

of officials who are alleged to have engineered the seizure and trial of the leaders. Officials have all the advantage and the people the disability, before the Hunter Committee. Why should Government grudge wronged leaders the facilities they provide for their subordinates? Surely the heavens would not have fallen if the leaders had been allowed a spell of grace—to be atoned for later—and enabled to complete their case before the Committee. Both principle and precedent have been cited, but officials seem destined to win all along the line. We want the public to realise that the break has not come through querulous pertinacity, but has been based on an issue which makes or mars the entire case for truth. We can understand why officials are pleased to give their evidence on the Amritsar trouble in the absence of Dr. Kichlew and Dr. Satyapal who are able to give the other side of the picture. If official witnesses escape cross-examination at the instruction of such leaders, they may escape after having made asseverations they are not able to support. The presence of the prominent men in jail hence is of paramount importance. To allow them to be present and be free to prepare their evidence will not work the ruin of the Empire and the Punjab Secretariat knows it. Still the demand so essential to the eliciting of the truth, is turned down, leaving officials to have their own way before the Committee and enabling them to combine in attack of the leaders who may be marred in isolation to plead and answer questions before the Committee when they are called. The issue is not trivial, or the officials would not be so stern and obdurate over it. The exclusion of leaders from continued attendance and the denial of freedom, constitute, in effect, a lever with which to eliminate the evidence of the thousand witnesses whose statements have been collected by the Sub-Committee. The public should render due support to the non-official enquiry which is proceeding. It may be said that the findings will not be authoritative. The findings of the official show will be incomplete, one-sided and unauthentic. Even if the Hunter Committee obtained a correct verdict, does anyone expect adjudication of penalties to the guilty? We recall that Governor Eyre was, after many prosecutions, reimbursed by Parliamentary vote, for all his losses. Strange things happen through commissions. We shall not lose much by the official boycott of private evidence. Let us get at the facts to the best of our knowledge, through the most trustworthy agency, without allowing a so-called Enquiry opportunity to pretend that their whitewashing verdict was delivered after the hearing of both sides. And they do not seem anxious to give reasonable conditions for the hearing of both the sides of the case.

Extract from the "Independent," Allahabad, dated the 19th November 1919.

THE AMRITSAR "REBELLION."

The evidence of Mr. Miles Irving, who was Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar during the disorders, goes some way towards proving that after the passing of the Rowlatt Law, the Punjab Government was out to suppress all opposition to that measure. We have it from Mr. Irving that there was no sign of riot or disturbance at Amritsar after the Rowlatt Bill was passed. Public feeling had been roused by stoppage of the sale of platform tickets and there was general dissatisfaction due to economic conditions, but an outbreak of lawlessness was not in sight until the Government of Sir Michael O'Dwyer took it into its head to issue orders for the arrest and deportation of Drs. Kichlew and Satyapal. It does not appear from Mr. Irving's evidence that the Amritsar leaders were haranguing the people to rise in rebellion against the Government or helping to spread rumours of a wild sort for the purpose of exciting popular disaffection. They were publicly protesting against the Rowlatt legislation against which All India was protesting, and Drs. Satyapal and Kichlew are not reported to have said at the meetings at Amritsar what other leaders have not said at meetings elsewhere. But Sir Michael was a "strong" man, a model "ruler," jealous of the fame of his province and proud of the military strength of the Government; moreover, he had over-developed ideas of other people's duty, and a very high regard for the requirements of "justice," a wholesome aversion of agitation of any kind and particular contempt of so-called "constitutional agitation," and quite a Prussian conception of the responsibilities of an administrator. Accordingly this high-souled satrap decided not to tolerate public meetings of protest against laws passed by the Indian Legislative Council, and advised, first, muzzling, and then arrest and deportation of the Amritsar leaders. The *hartal* was the last straw on the camel's back, and at the same time as "the mob," to use Mr. Irving's words in his evidence before the Hunter Committee, "was in training with a view to some concerted action later to paralyse Government," the local officials, too, on their own initiative and under instructions from headquarters, were in training with a view to some concerted civil and military action to "paralyse" the mob. *Hartal* had been decided on the 29th March to be observed on the 30th, and on the 29th March Dr. Satyapal was muzzled under Government orders. The *hartal* came about on the 30th without untoward incidents happening, and when on the 4th April news of the Delhi disturbances reached Amritsar, Dr. Kichlew was muzzled, also under orders of the Punjab Government.

Meanwhile Mr. Irving had asked the Officer Commanding "to get ready the internal defence scheme," and troops were in readiness, although no riots had broken out and police or military intervention does not appear to have been called for. On the 6th April the situation struck Mr. Irving as if some "mischief" was brewing. It has not transpired whether the troops who were in readiness from the 30th were getting impatient of inaction, as no action had become necessary till at least the 10th. When another *hartal* took place on the Ram Nanami day (9th April), Mr. Irving began to think seriously—"Cars went in procession shouting out 'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai,' 'Hindu-Moslem ki Jai,' and Mr. Irving was feeling uncomfortable while watching the crowd from the verandah of the Allahabad Bank, notwithstanding that "when each crowd met him they were very civil and stopped the procession and their bands played God Save the King." What with the protest meetings, the *hartal*, the crowd, the shouts, and the readiness of the troops to be civil to him, Mr. Irving must have been in a distracted state of mind, and must have been relieved to receive, on return home that evening, orders for the "quiet" removal of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal to Dharamsala,—a task that was accomplished the next morning at 10 o'clock. The fire was thus kindled at the tenth hour of the tenth day of the fourth month of 1919, for as soon as the leaders had been spirited away the crowd got excited and the troops who were so long in readiness found employment at last. Why, however, the crowd had to be fired upon does not appear, nor why Mr. Irving ordered the crowd not to be allowed to cross the railway lines. On the crowd insisting on crossing the railway lines they were fired on by the non-commissioned officer, under Mr. Irving's instruction, and riot broke out in every part of the city, giving plenty of work to the troops who had been all the time in readiness. The casualties had not been thus far very high, but General Dyer arrived on the scene on the 11th evening and made things hum on the 13th day after a third *hartal*, when a meeting was in progress at Jallianwalla Bagh. Lala Hans Raj was speaking, and General Dyer issued orders to open fire upon the people as soon as he arrived there, as many as 4 to 500 men being killed, according to Mr. Irving's statement. Mr. Irving was not present. He had been nursing, since the 12th, the impression that a local soviet was ruling the city, and has been able to opine that "the result of the firing was the whole rebellion collapsed."

"Rebellion" conquered, retribution commenced. Martial Law was proclaimed, without Mr. Irving having had to apply for that measure, restrictions on travelling were imposed, conveyances were commandeered, large numbers of arrests were made, whippings carried out publicly and privately, special constables enrolled, "crawling" orders issued, etc., etc. Darkness settled upon the land, and elation upon the soul of General Dyer.

Mr. Irving does not appear to have done anything, except keeping troops in readiness and giving orders to them to take action. He did not apply for orders, for the muzzling or deportation of the leaders, for Martial Law, or any 'pivotal' action. Mysterious agents were circulating the orders, and Mr. Irving was carrying them out—and thinking a good deal, sometimes of mischief at other times of Soviets, and occasionally of shouts of crowds. The responsibility for the 'pivotal' orders, as we may describe them, has been denied by Mr. Irving. Since, however, the "mob" was not in training with a view to rioting but in connection with Satyagraha, as admitted by Mr. Irving, to Mr. Justice Rankin, and there had been no disturbance before the arrest of the leaders, why were the people ordered off the railway line and fired upon at all? How will this action be explained and justified? Clearly the sequel cannot be allowed to confuse the cause, and it should be carefully examined whether the people were not provoked into committing such excesses as are alleged against them.

Extract from A. B. Patrika, dated Calcutta, the 19th November 1919.

HOW THEY MANAGED THINGS AT AMRITSAR.

Mr. Miles Irving, Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, at the time of the disturbance in that town, as the reader is aware, was the first witness examined before the Hunter Committee at Lahore. His statement throws a lurid light on the way the horrid incidents were brought about at Amritsar. He was directed by the Government of Sir Michael O'Dwyer to deport Drs. Kichlew and Satyapal. He knew that such an act would lead to a popular outburst. He also knew that none of these popular leaders favoured violence. All the same he agreed to carry out the order by adopting a plan which, to say the least, was un-British in its character. He invited the two gentlemen at his house on the morning of the 10th April and they unsuspectingly responded to the call no doubt relying on his honour as an Englishman. But after they had been under his roof for half an hour as his guests, they were caught hold of, and removed towards Dharmasala under police escort! Mr. Irving told this story without showing any sign of having done an act which very few Englishmen would care to do; and what is still more surprising is that it elicited no comment either from the President of the Committee or any of its members, European or Indian! We shall now tell a story. It was during the Sepoy Mutiny that Mr. Taylor held the post of the Commissioner of Patna. He suspected certain influential Mussalmans of that city of having helped the rebels. He, however, did not venture to arrest them openly. So he adopted the method of Mr. Miles