

THE
STORY OF AFGHANISTAN ;
OR,
WHY THE TORY GOVERNMENT GAGS
THE INDIAN PRESS.

A PLEA FOR THE WEAK AGAINST THE STRONG.

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A PLEA FOR THE WEAK AGAINST THE STRONG

AMONG the many grave charges to be brought against the Tory Government when at last—forced by the inevitable hand of Time—it is compelled to face its master, the people of Great Britain; among the crimes to be alleged against it at the bar of public opinion; among the counts of the indictment which is there to be presented against it, one weighty, one most fatal impeachment will come from the smouldering villages, the fire-blackened homes, the trampled harvests, the murdered men, the frozen women and children of the far-off Afghan land.

The history of English policy in Afghanistan is one which each citizen of Britain is now bound to study. No adult individual in a nation is free from responsibility of national policy—only some have votes, but all have influence. To-day the hands of the citizens are in so far clean that when this Tory Government was placed in power, it was placed there for inaction, for rest, for quietude. None voted that it should embroil us in Europe, in Asia, in Africa. None chose it that it should waste our savings and embarrass our finances. None raised it that it should pour out our money as dross, nor shed human blood as water in three of the four continents of the globe. To-morrow, if England vote Tory, on England, and not on the Ministry, will rest the crimes of the last six years. England's the dishonor in South Eastern Europe if she endorse the war-with-disgrace-treaty of Berlin. England's the shame if she condone the murder of women and children in cold blood in South Africa, the slaughter of the helpless by dynamite as they crouched for shelter in the caves. England's the disgrace—and the rapidly advancing Nemesis—if she approve our broken treaties, our dishonored promises, our inhuman cruelties, touching the wronged, the betrayed, the crushed races of the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan.

On behalf of the latter alone I raise my voice to-day. It is said to be unpatriotic to blame one's country. But not

so have I read the history of England's noblest patriots. Love of England does not mean approval and endorsement of the policy of some Oriental adventurer whom chance and personal ability and unscrupulousness have raised to power. Love of England means reverence for her past, work for her future; it means sympathy with all that is noble and great in her history, and endeavor to render her yet more noble, yet more great; it means triumph in her victories over oppression, delight in her growing freedom, glory in her encouragement of all nations struggling towards liberty; it means pride in her pure name, in her fair faith, in her unsoiled honor, in her loyal word; it means condemnation of her bullying, boasting, cruel imperialism since Lord Beaconsfield seduced her from her purity, and regretful remorseful turning back to the old paths of duty, of honor, and of faith.

Therefore this plea of mine for "the weak against the strong" is not an unpatriotic attack on our own beloved land, but rather the loving effort of a child to save a mother whose honor and whose life are threatened by unscrupulous betrayers.

In 1838 we first interfered in Afghan politics. An Afghan ruler, Shah Soojah, had ceded some of his realm to Runjeet Singh, "the Lion of the Punjaub," and had been, therefore, driven into exile by his indignant countrymen. Dost Mahommed succeeded to the vacant throne, and Shah Soojah appealed to Lord Auckland, Governor General of India, for aid against the selected of the Afghan people. He raised the ghost of Russian influence; he played on the unworthy fear of Russia that from time to time discredits English courage; he spoke of Russian spies, Russian designs, Russian intrigues, until Lord Auckland, panic-struck, rushed to meet the imagined danger, took up Shah Soojah's cause, placed an army at his virtual disposal, overran Afghanistan, entered Cabul, and propped up Shah Soojah on his throne with the sharp points of British bayonets. The seat was an uneasy one. In 1841 it gave way. Afghanistan rose. The hill tribes blocked the passes. From the 6th to the 13th January (1842), the English army of occupation strove to cut its way back to India. Food failed it. Snow blocked its path. Bitter cold destroyed its weaklings. Sharp swords cut down its loiterers. Out of 16,000 troops and camp followers one

exhausted, starving, fainting, fugitive fell still living within the gates of Jellalabad.

Il va sans dire that massacre revenged massacre. By sword and fire Britain punished the Afghan uprising, and then—wise at length—withdrew her troops, recognised Dost Mahommed, practically admitted her blunder, and left Afghanistan free and independent, mistress of herself.

In 1849 we annexed the Punjaub, and so advanced our border until it marched with that of Afghanistan. Dost Mahommed had no will to break himself against British power; he recognised the position of affairs, and in 1855 entered into a definite treaty with the British Government of India. In this treaty were two important pledges. One on the part of England promised that we would “never interfere” within the possessions of the Ameer. The other pledged the Ameer to be “friend of our friends, and enemy of our enemies.” The phrase “never interfere” had a peculiar and important signification. For some fifty years English annexation in Hindustan had been remarkably rapid. This annexation ran through a well-defined cycle. First—an English Resident; then, advice urgently pressed; then, complaint of misgovernment constantly published; then, interference; then, compulsion; then, open annexation. The free and turbulent Afghan people saw this play repeated over and over again on the other side of the Suleiman range. Hence arose a jealous fear of the like fate. Hence a keen dread of British interference. Hence an ineradicable distrust of British officers and a determination not to open the flood gates of subjugation by admittance of a British Resident. Therefore when the treaty of 1855 was signed, the promise of Afghan friendship was made to depend on the promise of England not to interfere within Afghanistan, not to send British Resident or Envoy to the Ameer’s court.

In 1857 another treaty was made with Dost Mahommed. We were at war with Persia and subsidised the Ameer as our ally. By this treaty British officers were admitted to Cabul, Candahar, and Balkh to supervise the expenditure of our money in defence of Afghanistan. But in this very treaty their functions were carefully limited to “all military and political matters connected with the war.” It was further agreed that “whenever the subsidy should cease, the British officers were to be withdrawn from the Ameer’s

country" (Art. 7), and that the British Government might appoint a Vakil (Agent) at Cabul, provided that such agent should not be "a European officer." Such was the clear and well-defined position of the British Government towards Afghanistan. Dost Mahommed lived till 1863, and the promise on either side was carefully performed. In the war of succession which followed, England's faith was preserved untouched. Sir John Lawrence, her representative, permitted no interference, but simply recognised as Ameer the chosen of the Afghan people. We were safe, at peace, free from peril. Afghanistan was a bar between Russia and ourselves, and was a friendly Power, jealous of her own independence, but trustful in our faithfully-kept pledge of non-interference within her borders.

Governments in England changed, but our policy towards Afghanistan did not alter. Sir John Lawrence who, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjaub, had negotiated the treaty of 1855, became, in 1863, Governor-General of India. Naturally, as Governor-General, he pursued the policy he had advocated as Chief Commissioner. When, in 1867, Ufzul Khan triumphed at Cabul, he sent, under the 7th Article of the Treaty of 1857, a "Mahommedan gentleman of rank and character" as agent to the then Ameer, and when, in 1868, Shere Ali again conquered, the same ties were maintained.

In 1867 Sir Stafford Northcote, then Secretary of State for India, frankly recognised that the Russian advances in Central Asia were likely to continue. He declared that they afforded "no reason for any uneasiness or for any jealousy," and that the conquests of Russia were "the natural result of the circumstances in which she finds herself placed." Sir Stafford Northcote was not then the mere tool of Mr. Disraeli, as he now is of Lord Beaconsfield. He had then a character for discretion and for good sense; he was yet not bitten by the mad dog, Imperialism. Sir Henry Rawlinson, in 1868, in vain tried to alarm the Indian Secretary. Sir Stafford refused to be led away, and kept his head cool and clear. It is important to remember that the most rapid advances made by the Russians were made before 1869; that they had then established themselves in Bokhara, and had thus become the immediate neighbors of Afghanistan. Lord Mayo succeeded Sir John Lawrence in 1869, and followed the same line of policy. Shere Ali was

very anxious to obtain from England a pledge of future assistance in securing his family on the throne. This pledge Lord Mayo refused to give, but in March, 1869, he met the Ameer in Conference at Umballa. Writing home on March 10th, Lord Mayo declared: "We want no Resident at Cabul, or political influence in his kingdom," and with these views he went into the Conference. The Ameer complained somewhat bitterly that the Treaty of 1855 was one-sided, but Lord Mayo steadfastly declined to involve England in the local disputes of Afghanistan; he gave Shere Ali some money, some arms, and a distinct reiteration of the pledge that "no European officers should be placed as Residents in his cities," and so smoothed over the necessary refusal to actively support his throne. Of Lord Mayo's promise there can be no doubt. He himself writes on June 3rd: "The only pledges given were, that we would not interfere in his affairs; that we would support his independence; that we would not force European officers or Residents upon him against his wish."

It is worthy of notice that ordinary communication between Russia and Afghanistan has not, until lately, been regarded as a matter of complaint. In 1870 General Kaufmann wrote to Shere Ali a letter which was communicated by Prince Gortshakoff to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg. In this letter General Kaufmann warned the Ameer not to interfere with Bokhara; the letter was laid before Lord Mayo, who, instead of objecting to the communication, expressed his approval of it. Other letters passed between General Kaufmann and the Ameer, and no word of complaint was ever heard from the English government. Friendly communications were never objected to until Lord Beaconsfield's craven fear of Russia cast a green light of jealousy over all her actions.

In 1872 Lord Mayo was unfortunately assassinated, and was succeeded by Lord Northbrook. The Seistan arbitration, owing to the dissatisfaction of the Ameer, led to the conferences at Simla in 1873. Lord Northbrook suggested that a British officer should interview the Ameer at Cabul, or some other Afghan town; but Shere Ali said he would prefer to send into India one of his own ministers, and Lord Northbrook, mindful of our pledges, at once accepted the offer. Here again arms were given to the Ameer, but he declined the money offered to him, and remained some-

what sulky, refusing to allow a British officer to inspect his northern frontiers with a view to their defence in case of need. He would not even permit Mr. Forsyth to pass through Afghanistan on his return from Yarkand. In spite of all this discontent on Shere Ali's part, the good faith and tact of Lord Northbrook again restored him to his former cordial relationship with us.

The evil genius alike of Hindustan and of South Africa now appeared on the scene. Sir Bartle Frere, in January 1875, wrote to the government that it was advisable to occupy Quettah, and to establish British officers in Afghanistan. Sir Bartle Frere, with his customary immoral disregard of good faith towards the weak, ignored our repeated pledges not to so establish them, and he sarcastically mocked the notion—a mockery somewhat lurid in the glare of the fate of Sir Louis Cavagnari—that they would be in any risk of life from Afghan jealousy. Sir Bartle Frere is wont to advise others to go into peril “with a light heart,” but history recordeth no case of his putting his advice personally into effect.

Immediately on the receipt of this letter Lord Salisbury, as Secretary of State for India, wrote to Lord Northbrook, directing him to obtain the assent of the Ameer to the establishment of British officers at Herat and then at Candahar, alleging that if the Ameer's “intentions are still loyal, it is not possible that he will make any serious difficulty now.” With astounding ignorance, or want of honesty, Lord Salisbury ignored the repeated pledges given by England that she would not send European agents into Afghanistan. With the same recklessness Lord Salisbury averred at Manchester that Afghanistan was the only country in which we were not represented, when he ought to have known that we had an accredited, though not European, agent at Cabul. Lord Northbrook on receiving this despatch, most honorably hesitated to obey it. He asked if discretion were allowed him, or if he were compelled to obey. He was directed to consult Sir Richard Pollock, Mr. Thornton and Mr. Girdlestone, and after some delay Lord Northbrook wrote home (June 7, 1875), urging that we were bound by our pledges, and had no reason, no ground for departing from them.

The unhappy policy of the Tory Government in Europe now began to cast its fatal blight over our policy in Asia.

The Russophobia diligently cultured by Lords Beaconsfield and Salisbury drove wild a large part of the British people, and the two Earls now felt that the time had come when they might venture to disregard all good faith, pleading in excuse "*La patrie en danger*." In November, 1875, Lord Salisbury penned the infamous command to "induce him [the Ameer] to receive a temporary Embassy in his capital. It need not be publicly connected with the establishment of a permanent Mission within his dominions. There would be many advantages in ostensibly directing it to some object of smaller political interest, which it will not be difficult for your Excellency to find, or, if need be, to create." Every decent English citizen must feel his cheeks burn with shame when he reads of one of his Ministers condescending to treachery so mean as well as so wicked.

Lord Northbrook—being an Englishman and a gentleman—declined to "find" or to "create" an "ostensible pretext," under cover of which he might disregard the treaties and promises made by England. Refusing to act as Lord Salisbury's tool, he was compelled to resign, and a more supple Viceroy was appointed in the person of Lord Lytton (1876).

The Tory Government instructed Lord Lytton to demand from the Ameer for their Agents "undisputed access to the frontier positions" of his kingdom, and to insist that these agents would expect "becoming attention to their friendly counsels." Sir Lewis Pelly—who had just destroyed the native Government of Baroda—was chosen as the messenger to convey these peremptory demands, and no permission was, as usual, asked from the Ameer as to sending the Envoy, but he was requested simply to say where he would receive him. "The ostensible pretext" "created" by Lord Lytton was his own assumption of the Viceroyalty, and the new title of Empress so foolishly allowed to the Queen by Parliament. The Ameer—with the courtesy of suspicion—"gushed" in reply, but suggested that there was no need for the coming of any new Envoy, as the existing relations were sufficiently defined by former agreements.

As the lamb declined to be coaxed into offering himself for dinner, the wolf began to growl. Shere Ali was told that he would incur "grave responsibility" by his refusal, and as this veiled menace had no effect he was sharply informed that England might make an arrangement with

Russia "which might have the effect of wiping Afghanistan out of the map altogether;" that he was "an earthen pipkin between two iron pots;" and that "the British Government is able to pour an overwhelming force into Afghanistan, which could spread round him like a ring of iron, but if he became our enemy, it could break him as a reed." Wise and conciliatory language if we desired a good understanding! Nevertheless, it was well chosen if we sought "to create" an "ostensible pretext" for a declaration of war.

Meantime Lord Lytton was preparing for the invasion of Afghanistan. While messengers were passing backwards and forwards to Cabul, the Viceroy was arranging for permanent barracks at Quettah, massing soldiers there and building a bridge across the Indus ready for the passage of troops (November, 1876). Stores were gathered, troops collected, and the Maharajah of Oashmere stirred up to attack tribes subject to Shere Ali. Threatened by word and act, the Ameer gave way, consented to send an envoy to meet Sir Louis Pelly and nominated Noor Mahommed Khan, his Prime Minister, as his agent at the proposed Conference. Foiled in his first attempt to make war, the Viceroy was compelled to stand by his own proposition and to send Sir Louis Pelly to meet the Ameer's envoy. Sir Louis was supplied with two treaties, a public and a private one, the private one so narrowing down and guarding the promises made in the public one that they were rendered almost nugatory. The Envoys met at Peshawur in January, 1877. The account of the interview can only be read with shame. Noor Mahommed asked, what "if this Viceroy should make an agreement and a successor should say 'I am not bound by it?'" Again: were "all the agreements and treaties from the time of Sir John Lawrence and the late Ameer up to the time of Lord Northbrook and the present Ameer, invalid and annulled?" Sir Louis Pelly fenced and equivocated, but no answer was possible to the sad, straightforward challenge of the Afghan Envoy. Noor Mahommed then made a long and elaborate statement, recalling the former pledges of the English Government, and concluding with a prayer not to urge the establishment of British officers and so "abrogate the former treaties and agreements." A month later Sir Louis Pelly gave his answer, under written instructions from Lord Lytton. This melancholy State Document asserts that the 7th article of

the Treaty of 1857 had "nothing whatever to do with the matters now under consideration" (!) and that all treaties existing between us and Afghanistan being old, they "afforded no basis for further negotiation." When we remember that the Tory Government posed as upholders of the treaty obligations of 1856 in Europe, it is interesting to learn that treaty obligations of 1855 and 1857 in Asia were too old to be of any binding force. It was next alleged that the "utterances" of previous Viceroys had not "the force of a Treaty"; yet surely the promises of England's highest Asian representatives ought to be held sacred. But Sir Louis Pelly actually stated: "His Excellency the Viceroy instructs me to inform your Excellency plainly that the British Government neither recognises nor has recognised, the obligation of these promises." Alas for our national honor! Alas for our lost good faith! What more could the most treacherous nation do than repudiate all pledges given by its representatives? The whole tone of the answer was rough, menacing, provocative, and Noor Mahommed, long ill, died in the hopeless attempt to reason with the peremptory Envoy of England. The Ameer, anxious at all risks to preserve our friendship, hearing of Noor Mahommed's serious illness, despatched another Envoy to Peshawur with instructions to yield to any demand that might be made. But submission was not what Lord Lytton desired. He telegraphed to Sir Louis Pelly to close the Conference, adding that if any new Envoy had arrived, all negotiations with him were to be refused. At the same time Lord Lytton recalled our agent in Cabul, and broke off all diplomatic communication with the Ameer. And this was deliberately done in order to forestall the undesired submission of Shere Ali to our unjustifiable demands.

Meanwhile in Europe our antagonism to Russia had been plainly shewn. We had made a grant of six millions to thwart her; we had summoned troops from India to fight her; we had called out our Reserves. Russia probably thought that if Indian troops were to fight in Europe, she might as well find them employment nearer home, and—very probably to embarrass us, or to feel her way—she despatched a mission to Cabul. Not very willingly, apparently, Shere Ali received the Russian Mission; but the "earthen pipkin" may have thought it wise to make friends with one of the "iron pots," as the other was threatening to break him. Whether he

desired friendship with Russia or not matters little, for the Treaty of Berlin was signed, and the Russian mission immediately withdrew. While the Russians were at Cabul, a message arrived from Lord Lytton, stating that Sir Neville Chamberlain would "immediately" visit the Ameer; the messenger arrived to find the Ameer mourning the death of his best loved son and heir, Abdoolah Jan. Reckless of the father's pain, Lord Lytton declared that any delay in receiving the British Mission would be regarded as "open hostility." The Russian Envoy left Cabul on August 25th. Abdoolah Jan had died on August 17th, and as the Russians had left before Lord Lytton's first letter reached Cabul, there was no need to worry the unhappy Ameer during the forty days of mourning required by the custom of his country. But, cruelly pressed as he was, the Ameer did not, as has been pretended, refuse to receive the Mission. He only pleaded for the delay of a decent interval, and for outward courtesy. "I do not agree" he said "to the Mission arriving in this manner. It is as if they wish to disgrace me. I am a friend as before, and entertain no ill-will. The Russian envy has come, and has come with my permission. I am still afflicted with grief at the loss of my son, and have had no time to think over the matter." He declared that he would send for the Mission, that he believed a personal interview would be useful, and only asked that the decent delay during the mourning might be granted him, and that the mission might not seem to come by force, without his consent. Our own messenger, Gulam Hussein Khan, even sent word from Cabul that if the "Mission will await Ameer's permission, everything will be arranged. . . . If the Mission starts on 18th without waiting for the Ameer's permission, there would be no hope left for the renewal of friendship or communication." But Lord Lytton meant war, and did not desire to grant time for arrangement, so the Mission advanced to Ali Musjid before the forty days of mourning were expired, and was there stopped. It has been pretended that the Mission was repulsed with insult, but Major Cavagnari himself reported that the Afghan officer behaved "in a most courteous manner, and very favorably impressed both Colonel Jenkins and myself." Shere Ali wrote, complaining of the "hard words, repugnant to courtesy and politeness" used publicly to himself and to his chiefs. But

complaint was useless. An "ostensible pretext" had been created for war, and war was declared.

Public opinion at home had, meanwhile, been sedulously misled. The Gagging Act had silenced the Indian Press; the telegraphs were in the hands of the Government; news was sent home that the Afghans had fired on our Mission and had insulted our flag. The fiction set aflame the hot English pride, and the now admitted falsehood served its intended purpose. Our troops—prepared beforehand by Lord Lytton—advanced rapidly, the hill-tribes were bribed, and we marched triumphantly forward, overrunning Afghanistan.

It might have at least been supposed that a war begun avowedly to protect our interests would have been carried on with some regard to humanity. We loudly proclaimed that we had no quarrel with the Afghan nation; yet we burned their villages, destroyed their crops, stole their cattle, looted their homes, hanged their men as "rebels" if they resisted, while we drove out their women and children to perish in the snow. If thus we treat those with whom we have no quarrel, what distinction do we draw between our friends and our foes?

All the world knows how we hunted out Shere Ali to perish broken-hearted. How we raised a puppet Ameer in his stead. How against all warning, all prayer, we established our Mission. How our Envoy perished—as Shere Ali had predicted—and how Yakoob Khan was driven out as traitor to his own people. All the world has heard also of our revenge. How we marched into Afghanistan murdering as "rebels" all who loved their country and their freedom well enough to face us. How we hanged by the hundred the wicked "traitors" who defended their own homes. How we refused quarter to the flying, and "cut up" the stragglers who had been vile enough to resist the invaders. These horrors have been committed under the pretence that the Afghans were "rebels." Rebels to whom? Where there is no rightful claim to authority there can be no rebellion in resistance. Resistance to the invader is a duty that each man owes to his fatherland, and the war of self-defence, of defence of wife and child, of hearth and home, is a righteous—aye, the only righteous—war. In such war every soldier is a patriot; in such war every death is a martyrdom. The defence of the road to Cabul,

the battle of Charasiab, were episodes in such a war, and not in a rebellion. They were carried on by the regular Afghan army, led by its own officers, fighting honorably and gallantly. The Afghans were defeated, and contrary to the rules of civilised warfare, all quarter was refused, all "prisoners taken in fight" were shot. Then General Roberts issued a proclamation offering rewards "for any person who has fought against British troops since Sept. 3rd; larger rewards offered for rebel officers of Afghan army." Again: "Amnesty not extended to soldiers or civilians . . . who were guilty of instigating the troops and people to oppose the British troops. Such persons will be treated without mercy as rebels." Under this bloodthirsty proclamation the religious leaders of the people have been pitilessly murdered; the military leaders when found have shared the same fate. The *Statesman* gives the crimes of some of those who were thus killed:—

"Muhammad Aslam Khan, chief magistrate of Cabul, issued a proclamation calling upon all true Muhammadans to go out and fight the British.

"Sultan Aziz, a Barukzye of the Royal blood, bore a standard at Kharasiab.

"Kwaja Nazir, a city moola, gave his followers a standard to be borne as a sign of a holy war."

An unknown number of prisoners—reckoned by hundreds—have been found guilty of defending their country and have been hanged. Well may Frederic Harrison cry aloud in burning indignation: "Let the old watch words be erased from all English flags: *Dieu et mon droit*—*Honi soit*—and the rest, are stale enough. We will have a new imperial standard for the new Empress of Asia, and emblazon on it—*Imperium et Barbaries*."

In dealing with these executions, the *Daily News* has a letter so horrible, so forcibly in contrast with the humanity for which it is honorably remarkable, that one can only imagine that it is written by one of General Roberts's staff officers, and printed by the *Daily News* to show the spirit prevailing in our Afghan army. The correspondent first tells how some villages were ransacked, and all disbanded Afghan soldiers were seized, and how on one occasion eighty-nine were brought in. Of these forty were released, as they were able to show that they had not been engaged against the British troops, but any who had been at Cabul during

the outbreak, or who had "returned later to fight against us," were hanged, and forty-nine were thus murdered in cold blood on November 10, 11, and 12. The letter then goes on:—

"Our great regret is that, while we are sending the rank and file to the gallows, the ringleaders are still at large. Such poor specimens of humanity as these marched daily to execution are of but little account in our sight, and will not be missed in a country like this; whereas the execution of leading men—as Kushdil Khan, Nek Mahomed, or Mahomed Jan—would have a wholesome effect on the whole tribe of intriguers who have brought Yakooob Khan so low. Unfortunately we have not these sirdars in our hands; they are still living, and capable of further evil-doing."

It seems impossible to believe that these words were written by an English soldier. Mahomed Jan is the gallant leader of the Afghan resistance; he is a soldier who has fought bravely and honorably against us. In the old days such a foe, when defeated, would have been treated with the respect due to a brave man, but the wild beasts who dishonor English manhood in Afghanistan long for the moment when defeat shall enable them to strangle him. The result of this butchery is seen in the now general rising in Afghanistan, and it is not likely that the Afghans, driven to madness by our murder of prisoners, will show any more mercy to our wounded or to any prisoners who may fall into their hands than we have shown to them.

If our conduct towards men defending their country has been criminal, what shall we say of our conduct towards the non-combatants? These, at least, are held sacred in wars carried on by civilised powers. But the word "civilised" is forgotten by our army in Afghanistan, and non-combatants share the fate of other rebels. Sword and halter are not enough—the torch is also called in to assist in the march of civilisation. By the light of flaming villages may be traced the blessings of the Empress of India's advancing rule. While the combatants dangle in the air from the gallows, the non-combatants freeze to death on the ground. We have burned villages when the thermometer registered 20° below freezing point, and, while we carefully sheltered our soldiers in thick tents, we have driven out women and children, houseless and foodless, to perish in the awful cold. Nine villages were thus destroyed in a single day. In this way do we discharge,

to use Lord Lytton's words, "our high duties to God and man as the greatest civilizing Power:" in this way do Bishops in our House of Lords vote for the spreading of the Gospel of Christ.

General Roberts may well lay claim to the succession of the title of "Butcher," borne by the Duke of Cumberland of Scotch renown, and when he returns to his welcome at Windsor, her Imperial Majesty might bestow on him, with his other decorations, a new coat of arms, emblazoned with a drumhead and halter, crest a scull, supporters a frozen woman clasping a child, and a strangled Mahommedan mollah.

Well may General Roberts silence all independent correspondence. Well may Lord Lytton gag the Indian Press, and manipulate Indian telegrams. Yet even in the few facts that creep out from time to time England is learning how her name is being soiled, her honor tarnished by blood-thirsty cruelty, by stony-hearted recklessness of human pain. From out the darkness that veils Afghanistan moans of suffering reach us, and we shrink in horror from the work which is being done in our name. These frozen women cry aloud against us. These starved babes wail out our condemnation. These stiffened corpses, these fire-blackened districts, these snow-covered, blood-stained plains, appeal to Humanity to curse us. Englishmen, with wives nestled warm in your bosoms, remember these Afghan husbands, maddened by their wrongs. Englishwomen, with babes smiling on your breasts, think of these sister-women, bereft of their little ones. The Afghan loves wife and child as ye do. He also is husband and father. He also has his love, his pain, and his despair. To him also the home is happy, the hearth is sacred. To you he cries from his desolated fireside, from his ravaged land. In your hands is his cause. You only can deliver him. And his deliverance can come only through the ballot-box. Peace can return only when the "wicked earl" has fallen. The message that carries the news of the defeat of the Tory Government will carry peace, liberty, and hope to South Africa, to India, and to Afghanistan. Will England be loyal to her love of truth and her hatred of oppression, or has she begun to tread the path of disregard of all duty, of contempt for all morality, the path that inevitably leads to national decay?