

The Indian

Press Act.

**An Appeal to Members of the
House of Commons**

BY

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PHILLIPS, 99 SHOE LANE, LONDON, E.C.

Price 6d. net.

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GENTLEMEN,

As an Indian Muslim brought up from his earliest childhood to repose implicit faith in British justice and fair-play, permit me briefly to relate the story of a cruel wrong—which is personal so far as I am concerned, and national so far as it affects the entire Indian community in general, and seventy million loyal Muslim subjects of His Britannic Majesty in particular.

I am a victim of the Indian Press Act. If ever the name of law was given to the most arbitrary collection of tyrannous measures conceived by the malevolent ingenuity of man it is the Indian Press law. It has taken away from us the right of free speech and the right of frank and honest criticism. It aims at degrading us into the position of servile sycophants, and those who refuse to sink into that category are exterminated by a force which is as relentless as it is irresistible. It seeks to convert us into a *tabula rasa* for registering the inspirations of an Executive which administers it with a reckless impunity born of the terrible reality that their decrees, even in defiance of it, are above appeal. Originally intended as a measure for the suppression of terrorism and anarchism, this measure is now being employed for purposes far beyond its original intention. Any criticism of the action of Indian officialdom, however pure in its motives, and however constitutional in its character, renders a writer or a newspaper under this lawless law liable to penalties which mean extinction. Newspapers and printing presses have been mulcted in large sums or confiscated by the score, and in one case an editor was banished at three hours' notice. These crushing penalties have been inflicted as punishment for sympathising with the troubles of Morocco, Persia, and Turkey, for setting forth the home grievances of the Indian Muslims, and criticising the policy of the bureaucracy.

The Indian Press Act has driven actual sedition underground. It has been unable to touch the few terrorists whose doings had formed the excuse for its inception; and, baffled in its primary object, its administrators are now seeking to justify its continuance by running amok and slaughtering harmless and innocent subjects of His Majesty. Its murderous activities seem to increase with every fatal blow that it deals at newspapers and printing presses, and it has nearly wiped out the whole Muslim Press. How repugnant this "Law" is to all fundamental conceptions of reasonableness and justice and how terrible is the power wielded by it may be judged from the provisions of Section 4, which says—

"Whenever it appears to the Local Government that any printing press in respect of which any security has been deposited as required by Section 3 is used for the purpose of printing or publishing any newspaper, book, or other document containing any words, signs or visible representations which are likely or may have a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise

to bring into hatred and contempt His Majesty or the Government established by law in British India or the administration of justice in British India or any native prince or chief under the suzerainty of His Majesty or any class or section of His Majesty's subjects in British India, or to excite disaffection towards His Majesty or the said Government or any such prince or chief

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the Local Government may, by notice in writing to the keeper of such printing press, stating or describing the words, signs or visible representations which in its opinion are of the nature described above, declare the security deposited in respect of such press and all copies of such newspaper, book or other document wherever found to be forfeited to His Majesty."

Section 5 requires the deposit of a further security in respect of a press which has come under the operation of Section 4, while Section 6 declares that if in the opinion of the Local Government such press is again

guilty of the same offence not only the further security deposited will be forfeited but the printing press itself will be confiscated.

Such is the Indian Press Act. The judgment of Chief Justice Lawrence Jenkins, of the Calcutta High Court, in the case of the "Come over into Macedonia and help us" pamphlet, shows the Press Act to be an impossible measure. His words, which by this time have acquired classic celebrity in India, will not suffer by repetition here:—

"The provisions of Section 4 are very comprehensive and its language is as wide as human ingenuity can make it. Indeed, it appears to me to embrace the whole range of varying degrees of assurance from certainty on the one side to the very limits of impossibility on the other. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not be plausibly extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval. An attack on that degraded section of the public which lives on the misery and shame of others would come within this widespread net; the praise of a class might not be free from risk. Much that is regarded as standard literature might undoubtedly be caught. . . . It is not enough for the applicant to show that the words of the pamphlet are not likely to bring into hatred and contempt any class or section of His Majesty's subjects in British India, or that they have not a tendency in fact to bring about that result. But he must go further and show that it is impossible for them to have that tendency, either directly or indirectly, and whether by way of inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor or implication; nor is that all, for we find that the Legislature has added to this the all-embracing phrase "or otherwise." . . . The incalculable powers of forfeiture vested in the Executive are a sure sign that the act was called into being by urgent political necessity. And it is of sufficiently recent date to enable us all to remember that the mischief chiefly aimed at was the prevalence of political assassination and anarchical outrage. Comprehensive words were designedly used to catch crime, and the incitement to crime posing in the guise of innocence.

The act was directed against crime and aimed at its prevention. I doubt whether publications with an authorship, a source, and a purpose like those of the present pamphlet were thought of; and I recognise the force of the argument that the Act is now being applied to a purpose never intended. . . . The Advocate General has convinced me that the Government's view of this piece of legislation is correct, and that the High Court's power of intervention is the narrowest; its power to pronounce the legality of the forfeiture by reason of failure to observe the mandatory conditions of the Act is barred; the ability to pronounce on the wisdom of the Executive order is withheld; and its functions are limited to considering whether the applicant to it has discharged the almost hopeless task of establishing that his pamphlet does not contain words which fall within the all-comprehensive provision of the Act. I describe it as an almost hopeless task, because the terms of Section 4 are so wide that it is scarcely conceivable that any publication would attract the notice of the Government in this connection to which some provision of that section might not directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication, or otherwise apply."

The assurances given by the sponsors of the Act at the time of its inception, that its extraordinarily drastic provisions were intended to apply only as a safeguard against sedition, and that in administering it the greatest circumspection would be used, have turned out to be absolutely non-existent for all practical purposes.

The fears expressed by the early critics of the Press Act, and shared by no less an authority than Sir Lawrence Jenkins, have been realised at every step. Twenty-eight Muslim newspapers and printing presses have experienced this Draconian rigour, not because they had anything to do with incitement to political assassination or terrorism of any kind, but because they had brought the Government established by law in British India "into hatred and contempt" by comments expressing "contemptuous" disapprobation of the measures of the Government.

The principal weight of the displeasure of officialdom has fallen on my paper, the *Daily Zamindar*, of

Lahore. Reuter's message announcing forfeiture of the heavy security of ten thousand rupees which I had deposited after losing my first security of two thousand rupees, as also of my printing press with all its valuable paraphernalia, reached this country on January 14, 1914. The papers described the suppression of the *Zamindar* as that of a journal which had the widest circulation of any Hindustani newspaper, and was the orthodox exponent of Pan-Islamism. This act has not only done the greatest possible violence to the feelings of the Indian Muslims by depriving them of their most popular public organ; it has also done a great civil wrong by robbing a British Indian citizen of his valuable property, and rendering him unable to earn his livelihood in a perfectly legitimate manner.

By no stretch of imagination could the *Zamindar* be described as seditious or even anti-Imperialist. It has always stood for the indefinite connection of England with India, and for the maintenance of British supremacy in Asia. I have boundless faith in the capacity of Great Britain to knit together in a harmonious whole the various nationalities inhabiting the Indian continent. The spirit of British rule is to my oriental conception a Divine dispensation, and, as such, I not only appreciate it myself, but have ceaselessly endeavoured to induce hundreds of thousands of my compatriots to share that appreciation with me. The motto of my paper is: "Be loyal to the British Crown. His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of India must know that you are devoted to him." This motto has appeared under a representation of the Imperial Crown alongside of the title in every issue of the *Daily Zamindar*. I have never departed from this ideal, and the back volumes of the paper, which has been in existence four years under my control, and for six years under that of my late father, will bear testimony to it. On the eve of the Delhi Coronation Durbar, the then Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir Louis Dane, assured me on his word as a gentleman that the *Zamindar* had been doing good service to the State. But thanks to my Western education and the ideals of patriotic self respect that I have imbibed from Western culture, I am not a sneaking toady. I mean what I

say, and I say what I mean. A section of officials who have gone out to India directly after leaving the Universities, and before they had learned anything of public affairs, have fallen from the high traditions of their race and are doing many odious things in England's name of which England would be ashamed. I have thought it my duty as an honest journalist and a citizen of the British Empire to criticise them from time to time, as much in the interests of England as of India. My criticisms have been free, frank, and outspoken; and as a Muslim, whose sympathies must go beyond the confines of India to other lands where my co-religionists dwell, I have had to make comments upon the Foreign as well as the Home policy of the Government. These criticisms, which have throughout been perfectly constitutional, have been resented by some of the miniature czars who of late have been playing havoc with our liberties. This terrible weapon of the Press Act has been placed in their hands by the Legislature, and they are now wielding it in the most autocratic and irresponsible fashion. In 1912 the Lahore magistrate suddenly mulcted me in a security of two thousand rupees in an absolutely illegal manner. Presumably, my sole offence in his eyes was that I had been inveighing in very strong terms against the Italian brigandage in Tripoli, and was successfully collecting funds for the sufferers from that unholy war, for which my appeals brought in £35,000. The whole of Muslim India vainly protested against the arbitrary conduct of the magistrate, and it was only when Mr. O'Grady asked a question in the House of Parliament that the official in question availed himself of the first opportunity of giving to his action a semblance of legality by transferring the security he had forced me to deposit to the Zamindar Press for the establishment of which I had applied to him. Then occurred the Cawnpore tragedy, and I criticised the action of the officials who had been responsible for it. The criticism was not relished and my security of two thousand rupees was confiscated by the Punjab Government. Four articles formed the basis of forfeiture. In one of them, which appeared lately in the *Daily News & Leader* as part of a letter which I had contributed to that paper, a correspondent of the *Daily Zamindar* had

drawn the attention of the Government to the fact that a mosque had been pulled down at Agra. Another was a communication from a correspondent protesting against the arbitrary action of Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of Agra & Oudh, in stopping a public meeting of the Muslims of Lucknow in connection with the Cawnpore affair. Of the other two articles, one appealed to Indian Muslims for funds in aid of sufferers from the Cawnpore tragedy and the other complained that the action of the Government in proscribing the pamphlet "Come over into Macedonia and Help Us" had been unjust. While my appeal against this confiscation was still pending in the Punjab Chief Court, although it was a forlorn hope in view of Sir Lawrence Jenkins's pronouncement, my people received the following order from the Lieutenant-Governor:—

Declaration of Forfeiture of Security under Section 6 of the Indian Press Act, 1910.

WHEREAS it appears to the local Government of the Punjab that the printing press known as the Zamindar Printing Press, Lahore, in respect of which a further security of ten thousand rupees has been deposited under Section 5 of the Indian Press Act, 1910, by Ghulam Kadir Khan, with the District Magistrate, Lahore, on the 4th October 1913, has been used for printing the issues of the newspaper called the *Zamindar* (daily edition), bearing dates the 19th November 1913, the 20th November 1913, and the 21st November 1913; and

WHEREAS the issue of the said newspaper, bearing date the 19th November 1913, contains an article entitled "*Ajudhya men Kurbanī*" (Sacrifice in Ajudhya), which article is in the opinion of the Local government of the Punjab likely to bring into hatred and contempt the Government established by law in British India, and to excite disaffection towards the said Government; and

WHEREAS the issue of the said newspaper bearing date the 20th November 1913, contains an article headed "*H'usara-i-Hind wa Inglistan Ki Sayasi ghalati*" (A political mistake by the Secretary of State for India, and the Premier of England), which article is in the opinion of

the Local government of the Punjab likely to bring into hatred and Contempt the Government established by Law in British India, and to excite disaffection towards the said Government ; and

WHEREAS the issue of the said newspaper, bearing dates the 21st November 1913, contains a communication entitled "*Lamaat*" (Rays), which communication is in the opinion of the Local government likely to bring into hatred and contempt the English Subjects of His Majesty in British India.

Now, therefore, this notice is hereby given to the said Ghulam Kadir Khan, that in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 6 (a) (b) and (c) of Indian Press Act, 1910, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab declares the sum of ten thousand rupees deposited as security in respect of the Zamindar Printing Press and also the press of the above-mentioned "*Zamindar Printing Press*," and also all copies of the issues of the *Zamindar* (daily edition) bearing dates the 19th November 1913, the 20th November 1913, and the 21st November 1913, wherever found, to be forfeited to His Majesty.

By Order of His Honour the Lieutenant
Governor of the Punjab and its
Dependencies.

*Issued at Lahore,
the 12th day of January 1914.*

(Sd.) A. C. BARON,
CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
PUNJAB.

I append below a verbatim translation of the articles which form the basis of this forfeiture, which means to the Indian Muslims the loss of their most popular paper, and to me, possibly starvation.

* * * * *

SACRIFICE IN AJUDHYA.

The riot which broke out last year in Ajudhya* over the question of the sacrifice of kine is still fresh in our memories. The institution of sacrifice is a religious ordinance which

* Ajudhya is the Hindu name for this town, which the Muslims call Fairabad.

Muslims are entitled to observe unhampered. The Hindus obstructed them from exercising this privilege, and the local officials supported the Muslims with all the weight of their authority, for which the latter thanked them. The policy of officialdom has, however, undergone a change this year. Mr. Day, the District Magistrate of Faizabad, is the same gentleman who presided over the destinies of this town last year. Twelve months ago he had safeguarded the religious prerogatives of Muslims in such a manner that the prestige of the Government and the majesty of the law had not suffered in the slightest degree. But he now turns a complete somersault. He prohibits the importation of sacrificial animals into Ajudhya from November 1 to 12, 1913; and in order to deprive Muslims of the exercise of a valid and admitted privilege, he goes to such extremes that bands of policemen are seen perambulating the roads which are likely to be used for the passage of animals intended for sacrifice. Thirty-six Muslims submit applications for permission to perform sacrifice, but not one is granted. On the other hand they are threatened with summary arrest and prosecution if they dare to mention the word sacrifice. It is still more surprising that on November 12 the local Muslims submit a telegraphic appeal to Government praying for intervention on their behalf in their just and valid demand, but the Government refuses to intervene.

Wonder of wonders! How shall one account for this sudden change? The same Government rules the Province of Oudh now as it did last year, the same magistrate governs Faizabad. How is it, then, that during one year Muslims are befriended and Hindus are given the cold shoulder, while the next year Hindus receive a pat on the back and Muslims are forcibly deprived of one of their admitted privileges? The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code remain unaltered, but they are used for intimidating the Hindus for the first year and the Muslims for the second. The cinema, the hand that manipulates it, and the spectators are the same, but the films are changed with such melodramatic dexterity that if a group of spectators grows delirious with delight on seeing the comic side of the moving pictures at first sight, the next moment their tragic phase brings scalding tears of sorrow into their eyes.

It is openly declared that Britain has no intention of ruling India by dividing the various Indian nationalities, but the action of certain officials belies this declaration. The Emperor George V. on leaving the shores of India is pleased to express a hope that Hindus and Musalmans will live amicably together, yet one is amazed to find that these sister communities move against each other on the Indian stage in obedience to some mysterious wirepulling behind the scenes, and the desired union between Hindus and Musalmans remains as far off as ever. The fact is self-evident that the two communities can develop mutual love and concord only when they are allowed to settle

their religious and social differences unfettered and uninterrupted by a third party. The sole duty of the Government consists in safeguarding the valid and just privileges of every community, and in scrupulously refraining from arbitrary interference in the rights and prerogatives of either. It behoves the ruling power silently to watch the growth of amity and goodwill between the rivals by the gradual process of one community relinquishing an admitted privilege with a view to courting the goodwill of the other. Our rulers ought to express their gratification at the fact that one community makes spontaneous advances towards the other, thus mechanically accomplishing the Emperor's wish that the Hindus and Musalmans may give up their antagonism and join in a fraternal bond of unity. The Government has no business to trample upon the admitted rights of a community, and thus force upon her the friendship of the other community. Our readers are perfectly well aware that in view of the sympathetic attitude of our Hindu brethren towards the Muslims over the Cawnpore affair, many of the Muslim leaders were prepared to show a marked respect for the religious susceptibilities of the Hindus. Thus Messrs. Muhammad Ali, Wazir Hasan, and Zafar Ali Khan had sent a telegraphic message to their co-religionists in India recommending that they should suspend their usual privilege of slaughtering cows for sacrifice during the present year and manifest a spirit of love and toleration towards their Hindu brethren. This appeal had the desired effect, and we have received numerous communications from various parts of the Punjab and the united Provinces of Agra and Oudh stating that Muslims of the localities concerned have refrained from sacrificing kine this year. It was quite possible for the Faizabad Muslims to adopt a similar attitude of goodwill and toleration towards Hindus influenced by the same evolutionary process, and to give up willingly their admitted right to sacrifice. The cordial relations thus established would undoubtedly have had a strong and unshakable basis. It is a pity the magistrate of Faizabad did not give the Musalmans a chance of manifesting a spirit of self-sacrifice by conceding to Hindus through neighbourly love what was their own by established usage and right. He promptly set in motion the machinery of law and compelled the Muslims to relinquish a cherished privilege by force. Why did he do this? Was he looking forward to the prospect of a noisy protest on the part of Muslims in defence of their religious privileges, which would exacerbate Hindu susceptibilities against them and thus prevent the growth of harmonious relations between the two communities? If the supposition is incorrect, how will Mr. Day account for holding a view which is diametrically opposed to the one he entertained only last year? Is not the performance of sacrifice a religious right vested in Muslims and admitted by the supreme Government as operative in the entire area under British Administration in India? Is this not a privilege to maintain and safeguard which Muslims have shed their blood in

various places, and the validity of which has never been challenged by the Government? Does Mr. Day wish that Muslims should be forcibly deprived of this cherished privilege? Is Mr. Day anxious to see that Muslims who are occasionally willing to relinquish the right of sacrifice of their own accord should fly at the throats of their Hindu brethren to protect it? We regard it as a great sin to suspect the Government of questionable motives, but will Mr. Day let us know how is it possible that his action should not create suspicion in millions of minds?

Matters are really getting very serious. A sanguinary *mélée* takes place in Cawnpore over the mosque affair in defence of a religious right. The authoritative pronouncements of the learned Muslim theologians are absolutely ignored. This deplorable incident has hardly been closed before Muslims in Faizabad are deprived of another religious right in connection with the institution of sacrifice—a right which for centuries has been admitted as valid in India. What is this conundrum? Will any one solve it and let us know what occult forces are actuating these strategems?

The desire of Muslims is that they should be allowed to exercise without let or hindrance their religious rights and privileges, just as Hindus enjoy theirs. They should have perfect liberty, when they so desire, to relinquish any valid communal right, if such a right happens to injure the religious susceptibilities of Hindus, but on no account must the Government interfere to bring about this end by arbitrary force or legal enactment. This is the only natural process of promoting the growth of cordial relations between Hindus and Musalmans, and accomplishing the object cherished by His Gracious Majesty the Emperor, and so much appreciated by His Imperial Majesty's Hindu and Muslim subjects. Any other course would only keep the mutual animosities of the two great communities alive, and the chances of a Hindu-Muslim *entente cordiale* would remain as remote as ever. We strongly deprecate any attempt on the part of the officials to arrest the natural growth of harmonious relations between the two peoples. We declare it as our belief, and we do so without any fear of contradiction, that short-sighted officials who place obstacles in the way of the fast growing Hindu-Muslim union insult the noble hope expressed by our Emperor. For such officials enlightened Hindus and Muslims can never entertain any fondness or respect.

—*The Daily Zamindar*, November 19, 1913.

THE DIPLOMATIC ERROR OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA AND THE PRIME MINISTER.

To my entreaties they have turned an ear
Completely deaf. My tale they would not hear.

an Urdu

How mighty is Britain! The sun with its dazzling lustre never sets on her world-wide empire. Morning and evening, day and night it sheds its perpendicular or slanting beams on one part or another of British dominions. The glory, grandeur, and renown of Britain have fixed their united seal upon the councils of the universe. A huge armada of super-dreadnoughts and armed cruisers has made Britannia the ruler of the waves, and the mightiest potentate of the age dare not look her in the face. All this greatness has been vouchsafed to Britain, because her Constitution is based upon the bed-rock of liberty, equality, fraternity, and toleration. Yet the dignitaries of this same Great Britain have so far forgotten their duties to the Empire that it is distasteful to them to look at the spokesmen of seventy millions of His Britannic Majesty's devoted subjects, much less to receive them and converse with them.

Syed Wazir Hasan is the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, which is the recognised political organisation of the Indian Muslims. Similarly Mr Muhammad Ali enjoys the confidence of the community, which has passed a large number of resolutions declaring his competency to act as its representative. Both these gentlemen repeatedly try to approach the Secretary of State for India and the Prime Minister of England with the humble and respectful prayer that they may be granted an interview to enable them personally to explain the grievances of seventy million subjects of King George V. These representations elicit only a blank and frigid refusal for an interview from the Earl of Crewe. They are told that after weighing the matter carefully it had been decided not to grant their prayer, as the interview asked for would not lead to anything conducive to public good. On the other hand it was certain that such of their co-religionists as did not agree with them, and claimed like them to be spokesmen of the Indian Muslims, would look upon such a concession as derogatory to their claims. Unfortunate are the people whose affairs are directed by such careless dignitaries; and luckless is the country over whose destinies preside such self-willed Ministers. Lord Crewe, in his reply, has also airily assured the two gentlemen that the aspirations of the Indian Muslims are entitled to every consideration on the part of His Majesty's Government, and no effort is spared to utilise *manifold and trustworthy sources of intelligence* to obtain information with regard to them. We wish the language used by Lord Crewe had a basis of realism and actuality. So far as we are aware in 95 per cent. of cases all interpellations relating

to India in the British Parliament are met with the stereotyped reply that the Secretary of State for India has received no special information on the subject. Should the matter be one of great urgency and the Member putting the question insists upon a suitable reply an attempt is generally made at evading a direct answer, either by promising a reference to the Government of India or by pointing out that the matter was still under consideration. Is Lord Crewe proud of the "manifold and trustworthy sources of intelligence" of this type referred to so jauntily in his reply? If his lordship's "trustworthy sources of intelligence" had any foundation in fact they would have enabled him to find out whether Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Muhammad Ali were the true representatives of the Indian Muslims or not? Is it not surprising that with all the "trustworthy sources of intelligence" at his disposal his lordship was unable to find out that Syed Wazir Hasan was the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League, and duly elected and entrusted by the Muslim community with that responsible position; that after his departure for London the community had passed numerous resolutions expressive of its confidence in him; and that Mr. Muhammad Ali was likewise declared by the general voice of the community to be its competent spokesman? The Muslim League is not a private body manufactured by Syed Wazir Hasan. It has been constituted by the Muslim community, and Syed Wazir Hasan has been appointed as its secretary by that same community. Can Lord Crewe, with his "manifold and trustworthy sources of intelligence," point out a single Muslim who does not regard Syed Wazir Hasan as the recognised and *bona-fide* secretary of the All-India Muslim League, and who cares to repudiate his actions in that capacity? Lord Crewe's refusal to see the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League means that his lordship does not care a jot for the feelings and sentiments of the seventy million Muslims of India, and has failed to realise the pain that his attitude has caused to them. His lordship's "manifold and trustworthy sources of intelligence" have hitherto failed to stand him in good stead, and he has been unable to discover the plain fact that the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League can act as the true representative of the Indian Muslims. It is amusing to find that no sooner Syed Wazir Hasan arrives in London than Lord Crewe makes the discovery that there is a section of Muslims who do not see eye to eye with him. To refuse an interview to Syed Wazir Hasan and Mr. Muhammad Ali simply because a solitary individual, Syed Ameer Ali, happens to entertain different views, constitutes a serious diplomatic blunder on the part of the Secretary of State for India, and the seventy millions of Indian Muslims are not likely to forget the incident readily. That Syed Wazir Hasan has a strong personality and is the true representative of the Muslim community may be judged from the fact that a person of Syed Ameer Ali's illustrious position did not dare to question the justness of his

views, and had eventually to ensconce himself behind a resignation. Had Syed Wazir Hasan been a bogus, third-rate and self-constituted mouth-piece of the community he would have failed to influence even the man in the street, much less an exalted personage like Syed Ameer Ali. This fact alone could have convinced Lord Crewe, if he were so minded, that the support of the community had added so much weight to Syed Wazir Hasan's position that Syed Ameer Ali, with all his lustre, had to climb down, and that such a man alone could claim to be the true representative of his people.

The world is ringing with the diplomatic accumen and administrative talents of Britain. It is an irony for which the vicissitudes of the age are responsible that she has at the present moment at her helm men who are so unstatesmanlike as to regard it as an insult to themselves to see and speak with the representatives of the subjects of the British Crown. Such an attitude on the part of the dignitaries of the Empire is sure to breed discontent among the people, and one cannot easily get away from the significance of the fact.

It is not the Secretary of State for India or the Prime Minister of England alone who commits such mistakes. The Collectors, Commissioners, Lieutenant-Governors, and even the Governor-General are all seized with the same malady. Their receptions are open only to those who are cads, hypocrites, and servile flatterers, and have not the courage to speak the truth. Their bungalows serve as a roost for those gilded chancleers, who can only crow "Yes, Sir" and "True, your Honour." They are readily accessible to those self-constituted leaders who are adepts in the art of betraying their community. A hackneyed toady, a cringing sycophant, a betrayer of his people can see them when he likes. But a true patriot and a real well-wisher of the community and the State can never, never enter the palaces of the bureaucrats, let his credentials be ever so high.

We know Lord Crewe and Mr. Asquith have refused to see Syed Wazir Hasan and Mr. Muhammad Ali, and have not given them a hearing. But we are sure that all that they had to say will reverberate in the Council Chambers of England, and their echoes will reach the ears of both these Ministers. The refusal of Lord Crewe and Mr. Asquith to grant an interview to Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Muhammad Ali is in reality a collective rebuff to the entire Muslim community. If our community has really any sense of self-respect, it is the bounden duty of its enlightened sections in all parts of the country to send telegraphic protests to the Secretary of State, telling him that his refusal to see the members of the Muslim deputation has caused much pain to the seventy million loyal and devoted subjects of His Majesty, and that they cannot tolerate such a slur with equanimity. Such a collective expression of Muslim opinion is bound to influence the conduct of the British Ministers sooner or later.

—*The Daily Zamindar*, Nov. 20, 1913.

LITERARY SCINTILLATIONS.

has four Souvenirs: Wine, Pork, Girls,

Wine, which is branded by Muslims as the "mother of iniquity," is recognised in England as the sister of propriety. Thus, when Lord Crewe, in remembrance of the British subaltern who lies buried in his grave on the Malabar coast, mechanically spoke of the inebriating bottle of whisky in a half laudatory, half deprecatory manner, and for the sake of Indians expressed a wish that British idiosyncracies had manifested themselves in some more appropriate form, Sir George Birdwood's patience was taxed to its uttermost limit. In *The Times* of October 31, 1913, that gentleman took the Earl of Crewe to task for having said anything against wine, and gave a remarkable proof of his ignorance by fabricating one of the funniest misstatements in respect of Indians. Sir George has pointed out that the mysticism of the Orientals derived its nutrition from dreams, and that dreams depended for their spiritual realism on drinking copiously. Hindus and Muslims could not therefore resent the indulgence of Englishmen in alcoholic beverages, for had not the mysticism of those Easterns been saturated with alcohol?

The second item in Western civilization is pork. As you get up early in the morning and go out for a walk, you will find the carcasses of pigs hanging in every butcher's shop. On your return the first dish that will be served to you at the breakfast table will consist of fried bacon. In the kitchen there is a constant and plentiful supply of lard and dripping, which is used in roasting meat and frying potatoes and all other comestibles which admit of a similar culinary treatment. The use of butter, pure and absolute, is limited only to those houses which are patronised by dusky-footed Indians.

Girls form the third attractive and plentiful item in the tempting programme of this fair land. There are three hundred and fifty thousand girls of extremely elastic manners, whose mode of life makes them the real or step-sisters or analogous types to the Indian Dwanni and Chwanni, and at whom even this free country has the Christian privilege of turning up its nose. There is another million and a half of women who cannot possibly get a husband until the Divine principle of the plurality of wives as embodied in the Koran is made into an Act of Parliament, just as the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill had to be enacted in England in spite of the opposition of ecclesiastics. The law of divorce has also had to be introduced, subject to the conditions and exigencies similar to those obtaining in Islam. To this third item of which we have been speaking may incidentally be ascribed the three thousand and odd decrees *nisi* that the divorce courts had to grant in three months' time on the plea that the wife had regarded it as

essential to her happiness to maintain a "connection" with a "friend" in addition to her husband. Lastly, it is due to this charming item that England has been converted into a vast darkhouse of venereal diseases. The extensive ramifications of this darkhouse have grown so fearsome that Government has had to appoint a Commission, first to measure and then to sweep its musty and venomous cells.

The fourth souvenir of London are its newspapers. We may assert without fear of contradiction that a cheaper commodity does not exist in any other part of the world. Look at *The Times*, its beautiful get-up, and the vast amount of information it supplies to you. One issue of the great Printing House Square daily contains more reading matter than all the collective editions of the Urdu dailies and weeklies in India. Yet such a paper can be had for two annas (an anna is a penny). It is quite another matter that its Eastern information is based upon the silly stories of George Birdwood, and its imperial and foreign columns are devoted to opprobrious denunciation of the Turks and the Indian Muslims. Then there is the *Daily Telegraph*. Its capacious pages can provide material for six table-cloths daily. It has the means of publishing in its columns on the morning succeeding the Cawnpore incident a telegraphic message from a correspondent costing at least a couple of thousand rupees. This great paper may be had for an anna. It is quite another story that in order to please the authorities of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh the correspondent above referred to spoke of the doings of Tyler and Meston as the most beautiful expressions of the highest teachings of Christianity, while Indians were condemned as so many uncivilised fanatics who were constantly impeding the sanitary progress of India. A country in which one newspaper has two, three and four editions a day is above praise in respect of its journalistic activities and the political power wielded by its newspaper-reading public.

Availing themselves of that liberty which is the pride of the West, Indians have enjoyed or are anxious to enjoy their due share of wine, pork, and girls—at least the first two, or by way of deprecation the third item.

How I dread London; ah, my artless soul;
The rich man does not so much fear the thief.
In Mabel's † company Bacon ‡ is his fare,
The Muslim's faith is trembling like a leaf.

The daily newspapers of London and their editors, however, are chary of their favours to us. The dailies of the British metropolis, with their circulation of hundreds of thousands, are following with a fixed resolve the one great policy into which

† The popular Christian name of girls.

‡ Flesh of swine; as also the name of a well-known English philosopher.

they have been initiated in respect of Indian affairs, especially those relating to Muslims at the present moment. This policy, followed by Liberal and Conservative, Protestant and Roman Catholic organs alike, is that India is the humblest of England's dependencies, that the best way of governing Indians is to make them feel "our prestige," and that their voice, no matter how genuine and pure-motived, must be suppressed. "The Times," the "Daily Telegraph," the "Morning Post," the "Daily News," the "Westminster Gazette," and the "Daily Mail" are the most illustrious pillars of the Fourth Estate. Their leaders can change the policy of the Government and overturn the personnel of the Ministerial Cabinet. Their editors are men of conspicuous literary talents, wisdom, and experience, whose inexorable logic can rattle the bones of Aristotle in his grave. No sooner, however, an Indian problem crops up than both their talents and their logic vanish into thin air. The greatest newspaper of London—"The Times"—sinks into the grovelling position of ascribing the mysticism of the Muslims and the Orientals to their hovering dreams, and their dreams to the effect of their wine-bibbing. May God have mercy on our souls!

Thus the daily newspapers of London do not hold or do not care to hold any independent views on Indian affairs. They deal with this subject according as they are inspired by official circles.

Behind the mirror, just like Polly, I
Re-echo my Eternal Master's cry

—From a Persian

Unfortunately for us Indians, however, Polly is versed in the art of embellishing to some extent her oft-repeated lesson, "Undoubtedly!" It can mimic the Eternal Master, and the ill-omened combination of the two is enough to confound us.

Messrs. Muhammad Ali and Wazir Hasan had visited England with the object of respectfully representing Muslim grievances to British Ministers. It was their intention to describe the present Indian situation to the British public, and to demonstrate the outstanding fact that in a country which was being ruled in England's name many things were happening which were as far removed from the traditional spirit of British justice and liberty as London from Cawnpore. After the departure of these gentlemen certain further developments of the situation rendered it imperative that we should follow the same course. We accordingly sailed for England, and we are grateful to our Indian co-religionists for having expressed their entire confidence in our ability to act as their spokesman. On their arrival in this country, however, Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Muhammad Ali discovered that before gathering the much coveted laurels they would have to clear their path of in-

numerable thorns which had been planted in it with the utmost assiduity. They realised that the very same forces which, bursting beyond the confines of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh had gagged the Muslims in other provinces of India, had forestalled them even in London. It had been arranged that the spokesmen of Indian Muslims should on no account gain access either to the British public through the Press or to the principal dignitaries of the State. The first work, therefore, that the Muslim representatives were called upon to perform was to remove these thorny obstacles.

It was impossible for us not to have our share of these troubles. When we reached England we found officialdom and journalism to be unsympathetic. With the exception of a few pure-souled and noble-hearted Englishmen, to whom is due the stability of our confidence in Britain, there are none to encourage us. Our indefatigable friends have done their level best to suppress our voice and choke our just aspirations. In a full public meeting Syed Wazir Hasan had to make the painful avowal that a regular plot appeared to have been hatched against them, so that they may not be able to raise their voice aloft and describe the true Indian situation to the British public.

The public gathering at which the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League had to make this unpleasant statement was a meeting of the Positivist Society, which was held last Sunday in the Essex Hall. A number of brilliant speeches were delivered on this occasion on the future of the Islamic world, in view of the terrible events that had lately happened in the Near East. The Positivist Society commemorates the school of thought headed by the famous French philosopher, Augustus Comte. Eminent public men like Lord Morley and Mr. Frederick Harrison are among its members. In the meeting, which was presided over by Mr. Swinny, that gentleman read a message full of sympathy for Islam from Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, the well-known author of "The Future of Islam." After the president's learned opening remarks, which were very sympathetic, Mr. Muhammad Ali delivered an able address. Syed Wazir Hasan then made an eloquent speech, and was followed by the talented journalist, Mr. Nevinson. In his comprehensive discourse, which was incisive as well as soothing, the latter gentleman made a number of adverse criticisms on Islam, and proffered many a sage counsel to the Muslims. We spoke last of all, and in critically reviewing Mr. Nevinson's reflections, related to the audience which thronged the Essex Hall the painful story of the Indian Muslims. Had this story been repeated in the Royal Mosque at Lahore, a hint from his holiness the Secretary of the so-called Anjuman-i-Islamiya (Islamic Society), of Lahore, would have brought the police inspector of that blessed town

down upon us in the heart of the mosque. In this meeting we said all we had to say, but there were very few of the London papers which could provide a space of even a few lines for the proceedings of the meeting.

In all this there was nothing that we did not expect. We had realised all along that our journey to England was not a pleasure trip. True our path would not be beset with the same amount of obstacles in London as in Lahore, Delhi, and Lucknow, but there was no getting away from the fact that the friends of Sir James Meston were in evidence here, there, and everywhere. On the other hand, we poor Muslims had no friend, except God Almighty, His Imperial Majesty King George V. (may he live long!), and the British public. God Almighty may be accessible to us through the Koran, but only the British Press can usher us into the presence of the shadow of God, George V., and the shadow of George V., the British public. To gain access to the British public we knew we had to surmount enormous obstacles, and were prepared to confront them. But we did not know that London could be, like Delhi, a tangled skein of troubles which enmesh us, and that our hands could be used for running the noose which was to strangle us.

Here is scrofula superimposed on leprosy,* as the common saying goes. Our Lord and Master in learning, the Rt. Hon. Syed Ameer Ali, author of "The Spirit of Islam," President of the London Muslim League, and patron of the British Red Crescent Society, &c., &c., has confronted the community with a *coup d'état*. The rt. hon. gentleman has for all this large number of years been the chairman of an organisation which is veritably and decidedly political in its nature. Nevertheless, he refuses to participate in a dinner or give one at which Messrs. Wazir Hasan and Muhammad Ali might get a chance of introduction to the notables of England, on the wonderful plea that, according to his Highness the Agha Khan, the proposed dinner would be used as an occasion for making political speeches; that according to the rt. hon. gentleman himself, there would be crowing over the Cawnpore affair; and that the Lord Chancellor had refused him permission to take part in such a dinner. Later on Syed Ameer Ali grew so incensed at a letter which Syed Wazir Hasan had addressed him in his capacity as Secretary of the All India Muslim League that he resigned the Chairmanship of the London Muslim League. To-day (Oct. 31, 1913), he has contributed to that very dear friend of the Muslims, the London *Times*, a letter setting forth the reasons for his resignation. A certain section of Anglo-Indians will reel with joy on reading these reasons, for

* This proverb is equivalent to the English: "It never rains but it

they hold out to them the prospect of a family feud among the Muslims. The Muslim community, on the other hand, will hang down their heads with shame. It will come as a shock to them to feel that they have now exhibited the unedifying spectacle of their family quarrels to the outside world. *The Times* in its to-day's issue has revealed certain ugly features of this unfortunate episode, and the full exposure is awaited at some other day.

"Ah the day, alack the day!"

While these miserable events are providing the proverbial iron to enter our souls, something is providentially happening to cheer us up. The light-giving fingers of Islam are deftly preparing a heavenly elixir, which is destined to materialise the gloomy forebodings of the poet, when he spurns a hundred thousand pearls and rubies, which he says are no recompense for a broken heart. Impossible may become possible, and a broken heart may become whole once more.

The Friday before last we repaired to Woking to take part in the Friday service. Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din had invited a number of friends, and Syed Wazir Hasan was one of them. The service was exceptionally edifying, and was the occasion of a happy announcement. As if to confound the critics who lose no opportunity of belittling his selfless and purely altruistic efforts in the way of truth, our dear friend, Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, was going to be crowned with a success of which Muslims may rightly feel proud. On this day, influenced by his guidance, an illustrious and select member of the British aristocracy was going to announce his acceptance of Islam, and make our hearts bound with indescribable joy. This British peer, unlike Webb, Quilliam, and other individuals of that type, was not partial to Muslim money, but Muslim religion.

Lord Headley, who, in relating the attractive story of his conversion to Islam in the November number of *Muslim India*, conveys to Muslims a message of boundless hope and joy, is a gentleman of enlightened views. His writing bears unmistakable internal testimony to his deep thought. For very many years he laboriously struggled to find the way which led from the gloom of the Trinitarian teaching to the light of Truth. At last he saw a glimmering taper from afar. As he approached it the transparent shade of the torch gave birth to the personality of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. We congratulate our friend and the Muslim community on the blessing that has been vouchsafed to him.

"Divine grace is vouchsafed as a heavenly gift ;
It is not earned by force of arms."

—*The Daily Zamindar*, November 21, 1913.

Comment is superfluous. These articles speak for themselves. The confiscation of a concern worth thousands of pounds on their basis shows what utter madness has seized the irresponsible autocrats in whose hands the lives and liberties of His Majesty's unfortunate Indian subjects are placed. In the first article, while advocating the principles so often enunciated by Royalty and British statesmen of a Hindu-Muslim *culte*, I have simply questioned the right of a magistrate to spoil the whole thing by indulging in shady tactics. In the second article I have protested against the erroneous attitude adopted by the Secretary of State for India and the Prime Minister in refusing to grant an interview to the two Muslim gentlemen who had been deputed by the Indian Muslims to place their grievances before Ministers of the Crown. I do not know what offence I have committed in the third article, in which I have jotted down in a humorous way a Muslim's impression of London life. It may be that, in the words of Sir Lawrence Jenkins, I have been guilty "directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise," of an "attack on that degraded section of the public which lives on the misery and shame of others," and thus, in the words of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, brought "the English subjects of His Majesty in India into hatred and contempt." If this is so, I have the satisfaction of erring in good company. The Bishop of London, speaking at the Willesden Hippodrome on December 7, 1913, before a mass meeting, gave facts about the immorality in London, which, in the words of the *Morning Post*, he "described as abominably cruel and disgusting. Most awful things were going on in the cities on both sides of the Atlantic. They were not going to have sin condoned and legalised in England. Their hospitals were full of children suffering for the sins of their fathers." The *Morning Post*, which must have been suppressed by the Lord High Autocrat of the Punjab if it had been there, further brings His Majesty's English subjects into "hatred and contempt" by giving publicity to the following awful language used by the Rev. C. Silvester Horne, who spoke after the Bishop of London: "There were social conditions in and out of London that made personal purity and