

In Peril in India

The Hapless Children - - Of the Murdered Mrs. Dost

“The Sunday Times” (Perth, W.A.) 13 November, 1910, page 13.

A well-known Perth citizen has received a letter from a friend in Karachi, N. W. India, giving some particulars as to the children of the late Mrs. Dost Mahomet, who was foully murdered in that place several weeks ago.

The writer says, among other things:

“I have seen the children who were left orphans here through the brutal murder of their mother. I met them one day being walked out on the beach by Mrs. Lawrence, wife of the Collector or Chief Revenue official at Karachi – a good woman. They are under police protection all the time, as it is feared that the murderers of their mother may have further designs. They ought to be removed far away, but they are more Indian than English to look at. They are well fed and cared for, but this is not the place for them.

“I wonder if you could let one of the newspapers know about this? No doubt something has been said already, but it is in fact a case of daily danger. One or other of the children may disappear at any time in spite of precautions. They seem to be from about five to 13 or 14 years of age, but I speak only at random about that point.

“Another matter in the same connection. One Jourack (a brother of Dost – Sunday Times) now in West Australia, remitted a sum of money for the keep of the Children, as I understand, to one Sadro Adinack, a boat runner at Karachi, and no one seems to know what the amount was – whether 500 rupees, or 2000, or what. Whether it is possible to find out from the said Jourack what the amount was, or whether he is known, I don't know, I don't know; but I think there will be no harm in mentioning those points, in case you have means of inquiring.

“It was the Deputy Collector who was asking about it. He seems to have received some money from the boat-runner, but it is doubtful whether the boatman handed all the remittance over or a part only. The Deputy Collector is a trust-worthy man.

“One feels sorry for these poor children: their mother was murdered – stabbed all over the body – in the dark, in the room where they were all sleeping together. They are not able to play about at large like other children, and seem only half alive.”

No doubt the member for Perth will bring this letter under the notice of the Minister for External Affairs. It is, indeed, an abominable shame that the children should be in so perilous a situation. What is needed more than anything is legislation for the absolute prevention of these accursed mixed marriages. If such legislation had been passed as a necessary corollary of the White Australia policy, the probabilities are that the ill-fated Mrs. Dost Mahomet would be alive to-day.