





THE DEBATE ON THE BUDGET.

As expected the Viceroy's speech was a characteristic one in every way. His Excellency's strong individuality peeped through almost every sentence he uttered.

We have been criticised in these circumstances for not having proposed a remission of taxation. I quite understand, and I do not in any degree deprecate such criticism.

And what are these normal circumstances which prevented the Viceroy from remitting a portion of the people's burden? Let His Excellency describe them.

The normal consideration of which I spoke was that of ordinary caution. Though I have spoken of the astonishing recovery of the past year, though I believe it to represent a much more than transient improvement in the resources of the country, and though Sir James Westland budgets for a surplus of nearly four crores in the coming year, I am yet too conscious of the part played by what I may describe as the swing of the pendulum in the economic world, to be willing to sacrifice any portion of a hardy won advantage by being in too great a hurry.

Analysed, the above stands thus: There is, no doubt, that we have got a surplus of four crores this year and the tax-payers have every right to demand relief; but who knows that there may not be a deficit in the following year? So ordinary caution requires that we should be on the safe side and make no remission.

What is done here is this. If there is a deficit, Government makes it up by fresh taxation or borrowing, which is the same thing. But if there is a surplus, the additional burden imposed upon the people is not removed on the ground of "caution."

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mean this, that the people of this country would never know what remission is, for even when the exchequer is full to the brim, the Viceroy might say that considerations of prudence would not permit him to lighten their burden.

The following announcement of the Viceroy, with reference to the proposition of the Hon'ble Mr. Arthur regarding the present high rate of telegraphic charges, will no doubt create a good deal of curiosity in the public mind.

I regard that rate as inimical to trade, as being a barrier to the ever-growing intercourse between India and the mother country, and as being obsolete and anomalous in itself. I have already considered the question, and I may say that I have placed it in a category of 12 important questions, all of them waiting to be taken up, all of them questions which ought to have been taken up long ago, and to which, as soon as I have the time, I propose to address myself.

Now, what are these twelve important questions which, the Viceroy assures us, ought to have been disposed of long ago, but which His Excellency means to settle ere long? The Viceroy rightly gauged the feelings of the public when he remarked that the announcement would rouse great curiosity.

But another question has been raised by an Hon. Member sitting at this table which I am unable to add to the dozen already alluded to. I am unable to add to it the suggestion of the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis that I should acquiesce in the reduction of the British soldiers in India.

In the above Lord Curzon betrayed the fact that, though occupying one of the most exalted positions in the world, he has yet the enthusiasm of youth! How could he be so positive as to say that he would never reduce British soldiers during his time when he has but just begun his rule? One hundred and one circumstances may occur during the next five years, that may compel him to alter his resolution.

PROTECTION FROM OFFICIAL VAGARIES.

When the Sub-divisional Officer of Munshigunj had a quarrel with the people of that place; and when we found that he had been able to secure the sympathy of some of his superiors, we deemed it a duty to take up the case in the interests of justice and good government.

As subordinate officials rule the country and not Lord George Hamilton, and as they rule with despotic sway, it is, therefore, their duty to afford protection to the people from the vagaries of the members of their own class.

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ordinate, as also to afford protection to the nonofficial accuser. This they are doubly bound to do, because they themselves are officials, and are the only parties who can do justice.

We had not the least doubt in our mind, and this we say sincerely,—as to the line of conduct which would be adopted by Sir John Woodburn and Mr. Bolton, when they were thus appealed to.

But one circumstance damped our zeal. We saw, to our dismay, that we were only injuring the case of the Munshigunj people by our advocacy, and that the more we made the authorities determined to follow the policy condemned by us, or to ignore the facts brought forward by us.

It must be borne in mind that men are rational beings, and, in spite of their best efforts, they can never act irrationally for any length of time. It is irrational to reject a course simply because one, who is not liked, has recommended it.

We must say this much, however, that the Indian papers did succeed in persuading Sir Charles Elliott to transfer Maulvi Fazlal Karim from a Sub-division where he was independent to a Sudder Station, where he had to act under the direct supervision of his superior.

We firmly believe that the duty of Government is not to see whether its critics are friendly or not, or whether their suggestions are agreeable or otherwise, but, to do even-handed justice, that is to say, to afford equal protection to its children,—the people as well as its brethren, the members of the service.

It will be remembered that a petition containing serious allegations against Maulvi Fazlal Karim and signed by hundreds of people in Munshigunj, was submitted to Government in September or October last.

No. 900 J. Government of Bengal Judicial Department Resolution.

Dated, Calcutta, the 9th February, 1899.

Read a memorial dated the 29th September 1898 from Babu Jogendra Nath Chatterjee and certain others, complaining against Maulvi Fazlal Karim Sub-divisional Officer of Munshigunge in the District of Dacca.

Read also a letter No. 689 Dated the 19th January 99, from the Commissioner of Dacca reporting on the memorial. After enquiry, a careful examination of records, and a thorough inspection of the Sub-divisional Office, the Commissioner has reported on all the complaints made against the Deputy Magistrate and expressed his opinion that the memorial contains a series of false charges emanating from persons whom the Deputy Magistrate has offended in doing his duty.

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not be in the possession of any, but some definite directions to the people, as to how they should try to avert the danger, ought to be forthcoming. Medical men ought to be able to say what are the means to be adopted to protect oneself from an attack of the disease, and what treatment should be followed when one is attacked.

The Indian Witness does not commend the Daily Mail for having selected Mr. Steevens for its roving representative in India. But it must be borne in mind that both the paper and its representative have been able to create a sensation which they may turn to their benefit.

We see that Mr. H. Roberts has asked a question in Parliament regarding the sugar legislation. The question is harmless enough, but it may be asked whether he is going to act in concert with Mr. Maclean for the purpose of opposing the measure.

The letter of our London correspondent which deals entirely with the Indian Sugar Bill, will be read with the most intense interest by the Indian public.

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ed wisely in refraining from taking any decisive action, without being assured of the support of the Indians in the matter. It seems, that the Liberals and many Tories are under the impression that the Sugar Bill would not benefit India in the least, and that it was introduced into the Indian Legislative Council with the ultimate object of introducing it in England, and thus undermining the principles of Free Trade.

LORD CURZON has thus begun his rule with a cloud, boldly raised by himself. To our view these petty matters should give place to other important problems, which Lord Curzon has raised by his own utterances. One of them is the question of the ever-widening gulf that is separating the two races in India.

THE Anglo-Indians have a contempt for the Indians which they cannot conceal, even with all their efforts. The Indians have also a contempt, in some respects, for the Europeans, which they cannot likewise conceal.

Now, Englishmen who are naturally cosmopolitan in instincts, who own the largest empire in the world, ought to be able to bear up with the failings of others. They ought to be especially considerate, in the matter of the failings of those whose liberties they have taken.

HERE is a piece of news:— It is gratifying to observe that one of our countrymen, Mr. S. C. Mahalanabis, B. Sc., F. R. M. S., F. R. S. E., who is now a professor in the University College, Cardiff, has, along with Prof. E. A. Schafer, F. R. S., of the University College, London, been appointed Examiner in Physiology for the degree of B. Sc., at the University of Wales. Mr. Mahalanabis is the first Indian Examiner in a British University.

Similarly, Dr. Sarat Mullick holds an important post in one of the hospitals of London and has already distinguished himself in various ways in England.

Of course, the Indian has his defects and the European his superiority in many respects; but the Indians have in some matters an advantage over his European brother. That being the case, Sir Charles Elliott had no business to call the Indians an inferior race.











