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Boycott of German Scientific Materials

... The importance of an international currency unit as an element in removing one outstanding cause of war is thus evident.

While the importance and desirability of a boycott of German scientific materials may be unreservedly supported, it would seem better therefore to stress other aspects than the merely financial pressure, which in any event may not be as effective as orthodox economists are liable to imagine.

A non-emotional reason for boycott, which would be at the same time effective propaganda, would be the well-founded belief that scientific goods produced under the present conditions in Germany must needs be of inferior quality.

A continued cultivation of a spirit of untruth must have its effects in other spheres than personal or national ethics. If as is reported, young Nazi students are reluctant to submit to the discipline of the mathematical sciences, it is unlikely

that the engineers and artificers of the next generation can be depended upon to turn out trustworthy products whether motors or microscopes. Clearly, the present Nazi Germany is living on the intellectual capital of an older generation. This is confirmed by the reference in the Report to attempts which have been made to return a certain number of Jewish intelligentsia to Germany.

An effective boycott of scientific apparatus and materials should not be as difficult as it was in the war of 1914-18. The alleged superiority of German products is a suggestion fostered by propaganda. Dyes, chemicals, porcelain and glassware of first rate quality have been available in England since the last war. British microscopes, balances, and instruments of precision generally have always held their own.

In the United States the obsession as to the superiority of German goods has lasted longer, not having been exorcised under the stimulus of necessity. There is no doubt that American manufacturers can turn out excellent materials in all spheres as a result of remarkably widespread technical research of the order exemplified in the Mellon Institute Reports. In the latest of these, just to hand, reference is made, e.g., to optical glass.

Here in India there is a great field awaiting development. Beginnings have already been made with chemical balances at Agra, and laboratory fine chemicals in the General and Organic Chemistry Departments at the Indian Institute of Science, and in other academic laboratories. Refractory porcelain

is being successfully manufactured on a large scale at the Government Porcelain Works at Bangalore. The construction of electrical instruments of precision, particularly in the field of wireless, is being developed in the Department of Electrical Technology at the Indian Institute of Science. The necessary training for workmen who will be competent to construct instruments of precision is already available on a modest scale under Dr Parameshwaran at Trivandrum, and under Principal Bence Jones of the Maclagan Engineering College, Lahore, from whom a bulletin on the subject was advertised some time ago by the Industrial Research Bureau.

Great expectations may justly be entertained of the results likely to accrue from the activity of the newly appointed *Board of Scientific and Industrial Research* under the brilliant leadership of Dr Bhatnagar.

The scientific community of India may therefore confidently and unreservedly support their American colleagues in their resolution to boycott all German scientific material for which duplicates or suitable substitutes can be obtained elsewhere, to give the boycott the widest publicity, and to endeavour by every means to stimulate the production of such material in their own country.

Let it not be said that through lack of energy and enterprise the industrialists and scientists of India have left the doors of their country open to the burglarious entry of predatory powers.

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