

THE premature return of Sir George Cave from The Hague suggests that immediate steps will be taken to satisfy the people with regard to the treatment of alien enemies, naturalised ex-enemies and similar people. The Government, which, as we have said before, means Mr. Lloyd George, is concerned about its strength in the blind whirlpool of next Election, and realises that the public, having apparently tolerated official laxity, or worse, in this matter for nearly four years, is not prepared to put up with another month of it. If it judged otherwise, the Government would be making a serious, and, so far as we know, an inexcusable mistake, because there is nothing to be gained further by shilly-shally. The fact of the position is that the Government has sought to fool the public over the alien question, but that time has defeated its intention. Lincoln's maxim still holds good. Time fits a series of events together; it throws up the Von Plessen incident with the curious letter from "our Mr. Waller," probably an innocuous but stupid person. Time reveals how the Government has dodged the public in the case of Baron von Bissing, brother of the late Governor of Belgium, who is still remembered by the Belgians. There was considerable fuss about the immunity from internment of this German under the McKenna régime and he was ultimately locked up. Then he was transferred to the Isle of Man where, to be sure, there is an internment camp, but the Baron was not meant to be kept in it. We understand that he inhabits a very comfortable house appropriately staffed, and is thus practically in the same state of dignity and ease as when the public complaint first arose. How can these deliberately planned favours be accounted for?

To talk of the hidden hand is merely to bemuse public opinion. The hand is that of the Government. If the Government were to