

SUFFRAGISTS HEAR OF INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

THE members of the Just Government League heard a very interesting lecture on Tuesday afternoon delivered by Taraknath Das, M.A., formerly a Fellow in Political Science and Economics of the University of Washington, and now one of the lecturers of the Friends of Freedom for India of New York (7 E. 15th street), an American organization of which Prof. Robert Morse Lovett, a Dean of the University of Chicago, is president and Hon. Frank P. Walsh and Hon. Dudley Field Malone are the vice-presidents. The objects of the organization are (1) to maintain the right of asylum for the political refugees from India; (2) to present the case of independence of India. Mr. Das spoke on the topic of "Women of India," and in the course of his talk he discussed the moral, educational, economic and political condition of India under the British rule and advocated complete and absolute independence of India from the British rule, which he characterized as the worst form of tyranny practiced in the twentieth century.

In discussing the moral condition of India under the British rule he blamed the British Government for encouraging opium cultivation by advancing money to the farmers without any interest. He pointed out that about 700,000 acres of the most fertile land is being used in India for cultivation of the poppy to drug the people of the world. He referred to the splendid work of Miss Ellen N. La Motte (a former officer of the Just Government League) on "Opium Monopoly," published by Macmillan, and paid tribute to American women to the effect that the work of Miss La Motte in exposing the opium question is worth more than all the work of 10,000 missionaries who keep silent about the drugging of nations by a Christian government.

Mr. Das pointed out that the educational condition in some of the native States of India, such as Baroda, Mysore, Travancore, is far better than the condition in existence in British India, where 80 per cent. of the children of school-going age do not go to school, and where there is no free and compulsory primary education at all. He pleaded that educational condition of the women of India is worse than that of the men, and suggested that American women send a commission to study the Indian problems and help the people of India, particularly the women. He praised the American policy of education in the Philippines, and contrasted it with that of the British, of keeping the people in ignorance.

In discussing the economic condition of India he blamed Great Britain for "legalized pillage" of India and destruction of Indian industries. He referred to such works as "Prosperous British India," by Sir William Digby, and also "England's Debt to India," by Mr. Lajpat Rai, published by Heusch (1918). He characterized salt tax in India as "blood tax." In discussing the economic condition of India he talked about famines in India, which have now become chronic, and in the famines of India during the last 20 years more than six times as many people died of starvation as lost their lives in the World War. He referred to the work of Rev. Dr. J. T. Sunderland on "Causes of Famine in India" to substantiate his thesis that famines in India are economic famines and are not due to want of rainfall or overpopulation. He said that the rate of mortality in India has increased from 20 per 1000 to over 40 per 1000 during the last few years. He emphasized the fact that the people of India are taxed most heavily in proportion to their income, which, according to the British Government statistics, is less than \$10 a year.

Politically, India is the best example of autocratic government practicing taxation without representation. The present so-called Montague-Clemsford Reform granted to the Indian people, and which is characterized as partial Home Rule to India, does not give the people of India one-tenth of political freedom as has been granted to the people of the Philippines by the Jones Bill. Indian people have no control over the finance, military and foreign affairs of their own countries, and they are studiously debarred from administrative positions. Mr. Das believes that India should be absolutely free from the British, and those who are preaching Home Rule for India are consciously or unconsciously supporting British imperialism, which wants to dominate the whole world by utilizing manpower, raw materials and strategic position of India. Mr. Das referred to the ghastly massacre of the unarmed peaceful people of Amritsar by

General Dyer, who shot down more than 500 people and wounded 1500 more within 10 minutes. He substantiated his charges of brutality of the British official by quoting facts from the Hunter Commission and extracts published in the *Nation* (New York) and the *Literary Digest* of January 24, 1920.

Mr. Das and his compatriots believe in absolute freedom of India, and pleaded that America should not support British imperialism as she has done in the case of recognizing the British protectorate over Egypt.

About the women of India Mr. Das mentioned several cases where the modern women of India are taking active part in securing better rights for women, and mentioned the work of the poetess Sarajini Naidu and Sarola Devi, two women leaders of India. He said that the woman's movement is growing in all of Asia; in fact, many Indian women are aiding the revolutionary movement in India. He drew attention to the fact that the Chinese had a woman delegate in the Peace Conference, and the Nationalist Government of Mustafa Camel, Pasha of Turkey, has now a woman Minister of Education. In Persia, the women are taking great interest in politics, and mentioned what Mr. Morgan Shuster had to say about the part played by the Persian women in the struggle for a constitutional monarchy in Persia.

Mr. Das predicted that there will be a Federated Republic of the United States of India, free from all foreign control.

Rev. Father Monaghan, at the request of the president of the League, spoke a few words and expressed the idea that as the American ideal is "world freedom," for which so many Americans gave their lives in the World War, it is imperative that the American people should support the cause of independence of all oppressed people of the world.

MERRITT OF CONNECTICUT PREVENTS CONSIDERATION OF WOMAN'S BUREAU BILL

THE Campbell bill to establish on a statutory basis the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, on the unanimous-consent calendar in the House of Representatives on Monday, but objection by Representative Schuyler Merritt of Connecticut, Republican, prevented its consideration. Notwithstanding the fact that the representatives of the Republican Women's Executive Committee, the Democratic Women's Bureau, the National League of Women Voters, the National Women's Trades-Union League, the American Federation of Labor, the National Consumers' League and the National Y. W. C. A. appeared at the hearing recently to urge the passage of the bill, Representative Merritt stated that the women best informed on the subject did not want this legislation, and he personally did not believe in it.

Floor Leader Mondell, urging Representative Merritt to withhold his objection, called attention to the fact that this bill merely gave authority of law to appropriations for the Woman's Bureau which had been made in the past two sessions of Congress, and would be reported in the Sundry Civil Bill of the present Congress. Mr. Mondell further stated that he had reason to believe that the Rules Committee would report a rule if necessary to make the appropriation in order when it came up for consideration, and he therefore thought the Campbell bill making the bureau statutory should meet with no opposition.

As Representative Merritt insisted upon his objection, however, the bill could not be considered that day, but will be brought up probably next week under special rule if necessary. The leaders state that the sentiment of the House is overwhelmingly in favor of the bill, and the obstacles thus far interfering with its consideration have been merely the parliamentary obstructions of individual opponents. Two weeks ago, when it came up on the unanimous-consent calendar, Representative Walsh, Republican, of Massachusetts, prevented its consideration by his objection.

We are members one of another. No man liveth to himself alone. If any, even the humblest, is made to suffer, the whole community, and every one of us, whether or not we recognize the fact, is thereby injured. Generation after generation this has been the cornerstone of the faith of labor; it will be the guiding principle of any labor government.—British Labor Party.