

RIOT AT WARWICK.

PRIME MINISTER ASSAULTED.

DISGRACEFUL DISPLAY BY MEN OF MILITARY AGE.

THE POLICE ATTITUDE.

STIRRING DECLARATIONS BY MR. HUGHES.

WALLANGARRA, November 29.

An extraordinary and disgraceful riot occurred at Warwick this afternoon, when the Prime Minister (Mr. Hughes) alighted from the southward bound train to address an open-air meeting on the platform. The moment he stepped from his carriage he was surrounded by a howling mob. The platform had been beflagged, and a large crowd had gathered in the roadway below to hear Mr. Hughes's address, but about 50 men, most of them of military age, were waiting on the platform when the train came in.

VILE EPITHETS AND MISSILES.

The moment they saw the Prime Minister they commenced hooting and groaning, and hurling vile epithets at him. He had not gone more than a yard or two before a struggling, jostling crowd was wedged around him. An egg thrown from the crowd just missed him and broke upon the platform railings. The odour it gave off quickly cleared a space about it. A second one, better aimed, broke upon the Prime Minister's hat and knocked it off. There was a howl of jeering laughter, which drowned the cries of "shame" which arose from the crowd in the street, and from a few women on the platform. But the thrower of the egg did not enjoy his triumph long. A returned soldier on the platform hurled himself upon him, and in a second a free fight was in progress. Friends of Mr. Hughes's assailant rushed to his assist-

fight was in progress. Friends of Mr. Hughes's assailant rushed to his assistance, and the loyal men on the platform gave what help they could to the returned soldier. So far as could be judged, the loyalists had the better of the struggle. One of the first to defend Mr. Hughes's assailant from the wrath of the returned soldier came out of the fight with blood streaming down his face.

THE PRIME MINISTER'S PLUCK.

Fists were flying everywhere, and the Prime Minister was in the thick of it, striving to get at the man who had assaulted him, and who was one of the biggest in the crowd. Mr. Hughes was hustled and jostled by men twice his size, but when he emerged it was his hand, and not his face, that was bleeding. One of the men in the crowd carried a hammer, and another a heavy spanner, but the Prime Minister was daunted by nothing.

ATTITUDE OF THE POLICE.

He demanded assistance from the police in apprehending the man who had assaulted him, but it was only under the most insistent demands of the Prime Minister that they could at last be induced to escort the man off the platform, and then, apparently, they released him so soon as they got out of Mr. Hughes's sight, for he appeared on the scene again almost immediately. It was a most flagrant case of flouting the authority of the Prime Minister and the laws of the Commonwealth, and this attitude of the police was persisted in to the end. Although Mr. Hughes demanded in his capacity as Attorney-General of the Commonwealth that they should take action against his assailant, Senior-Sergeant Kenny declined to do so, declaring that he recognised the laws of Queensland only, and would act under no other.

MENACE OF THE CROWD.

When the riot at last subsided, and the egg thrower had been escorted from the station, Mr. Hughes proceeded to the edge of the platform to address the crowd. But the air was still electrical. A woman standing on the edge of the crowd declared that she would willingly "do a fortnight to have a crack at him," and

fortnight to have a crack at him," and a big, hulking man at the side replied that he "was not afraid either, and that he would have a crack at the — if he did time for it." Beyond hooting, however, the menace of the crowd did not further display itself. The seriousness of what they had already done seemed to have come home to them, and, although there was no abatement of their hostility, no further physical violence was attempted. When the Prime Minister commenced his address he was greeted with mixed cheers and hoots. The sergeant of police, despite his remarkable attitude toward the acts of the lawless mob, realising apparently that it would be prudent for him to at least assume the role of preserver of law and order, stepped to the edge of the platform, and asked the crowd in the street to give the Prime Minister a "fair and square deal." This appeal was followed by mingled cheering and hoots.

MR. HUGHES'S DECLARATION.

The Prime Minister, speaking with ringing voice, said: "We have just had demonstrated before our eyes proofs of the real motives of those who oppose

the Government's proposals, and of the shameful abuse of the rights of free citizenship. We have seen an exhibition to-day which proves conclusively that these men, who enjoy liberty, are unworthy to retain it, but the law shall be obeyed by every man in this country, police or not. (Cheers and hoots.) Here, in this great crisis in the history of Australia and the Empire, when the citizens are asked to decide a question upon which the safety and liberty of Australia depends, the Prime Minister is assaulted and denied the opportunity of free speech. I came here at the invitation of my fellow citizens" —

At this stage the man who first assaulted the Prime Minister approached Mr. Hughes in a threatening manner from the street. The Prime Minister promptly jumped off the platform and went towards him. His earlier demand that the ruffian should be arrested had

that the ruffian should be arrested had been ignored, for there he was again threatening Mr. Hughes with further violence. The Prime Minister again gave the man in charge, and he was removed from the immediate vicinity, but whether he was locked up or not is not known, as the train resumed its journey a minute or two later.

LAW AND ORDER MUST BE MAINTAINED.

Resuming his speech, the Prime Minister said: "I will keep law and order in this country. (Cheers and hoots.) Neither Sinn Féin nor I.W.W. will keep me from it." (More cheers and hoots.)

A man in the front of the crowd here made a hostile interjection.

The Prime Minister: You say one word and I'll have you. (Cheers and hoots.) I am here to speak to you on a subject of vital moment to the welfare of Australia. On December 20 you are to decide whether you are for Australia or against her; whether you will range yourselves under the Union Jack alongside your kinsmen, the lads who are fighting for the cause of liberty, or alongside those men who are doing the dirty work of Germany in our midst. (Loud cheers and hoots.) These men who prate about liberty are endeavouring to prevent the voice of the Government being heard. The people of the Commonwealth have given me authority, and by virtue of that authority I will maintain law and order. (Cheers.) Any man who interrupts me or any other speaker, or who makes any statement calculated to mislead the electors, will be dealt with out of hand.

STATE GOVERNMENT'S DEFIANCE.

There are men in charge of the Government of this State who are openly lending themselves to this defiance of the laws of the country, and they are endeavouring now to circulate through the medium of "Hansard" a concoction of vile lies for the purpose of confusing and deceiving the electors in the exercise of their votes. They are not doing it openly, but by a subterfuge. There never was a more critical time in the history

There never was a more critical time in the history of Australia, and the Government would have been a set of craven cowards if they had not come before the people. If you are for Germany have the manliness to put up her flag; if you are for Sinn Fein put up the flag, and I will know how to deal with you, whether you are in the police or outside of it. (More cheers and hoots.) When these men prate about liberty; when they say the proposals of the Government are inimical to liberty, I ask you to remember that you owe your liberty to the fact that England, France, and all the nations of the world, except ourselves, have adopted the very system that, in such a moderate form, we now ask you to approve. You are sheltering behind the valour and self-sacrifice of the conscript armies of the world. Are you free men? are you worthy of the men and women who bore you? If you will not strike a blow for the country to which you owe everything then do you stamp yourselves unworthy of freedom.

"SHOW THAT YOU ARE LOYAL."

There are some men in this country who tell you to put Australia first. Yes, I ask you to put Australia first and if you do that, you will be for the Empire. (Further cheers and hoots.) There is a man to-day, who is the real front of the opposing side, a man to whom every German in the country looks: to whom every Sinn Feiner looks; to whom every I.W.W. man looks, who is the real leader of the opposition to the Government's proposals. His name is Mannix. (Cheers and hoots.) If you follow him you range yourselves under the banner of the deadly enemies of Australia. Why does every German oppose the Government's proposals? Why, because they know they are a menace to Germany. I adjure you in the name of Australia, and in the name of liberty, to cast your votes on December 20 in favour of the Government's proposals. Show that you are loyal to Australia and to the Empire. (More cheers and hoots.)

A TORRENT OF ABUSE.

The time for the departure of the train having now arrived. Mr. Hughes returns.

having now arrived, Mr. Hughes returned to his carriage, followed by a surging crowd, some hooting and others cheering. No further missiles were thrown, but a number of men and women gathered round the open windows and hurled a torrent of abuse at the Prime Minister. The police sergeant, who was in the forefront, was again instructed to proceed against the prime mover in the disturbance at the court the following morning, but he again informed Mr. Hughes that he was prepared to recognise only the laws of the State. As the train moved out of the station there was a further hostile demonstration, and it was noticeable that a number of the Queensland railway employees, who were in uniform, joined in the hooting.

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