RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, 
dated 5 February 1858;—for,

"COPIES of the Petition of the Inhabitants of Calcutta for the Recall of 
the Governor General; together with any Observations which he may 
have made thereon."

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East India House, 
11 February 1858.

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JAMES C. MELVILLE.

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(Sir Harry Verney.)

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Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed, 
12 February 1858.
PETITION OF THE INHABITANTS OF CALCUTTA

Copies of the Petition of the Inhabitants of Calcutta for the Recall of the Governor-General; together with any Observations which he may have made thereon.

Home Department, No. 130 of 1857.
To the Honourable the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

Honourable Sirs,

The accompanying petition to the Queen, praying for the recall of the Right Honourable the Governor-General, has been communicated to us; but indirectly, and not from the petitioners.

2. We transmit it to your Honourable Court with marginal notes indicating the chief errors of fact put forth in it.

3. We have abstained from comment upon the opinions and deductions which it expresses.

We have, &c.  
(signed)  
Canning.  
J. Darin.  
J. Low.  
B. Peacock.

Fort William,  
10 November 1857.

To the Queen’s Most Excellent Majesty.

The humble Petition of the under-signed Christian Inhabitants of Calcutta and of the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal.

Most humbly showeth,

That Your Majesty’s petitioners humbly solicit your gracious consideration to the present deplorable state of this country, and of Your Majesty’s most loyal Christian subjects residents in this Presidency.

It is not unknown to Your Majesty that now nearly all Behar (1), one of the first, and all Oudh the last, acquired of the territories of the East India Company in India, are in the possession of the rebels; that in every (2) district, English men, women, and children have been foully and treacherously murdered with every circumstance of horror; that almost all the British and Christian population is in mourning, the English name and reputation are lowered, commerce and trade are paralysed; agriculture is interrupted, ruin and famine are impending over those who have escaped massacre, the treasuries of the East India Company are pillaged and exhausted, their credit is wholly gone, and their securities are so depreciated as to be almost unsaleable at any rate of discount (3).

It is the deliberate conviction of Your Majesty’s petitioners that all these calamities, the result of the spread of the mutiny, are directly attributable to the blindness, weakness, and incapacity of the local Government of India, of which the present Governor-General is the responsible head; and in support of this charge Your Majesty’s petitioners submit the following facts.

It is now clear from the papers relating to the mutiny produced to both Houses of Parliament by Your Majesty’s command,
command in the last Session of Parliament, that the Government of India had sufficient warning (4) in the months of January and February of this year, that the four sepoy regiments stationed at Barrackpore had formed the design of murdering their officers, and marching on Calcutta, distant only 16 miles from Barrackpore, for the purpose of massacring all Christians, and pillaging the treasuries and city, and that they were in treasonable communication with the disaffected regiments at Berhampore. It is also now well known that the Government had numerous other clear intimations given them of the spirit and mutinous designs (5) of their native army in other parts of India, both by their officers, and by the incidentary fires which were nightly breaking out at Umballah, and other stations; and it is further a fact (6) that certain of the officers who gave such warnings were reprimanded for having so done.

Not the slightest preparations were then made by the Governor-General to meet the impending (7) danger, nor was any warning given to the inhabitants of Calcutta, who were thus left nightly in the danger of being surprised by massacre, which in magnitude and horror, would have surpassed all in the annals of this country, against which any such warning would have enabled them instantly to have protected themselves, and from which nothing, humanly speaking, but the indecision of the mutineers and accident preserved them.

The only European force (8) which there then was in Calcutta to oppose to these four sepoy regiments, to the Calcutta native militia, who were equally disaffected, to the bazaar rabble, who, out of a native population of about six hundred thousand, would have joined the mutineers by thousands, and to the hordes of Dacoits, and other professional robbers, who would have crowded from all sides to the plunder of so wealthy a city, was one wing of Your Majesty's 53rd Regiment, stationed in Fort William, a fort which requires upwards of ten thousand (9) men for its full garrison, and where they would have had to protect themselves against as well the attack from without, as the treachery of the native garrison within, and so could have afforded no assistance whatever to the inhabitants of a city extended over several miles.

The design of the mutineers, as has since been ascertained, was to seize the fort and turn its guns on the shipping in the port, so as to sink them, and take away all means of flight. Had they succeeded, not one Christian would have escaped massacre.

The symptoms of spreading disaffection continued; the sepoys, determined on a pretext for revolt, refused explanation or satisfaction on the subject of the cartridges; the 19th Native Infantry at Berhampore, on the 26th February, broke into open mutiny, seized their arms, menaced their officers, and were subsequently marched to Barrackpore, where, on the 31st of March, having been paid in full, together with the hire of their carts, cattle, and boats, they were disbanded, and sent to swell the ranks of your Majesty's enemies in the Upper Provinces. (10).

On the 30th day of March, a private of the 34th N. I. at Barrackpore fired at and wounded the adjutant, and also the European sergeant-major of that regiment, in the presence of a guard and native officer, and of a number
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of the other sepoys of the same regiment. With one single exception, none moved to save their officers or arrest the culprit. As the punishment of this offence, the assassin and the native officer were executed, and their accessories, who stood by, were, with the other men of the seven companies then at Barrackpore, paid off and dismissed in like manner as had been the 19th Regiment.

Your Majesty’s Government and the Court of Directors were then informed by the Governor-General that “discipline was restored throughout the Bengal army,” and your Majesty’s 84th regiment, which had been brought up from Pegu to assist at the disbanding of the 19th regiment native infantry, was ordered to embark for Rangoon.

After this, and until the seizure of Delhi, with the exception of issuing certain proclamations, calculated to encourage the mutineers by proving to them the blindness and weakness of the Government, nothing whatever was done to arrest the mutiny (11), and its existence was consistently ignored in the face of every evidence.

On the 10th of May, the massacre took place at Meerut, and on the 11th that at Delhi, the horrors of which it is unnecessary to dwell on to Your Majesty. Delhi was reized by a number of regiments of native infantry and the 3d Native Cavalry. In Oudh, on the 19th of May, three native regiments went over to the mutineers at Delhi; the whole of that country was clearly on the brink of revolt (12), and Sir Henry Lawrence was fortifying himself in Lucknow to meet siege, in which he has since fallen.

On the 21st May, while matters stood thus, the British and other residents of Calcutta forming the Trades Association, the masonic fraternity, and also the French inhabitants, presented their several addresses to the Governor-General, offering their services generally.

The Governor-General in his reply informed them that he had no apprehension whatever of any disturbance in Calcutta, and expressed his regret that in the address of the Trades Association, they should have assumed the existence of disaffection in the sepoy army generally, and so done an injustice to the army of Bengal, as well as those of the other Presidencies.

On the 25th of May, the European inhabitants generally came forward and tendered their services as volunteers to the Government; but this offer was ungraciously declined, and the Secretary of the Home Department of the Government of India was directed by the Governor-General to inform them (13), that “the mischief caused by a passing and groundless panic had been arrested, and that there was every reason to hope, that in the course of a few days, tranquillity and confidence would be restored throughout the Presidency.”

At this time rebellion and mutiny were breaking out openly on every side; Christian men and women were being murdered and mangled on every road and in all parts (14) throughout India. The villagers and other marauders were joining the mutineers in their work of pillage and bloodshed. The three remaining sepoy regiments at Barrackpore, of whose murderous design the Government had for months been possessed, were allowed still to retain their arms, and were only waiting their opportunity.

In consequence of the Governor-General’s replies to those addresses (15), no volunteer force was then enrolled.

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In the following month the inhabitants of Calcutta formed voluntary associations for their defence, and these were afterwards embodied into the Volunteer Guard, to whom the safety of the city has been since entrusted and owing. Had the Government accepted the first offer, the number enrolled would have been from 3,000 to 4,000. In consequence of the discouragement offered by the Government the Volunteer Guard numbers about 800.

On the deposition of the King of Oudh, in last year, his army, numbering about 50,000 men, was disbanded, with the exception of about 12,000, who were taken into the service of the East India Company, and retained in the kingdom of Oudh. The population of that kingdom is notoriously among the most turbulent in India, and all habitually carry arms. The country is studded with the fords and jungle fastnesses of the zemindars and chiefs.

In consequence of the Crimean campaign there was then remaining of Your Majesty's troops for the garrisons of Lucknow and Cawnpore, and for the maintenance of the East India Company's rule against the wide-spread discontent of a newly annexed province of such character and extent, against the intrigues of the deposed royal family, the disbanded soldiery, and the possible mutiny of those who had been lately transferred, only Your Majesty's 32nd Regiment.

Your Majesty's petitioners submit that the continuance of such a state of things was an invitation to and a main cause of revolt, and that it was the clear duty of the Governor-General to have provided against it, by representing to Your Majesty's Government the imminent risk of such a position, and the absolute necessity there was for sending more of Your Majesty's troops thither on the conclusion of the Russian war, and in the mean time to have removed Oudh troops from that kingdom, and supply their place by regiments raised in other districts (16), and having no sympathies with the royal family and people of Oudh.

This course had been adopted on the annexation of the Punjab, and that precedent could have been followed without difficulty in Oudh. Various suggestions (17) to that effect were made at the time to the Government of India, but so far as Your Majesty's petitioners are aware, no precaution whatever was taken for the security of Oudh.

On the 4th June the native regiments of Cawnpore mutinied. The siege of the barracks, containing a small body of European soldiers, and the Christian population of the place, men, women, and children, was carried on till the 26th, when they surrendered on terms, having exhausted their food, water, and ammunition. The men were massacred then, and the women and children, to the number of upwards of 140, on the 15th of July. During the whole duration of the siege, though the danger of the garrison of Cawnpore was well known, no attempt (18) was made to relieve it, the Government of India had not any force to send, the troops at their disposal being merely sufficient for the protection of Calcutta, Benares, Allahabad, and the other river stations.

If the Governor-General had in the month of May armed and embodied the Christian inhabitants of Calcutta, for the protection of that city, it would have placed at his disposal, for the relief of Cawnpore, the whole, or nearly all, of the European force in Calcutta (19).

That such a volunteer force would have been fully equal to the recall of the Governor-General.

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not one more soldier could have been sent away for the relief of Cawnpore. If all the garrison of Fort William could have been spared, there were no means of sending one more man to Cawnpore in time for its relief.

(29) There is no similarity between the two cases, the rebels at Cawnpore having cavalry and many guns, which the Dinapore mutineers had not. But in fact no larger force than actually reached Cawnpore could by any possibility have got there in time.

(21) This is altogether inaccurate. On the 5th of June the Resident reported that Jung Bahadour had offered troops, that he had taken upon himself the responsibility of accepting the offer, and that 3,000 Goorkhas, in detachments of 1,000 each, were about to march towards Lucknow, Benares, and Patna. This was not approved, and the Resident was told on the 15th of June to recall the troops if they had not left Nepaul, and if they had left it, to tell Jung Bahadour that they would be released as soon as possible. The Goorkhas had not left Nepaul, and were recalled. Afterwards, on the 23d June, the Resident was directed to ask for 5,000 Goorkhas to be sent to Oudh, and these were at once given. As the Goorkhas were in the first instance offered only on the 5th June, the day on which the mutiny broke out at Cawnpore, it is obvious that they could not have got near that place before it capitated, the distance from the frontier of Nepaul to Cawnpore being 350 miles; and as they had no guns, and none could be supplied to them, their marching unsupported across Oudh was out of the question.

(22) The facts are as follows:

Two proposals were made to the Governor-General with a view to the disarming of the sepoys at Dinapore. The first was that Major-general Lloyd should be directed to disarm any at once. The Governor-General declined to do; there being at that station three native regiments at nearly their full strength, and one weak European regiment, and the temper of the former not having shown itself to be such as to make so risky an experiment necessary.

The second proposal was that the detachments of Her Majesty's 5th Regiment, then on its way up the river, should be halted at Dinapore, to disarm them. This the Governor-General declined to order. Any delay of the 5th Regiment was above all things to be avoided. Major-general Havelock was then at Cawnpore preparing to cross the Ganges, but with a force necessarily very inadequate to the work before him; he had need of every man to the protection of Calcutta has been proved by the effectual manner in which its peace has been since assured by a far smaller number. And that the relief of Cawnpore might have been effected by a small force, has been shown by the relief of Arrah (20) by a body of English soldiers numbering less than 200. Had a further force seemed necessary, the Government could have embodied the British sailors in the port, to the number of from 2,000 to 3,000.

After the seizure of Delhi, the aid of a body of Goorkhas was offered to the Governor-General by Jung Bahadour, the minister of the Nepaul Government, and at first accepted. The advanced guard was sent forward, and had nearly reached Lucknow about the end of May (21), when a despatch from Calcutta, informing them there was no need of their services, sent them back home, which they had no sooner reached than they were asked to return. They again started, but arrived too late. Had this force remained in the first instance, before all Oudh had risen, they would have been sufficient to have relieved Cawnpore, checked revolt in Oudh, and so prevented the siege of Lucknow.

To the weakness and vacillation of the Government of India and its Council are due the massacre of Cawnpore, and the sufferings of the garrison of Lucknow, and of its Christian population, comprising among them hundreds of women and children.

In the months of June and July mutinies and massacres took place at Futteghur, Seal Kot, Jhansi, Gwalior, Nee much, Sultanpoor, Sasnee, Hatras, Shojehanpoor, and other places. And that, which at first appeared to be a military mutiny, was on all sides assuming the dimensions of a general native insurrection.

On the 20th day of July, a deputation of British merchants and others interested in the safety of Behar, waited on the Governor-General, and having represented to his Lordship the fatal consequences which would ensue in case of the mutiny of the sepoys regiments stationed at the river station of Dinapore, prayed that orders should be issued for the disarming of those regiments. It was suggested to his Lordship that Your Majesty's 10th regiment, also stationed at Dinapore, should be employed for that purpose, and that such further force as should be considered necessary might be supplied from Your Majesty's 5th Regiment, which was then on its way up the country by the river, and would thus have been detained for this purpose but a few hours.

The Governor-General refused (22) to do so, and stated as his reasons, that one of those sepoy regiments, the 40th N. I., had always had a high reputation, and that he would not consent to delay, even for an hour, the progress of any of Your Majesty's troops.

On the 25th day of July, those three native regiments mutinied, and went away with their arms. The result of this mutiny was the revolt of Behar, the siege of Arrah, and the almost total destruction of a detachment of Your Majesty's troops.

These additional calamities had not occurred, if the still continuing confidence of the Governor-General in the native army had not prevented him from listening to the warnings given him, and disarming these troops.
FOR THE RECALL OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

On the 13th of June the Governor-General personally introduced into Council, where it was at once read three times and passed, an Act placing the press of India, English and native, wholly at the mercy of Government.

The Governor-General then stated (23) that he had received, up to that time, every support from the English press, and that it was not his intention to use the Act to prevent fair discussion, or curtail the liberty of the British press. The passing of that Act caused great alarm and offence in the English and Christian community, of whom many were desirous of protesting strongly against it. They were however induced by reliance on the assurance of the Governor-General, and their desire not to embarrass the Government at such a crisis, not then to do so.

That Act has been since so systematically used by the Governor-General and his Council for the intimidation (24) of the press, the suppression of the truth, and of every discussion or expression of opinion unfavourable or unpleasant to Government, and even for the prevention of all criticism on the conduct, or misconduct, of Government officials, that there is not now remaining one newspaper in this Presidency which dares to publish here that which is the opinion of all British India as to the conduct of its Government, and various of its officers.

Your Majesty’s petitioners submit that such a proceeding was uncalled for, despotic, repugnant to British feeling, and most mischievous in a country where, as here, the free expression of opinion through a public press is the only check on a narrowly constituted and arbitrary Government, and in many instances, as has been often acknowledged by the most eminent English statesmen that have ruled this country, has proved a most valuable guide and source of information to them. The only excuse for such severity, namely, seditionist writing, was not pretended to exist as regarded the English press, though it was charged against the native press. Your Majesty’s petitioners submit, that they were entitled to have the distinction drawn between loyalty (25) and sedition, that the Act, if necessary for the native press, should have been applied and confined to it; and that whatever aggravation so hateful an invasion of the liberty of the press is capable of, it has received from the weak 73. A 4 and

man who could be pushed up to his support: and it was want of numbers, which later, and after a most gallant and successful advance, compelled him to retire again to the right bank of the river. The want of force at Cawnpore was a pressing certainty. The urgency of an immediate disarming at Dinapore was by no means certain. For this reason the Governor-General declined to engage himself to take the course suggested.

But the only measure which in this state of things could prudently be adopted in Calcutta had been already taken. Five days before the deputation expressed their views to the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief had, at the desire of the Governor-General, informed Major-general Lloyd that it, when Her Majesty's 4th Regiment reached Dinapore he saw reason to distrust the native troops, and thought it desirable to disarm them, he would be at liberty to disembark the 4th Regiment for that purpose. He was further told that it was imperatively necessary that the detention of the regiment should be as short as possible. Sir Patrick Grant's letter is appended. (See Appendix A.) It was written by his own hand, and marked "confidential;" the necessity of keeping such instructions secret being manifest. It is true that the three native regiments subsequently munitioned; but it is also true that the mutiny did not take place until the attempt to disarm them was made. Unhappily it was made feebly and ineffectually.

(25) The Governor-General did not state this. A copy of the speech with which the Governor-General introduced the Bill to the Legislative Council is appended. (See Appendix B.)

(24) No examples are referred to; and the Act has not been used for the intimidation of the press, or for the suppression of the truth, the only instance in which a license has been withdrawn by the Government of India from any English newspaper, and that only for a few days, is one in which an important measure of the Government was signified in language directly and obviously calculated to weaken its authority, and to bring it into hatred and contempt among all classes of Her Majesty's subjects. The reasons which led the Government of India to propose a law for restricting the press, and the Legislature to pass it, as well as the subsequent proceedings of the Government under the law, have been reported to the Honourable Court.

(26) This seems to assume that the Press Act was directed against sedition only. Such is not the case. It was passed at a time when writings upon certain subjects, although perfectly loyal and temperate in intention and expression, might work more mischief than the most
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most seditious libel; and when the lives of Englishmen depended upon the direction in which the minds of native chiefs or functionaries might at the moment be swayed. Nor has that time yet passed away.

(26) Granting that the movement is avowedly one of race and religion on the part of those who have engaged in it, yet these form but a small proportion of the native population of India, the great bulk of which has continued loyal. The Act itself makes no distinction, but gives the power to the Executive Government to except any person or classes of persons from its operation whenever or wherever it shall be put in force.

(27) This protest has been received and answered. A copy of the protest, and of the answer given to it, is appended. (See Appendix C.) This answer sets forth fully the views of the Governor-General in Council upon the question raised.

(28) These circular orders are simply directions to civil authorities as to the mode of dealing with mutineers and deserters who are brought before them. The principle laid down is briefly this, that the civil officer shall, as a general rule, deal only with those who are found with arms in their possession, or are charged with a specific act of rebellion, or who belonged to a regiment which killed its officers, or committed any other sanguinary outrage. All other mutineers and deserters apprehended by the civil power are to be made over for trial to the military authorities. No forgiveness is extended by these orders to any mutineer or deserter. All such persons have been and will be tried either by the civil or by the military authorities, and punished according to the measure of their guilt. A copy of the orders is appended. (See Appendix D.)

(29) The orders neither prescribe nor encourage lenity to any conspirator or mutineer, but every endeavour will be made to discriminate between the innocent and the guilty, and to save those who have hitherto distinguished themselves from their comrades by fidelity to their officers and to the State.

(30) The orders were not published by the Government, but circulated in the usual official manner, for the guidance of public officers. They were published without authority in a Calcutta newspaper.

and wanton confounding of Your Majesty's loyal subjects with the seditious and rebellious. And it is further the belief of Your Majesty's petitioners that if there has since appeared anything offensive to Government in the press of this Presidency, it has been in a great measure owing to the passing of the said Act.

On the 12th day of September, a Bill was passed for the registration and licensing of arms and ammunition. Notwithstanding the broad line of distinction which was afforded to the Legislature by the fact of the present movement being avowedly one of race and religion (26), the Governor-General and his Council refused to draw any such distinction, and the Act was made applicable to the Christian as well as native races.

A numerous signed (27) protest against this Act, as both highly offensive and dangerous, has been sent in by the Christian population of Calcutta to the Governor-General in Council, and similar protests from other parts of India are being now signed.

The Governor-General in Council, (who had censured and repudiated the proclamation of Mr. Colvin, the Governor of the North Western Provinces, issued in the month of May, when the extent of the mutiny was not clearly known, by which he had offered pardon to all mutineers who should lay down their arms), issued circular orders (28) on the 31st of July, addressed to all the civil authorities of the Presidency, and containing directions as to the mode of dealing with mutineers who should be brought before them for trial, which amount in fact to the declaration of an amnesty to all mutineers, except those who should have taken an actual and active part in the murder of their officers and others.

If it be borne in mind that the mutineers, to whom this almost indiscriminate forgiveness is to be extended, had of their own free will entered the service of the East India Company, with which their connexion was of an hereditary nature, that they were highly paid and pensioned, pampered, and indulged to a degree known to no other army in the world; that they had in mere wantonness and lust of blood and plunder mutinied without a grievance, had banded in one general conspiracy, massacred their officers, and their wives and families, with every circumstance of outrage and dishonour, and declared a war of extermination against all Christians in India, then your petitioners submit to Your Majesty that such lenity (29) towards any portion of those conspirators is misplaced, impolitic, and iniquitous, and is calculated to excite contempt and invite attack on every side, by showing to the world the Government of India so powerless to punish mutiny, or so indifferent to the sufferings which have been endured by the victims of the rebellion, that it allows the blood of Your Majesty's English and Christian subjects to flow in torrents, and their wives, sisters, and daughters to be outraged and dishonoured, without adequate retribution. And Your Majesty's petitioners submit further, that the publication (30) of these orders at such a time, while still the mutiny and rebellion were raging, could have no other effect than to produce a prolongation of the struggle, by holding out to the mutineers the prospect of being received
received into mercy whenever they shall please to desist from fighting against the Government.

Notwithstanding the numerous well-known instances of treachery on the part of Mahomedan officers of the East India Company during the present insurrection, of which Your Majesty's petitioners may here instance the case of Mr. Tucker, judge of Futtehpore, betrayed to death by the Mahomedan deputy collector of that station, and Mr. Robertson, judge of Bareilly, betrayed in like manner by another Mahomedan official, the Governor-General has continued to display his confidence in that class of men by lately sanctioning the appointment of one Amer Ally (31), a Mahomedan, to be Deputy Commissioner of Patna, a place of great importance and trust; and also the appointments of other Mahomedans to other places of trust, to the great offence and discouragement of the Christian population of this Presidency.

The Governor-General and his Council have taken numerous (32) occasions to express their sympathy with the native races, to the disparagement of Your Majesty's loyal Christian subjects. Lately on the approach of the Mahomedan festival of Mohorun, the Governor-General in Council permitted the Commissioner of Police for the town of Calcutta to offer to its Christian inhabitants the gratuitous insult of having conspicuously inserted for several days an advertisement in the Calcutta papers, warning them that any of them who interfered with the native religious ceremonies would render himself liable to punishment. There was not at that time the slightest ground for apprehending the existence of any such intention, and notwithstanding those advertisements not the least disturbance took place.

In the month of February last, a memorial was presented to the Governor-General in Council by a number (33) of the principal holders of the 4 per cent. promissory notes of the East India Company, praying that the Government would allow subscriptions to the then recently opened 5 per cent. loan to be paid one-half in cash and the remainder in the 4 per cent. promissory notes. By granting this prayer any sum of money could have been then procured (34). It was refused. In July following the Government issued a notification that subscriptions to that loan would be received in that manner. But their vacillation had so destroyed their credit that hardly any subscriptions were received, and they could now hardly obtain the required amount at any rate.

(31) Mooneshu Ameer Ali was appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to be a deputy magistrate in the Patna division, and specially to assist the Commissioner. The circumstances under which the appointment was made, and the results of it, are fully explained in a letter from Mr. Samuels, the Commissioner of the Patna division, No. 1167, dated the 6th October. See Appendix (E.)

(32) No man can suppose that the civil administration of the country can be carried on without the help of native agency; and no just or sensible man will proscribe the whole Mahomedan community of India (many of whom have rendered signal service to the Government at a time when their loyalty was put to the severest trial), for the treachery of some Mahomedan officials in the North-Western Provinces.

(33) The Governor-General in Council has taken no occasion to express his sympathy with the native races to the disparagement of Her Majesty's Christian subjects. On the occasion alluded to, the Commissioner of Police, an officer under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, issued a notice, the simple and proper object of which was to prevent the serious consequences likely to arise, at a time of excited public feeling, from interference by Europeans with the native processions usual at the time of the Mahomedan festival. There was ground for apprehending that such interference was intended, and the fact that not the least disturbance took place does not at any rate prove that the precaution taken by the Commissioner was unnecessary. That it should have been thought that insulting indication of the very state of excited feeling which it appeared prudent to guard against.

(34) This memorial was signed by 36 persons, of whom 35 are natives, and one an Armenian. Most of them are brokers and dealers in Company's paper.
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When the notifications of the 9th and 27th July were issued the position of affairs was altogether changed. The mutiny had spread, the money market was daily becoming tighter, a falling off in the revenue had become certain, and on its thus being unquestionable that more favourable terms than 5 per cent. would be necessary to secure subscriptions to a loan, the arrangement for taking 4, 4½, and 3½ per cent. paper in part subscription to the 5 per cent. loan was resolved on, in preference to opening a 6 per cent. loan, chiefly out of consideration to the then holders of Government securities. That the credit of the Government was destroyed is proved not to be the case by the fact that cash subscriptions have been received since the 21st July to the amount of 27,361,320, while the transfers have amounted to 96,029,710, and this notwithstanding that the subscriptions in Calcutta have been greatly curtailed by the bank of Bengal having, for a considerable period, refused any accommodation in the way of fresh loans. At the present date (39th November) the loan has reached three millions sterling.

(35) The Governor-General in Council has at no time refused to acknowledge the existence of mutiny in these corps and at those places where it existed.

(36) No such policy has been at any time pursued towards rebels or mutineers. Measures for the condign and swiftest punishment of rebels and mutineers were passed immediately after the first outbreak, and have been uniformly carried out with just severity.

(37) It is not stated by the petitioners, nor is it known to the Governor-General in Council, what rights of Her Majesty’s British and Christian subjects, or of any other loyal subjects of Her Majesty, have been attacked.

(38) Such has been the policy of the Government from the commencement of the outbreak, and it has been carried out sternly and consistently in every part of India. But the Governor-General in Council has felt it an imperative duty to discourage, and as far as possible to repress, that feeling of indiscriminate revenge which would confound the innocent with the guilty, and hold every Mahomedan and Hindoo in India responsible for the crimes committed by a comparatively small number of them.

(39) The Governor of India is not a representative Government, but it may safely be said that of all classes of the community in India, or elsewhere within Her Majesty’s dominions, there is no class which enjoys greater facility of useful and honest communications, wishes, or complaints known, and of obtaining a ready hearing.

The Governor-General, by pertinaciously refusing (35) at first to acknowledge the existence of mutiny, by the subsequent feebleness and vacillation of his measures, when it could no longer be denied, by pursuing an ill-timed and hopeless (36) policy of conciliation towards the rebels and mutineers, and by his wanton attacks on the valued rights of Your Majesty’s British (37) and Christian subjects in this country, has, as Your Majesty’s petitioners believe, been a principal cause of the great calamities which have desolated this land, has strengthened the hands of the enemy, weakened or destroyed the respect before entertained for the name of Englishman in the East, imperilled British rule, exposed the capital of British India to massacre and pillage, excited the contempt of all parties, estranged from the Government of India a large and loyal body of Christians, and in every way proved himself unfit to be further continued in his high trust.

Your Majesty’s petitioners submit, that the only policy by which British rule, and the lives, honour, and properties of Your Majesty’s Christian subjects in this country can in future be secured, is a policy of such vigorous (38) repression and punishment, as shall convince the native races of India, who can be influenced effectually by power and fear alone, of the hopelessness of insurrection against British rule, even when aided by every circumstance of treachery, surprise, and cruelty, and may teach them henceforward to respect the inviolability of English and Christian men and women by the recollection of the just retribution for foul and horrid murder and outrage that their countrymen have exacted. And it is the firm conviction of Your Majesty’s petitioners, that the adoption of any milder policy would be regarded as springing wholly from conscious weakness, and will lead at no distant day to the repetition of the same scenes, and endanger British India.

Your Majesty’s petitioners, who, wholly unrepresented (39) as they are in the Government of this country, have no other refuge or resource against the dangers which threaten them except in the gracious interference of Your Majesty in their behalf, humbly solicit Your Majesty’s consideration to the facts which they have ventured to bring before
FOR THE RECALL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Your Majesty in this their petition, and pray that if, on investigation, the same shall appear to Your Majesty's wisdom to be true and sufficient, Your Majesty would be graciously pleased to recall the present Governor-General of India, Viscount Canning, and thereby mark Your Majesty's disapproval of the policy hitherto pursued by that nobleman, and give assurance in the future of the stability of British rule, and of the security of life, honour, and property to Your Majesty's most loyal Christian subjects in this country.

And your Majesty's petitioners will ever pray, &c.

APPENDIX.

Containing the Papers referred to in the Marginal Notes attached to the foregoing Petition.

(A.)

(Confidential.)

From His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief to Major-General Lloyd, Dinapore; dated Calcutta, the 15th July 1857.

My dear General Lloyd,

The first detachment of Her Majesty's 5th Fusiliers left Chinsurah this morning on Mrs. towed by steamers in progress towards Benares, and the remaining portions of the regiment will follow by the same means of transit to-morrow and Friday.

If when the regiment reaches Dinapore you see reason to distrust the native troops, and you entertain an opinion that it is desirable to disarm them, you are at liberty to disembark the 5th Fusiliers to assist you in this object; but it is imperatively necessary that the detention of the regiment should be limited to the shortest possible period.

If you decide on disarming, it should extend to all three regiments, and it should be carefully explained that it is merely a measure of precaution to save the well-disposed from being led to commit themselves by the evil machinations of designing scoundrels, some few of whom are always to be found in even the best regiment.

If resistance to authority is exhibited, the most prompt and decided measures for its instant suppression should be adopted.

I am, &c.

(signed) Pot. Grant.

(B.)

Speech of the Governor-General in the Legislative Council, on the 13th June 1857, regarding the Press Act.

Before the Council proceeds to the orders of the day, I ask permission to bring before it a subject of pressing and paramount importance. Those whom I have the honour to address are well acquainted with the present aspect of public affairs in the northern parts of India. The general disaffection of the Bengal army in the North-Western Provinces—the lawlessness and violence of the evil-minded part of the population to which this disaffection has given opportunity and encouragement—the pilage, the heart-rending loss of life, and the uprooting of all order in that part of the country, are painfully notorious. I will not dwell upon them. Neither will I trace the causes which have led to these calamitous results, or describe the means by which the Government is meeting and repressing them. But there is one quarter to which I desire to direct the attention of the Council—a quarter from which the evil influences which now pervade so many minds have been industriously put in motion, and to which a large portion of the discontent instilled into our troops and our ordinarily harmless and peaceable community is attributable. I doubt whether it is fully
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fully understood or known to what an abominable extent seditious has been poured into the hearts of the native population of India within the last few weeks under the guise of intelligence supplied to them by the native newspapers. It has been done sedulously, cleverly, artfully. Facts have been grossly misrepresented—so grossly, that, with educated and informed minds, the very extravagance of the misrepresentations must compel discredit. But to native readers of all classes, scattered through the country, impartially acquainted with the proceedings of the Government, and not well instructed as to what is passing even immediately around them, these misrepresentations come uncontradicted, and are readily credited.

In addition to perversion of facts, there are constant vilifications of the Government, false assertions of its purposes, and unceasing attempts to sow discontent and hatred between it and its subjects.

Again, opportunities have been taken to parade before the eyes of the inhabitants of the capital, and of our subjects in other parts of India, a treasonable proclamation put forth by those who are in arms against the Government in the North-Western Provinces, crying for the blood of Europeans, offering rewards for rebellion, and denouncing all who shall oppose its measures as traitors. I am speaking to a body whose members have more experience of the native character, and of the working of the native mind, than I possess. But it needs little of this to see that it is impossible that all this mischief can be a-foot and unrestrained without producing wide-spread disaffection, lamentable outbreaks, and permanent injury to the authority of Government.

Against such poisoned weapons I now ask the Legislative Council to give to the Executive Government the means of protecting itself, its army, and its subjects; and I know no means by which this can be effectually accomplished other than a law which shall give to the Executive Government a more absolute and summary control over the press than it now has in its hands. With this view, I propose to introduce a Bill this day; and, as a preliminary step, I move that the Standing Orders be suspended, in order that the Bill may be carried through its several stages, and passed forthwith.

The several provisions of the Bill will be read in extenso by the Clerk of the Council. The Bill is framed upon the principle that no press shall exist without being licensed by the Government; that the license shall be granted by the Governor-General in Council under such conditions as he may think fit; that, on the infliction of any of these conditions, it shall be in the power of the Governor-General in Council, and, in distant parts of the Empire, of local Governments to whom he may delegate the authority, to withhold such license, or if one has been already granted, to recall it.

One of the sections provides that the Bill shall have effect for one year, and for one year only. At the end of that period, the subject will again be before the Legislative Council, and the Legislative Council will know how to deal with it according to the circumstances of the moment.

It is also provided that the Bill shall be applicable, not only to Bengal, but to all India. The question involved is one which, in my opinion, deserves not only at the present juncture, but at all times, to be treated as an imperial one. It is a question in regard to which Indian should be ruled by one authority.

I also propose that the Act shall extend to all periodical and other publications, European as well as native, whatever their condition or character.

The remarks which I have taken occasion to make with reference to the Native press, I do not direct to the European press. But I see no solid standing ground upon which a line can be drawn, marking off one from the other, when the question is to prevent the publication of matter calculated to work mischief at a crisis like this. For whilst I am glad to give credit to the conductors of the European press for the loyalty and intelligence which mark their labours, I am bound by sincerity to say, that I have seen passages in some of the papers under their management which, though perfectly innocuous, so far as European readers are concerned, may, in times like the present, be turned to the most mischievous purposes in the hands of persons capable of dressing them up for the native ear. I am glad, then, I say, to admit that the Bill is not specially levelled at the European press; but I do not see any reason, nor do I consider it possible in justice, to draw a line of demarcation between European and Native publications. The Bill, accordingly, applies to every kind of publication, whatever the language in which it may be printed, or the nation of the persons who are responsible for what is put forth in it.

I cannot conceal from the Council, that I have proposed this measure with extreme reluctance. It is one which no man bred in the atmosphere of English public life can propose to those who are vested with the high authority of legislating for English dominions, without some feelings of compunction and hesitation. But there are times in the existence of every state in which something of the liberties and rights which jealous custodians and scrupulously guards in ordinary seasons, must be sacrificed for the public welfare. Such is the state of India at this moment. Such a time has come upon us. The liberty of the press is no exception. And now, upon my responsibility as the head of the Government of India, and with the unanimous support of the colleagues with whom I have the honour and satisfaction to act, I ask the Legislative Council to strengthen the hands of the Executive Government by investing it with the powers which will be given by the Bill which I here lay on the table.
FOR THE RECALL OF THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

(C.)

To the Governor-General of India in Council.

The respectful Petition of the undersigned Christian Inhabitants of Calcutta, on behalf of themselves and of all other Christian Inhabitants of this Presidency.

Showeth,

That your petitioners have read the Act which passed the Legislative Council on the 5th September instant, and received the assent of the Governor-General on the 12th instant, and have observed with great and regret that the said Act is framed so as to apply to all the unofficial classes alike without distinction within the districts to which it shall be extended by order of the Governor-General in Council, or of the Executive Government of any place.

The object and justification of such an Act being, as your petitioners conceive, to enable Government to take arms out of the hands of disaffected and dangerous persons, your petitioners had hoped that the said Act would have been confined in express terms to those classes from whom alone danger could be apprehended.

Your petitioners feel strongly that to apply the Act to them equally with the rest of India is to confound the loyal with murderers, mutineers and rebels, and to cast an unwarranted reflection on a body who, having the same interest with the Government of India, have in every way supported it, and exhibited their loyal feeling since the commencement of the present outbreak.

Your petitioners are further of opinion that to give the proposed power to a magistrate or commissioner of police of disarming all persons within his district who, in his judgment, may endanger the public peace, is to give to one official, who may be acting under the influence of panic, prejudice, or worse, the power to leave all the Christians within his district wholly defenceless, or to force them into opposition to Government if they shall resist being placed in such a position, and your petitioners are led strongly, by certain recent proceedings in this town of Calcutta, to the conviction that this is no idle or speculative apprehension, and that such powers cannot be safely intrusted to all officials of the proposed classes.

Your petitioners believe that the only result of extending such an Act to the Christian population of India will be to oppress and irritate the loyal, while it will be wholly ineffectual as regards the disaffected, who will neither register nor expose their arms till the moment for using them shall have arrived.

Your petitioners submit that the Christian inhabitants of this Presidency are entitled of right, as loyal men, between whom and the rest of the population of the Presidency there is a broad and unmistakeable line drawn, to have that distinction acknowledged by the Government at this time, and in the like manner as was done with regard to Europeans at the disarming of the Punjab, to be exempted from the operation of a law which is wholly inapplicable, and therefore highly offensive to them.

Your petitioners, therefore, respectfully pray that the Governor-General in Council will be pleased to make a declaration, such as is contemplated by the exception clauses of the said Act, for the exception of all Christian inhabitants of this Presidency from the application of the said law.

And your petitioners, &c.

(signed) D. Mackintosh,
Merchant, Calcutta,
and 682 others.

(No. 2094.)

From C. Beaton, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, to Henry Berners, Esq., Attorney-at-Law; dated the 15th October 1857.

Sir,

I am directed by the Right Honourable the Governor-General in Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 6th instant, forwarding a petition from certain Christian inhabitants of Calcutta, praying, on behalf of themselves and of all other Christian inhabitants of the Bengal Presidency, that the Government of India will make a declaration for exempting them from the application of Act No. XXVIII. of 1857.

2. The Governor-General in Council is unable to comply with the prayer of this petition. At the same time his Lordship in Council directs me to state that all exemptions which may be just and reasonable will be made by the local Government, whenever the Act, or any part of it, shall be put in execution.

3. The Governor-General in Council cordially appreciates the loyal feelings of the petitioners, and of those in whose name they speak, as also the support which they have given to the Government; but he cannot admit that the fact of the Arms Act being general in its terms is any reflection upon their body.

4. The
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4. The Governor-General in Council does not share the apprehension of the petitioners that any powers which, under the Act, may be intrusted to magistrates or commissioners of police will be abused in the manner supposed by them.

5. Neither does his Lordship in Council agree in viewing the case of the Punjab as parallel to that of Bengal. The Punjab, when the disarming took place, was a newly-conquered country, peopled with a hostile race, and it was reasonable to draw a broad line of demarcation between its whole native population and all Europeans who might become resident there. In Bengal, on the contrary, a large portion of the population is loyal and well-affectcd to the British Government, and many have given proofs of this by exercising influence, and risking property and life, in support of the Government.

6. If then the law should undertake to lay down a line of distinction, and should class these men with those who are not to be trusted, it would do a great injustice. If, on the contrary, it draws no distinction, but leaves all excepted persons subject to the law, its only possible inconvenience is rendered unprofitable by the Govemor which administers the law, no such injustice is committed; and it appears to the Governor-General in Council scarcely possible that any Englishman, or any Christian, viewing the case dispassionately, should find offence to himself in such a law. Most assuredly no such offence is intended; and the Governor-General in Council has directed me to furnish this explanation to the petitioners in proof that such is the case.

I have, &c.

(signured) C. Bandon,
Secy. to the Govt. of India.

(D.)

RESOLUTION.

1. The Governor-General of India in Council has observed with approbation the zealous exertions of the local civil authorities for the apprehension and condign punishment of the mutineers and deserters concerned in the present revolt. It was necessary, by the severe and prompt punishment of such of these criminals as found their way into the districts in our possession, where the minds of the native troops could not but be in a very unsettled state, though the men, for the most part, had abstained from open mutiny, to show that the just fate of the mutineer is death, and that the British Government was powerful to inflict the penalty. It was necessary, also, by the offer of rewards for the apprehension of all deserters, to check the crime of desertion which was becoming rife in some of these regiments, and to prevent the possible escape of men who, apparently mere deserters, had been concerned in such terrible atrocities that their apprehension and condign punishment was an imperative duty.

2. But lest measures of extreme severity should be too hastily resorted to, or carried too far, his Lordship in Council thinks it right to issue detailed instructions on this subject, by which all civil officers will be guided in the exercise of their powers in the cases of mutineers, deserters and rebels.

3. There is reason to believe that in some even of those native regiments whose revolt has been stained by the most sanguinary atrocities, some men may have distinguished themselves from the mass by protecting an officer. In some such cases men of very guilty regiments possess certificates in their favour from officers of their regiments; but there may be others equally deserving of clemency who are without any such ready means of clearing themselves from the presumptive evidence of their deep guilt.

4. Where the number of men guilty of what it is impossible to pardon is so great, the Government will gladly seize every opportunity of reducing the work of retribution before it by giving a free pardon to all who can show that they have a claim to mercy on this ground, provided they have not been guilty of any heinous crime against person or property, or aided or abetted others in the commission of any such crime.

5. It is understood that in regiments which mutinied, and for the most part went over to the rebels without murdering their officers, or committing any other sanguinary outrage, there were men who appeared to have had no heart in the revolt, though they failed in their duty as soldiers, and who have evinced their peaceable disposition, and their want of sympathy with those who are now armed in open rebellion against the Government, by dispersing to their villages when the regiment broke up, and mixing quietly with the rural population. It is desirable to treat such men with all reasonable leniency.

6. The Governor-General in Council therefore deems it necessary to lay down the following rules for the guidance of civil authorities, in exercising the powers vested in them by recent legislation for the punishment of native officers and soldiers charged with mutiny or desertion.

1st. No
1st. No native officer or soldier belonging to a regiment which has not mutinied is to be punished by the civil power as a mere deserter, unless he be found or apprehended with arms in his possession. Such men, when taken before or apprehended by the civil power, are to be sent back to their regiments whenever that can be done, there to be dealt with by the military authorities. When such men cannot be sent back to their regiments immediately, they should be detained in prison pending the orders of Government, to whom a report is to be made, addressed to the Secretary to Government in the Military Department.

2d. Native officers and soldiers being mutineers or deserters, taken before or apprehended by the civil power, not found or apprehended with arms in their possession, not charged with any specific act of rebellion, and belonging to a regiment which has mutinied, but has not been guilty of the murder of its officers or of any other sanguinary crime, are to be sent to Allahabad, or to such other place as Government may hereafter order, and are there to be made over to the commandant, to be dealt with by the military authorities. Should any difficulty arise in sending the offender to Allahabad, either by reason of its distance from the place of arrest or otherwise, the offender should be imprisoned until the orders of Government can be obtained, unless for special reasons it may be necessary to punish the offender forthwith, in which case a report will immediately afterwards be made to the Government.

3d. Every mutineer or deserter who may be taken before or apprehended by the civil authorities, and who may be found to belong to a regiment which killed any European officer, or other European, or committed any other sanguinary outrage, may be tried and punished by the civil power. If the prisoner can show that he was not present at the murder or other outrage, or, if present, that he had no part in it, or did not possess any arms or ammunition, or, if he had arms, that they were not intended to be used in the commission of the crime, then he may be tried and punished by the civil power. But this object can only be accomplished by the procedure outlined in the previous paragraph.

4th. If it cannot be ascertained to what regiment a mutineer or deserter taken before or apprehended by the civil authorities belonged, he is to be dealt with as provided above by the second rule.

7. Lists showing the several regiments and detachments which have mutinied will be prepared with all practicable dispatch in the Military Department, stating in each case all known particulars of the mutiny, and accompanied by nominal rolls, with appropriate remarks opposite to the names of those native officers and men who are known to have been absent from their regiments at the time of the mutiny, and of those who, if present, are known to have taken an active part either in promoting or suppressing the mutiny, or to have simply joined, or abstained from joining it. These nominal rolls, as soon as prepared, will be printed and circulated to all civil officers, and to military officers in command.

8. The Governor-General in Council is anxious to prevent measures of extreme severity being unnecessarily resorted to, or carried to excess, or applied without due discrimination, in regard to acts of rebellion committed by persons not mutineers.

9. It is unquestionably necessary, in the first attempt to restore order in a district in which the civil authority has been entirely overthrown, to administer the law with such promptitude and severity as will strike terror into the minds of the evil-disposed among the people, and will induce them by the fear of death to abstain from plunder, to restore stolen property, and to return to peaceful occupation in which they may be engaged. But this object can only be accomplished by the procedure outlined in the previous paragraph.

10. The continued administration of the law in its utmost severity, after the requisite impression has been made upon the rebellious and disorderly, and after order has been partially restored, would have the effect of exasperating the people, and would probably induce them to band together in large numbers for the protection of their lives, and with a view to retaliation—a result much to be deprecated. It would greatly add to the difficulties of settling the country hereafter, if a spirit of animosity against their rulers were engendered in the minds of the people, and if their feelings were embittered by the remembrance of needless bloodshed. The civil officers in every district should endeavour, without condoning any heinous offences, or making any promises of pardon for such offences, to encourage all persons to return to their usual occupations, and, punishing only such of the principal offenders as can be apprehended, to postpone, as far as possible, all minute inquiry into political offences until such time as the Government are in a position to deal with them in strength after thorough investigation. It may be necessary, however, even after a district is partially restored to order, to make examples from time to time of such persons, if any, who may be guilty of serious outrages against person or property, or who, by stopping the dawk, or injuring the electric telegraph, or otherwise, may endeavour to promote the designs of those who are waging war against the State.

11. Another point to be noticed in connection with this subject is the general burning of villages, which the Governor-General in Council has reason to fear may have been carried too far by some of the civil officers employed in restoring order.

12. A severe
12. A severe measure of this sort is doubtless necessary, as an example, in some cases where the mass of the inhabitants of a village have committed a grave outrage, and the perpetrators cannot be punished in their persons; but any approach to a wholesale destruction of property by the officers of Government, without due regard to the guilt or innocence of those who are affected by it, must be strongly reprehended. Apart from the effect which such a practice would have upon the feelings and disposition of the country people, there can be no doubt that it would prevent them from returning to their villages, and resuming the cultivation of their fields, a point at this season of vital importance, inasmuch as if the lands remain much longer unsown, distress, and even famine, may be added to the other difficulties with which the Government will have to contend.

Ordered, That instructions to the above effect be issued to the Governments of Bengal and the North-Western Provinces, and to the Commissioners of the Allahabad and Benares Divisions.

Ordered, also, That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Foreign and Military Departments for such further orders as may be necessary.

(signed) C. Beadon,
Secretary to the Government of India.

(E.)

(No. 1167.)

From E. A. Samuels, Esq., Commissioner of Revenue for the Division of Patna, to A. R. Young, Esq., Secretary to the Government of Bengal; dated Patna, 6 October 1857.

Sir,

The period for which Moonshee Ameer Ali tendered his services to Government having nearly expired, he has expressed a wish to be allowed to return to Calcutta, and I have accordingly permitted him to do so. He will leave this in the course of a few days.

2. There has been so much misconception and misrepresentation with regard to the appointment of Moonshee Ameer Ali that I am induced to take this opportunity of placing the facts upon record, and at the same time of submitting a few observations on the tone assumed by the public press towards the Mahomedan community in connection with this appointment.

3. Moonshee Ameer Ali is a man whose interests are bound up with those of the British Government, and whose native shrewdness and knowledge of our resources showed him clearly from the commencement what the ultimate result of the present revolt was certain to be. He is one of the leading pleaders of the Sudder Court, where he is employed in nearly every Behar case. His professional income is popularly estimated at from 3,000 to 4,000 a month, and he has acquired considerable estates in the neighbourhood of Barr. If the present rebellion had succeeded, his professional practice would have been at an end, and his estates would have reverted, as has been generally the case in the disturbed districts, to the ancient proprietors. Had any guarantee for his loyalty been necessary, the Government therefore could have desired none better than those which were furnished by his own circumstances and position.

4. From the first, however, Moonshee Ameer Ali, whose father had been Lord Saheb's moonsee, and who himself had been for many years a Government servant, attached himself warmly to the cause of the British Government. He exerted himself to induce the Mahomedans of Calcutta to express their loyalty to the Government, and he kept the Government regularly informed of the state of feeling amongst the native community both in Calcutta and Behar.

5. On the 5th of August I was informed that my services were required in my present appointment, and that I must be prepared to start on the 7th. On the 6th, Moonshee Ameer Ali and other pleaders of the Sudder Court called to bid me good-bye, and the moonsee, after mentioning that he had written to his friends and clients in Behar urging them to stand by the Government and to afford me their support, added, that if I thought his personal services could be of any use, he would willingly make arrangements for the conduct of his business with his brother pleaders, and accompany me to Patna. At this time, it will be recollected, affairs in Behar wore a very gloomy aspect; Major Eyre's victory was not known, and it was believed that in consequence of Kooper Sing's rebellion, and Mr. Tayler's order for the withdrawal of the civilians from the out-stations, I should find the entire province of Behar more or less in a state of anarchy. The troops available for the restoration of order were few in number, and the task of keeping the great seminaries true to their allegiance and preserving the peace of the country through their agency was clearly likely to be one of no common difficulty.

6. This being the state of affairs, it occurred to me that a shrewd intelligent man like Moonshee
Moonshire Ameer Ali, intimately acquainted with the private history of every family in Behar, and able which told me the secret springs which were likely to influence them, might be of great service, and I therefore told him that I thought if he was serious in his offer, and would repeat it to the Lieutenant-governor, that it would be cordially accepted. He accordingly waited upon the Lieutenant-governor, who took a similar view of the case to myself, and Moonshire Ameer Ali was appointed special assistant to the Commissioner on a salary of 700 rupees a month, it being understood that his appointment should cease at the conclusion of the Dussehra holidays. It was absolutely necessary that he should be accredited by the bestowal of an appointment, because it was my intention to employ him principally in communicating with the principal zemindars in the division, but I need hardly observe, that the appointment he received bestowed on him no power whatever, and only that degree of influence which it was necessary he should possess to be of any use in furthering the objects of my mission.

7. On my arrival at Patna, I found that Major Eyre's victories at Arrah and Judgespore, and the speedy return of the civilians to their stations, coupled with the exemplary behaviour of the people in the districts of Clapraun and Turhoot, had preserved the province from any serious disorder, and that there was not that occasion for Ameer Ali's services in the interior of the division which I had anticipated. His assistance was, however, most useful to me during the Mohurrum. By my desire he assembled the inhabitants of the different Muhivals in rotation, and explained to them, according to a programme I had previously given him, the precise position of affairs, and the power and resources of the British Government, answering all their questions, satisfying their doubts, and confirming their confidence in the stability of the British rule. He explained to them at the same time the rules I had laid down for their guidance during the Mohurrum, and the necessity of carefully avoiding any demonstration which might lead to a breach of the peace. He attended at the Durghal on the great day of the Mohurrum, and superintended all the police arrangements at that spot in person, and it was undoubtedly owing in a great measure to his exertions that the Mohurrum, which had been looked forward to with dread by so many persons, passed off more quietly than it had been ever known to pass before in the city of Patna, and this without any coercion of the people, or any display of military force.

8. Since that period Moonshire Ameer Ali has been occupied in conducting the extensive correspondence which I have had with native zemindars and others on affairs connected with the disturbed state of the country, and in acquiring information for me on the state of feeling among the natives in all parts of my jurisdiction. In all this his zeal, tact, and intelligence have been conspicuous, and I should be most unjust if I did not acknowledge in the fullest manner the assistance which I have derived from him in this department of my duties.

9. The return which he has received from the press of this country for volunteering his services at a critical period in aid of the British Government at great personal inconvenience to himself, has been a most ungracious one, and is ill-calculated to induce other natives to make a similar display of their loyalty. He has been the object of ceaseless vituperation. The most treacherous motives have been imputed to him, and he has become in fact the bête noir of the English press.

10. The only tangible accusation I have seen made against him, however, was that he had induced me to remove the restrictions which Mr. Tayler had imposed on the inhabitants of the city of Patna, and to release the political prisoners whom Mr. Tayler had arrested. Both these accusations are, as the Lieutenant-governor is aware, wholly unfounded. The restrictive and coercive measures adopted by Mr. Tayler had been abandoned by Mr. Farquharson before my arrival, from a conviction of their impolicy and inutility. Nujee Moodoo, the Bhand Rajah's Dewan, was released by me, before Moonshire Ameer Ali joined me, at the urgent request of Mr. Tayler, upon ascertaining that there was no charge against him beyond one of delay in the delivery of a petition to have Wahabees were released because there was literally nothing against them. Mr. Tayler himself informed me that their arrest was merely precautionary, and that he had intended to release them after the Mohurrum, and so on with the other less noted prisoners, the reasons for whose release, where they have been released, have already been fully reported to you. In none of these cases had Moonshire Ameer Ali any concern whatsoever with the release of the prisoners.

11. The main ground of attack against him was however that he was a Mahomedan, and I confess, I think, had his appointment served no other purpose, that it would have been of the greatest utility in proving practically to the natives, that the Government did not sympathize with the violent tone which the press assumed towards the Musselman community, and had no intention of acting upon its suggestions. The whole of the Calcutta press apparently without exception have taken up the idea that this is a Mahomedan rebellion, not merely in the sense that the sepoys were worked upon by individual Mahomedans, which may or may not be true, but that the entire Mahomedan community is disaffected, and merely waits its opportunity to rise and throw off the British yoke. I need not point out how destitute of foundation this notion is, how entirely unrestrained many millions of Mahomedans in Bengal have been during the last four months except by their own feelings of loyalty, and how quiet the Mahomedan villages of Southern Behar have generally been.
PETITION:—RECALL OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL.

generally remained while the Rajpoot and Brahmin villages were rising around them. In this neighbourhood in particular, as the Lieutenant-governor is aware, the Mahomedans have been foremost in acts of devotion to the State. When a few fanatics, principally Oude men, attempted to excite an émeute in the town of Patna, proclaimed a jihad, or holy war, and carried before them a banner inscribed with a verse of the Koran, not above 30 or 30 individuals of the enormous Mahomedan population of this town showed the least sympathy with them; a Mahomedan Darogah was the first to attack them, and lost his life in a gallant attempt to arrest them with the aid of his Burkundazes alone. Numerous other acts of devotion on the part of Mahomedans might, as you are aware, be cited. But the press could see no virtue in any act of a Mahomedan, and it was seriously contended, in issue after issue of the different papers, that the entire race should be proscribed; that no employments of trust should be given to them, and that we should treat them in fact as our natural enemies, people on whom our heels should be constantly pressed.

12. I confess it appears to me that articles of this description are much more likely to endanger the stability of the Government than any amount of abuse, whether of the persons or the measures of the members of Government. They have a direct tendency to excite disaffection amongst large masses of the population, and to convert what is now a military revolt into a national rebellion. I cannot conceive a more sure method of inciting the whole Mahomedan population of the Empire to rise, than to persuade them that the English Government is determined for the future to treat them as disaffected subjects, and to exclude them from every honourable office.

13. Many people endeavour to persuade themselves that the natives are not aware of the contents of the English papers, and that, so far as they are concerned, it is immaterial what appears in those publications, but this is a very great mistake. The English papers have for many years past formed the source to which the native news writers and the native papers looked for their intelligence of our movements and intentions. Since this revolt commenced the greatest anxiety has been manifested to learn what the English papers say, and every one fortunate enough to get hold of an English paper is called upon to translate it for the edification of large circles of listeners, who again retell the news and comments of the journals in their villages. It came to my notice accidentally the other day that the Nuzeds at Murrarpoore were in the habit of having the English papers translated to them, and there can be no doubt that whatever appears in the English papers which can in any way serve the purposes of the disaffected is speedily made known to them by their agents in Calcutta or elsewhere. To suppose that it can be otherwise is to give our enemies credit for a degree of wilful blindness and negligence which forms no part of their character. Their intelligence department has always been remarkably good, and they certainly would not neglect the most simple and obvious means of ascertaining our views and intentions.

14. At all the stations which I passed on my way up the river, I understood that the violent tone which the papers had assumed towards the Mahomedan community had excited alarm and anxiety amongst them, and that they were in dread lest the Government should issue an edict of proscription such as the Calcutta papers advocated. The appointment of Moonseed Ameer Ali, and the honours liberally bestowed since on other Mahomedans who have shown their devotion to the State, have done much to satisfy the people that the Government are not likely to be led by popular clamour into the commission of such an act of folly and injustice; but it is not unfairly argued that under the present licensing system, when the Government allows writings of this kind, which are manifestly in violation of the conditions of the licence, to continue unchecked, it must be supposed to view them without displeasure, and I do think that great care ought to be taken to dispel this idea, and that the papers ought to be peremptorily prohibited from indulging in a style and tone of writing calculated to excite disaffection in any large class or section of the native community.

15. I commend Moonseed Ameer Ali to the notice of the Lieutenant-governor as a native gentleman, who volunteered his services at a critical period in aid of the British Government, and who has performed such service as I have thought proper to allot to him with zeal, intelligence, and fidelity.

I have, &c.

E. A. Sammells
Commissioner of Revenue.

(True copies.)

East India House,
11 February 1858.

J. S. Mill
Examiner of India Correspondence.
EAST INDIA (GOVERNOR-GENERAL).

COPIES of the Petition of the Inhabitants of Calcutta for the Recall of the Governor General; together with any Observations which he may have made thereon.

(Sir Harry Verney.)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
12 February 1828.

73. Under 3 oz.