

Our cotemporary, the *Law Times* (Eng.), refers to this subject as follows:—

“The debate in the House of Lords on Wednesday last will do much to clear the air of a lot of cant that has been current recently with regard to the punishments awarded to those persons who refuse to perform any military or national service. The true conscientious objectors are few in number, and may be described as those persons who hold genuine convictions based on religious or moral grounds. With these misguided people a certain amount of sympathy may be felt, and any vindictiveness towards them should be deprecated. By far the greater number of those who are now undergoing punishment are not conscientious objectors at all, but may be classed as objectors to military or national service on political, social, or personal grounds. To these persons no leniency whatever should be shewn, and we are glad to see that for the future punishments awarded by courts-martial are to stand, and there will be no successive punishments. The tribunals—local, appeal, and central—have done good work separating the sheep from the goats, and very few mistakes as to category have occurred.”

There is another class in the community which requires prompt and effective treatment from time to time. Pacifists happily are neither a large nor an influential body. Their vaporings, however, in such times as these are harmful, as well as disloyal. It is when such men as Lord Lansdowne, who has occupied most prominent positions in the councils and government of the Empire, writes as he has done that this subject comes prominently before us. It may be, as has been suggested, that his intellectual powers are waning, or that he has come under baneful influences; but, however that may be, he and others who speak as he has done are at least anti-British, and to that extent “give aid and comfort to the King's enemies.” It will be remembered by some that when the Marquis of Lansdowne was Secretary of State for War, previous to the South African War, he did not even take the trouble to open reports sent him officially by the Director of Military Intelligence, which would have given much valuable information as to the doings of the Boers in their preparations, resulting in the British suffering great harm and loss, a result which will also follow more or less from his recent utterances.