

Lord Curzon's Reappearance in the Political Field



WRITING some days previous to the election of Lord Curzon to the seat in the House of Lords, which had become vacant by the death of Lord Kilmaine, the London Times said:

The letter in which Lord Curzon informs his brother Irish peers that he is a candidate for the seat in the House of Lords which has become vacant by the death of Lord Kilmaine will be read with interest by the public. Lord Curzon's claims to a place in that House are too clear to be dwelt upon. Opinions may differ as to his policy when in India, and there are portions of it which we have not ourselves been able completely to approve. But that he was a great Viceroy, and that he has won for himself a high place amongst the statesmen of British India, is beyond dispute. Before he went to the East he had achieved a well-deserved reputation in the House of Commons. His knowledge, his industry and his remarkable dexterity in debate had placed him in the front rank of his contemporaries. He was looked upon as one of the most promising of the younger members of the Unionist party, and when he accepted the Viceroyalty it was his ambition, as he states in his letter, to return to that House when he had laid down his office. It was with a view to the fulfilment of this ambition that the peerage conferred upon him on his appointment nearly ten years ago was an Irish peerage, and not, as originally intended, a peerage of the United Kingdom. The enjoyment of the Irish peerage, we need hardly say, does not prevent the holder from sitting

and voting in the Commons. We are not at all sure that the realization of this project would have been desirable either in the interests of the State or in those of Lord Curzon himself. The sight of an ex-Viceroy of India engaged in the rough controversies of the House of Commons might easily be misunderstood by Orientals. The change from a position of exceptional dignity and exceptional isolation to that of equal comradeship with the composite elements of the popular Chamber, must inevitably try very severely the temper and the susceptibilities of any man who underwent it, and perhaps Lord Curzon's nature is not particularly well suited to adapt itself to such a transition. All of us must regret the cause which forbids him from making the experiment, though we may not all be sorry that the experiment may not be made. The strain of his work in India has been so great that, in the opinion of his medical advisers, it would be imprudent for him to re-enter the House of Commons. The result has been to debar him from taking part in public life at all since he came home. He resigned the Viceroyalty; it will be remembered, near the close of Mr. Balfour's administration, and he resigned it in circumstances which made it difficult, if not impossible, for the then Prime Minister to offer, or for him to accept, any distinction before the government went out. But men who have held his high office have always hitherto had a voice in the House of Lords. In recent years only peers have been appointed viceroys, and they have usually been given a step in the peerage on their retirement. The only commoner, before Mr. George Curzon, to fill the office since the Crown took over the government of India from the East India Com-

pany, was Sir John Lawrence, and he was made a peer on his return to England. When viceroys have come home they have been able to speak at Westminster with the authority which their abilities and their experience gives them. This practice is so manifestly in accordance with the interests of the Empire, that representations appear to have been made to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman to allow Lord Curzon to take his place in the House of Lords with all the other ex-Viceroy of India. It would have been a graceful and becoming act for the Liberal Prime Minister to have acceded to a request so natural and so reasonable. The boon was not a great one to grant, for, as the eldest son of Lord Seardsdale, Lord Curzon will in the course of nature eventually succeed to a British peerage. For reasons which, in view of the prejudices of some sections of his followers, it is not, perhaps, difficult to surmise, the Prime Minister has not seen his way to grant it. Lord Curzon now asks the other Irish peers to give him that opportunity of resuming an active part in the affairs of the country which Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman refuses him. There are, of course, objections to such a candidature, which are sufficiently obvious. Lord Curzon himself is sensible that this is the case. He owns that there are many considerations which may induce those whom he addresses to give their votes to a peer who is directly connected with their own country, rather than to an Englishman, and he observes that no one would have less cause to complain than he should this prove to be the case. The Duke of Abercorn and Lord Londonderry, who have great and deserved influence with the Irish peers as a body, and who have addressed to them a joint letter warmly supporting Lord

Curzon's election, are equally alive to this fact. They hold, however, that any reasons of this kind are more than outweighed by the reasons which should recommend Lord Curzon to the choice of the Irish peers. They are able, they affirm, to state with confidence that should he be elected, "he would consider it his duty as a representative peer to devote special attention to Irish subjects." Lord Curzon himself gives a pledge to the same effect, declaring that, if elected, it will be his desire to take an interest in those Irish affairs which are the special and natural concern of the important body whose suffrages he has the honor to seek. Of his ability to master these complex questions, to form wise and prudent opinions upon them, and to defend those opinions vigorously in debate, there cannot, we imagine, be much doubt. On the broader aspects of Unionism his views are well known. He is a thoroughgoing and convinced defender of the Unionist cause, and, in the House of Lords will add greatly to the debating strength of the Unionist party. The matter is a matter wholly for the decision of the Irish peers, but most competent judges will share, we imagine, the view of Lord Lansdowne, that they will be fortunate if they secure Lord Curzon as one of their representatives. Those of their number whom they select to speak and vote for them in the House of Lords are in many respects well fitted for their duties. Many of them possess an intimate knowledge of Irish affairs, and particularly of Irish rural affairs, which often enables them to expose the mischiefs of schemes which the Liberals take over from the Nationalists, and to bring to light in a telling fashion

abuses which the Government and their allies would gladly keep concealed. But they would themselves probably be quite ready to admit that, as a rule, they are not conspicuous for debating power of a very high order. They put their case well for those who are already familiar with the facts, but they do not always manage to bring out the full strength of that case in the form which would be most effective with strangers. A fresh mind coming to these problems in a thoroughly sympathetic spirit, and a mind which is fully conversant from long and intimate experience with English ways of thought, should be able to place them in a new light before English hearers. There is another reflection which it would be improper, perhaps, to press upon the Irish peers, but which may not be without its influence upon them. They would undoubtedly take a step which the whole body of British Unionist opinion, and a considerable body of British opinion which is not actively Unionist, would approve, should they restore Lord Curzon to public life. The nation as a whole feel that they ought not to be deprived any longer of his services. They will be grateful to any body of men who give back those services to them. Lord Curzon's reappearance in the political field would have been welcome at any time. It would be recognized as particularly opportune, should it take place at a moment when the affairs of the great university of which he is chancellor seem likely to be the subject of early debate. We have not too many men of eminence at present available to conduct the affairs of this great Empire. We trust that the Irish peers may see their way to giving us back one of them whom the Prime Minister shuts out.

Mr. Haldane on Reserve



MR. HALDANE, M. P., attended a crowded meeting in the Albert Hall, Stirling, and presented the prizes to the winners in the various competitions connected with the Stirling and district troop of the Fife and Forfar Imperial Yeomanry, says the London Times. Colonel Simpson presided, and among those present was the Duke of Montrose. Mr. Haldane, who was cordially received, said there was only one shade of regret that came over his mind when he contemplated that magnificent meeting, and that was that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman could not himself be there. (Hear, hear.) It was the Prime Minister who proposed that he should come among them, and he it was who had borne a large part in the schemes which they were now working out. (Cheers.) Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was closely associated with Mr. Cardwell, and his experience at the War Office made him what he was today, a believer in the principles which Mr. Cardwell laid down more than a generation ago. It was these principles which they were carrying to their completion, and it was on the footing of these principles that the Prime Minister had given him a free hand to work these things out. (Cheers.)

The Future of the Militia

He desired to say a word or two to them on the Army Order which appeared a day or two ago. They were making a great change in the Militia. He would read ill the history of his country who did not recognize the splendid services which the militia had performed. (Cheers.) The oldest of the competent corps of the King's Army had a long record behind them. They had suffered because the Regulars had pressed on them on the one side, and because the Volunteer Force, raised under Mr. Pitt first, and again raised in 1859, had pressed on them on the other side; but nobly they had done their work, for whenever the British nation had been pressed the militia had been there to bear their burden of the national extremity. Under no compulsion to go abroad, their men and officers had always been willing to take their share of the duty to go. It was not a legal duty, but a moral duty. (Hear, hear.) They had never flinched, and today, if changes had come, they were changes which had come, not from any mistrust that in the future the Militia would respond as they had done in the past, but because of the evolution of things which the more and more scientific training of our Army required, and because the time was ripe for a departure which should give to the Militia an even more honored position than that which they had occupied in the past. (Cheers.) At first there was a question whether or not the Militia would furnish drafts, not merely to the regiments of their own corps, but generally. The Militia, or some of their officers, demurred to that course. It seemed to him that it was reasonable that they should demur, but he had to consider where they should go, and he proposed to them that they should go into the Territorial Army. It was the very essence of the scheme that every component part of the King's forces should move up one. They had got to the stage at which the Volunteers had to be put on another footing, and they took the country as a unit of organization, and they were determined to ask the Volunteers to assume the role of the Militia in the true sense, on a territorial basis. As the Volunteers moved up one the question was who should remain with them, and who should go further forward. The Yeomanry

elect to remain with the Territorial Army, but the question came to the Militia. The Militia made their election to go over to the Regulars, and they said to them that they did not mean to disturb the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders or the Royal Scots or Black Watch. These regiments would have their battalions belonging to the regiments, or belonging to the same corps, just as of yore, but there would come a point where the line would be drawn across, and certain of the battalions would belong to the expeditionary forces and field army, and another part would belong to the country force, which would form the home army. The Militia then had elected to go with the Regulars, and today the Militia formed third and fourth battalions of the Regular regiment, and their function would be not only to go abroad, but to do what every Regular battalion did, to furnish drafts which would afford strength and make up the wastage of war in cases where the Regular battalions had become thinned under attacks of the enemy. (Cheers.) The position of the Militia was that they had gone on the Regular side of the fence and the Militia and Regulars became the field army complete. The organization was now simpler, and one which corresponded with the requirements of the modern standard.

The Militia officers fell into three classes. There were the men who did not want to go into the Regular Army, they did not want to give their whole time to that pursuit, and there were those who wished to get into the Regular Army by an easier way, and they went through the Militia. There was the class with a keen military instinct, who would like to be soldiers, but who could not afford to go into the Regular Army. That was the class they wanted to help. (Cheers.) One of the greatest problems they had to face today was the shortage of officers, and that was a problem, too, which Germany had to face. Thank God, it was not money that appealed to the people of this country, but, if they could give them enough to make it possible to serve their country, there were thousands of men of the best type who would go forward and work in that career on public grounds. (Cheers.) In the future the young man who joined the Reserve of Officers would have his outfit of \$100 a year, and his pay in a fuller form than at the present time. Then they would have the chance of getting that full complement of officers, which they required in order to make the Army effective. It was all very well to have their men, but if they were short of officers in mobilization they were done. He believed also that they would succeed with the County Associations. They had every reason to hope so from the patriotic attitude of those who, like the Duke of Montrose, placed themselves at their heads, and who, without distinction of party, had taken up these plans. (Cheers.) Thus he believed that the soldier of the Crown would be in a very different position from what he had been in formerly. (Cheers.) They would have brought home to his life the county from which he sprang, for he would come in contact with the people from whom he sprang and unto whom he belonged, and no longer would there be a gap between the Army on the one hand and the public on the other, which had been too much evident in the days that were past. (Cheers.) Speaking for himself, he had the confident hope that the future of the soldier who joined the forces of the Crown, whether as Territorial or Regular, would be a very much brighter future than had been the case in the past. He believed that the people would realize

that the Army was as essential to them as the Navy. They were not to be a means of aggression. They had got, perhaps, more of the earth's surface to control, but they were not to think of aggression. Their Army and Navy were to be a means of protecting and standing up for what was their own. (Cheers.) If they had a perfect organization of the Army and Navy, ready to strike if necessary, then they had got something which was rapidly understood abroad. (Cheers.) He was not one of those who believed that the foreign countries, any more than ourselves, were always looking out for the opportunity of attacking their enemy. These were days of profound peace, and the nations had awakened to the feeling that war was a national calamity to every nation that undertook it. But while that was so, it was equally true that unpreparedness for war was also a national calamity. (Hear, hear.) While the armaments remained what they were, while the relations of the Powers of the earth stood as they did, they might be sure that the nation that was unprepared, and which was known as being in a state that was not effective, would, in human nature, count for less on God's earth than it would otherwise do. (Hear, hear.) They as a nation had to stand up for the rights at times of oppressed people, and they had to see to it that the British influence was an influence that could be made effective when there was a suspicion of the oppression of small nationalities. It was not without responsibilities that they occupied their great position in the world, but to make the influence of their Foreign Office effective they required the means to come to the backing of that Foreign Office. (Cheers.) It was, therefore, not a question of aggression; it was a question of the real strength of the nation being realized. (Cheers.) It was the desire to keep this nation in the position in which it had hitherto been effective for the work which was associated with our name that he was keen that we should not go behind the standard of making our influence felt. (Cheers.) It was in that spirit that the new plans were conceived, not for aggression, but for defence. These were times of profound peace, but these were also the times in which they must set their house in order. (Cheers.) And they should be falling in their duty, and losing their opportunity, if they did not take the chance that was given to them of trying to bring order out of confusion. (Cheers.) He had said what he wanted to say about the new reform. The new conditions were not harder than the old conditions. They were shaped for producing efficiency, and they entailed no burdens different in kind from the responsibilities which they had hitherto freely and unstintingly taken upon themselves. They were only at the beginning of the way on which they had entered, and on which they had to treat if they were to attain the end. It was because he believed that these plans were sound that he appealed to the men sitting there, and to that great audience, to make this effort a reality by imparting to it the only strength that could make it a reality, and that was the strength of the co-operation of the people themselves. (Cheers.)

"Waiter, where's that beefsteak I ordered?"
"Coming in a minute, sir?"
"Well, look here; I've got to catch that next train."
"But it will only take you a minute to eat it when it comes."—Translated from Fliegende Blatter.

Japan and Other Powers



LAST week we published with all reserve the report of a speech alleged by a Japanese paper to have been addressed by Count Okuma to the Kobe Chamber of Commerce, says the London Times. The report conveyed the impression that the speaker gave utterance to Japanese aspirations in India, and suggested that Japan should extend her protection to the people of our great Asiatic dependency. As we fully expected, though Count Okuma's eloquence is not always tempered with prudence, the report has been authoritatively declared to be misleading, the whole object of the distinguished statesman's speech having been to direct his countrymen's attention to the vast commercial field lying before them in India, and to urge them not to lose the opportunities for trade there presented. The erroneous version of Count Okuma's speech was inherently improbable from the fact that only a short time previously he had discussed at some length, before the students at the university of which he is president, the great benefits which British rule had brought to India and the claims which we had on her gratitude. He had even dealt with the political aspirations for greater independence expressed by some natives, and had pointed out that the state of progress and civilization in the country in no way indicated that a change of government was either desirable or feasible. We should hardly have alluded to this incident, for, after all, Count Okuma is not a member of the Japanese government, nor in any sense an official spokesman of the Japanese people—we were it not for the hasty conclusions derived from the first erroneous report. We find a Russian newspaper, on the strength of it, seriously suggesting that English and Russian troops may yet be found fighting shoulder to shoulder for the defence of India against Japan, while, in spite of its obvious improbability, alarmist conclusions were in some cases drawn even in England. As it is, the moral to be drawn is that a grave responsibility rests on the Japanese newspapers which originally spread the report. Our alliance with Japan is firmly fixed and based on the mutual interests and the mutual respect of the two peoples, but it must be obvious that there are questions now agitating the world which require mutual self-restraint and delicate handling; and that a stupid mistake may create unnecessary difficulties, even with the best will on all sides. One of the most notable signs, indeed, of the way in which the Japanese have suddenly risen to their great position as a world power has been their abstinence from any petulance or hasty language with regard to other nations, in spite sometimes of great provocation. It cannot be denied that, with regard to certain utterances and even overt acts against the Japanese which have recently occurred on the Pacific coast, the dignity and reticence of the Emperor's government and people have been most remarkable. It is unfortunate that the same cannot be said of the attitude of some of the newspapers and politicians in America. "Mr. Dooley" has recently been lamenting that his nation's assumption of a foreign and colonial policy has made it less possible for him than it was before to express his contempt for other races of mankind with the frankness he was wont to use; but some of "Mr. Dooley's" compatriots have evidently not learned the lesson which he expounds so pithily. In these days, when every ill-advised remark and every provocative speech made by anybody of the least

consequence even in purely local affairs is telegraphed all over the world, every man is a guardian of the public peace and an arbiter of peace and war in a far more real sense than was ever the case before. The Americans have always been a people particularly free in the expression of their opinions; this did not so much matter when the opinion referred only to another individual, who in return would probably shoot the speaker at sight, if, indeed, he were not shot first himself. But this elementary stage of society, so frankly portrayed by Bret Harte and other writers of his period, does not answer so well when it is applied to foreign nations. Nobody doubts that the question of Japanese and Oriental immigration generally is a matter of serious import to the people of California; but it is hardly credible that the speechmakers and agitators, specimens of whose reckless utterances were given in our Foreign Intelligence of last Monday, are seriously anxious to settle these questions by an immediate war with Japan. If there were no other reason, they are certainly not prepared for it at present; and meanwhile they are throwing intolerable difficulties in the way of their own diplomatists' and statesmen's efforts to effect a solution of the difficulties. We feel that we have some justification in making this reference to American concerns, owing to the fact that the particular question of Japanese immigration is one that affects us almost as closely as themselves. In the first place, as we pointed out on Saturday, this whole matter is one which cannot be settled off-hand, and requires very sane and unprovocative handling. Negotiations are proceeding, on the part both of the United States and of our own Dominion, with Japan on the subject of immigration, and there seems some hope that a compromise on the basis of very restricted immigration will be effected. At any rate, it is worth giving a trial to such a compromise, until some more decisive and final settlement is reached. In the second place, it will be expected of the Japanese government that any such restriction shall be scrupulously observed in the spirit as well as the letter. It appears that, while, according to agreement with the United States, Japan restricted the immigration of her subjects directly from the mother country, intending emigrants found means of evading provision by starting from some other country. Similar methods of invading Canada have also been spoken of. It is, of course, difficult for the Japanese government to keep control over all her subjects not living in Japan, but it is not unreasonable to demand that every effort should be made by them to fulfil the spirit of any agreement as to limiting the number of Japanese colonists. From self-interest it is obvious that they should do so; for nothing is so likely to excite the already strong feeling against Oriental immigration as a belief that its conditions, as laid down by mutual agreement, are not rigidly observed. Even if irregularities are not the fault of the Japanese government, they will not unnaturally have to bear the blame for them, while their subjects will suffer. Mr. Nosse, we notice, has been summoned from Ottawa to Japan. It is very much to be hoped that his great knowledge of Canadian conditions and feeling, and the great tact which he has recently manifested, will be called to aid by the Japanese government in the final stage of their negotiations with Mr. Lemieux. So far no issue of these negotiations seems to have been divulged; we can only hope that it will with his aid be on the satisfactory lines foreshadowed by our American correspondent.

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