

MARCH 21, 1910

INDIAN AGITATORS.

Following on the decision of the Indian Council, a certain number of agitators deported some fourteen months ago returned to Calcutta recently. AS was to be expected, they were greeted by many hundreds of native sympathisers who escorted them through the streets as heroes, to the accompaniment of extremist songs. Very shortly others will arrive, and the same reception will doubtless be accorded them. The Indian authorities could have expected little else and it can only be hoped that they have weighed well the consequences. It might be asked, was the repatriation decision the result of their own better judgment, or were they pressed by the home government? This is the all important point at the present juncture.

The best informed journals in India are very apprehensive that the remedy will increase the disease. It certainly looks very much like it. On the face of it, the natives have undoubtedly scored a point, at any rate they think they have, and far and wide the story will be repeated that the authorities have bowed before the storms of clamor. This is nothing more nor less than an incentive to native agitators to shout louder and longer. If they refrain from doing so, then there is no heart in the cause. Time will show.

On the other hand, it is highly satisfactory to note that the leading nobles and gentlemen of Bengal have formed an imperial league as a means of counteracting anarchy and sedition. It is proposed to educate the natives, by means of lectures and pamphlets, as to the real aims and objects of the Imperial Government. This is a wise step. As it is, anarchy has been allowed so long a start that it will be difficult to catch it up.