bampfylde Fuller maintains unreservedly that the Government has not been firm, and that therefore the agitators are encouraged to believe that the Government is afraid of them and too weak to put them down.

The gloomy impression left by Sir Bampfylde Fuller's letter is not removed by the grave apprehension evident in the speeches in the Viceregal Council at Simla, which was held last Monday and at which two Bills, dealing with the disaffected state of the dependency, were introduced and passed. But if the authorities in India are impressed by the seriousness of the danger, the new measures are the best guarantee that at last something is to be attempted adequate in its scope to the new situation. It has been found that the present penal code has failed to meet many cases of violence and sedition, and it has been resolved to introduce machinery which should dispose expeditiously of all attempts to use explosives as a means of enforcing political aspirations and of all newspapers and pamphlets advocating violence. The measure dealing with explosives is straightforward, and is based on a similar measure, which is now a part of the law of England, introduced in the House of Commons in 1883. It has the full approval of the three native members of the Council, and it should prove of great assistance in deterring the manufacture of explosives and the financing of agents by wealthy agitators behind the scenes. With regard to the second measure, the Newspaper Bill, the native members complain that at least a month should have been given for its consideration before it be-

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came law. To this objection, however, Lord Minto replied that the necessity of prompt action was imperative, and that the fact of the Government's having chosen to act by legislation, when it was open to it to act by ordinance, was in itself a concession. He admitted that this legislation was somewhat more hasty, somewhat more summary than was usual under normal conditions, but he pointed out that the Government had resorted to legislation rather than to an ordinance because it desired to explain its conduct and to make it clear that the guiding motive was one of justice rather than of intimidation. The British *raj* had been built up on justice, and on that basis they intended to maintain it.

The Newspaper Bill does not touch the right of free speech in the press; on the contrary, the power of journalists to express themselves in any terms short of incitement to violence is left untouched except by the existing law. When, however, expressions such as the Bill is intended to combat have been judged to have been employed, the magistrate has the right without procedure in a Court of law to confiscate the offending issue, to prohibit further issues, and to confiscate the press. If the owner of the confiscated press thinks that the matter complained of does not bear the construction placed upon it by the magistrate an appeal lies to the High Court within fifteen days. Hitherto it has been difficult, if not impossible, to apprehend individuals ultimately responsible for publishing seditious. Thus, Sir Harvey Adamson pointed out in introducing the measure, during the last year the *Yugantar* had been prosecuted five times for sedition, a fresh publisher and printer being registered on each occasion. The new measure will render the repetition of such an abuse impossible. This, however, does not in any sense partake of the nature of a general Press Act, nor, according to Lord Minto, does the Government intend to tie its hands with reference to the introduction of more stringent measures. For the present, the policy of allowing the Press as much freedom as is practicable will be continued. The Indian Administration does not yet intend abandoning altogether the attempt of sanctioning generous opportunities for political emancipation; but, as the Viceroy said in reference to seditious publications, "no exaggerated respect for the principles of English freedom, totally unadapted to Indian surroundings, can justify us in allowing such poison to work its will."

### A CHANGE FOR SUFFRAGETTES.

In 1670 the following remarkable Act of Parliament was passed in England:—"That all women of whatever age, rank, profession, or degree, whether virgins, maids or widows, that shall from after the passing of this Act impose upon, seduce, and betray into matrimony any of His Majesty's male subjects, by scents, paints, cosmetics, washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes, or bolstered hips, shall incur the penalty of the laws now in force against witchcraft, sorcery, and such like misdemeanours, and that the marriage, upon conviction, shall stand null and void." The suffragettes ought to inquire whether the Act is still on the Statute book.

### A DANTE MEMORIAL.

The Italian Chamber has under consideration a Bill brought in by Signor Alfredo Baccelli seeking a million lire—about £40,000—to raise a monument in honour of Dante, the grandeur of which shall be in its simplicity. The *Tribuna* and the *Secolo* suggest that the monument should be set up on Mont Mario, on the right bank of the Tiber.

## GENERAL NEWS.

### THE REVAL ENTREVUE.

#### THE KING'S RETURN.

King Edward bade the Czar farewell on board the "Victoria and Albert" on Wednesday night. The Royal yacht weighed anchor early on Thursday morning and sailed for Holtenuau.

#### AN OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE.

The *St. Petersburg Telegraph Agency* publishes the following *communiqué*: The meeting of the rulers of Russia and England at Reval had for its object the strengthening of the friendly relations of the two governments which were introduced by the agreements of last year. In the course of the conferences which M. Isvolski, the Foreign Minister, had with Sir Charles Hardinge it was established that these agreements have exercised the happiest influence on the peaceable development of several questions treated therein. Complete harmony of opinions reigns, now as before, between Russia and England with regard to the situation in Persia and Afghanistan. As regards Persia, the Russian and British governments are as determined as ever to maintain the integrity and independence of this country. The negotiations which have been pending for some time between the two governments with regard to the situation in Macedonia may be taken to have arrived at a point where complete agreement will be reached, and it only remains to draw up a formal agreement. M. Isvolski and Sir Charles Hardinge could also convince themselves of the mutual wish of the two countries to maintain the best of relations with all other Powers and to give no cause for anxiety about their object. This applies equally to the agreements made between the two countries and to their general policy, and cannot help but contribute to the maintenance and furtherance of the cause of peace.

#### THE CZAR IN DANGER.

The *Standard* reports from Reval that, two days before the arrival of the Czar, a female teacher committed suicide by throwing herself in front of an approaching train, because she would not carry out an order of the Terrorist organisation with reference to the arrival of the Imperial family.

#### RUSSIAN MINISTERS INTERVIEWED.

The special correspondent of the *Matin* at Reval was received by the Russian Ministers MM. Stolypin and Isvolski, who authorised him to publish statements which correspond in the main with the *communiqué* already issued on the subject of the meeting of the monarchs. The following sentence in M. Stolypin's statement deserves to be emphasized. "Our alliance with France remains the fundamental principle of our general policy. Our friendship with England coincides with the peaceable objects of that alliance. The Anglo-Russian friendship is essential for the balance of power in Europe, which I am convinced no one would wish to disturb. By the side of our friendship with England our traditional friendship with Germany remains unchanged, since it in no wise suffers through our agreement with England. This agreement refers to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet, countries in which England and Russia are endeavouring to defend their own interests."

#### NEWS FROM ENGLAND.

##### MR. HALDANE'S ARMY CRITICISED.

Dr. T. Miller Maguire, in the course of a second article in the *World*, headed "The Haldane Fiasco," says:—"There is no question in the mind of any critic that the Territorial Artillery scheme is a preposterous absurdity, and that the reduction of the batteries of the Regular Artillery is a 'gamble' of a very risky nature, so risky as to call forth indignant protests from all parties, in spite of fantastic speeches in its defence by politicians *pour rire* like Lord Tweedmouth.

"The hundred and eighty batteries of the Territorial Force will be produced with much difficulty, and, if produced, will be very bad indeed. Gen. Grant found that too many guns, even if well managed, were a serious incumbrance in many cases, and sent batteries to the rear wholesale in May, 1864. But badly handled artillery are worse than no artillery.

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