

The Bengaler

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CALCUTTA, OCT. 17, 1914.

BUDGE-BUDGE COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY.

THE REFRESHING RESPONSIVENESS to public opinion which His Excellency Lord Hardinge has shown ever since he assumed the reins of administration is the most conspicuous feature of his statesmanship. The true statesman knows what he should aim at and once he has made up his mind to it he suffers nothing to stand between himself and his cherished object. Lord Hardinge is such a statesman. Under His Excellency's wise administration the Indian people have been enabled to feel that their will is not altogether a negligible factor in the determination of the course of public affairs. His Excellency with the help of the sympathetic imagination of which he seems to possess a large fund can at once enter into the feelings of the people with regard to any public matter and never thinks it beneath his dignity to shape his policy and principle by this happy insight into popular sentiments. No administrator has ever been known to be betrayed into a great blunder by following the dictate of public feelings. And the passionate attachment to the British connection of which there is such an overwhelming evidence on the occasion of the present great European war has been evoked as much by a sense of common danger as by the policy of sympathy and confidence which His Excellency has pursued since he was appointed to pour oil over the troubled waters in India. From the manifestation of clemency to the accused in the Khulna gang case to the appointment of a Committee of Enquiry to investigate and report on the Budge-Budge incident—his last though not least act of statesmanship—His Excellency has adhered to the same principle of governance i.e., to take the people into confidence and win them to the conviction that the Government is actuated by nothing but the very best of motives. Lord Hardinge fully realises that it is not enough only to profess good intentions. A system of government in which the popular voice is yet an ornamental element there is ample room for misunderstanding between the people and those set over them in authority. Here the only lubricating oil of the machine is the tact and judgment of the supreme head. And Lord Hardinge's sympathetic and far-sighted actions in all matters which have greatly exercised the public mind during his regime have abundantly

disturb his pillow that he has on a single and solitary occasion failed in loving and sympathetic consideration of the interests of his charges. The man who assured the people of India of his never-failing kindness towards them when he was still smarting under the pain of an wound inflicted by insane perversity has already shown that he has in him the stuff of which royal goodness is made. We can only hope that the Committee imbued with the spirit of firmness and justice seasoned with mercy which has marked the conduct of His Excellency in this connection will address themselves to their work with an open mind and restore by their labours the confidence of the public in his unmistakably beneficent policy.

The Imperial Relief Fund.

MR. BALFOUR'S explicit statement published in the "Times" in the matter of the uses to which the Prince of Wales's Fund is to be put recognises fully the necessity of relieving civil distress at a time like this. It goes without saying that in all warfares the dependants of those who ungrudgingly shed their blood for the defence and honour of their country are entitled to the first and foremost consideration. But in the universal distress which always follows in the wake of such gigantic catastrophes there is very little room for discrimination. Distress is distress whether it concerns those who actually participate in the fight or those who remain at home to suffer and die in a prosaic and pacific fashion and has its indubitable claim on humanity. Mr. Balfour therefore has thought it fit to rush to print to remove a popular misconception that no part of the Prince of Wales's Fund is to be used to relieve civil as distinguished from military distress. In fact we have been assured by Mr. Balfour that the Executive Committee of the Prince of Wales's Fund have requested the Central Committee to lay before them any scheme which they think the Prince of Wales's Fund should assist; and every suggestion made by the Central Committee for the mitigation of civil distress has been immediately followed. We think that this also ought to be the guiding principle of the Indian Imperial Relief Fund, which according to the "Pioneer," "is making a mystery of its good works." We thoroughly associate ourselves with the "Pioneer" in the following request:—"In the case of these great sums of money the public should clearly be told punctually and regularly what the Committee is spending and what it designs to spend. This is all the more necessary since there are

plement of qualifications be made a conditions precedent to their selection! The arrangement has an air of mystery about it. Besides, they can do without this additional qualification during fifteen long years of their service, they can very well dispense with it towards its fag end. At any rate let us hope that the Government will see to it that they get good value for their mercy.

BOMBAY LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Bombay, Oct. 12.

Troops in Bombay.

Since troops began to pour into Bombay from all parts of India for embarkation to their destination in Europe, the entire Esplanade of Bombay stretching from the Cooperage to Cruikshank Road, presents the scene of a tented field. It looks like a white camp. Latterly, no infantry troops are to be noticed. Only the artillery and cavalry are being daily seen. Almost daily a squadron after squadron of European and Indian Cavalry are detrained at the Victoria Terminus in order to encamp on the esplanade and to be embarked on board the troop ships awaiting their conveyance from the docks. But all the different movements are executed silently and with little of the fanfare and other military pageant generally in vogue on troops marching to war. And there is no doubt that secrecy is strictly kept as to their destination. So a variety of rumours are generally afloat, rumours which the proletariat take for gospel. Credulity is the common characteristic of these and it is not surprising that there are daily large drafts of such credulity which it is nobody's business to discount.

Scares are Ever Plentiful.

Next to the troops camp what is most to be noticed are groups of idler gossipers here and there, and especially at native coffee shops in the native town soon after eventide. One curiosity to learn the pabulum of the gossip may easily mix incoherence in the Company of these babblers and be amazed at the legends conjured for the consumption of the ignorant and the credulous. At such places one is sure to find a few sensational story-tellers. Educated, they would make a fine tribe of sensational novelists of unreason. But the book of knowledge with its ample pages has never been unfolded to them. No wonder their imagination is active and greatly heated by any kind of war news or military incidents in the nearest camp. They have a warm admiration for the military. It is so with the proletariat everywhere. The military always tickle their fancy. At the beginning the scares had more or less reference to supposed official kidnapping of loiterers and unemployed for purposes of recruiting or serving on board the transport ships. Ru-

fostered. He is to see the this afternoon. What proposals these men of cotton will make remains to be seen. These interviews are a grain of salt. They mean

PUNJAB LETTER.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Lahore,

DISPELLING OF IGNORANCE.

The Punjab, agricultural antipodal reverse of Bengal, the land of small farms, their own plots of land. of our people, therefore, close juxtaposition with be. That is perhaps one reason Punjabi skull is so thick Punjabi hide so pachyderm. It is, therefore, of the necessity that all knowledge cattle should be prop much and as widely as possible. Land of Five Rivers. The the Veterinary Department named, forms interesting from this standpoint:—

"A noticeable feature of the efforts which are made by the department to impart to the people some knowledge of veterinary facts which they ought to be acquainted with regarding cattle breeding by means of lectures and tours in villages as also of instructing veterinarians and assistants introduced year to enable them to be abreast of the times in the practical knowledge. "Mr. held," says the report, districts up as to permit inspectors and assistants two neighbouring districts. At these gatherings, which days, a Superintendent's paper was read and discussed. The department also instructed the latest methods of treatment. These meetings have proved successful and instructive, greatly appreciated by the Superintendent is of course not only does this system men up-to-date, but he is able to select the able men for promotion. The department has also been successful in demonstrating matters in villages. The better method than the circulars, as it impresses more.

PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION.

According to the "Akhbar", five hundred Moslems, headed by a Kall residents of the Mohajirwala, adopted a practical method of their loyalty to the Government in a deputation to the Magistrate and officers during the European course set the example.

Ru Bengale Oct 17, 1917

tion that the Government is actuated by nothing but the very best of motives. Lord Hardinge fully realises that it is not enough only to profess good intentions. A system of government in which the popular voice is yet an ornamental element there is ample room for misunderstanding between the people and those set over them in authority. Here the only lubricating oil of the machine is the tact and judgment of the supreme head. And Lord Hardinge's sympathetic and far-sighted actions in all matters which have greatly exercised the public mind during his regime have abundantly shown that in His Excellency's suave personality there is a great neutraliser of irritating bureaucratic omniscience and omnipotence. The deplorable incident at Budge-Budge howsoever occasioned was a jarring contradiction of the admirable spirit in which His Excellency has throughout handled the question of Indian immigration into self-governing Colonies. It was an irony of fate that those whom His Excellency helped so much in escaping the utmost of trouble and humiliation on inhospitable foreign shores should have met with such a terrible end in their own land. All the humanity in the noble head of the Indian administration which employed itself to soothe the irritation to his beloved charges caused by inexorable political prejudices revolts against this inscrutable aberration in the affairs of men and His Excellency has lost no time to set right as far as possible what appears to be a mysterious and absolutely undeserved defeat of his transparently beneficent end. His appointment of the Commission of Enquiry into the Budge-Budge incident seems to whisper into our ears in frankly penitent and insinuating accents if you know what I have meant by you all along and if this unforeseen and regrettable sequel has cast any doubt on your minds as to my honest and benevolent intention, let there be an open enquiry for the unhampered flow of the course of right and justice which has ever been my watchword in this connection. The promptitude with which the Committee has been appointed is another proof of the "bona fides" of the Viceregal policy. Seldom in the annals of Indian administration has a Committee of Enquiry been appointed so soon after the event and the expression of the popular demand for it. We must confess that in view of the troublous times through which the Government is passing the public press has not made the demand for a public enquiry so emphatically and persistently as it would have done under normal conditions. But the feeble and intermittent expression of public opinion in this respect has been sufficient to lead His Excellency to appoint a Committee of Enquiry. All these circumstances go to show that as long as His Excellency has in his keeping the destinies of India he will not allow any such thought to

Wales's Fund should every suggestion made by the Central Committee for the mitigation of civil distress has been immediately followed. We think that this also ought to be the guiding principle of the Indian Imperial Relief Fund, which according to the "Pioneer" "is making a mystery of its good works." We thoroughly associate ourselves with the "Pioneer" in the following request:—"In the case of these great sums of money the public should clearly be told punctually and regularly what the Committee is spending and what it designs to spend. This is all the more necessary since there are so many private funds springing up of the urgency of whose appeals people can not judge until they know what ground the big funds are covering." If modicum reports are to be believed attempts are being vigorously made to make all classes of the community contribute to the Imperial Relief Fund. And they will not grudge their mite if it is made known that a part of the fund will be devoted to the relief of the civil distress which has now begun to be fairly wide-spread. India's paying capacity is limited. She can not be expected to contribute to a multiplicity of funds with diverse objects. One Central Fund which makes its appeal effective by undertaking to mitigate both military and civil distress is expected to be a greater success than many started for different purposes. In all calamities the people must be ultimately ready to help themselves. And constituted as we are any organised work in this direction can only yield the expected result by appealing both to humanitarian sentiment and self-interest.

Facilities for legal studies by officers on leave

For a pretty long time the question of providing suitable facilities for legal education to those of their officers on leave in England who wish to have it has been before the Government of India. But at last a few rules have been published giving the details of the expenses which the Government are prepared to incur for the purpose. They provide—

"For the advance by Government of the initial expenses involved, viz. bonuses of £25 for each first class obtained in any of the four examinations comprising part one, and £50 for a first class in the final examination on certain conditions, the most important of which are—That the officer should have sufficient leave due to him under the ordinary rules to enable him to pass the final examination before he has completed fifteen years' service under Government; and that he should rejoin the service in India before the expiration of his leave of absence."

We do not very well understand the soundness of an arrangement in which the appointment precedes the necessary equipment. If it has been felt that these officers require a good legal education to enable them to discharge their duties efficiently then why should not the full com-

sure to find a few sensational story-tellers. Educated, they would make a fine tribe of sensational novelists of unreason. But the book of knowledge with its ample pages has never been unfolded to them. No wonder their imagination is active and greatly heated by any kind of war news or military incidents in the nearest camp. They have a warm admiration for the military. It is so with proletariats everywhere. The military always tickle their fancy. At the beginning the scares had more or less reference to supposed official kidnapping of lóterous and unemployed for purposes of recruiting or serving on board the transport ships. Rumours also came from Surat, Broach Ratnagiri and other places. From Randar, a village near Surat, came news of the flight of lascars to distant woods to escape the pursuing will-o'-the-wisp of the policeman or recruiting Mucadam. These have now subsided. But there was a big "shave" some days ago about a kind of floatsam and jetsam. Stories of onions, potatoes and cocoanuts floating in creeks and tributaries of the harbour from Colaba to Bandora were rampant and implicitly believed in. There were those legendary sensationalists who went so far as to conjure ghosts of dead camels and horses and even of European Cavalry troopers. Their coats were seen floating on the waters. The conclusion drawn was that some mysterious "Emden" had a little distance from the harbour sunk some troop ships. The onions, the potatoes and the cocoanuts were the supplies for consumption on board the vessels. The camels and horses were of course part of the troopship. paraphernalia and so on "ad infinitum." One fellow's imagination seemed to have so far run riot as to conjure on board a troopship any number of monkeys seated on camels! A wonderful Hanumanic camel corps it was and the beauty of it is that one sailing to Bombay espied this corps from the deck of his own ship at a distance! That has been the biggest broadside yet fired off the sensationalists' imaginary artillery! Next, Venus was seen at four in the evening, so bright and resplendent as has often been noticed by the scientific stargazers. It attracted the eye of one or two who soon gathered round them. In a few minutes more the crowd swelled to hundreds. And some new stargazer of the scarified type roared forth that it was a mysterious a'roplane, probably German! Imagine the consternation crowds after crowds gathered here, there and everywhere to espy the air-ship! This thing went on the whole evening till next day sobriety and common sense convinced the credulous of the fact that it was the glowing Venus. Verily credulity is a kind of tax upon all the foolish and the silly of a community. It is always believed in and will be believed in so long as such tribe flourishes anywhere.

The new Director General of Commercial Intelligence is in our midst since Saturday. Mr. Lea met the members of the Committee of the Indian Chamber who plied him with all sorts of panacea, mostly of an impractical character, to promote certain industries and to avoid German imports in future. Mr. Lea smiled but explained how nascent industries may be best

portant in the matter is to have better method of circulation, as it is more.

PRACTICAL

According to Akhbar, Sye Moslems, headed by all residents of the Gujranwala, adopted and practical measures their loyalty to the went in a deputy Magistrate and during the European course got the example is worth.

A NOTEWO

His Highness Patiala Sir Bhup G.C.I.E., is the head of the Sikh is in addition the trous name. The Prince, there War is an event North India.

His Highness, The road Palace to the rail by infantry and sands of spectators crowded the str departure.

As His Highness along the people Ally of the King ed for the victo arms and for the Highness. At the the 'ahikars' of sent in 'darbari' don, the Political assistant and Gen tor General, Imp and other inspec Imperial Service sent. His High Sahib of Dholp Bahadur Sardar Sardar Sahib Sahib of Bhagr Bunder Singh 'Sardars' and J had also assemb His Highness, an led was the et present hailed Highness, who spirits, shook h cal Agent and and carders an guard of hono Service Troops. had returned to special train the road a st to Akalpurkh British arms, f His Highness a to his State an

ASSAM LEGI

The Chief Co is pleased to a 10th November time, and the Government H place, for a m Legislative Cou

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Mr. Loy, C rector General, peace, vice lat