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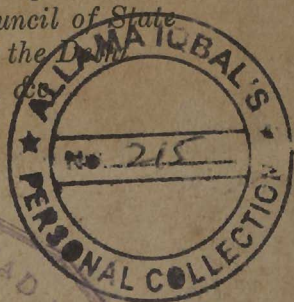
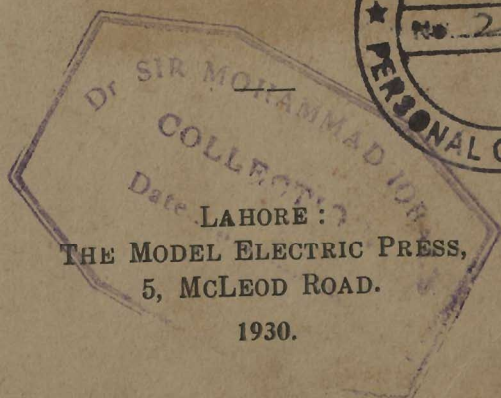
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SOME IMPORTANT INDIAN PROBLEMS

M.A. SECTION

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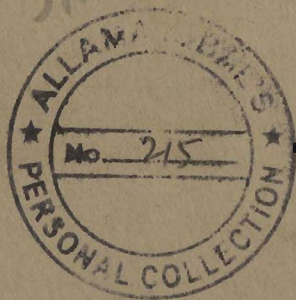


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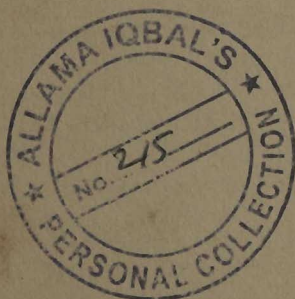
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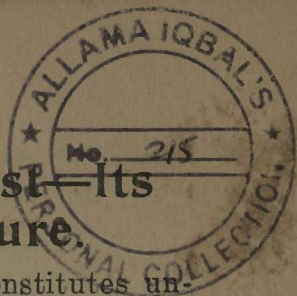
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Research



The Indian Unrest—Its Causes and Cure

A GRAVE national crisis constitutes undoubtedly the most supreme test of real statesmanship. Mere idealism, however high, divorced from practical statesmanship is, at such a critical moment, liable to lead to action which, in the end, may prove disastrous. To be able to look ahead in order to judge correctly the ultimate consequences, on national evolution, of action taken in a crisis which, for the time being, may have roused deep and wide-spread passions ; to measure with precision and exactitude the material with which you have to handle the situation ; to take stock, dispassionately and correctly, of the forces on the other side and to adapt your own strategy so as to be able to deal with those forces to the best advantage of the cause you represent ; and, at the same time, never, even for a moment, to abandon those high principles of justice, truth and honour adherence to which is a sure guarantee of ultimate success and thus to combine idealism with practical statesmanship—these are the qualities which, in 2



national crisis, distinguish a statesman from a mere politician.

Such a crisis arose in India in the years 1919-1920. The passing of the Rowlatt Act at a time when educated India was longing for fulfilment of the solemn pledge embodied in the historic declaration of 20th August 1917, the unhappy Punjab occurrences of 1919, including the proclamation of Martial Law, and the publication of the Treaty of Sevres in August 1920, roused feelings of deep resentment throughout the length and breadth of the country. Shortly after the passing of the Rowlatt Act, the British Parliament granted a new constitution to India, as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1919, which, though by no means calculated to satisfy in their entirety all the aspirations generated by the world-currents set into motion by the Great War and by the declaration of 20th August 1917, constituted a substantial advance on the Minto-Morley scheme and placed enhanced powers in the hands of the representatives of the Indian peoples.* But the unhappy Punjab occurrences and the over-stringent Turkish settlement

*The last of a series of 14 Articles written by me for the "Civil & Military Gazette", Lahore, on the Chelmsford-Montagu Report is re-printed as Appendix III.

had split the Indian intelligentsia into two sections. One of these, led by Mr. Gandhi, decided upon absolutely boycotting the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and the other, consisting of the Liberal and Conservative elements in the country, came to the conclusion that the best way to promote constitutional evolution in India was to enter the Legislative Councils, Imperial and Provincial, and to proceed along constitutional lines by making the best and fullest use of the new constitutional machinery.

Until the publication of the Treaty of Sevres, the Indian Musalmans, as a community, had held aloof from the Indian National Congress. The over-stringent peace terms imposed on Turkey by the provisions of that Treaty and the consequent resentment in Muslim circles in India gave the Congress leaders the one opportunity they had hitherto looked for in vain. A large section of the Muslim community had been carried off their feet, having conceived the idea that Britain was, for purposes of her own, aiming at the destruction of the *Khilafat*. Certain pronouncements by Liberal leaders like Messrs. Asquith and Lloyd George and the pro-Greek-anti-Turkish policy of the latter lent colour to this impres-

sion. The Nationalist leaders, with Mr. Gandhi at their head, persuaded that section of the Musalmans to join hands with the Congress by expressing sympathy with them in their religious sorrow, and the leaders of the new combination were, in these circumstances, enabled to direct their energies towards influencing the masses through their religious leaders. Thenceforward religion began to play an important part in the struggle carried on by this combination. These, in brief, were the conditions in which Mr. Gandhi launched his non-co-operation movement. At a special session of the National Congress, held in September 1920 in Calcutta, a resolution was adopted according to which all Legislative Councils, all Services, Government and aided educational institutions and Law Courts as well as foreign goods were to be boycotted, all lawyers were to give up professional practice in British courts and all title-holders were to return their *sanads* and badges to Government. National schools and colleges, to be established all over the country, were to provide education for the people and a network of *panchayats* was to be started to carry on the administration of justice.

The Government of India realised that the Congress scheme of multiple-boycotts was foredoomed to failure, being hopelessly impracticable and impossible of successful execution in a vast sub-continent like India, inhabited by 310 millions of people belonging to diverse communities and creeds and following different schools of thought. No effort by a section of educated Indians, however well-organised, could, in the conditions then existing, succeed in bringing about even a partial dead-lock of the kind contemplated by Mr. Gandhi and his followers. Liberals and Conservatives would seek election to the Councils and not a single seat would remain vacant; the educated middle class whose livelihood depended on service could not afford to leave their posts; the vast majority of parents could not allow their sons' careers to be ruined by taking them away from colleges and schools; the Law Courts would go on functioning as before and lawyers were not, as a class, likely to abandon their lucrative practice; people used to higher modern standards of living would not resort to wearing *khaddar* wholesale; and title-holders, as a rule belonging to moderate and loyal

sections of the population, would not obviously give up their titles. *So long, therefore, as no elements of violence or of breaches of law and order came in*, the best policy for the Government to adopt in relation to Mr. Gandhi's Non-co-operation Movement was one of non-interference. There was also the possibility that unnecessary Government interference might make the movement at least partially successful. The real danger lay in the combination of the Congress Non-co-operation and the Khilafat movements, for the latter involved a religious factor the continued operation of which might ultimately create a grave situation. The paramount necessity, therefore, was to press His Majesty's Government to bring about a modification of the Turkish Peace Terms on lines calculated to satisfy reasonable Muslim sentiments in India.

Meanwhile, shortly after the passing of Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation resolution at the special session of the National Congress in September 1920, general elections for the Reformed Councils, Imperial and Provincial, were held in all the Provinces and, in spite of strenuous efforts made by the Congress

organisations, not a single seat in any of the Councils remained vacant, a fairly large proportion of voters going to the polls. The Government of India Act came into operation on 1st January 1921, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught came out to India on behalf of His Majesty the King Emperor to inaugurate the reformed Councils and conveyed to the people of India His Majesty's gracious message which heralded the dawn of a new constitutional era in this country. The speeches delivered by His Royal Highness and His Excellency Lord Chelmsford on that occasion strengthened the position adopted by the Liberal and Conservative parties and created a new atmosphere of co-operation between the Councils and the Executive Government, which constituted a most pleasing feature of the political situation throughout the life of the first reformed Councils. The passing of the Government of India Act had already been made the occasion for the release, as an act of Royal clemency, of Martial Law prisoners in the Punjab. The Rowlatt Act was now repealed, racial distinctions in the administration of justice were removed, many repressive laws inconsistent with the spirit of the new Reforms were expunged from

the statute book, greater Indianisation of our Imperial Services was set in motion, new Universities were created in certain educational centres and other measures calculated to advance the material and moral progress of the people were adopted. All this could not but produce its inevitable effect upon the general political situation. In spite of Mr. Gandhi's whirlwind tours all over India, during the course of which he received ovations everywhere from thousands of people, our educational institutions continued to flourish, law courts functioned as before, the number of legal practitioners went on increasing, no single post in any of the services remained vacant and titles conferred by Government continued to be coveted as much as hitherto.

While the situation among the Indian intelligentsia thus continued to be, on the whole, steady and reassuring, events in Europe took a turn which enabled the new combination to make use of it for purposes of their own. The joint decision of Messrs Lloyd George and M. Clemenceau to disembark Greek troops in Smyrna in May 1919 and the atrocities committed by these troops in that

district had created the Turkish National Movement and the interior of Anatolia had been consolidated by the new Angora Government headed by Mustafa Kamal. The new Turkish Nationalist organisation now set out to recover for Turkey all territories inhabited by non-Arab Ottoman majorities. France, realising the dangers of Greek ascendancy in the eastern Mediterranean sphere and the necessity of cultivating friendly relations with the new Turkey, thus brought into existence, in order to safeguard and promote her old interests in the Levant, entered into an agreement with the latter which was signed by M. Franklin-Bouillon and Usaf Kamal Bey on the 20th October 1921. In this agreement France conceded practically all the Turkish demands. The pro-Greek anti-Turkish policy of Mr. Lloyd George's Government, however, did not undergo any change whatever, in spite of the late Mr. Montagu's unceasing efforts and of a personal appeal made by Lord Reading to the Prime Minister direct. The Congress-Khilafat combination in India made the fullest use of the many opportunities afforded to them by the events of this period in furtherance

of their non-co-operation movement. And but for the reasons mentioned in the following paragraph their renewed efforts might have resulted in creating a grave situation in this country.

After the conclusion of the special session of the National Congress in September 1920, in which, as already mentioned, the non-co-operation resolution was adopted, including the boycott of our educational institutions, Mr. Gandhi accompanied by the Ali Brothers travelled across Northern India for the purpose of taking active steps to enforce the scheme of multiple-boycotts embodied in that resolution. But, instead of commencing with the Benares Hindu University, he passed on to Aligarh and delivered his first attack on our M. A. O. College. Proceeding onward from that revered centre of Muslim education in India, he passed by Delhi with its two Hindu Colleges, and arriving at Lahore made his second attack on the Islamia College, practically ignoring the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College in this town. These attacks on the only two Muslim educational centres in India created grave doubts in all moderate Muslim circles regarding Mr. Gandhi's ultimate aims

The Government of India, on the other hand, carried the Muslim University Act through the Central Legislature, elevating the M. A. O. College to the rank of a University and, thus, brought about the realisation of that dream to which the late Sir Sayad Ahmad Khan had devoted his life's work and on which the whole community had, for years, set their heart. Moreover, the Government as well as H. E. Lord Reading personally, realising the possibilities of these renewed activities of the new combination, made further strenuous efforts to persuade Mr. Lloyd George's Government to change its pro-Greek anti-Turkish attitude and to bring about a revision of the Treaty of Sevres calculated to satisfy reasonable Muslim sentiments. Lord Reading's replies to the addresses presented to him by the Delhi and Bengal Muslim Deputations in November and December, 1921, produced a highly re-assuring effect in Muslim circles and a Minute, submitted to him on the 2nd November, embodying a survey of the post-war international situation, discussing the serious consequences to the British Empire of a Greater Greece under King Constantine and pointing

out the real remedy for the only two dangers which the British Empire had to face, was forwarded by him to the Secretary of State, requesting its circulation among the members of the British Cabinet. Some two and a half months after this came the announcement that an Allied Foreign Ministers' Conference was to be held in the following March in Paris to consider the question of a revision of the Treaty of Sevres, and Lord Reading, after ascertaining the views of all the Provincial Governments, including Ministers, despatched to the Secretary of State a telegram embodying the views of the Government of India, concurred in by all Provincial Governments, regarding the lines on which that Treaty should be modified and asked for the Secretary of State's permission for publication of the telegram in India. The permission asked for having been granted, it was published broadcast throughout the country. And though its publication cost the late Mr. Montagu his seat in the Cabinet, it had a tremendous effect among the Indian Musalmans, not only completely countering the effect of the activities carried on by the new Congress-Khilafat combination but also bringing about a separa-

tion between that group and many of those who had joined it, merely because of the wound inflicted on their religious feelings by the Treaty of Sevres. The *Farangi Mahal* (Lucknow) and Deoband Theological Schools were now persuaded to abandon that combination and the old trust imposed by the majority of Indian Mussalmans in the Government of India was well nigh restored.

Meanwhile, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit to India during the winter of 1921-22 led to certain events, the real effect of which on the Indian political situation can be properly gauged only now when it is possible to scrutinize them in their true perspective. His Royal Highness' visit, to my mind, provided a real test in so far as Gandhi's statesmanship was concerned. The Heir to the Imperial Throne, undoubtedly the most popular figure in the Empire, was coming out on a visit to India. Were the entire Indian population to unite in offering him a warm and loyal welcome, the effect in England and throughout the Empire would indeed be profound. It would furnish conclusive proof of the fact that the heart of India was sound, her devotion to the Imperial

throne unshakable by political controversies and events like those of 1919-20 which were, in reality, in the nature of domestic quarrels in no way affecting the strong link which bound England and India together. Such a conviction thus brought home to the British nation, would have the most beneficial effect on India's constitutional advance towards full responsible Government. But Mr. Gandhi suspected in this a clever move on the part of the beaurocracy to kill his non-co operation movement and, under his leadership, the Congress parties decided to boycott the Prince's visit. And when, seeing the pernicious effects, immediate as well as remote, of this grave blunder on the part of Mr. Gandhi, certain leading members of the Legislative Assembly suggested a Round Table Conference between representatives of Government and of all political parties, Mr. Gandhi rejected the invitation, in spite of the earnest telegraphic message sent to him by the late Mr. C. R. Das, one of his principal lieutenants, urging him to agree, thus missing a unique opportunity of doing real service to the cause of India's constitutional advance.

The boycott of His Royal Highness' visit by Mr. Gandhi and his followers roused

the Liberals and Conservatives in the country from their hitherto apathetic attitude and brought those who had been sitting on the fence since the commencement of the non-co-operation movement over to their side. As has been observed already, the publication of the Government of India's telegram to His Majesty's Government regarding the lines on which the Treaty of Sevres should be modified had had immediate effect even in Khilafat circles. The result was that by the time His Royal Highness reached Delhi and the Punjab, the position was materially changed and in these places the Prince received a rousing reception, not spoiled by a single unpleasant incident. In the earlier stages of the Prince's progress, however, in spite of Mr. Gandhi's sermons of non-violence, a section of the ignorant masses influenced by the spirit of his movement in a manner exactly contrary to what he preached, interfered violently with those who participated in the celebrations connected with the visit, resulting in riots and bloodshed in Bombay and troubles in one or two other places. This opened the eyes of even some of those who had hitherto blindly followed Mr. Gandhi. And when, soon after, Govern-

ment took strong action against him, the political atmosphere in the country remained absolutely undisturbed, not a single hand being raised anywhere in retaliation. His Royal Highness' visit had, thus, a profound effect on the Indian political situation and, in spite of the doubt entertained at the time in certain circles regarding its advisability, its ultimate results justified the visit. What effects the two great blunders committed by Mr. Gandhi on that occasion and his ultimate incarceration had on the National Congress circles and their activities will be dealt with later on.

Meanwhile, events of far reaching consequence were taking place in the Near East which made it clear beyond possibility of doubt that in pursuing his pro-Greek and anti-Turkish policy Mr. Lloyd George had backed the wrong horse. The failure of his post-war policy resulted in the break-up of the Coalition Ministry and the Unionists again came into power. So long as one of Mr. Gladstone's principal disciples, nurtured in the atmosphere of Gladstonian foreign policy, remained in power in Great Britain, the Muslim world continued to be overwhelmed by

a spirit of despondency. With the coming into power of the Conservative Party, the Indian Musalmans breathed a sigh of relief. The Government of India's persistent efforts to induce His Majesty's Government to modify their policy in relation to the Near Eastern affairs began to bear fruit and, finally, at Lausanne, a new Treaty of Peace with Turkey was concluded, the main provisions of which followed the lines laid down in the Government of India's telegram of February 1922. The effect of the new Treaty in India, based as it was on principles of justice and equity, was, as had all along been anticipated, almost instantaneous. It justified the trust which Muslims of my school of thought—and they constituted a majority of the community—had throughout placed in the Government. It smashed the link which had united the Khilafatists with Mr Gandhi and his followers, with the result that, excepting a few irreconcilables who, owing to personal motives, still continued to non-co-operate with Government, by far the larger majority of Musalmans deserted Mr. Gandhi's camp. About that time the Hindu Mahasabha started the "*Shudhi*" and "*Sangathan*" movements,

the significance of which will be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs. Realising the serious consequences of these two movements, certain leading Musalmans, including even some of those who had played an important part in Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation movement, *e.g.* Dr. Saifud Din Kitchlew, Mir Ghulam Bhik Nairang, etc., founded the "*Tabligh*" and "*Tanzim*" among the Musalmans to counteract the evil effects of the two Mahasabha movements mentioned above. Moreover, the Hindu Mahasabha initiated a campaign against separate Muslim electorates, and together with the Arya Samajists they set up an agitation against cow-sacrifice by Muslims on the occasion of the *Id*, at the same time insisting on the right of the Hindus to take their processions with music playing in front of mosques even at prayer time, which resulted in Hindu-Muslim riots in various places. The Muslim leaders took advantage of this psychological moment to reorganise the Muslim League in order to give the right direction to Muslim political activities. And the Hindu opposition to the introduction of Reforms in the N. W. F. Province produced the most profound effect even in radical

Muslim circles. With the increasing activities of the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim situation went on steadily improving until, at last, even the small remnants of the Khilafat committee abandoned non-co-operation.

Turning now again to the Indian National Congress. As already observed, until the winter of 1919-20 the Indian Musalmans, as a community, had held aloof from this organization. From 1907 onwards the All-India Muslim League constituted the vehicle of their political activities. In February 1919, when the Rowlatt Bill was on the Legislative anvil, Mr. Gandhi, who was at that time the most prominent figure in the Congress circles, held out an open threat of starting *Satyagraha* (passive resistance) should the Government persist in passing the measure. Realising the great danger involved in the carrying out of this threat by Mr. Gandhi, the late Mr. (subsequently Sir) Surendra Nath Banerjee and I organised and published a manifesto, signed by a number of leading non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council, condemning the threatened action. On the passing of the Act, Mr. Gandhi carried out his threat. As a result of this move on his

part, the moderate Hindu element in the Congress left that body, and an All-India Moderates' Conference was held at Bombay in the month of April 1920, under the presidency of the late Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee, at which the National Liberal Federation was started, with stalwarts like Messrs Sapru, (now Sir Tej Bahadur), Sir Sivaswmani Aiyar, Chintamani, Paranjapai, etc., among its members. From that time onward till his incarceration in March 1922, Mr. Gandhi occupied virtually the position of a Dictator in the Congress movement. And when, on Mr. Mohammad Ali's return from England in the summer of 1920, after his fruitless interview with Mr. Lloyd George as head of the Khilafat deputation, the Ali Brothers joined hands with him, Mr. Gandhi rose a degree higher in his dictatorship. But he had not measured exactly the material with which he had to handle the situation, nor taken stock correctly of the tremendous forces on the other side. His strategic plans were ill-conceived and ill-adapted to the circumstances. On the other side, the difficult and complicated situation was, at all stages and in all its developments, handled by Lord Reading with unrivalled

strategic skill. The inevitable happened. His scheme of multiple-boycotts tumbled like a house built on sand, the successive dates fixed by him for the advent of *Swaraj* in India passed without *Swaraj* coming in sight, shaking the faith of that section of the ignorant masses who, for the moment, had worshipped him like an *Avatar*, and the two great blunders committed by him in connection with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit shook the faith even of some of his staunch followers and proved him to be an idealist and visionary rather than a far sighted statesman. On his incarceration the non-co-operative camp was left without a leader, with the result that there was a race for leadership between certain aspirants who were now eager to step into his shoes. Most prominent among these was Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who, though professedly not a non-co-operator, had yet remained within the Congress when the Moderates separated from it in April 1920. With his usual shrewdness, he had foreseen the ultimate failure of the Gandhi cult and, therefore, preferred for the moment to plough a lonely furrow within the Congress, biding his time.

The Hindu Sabha and Arya Samaj parties had never at heart approved of Mr. Gandhi's support of the Khilafat movement but had not had the courage to raise their voices against one who had, for the time being, captured the imagination of a section of our vast population. Seeing the field clear, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya now put himself at the head of the two parties and organised the All-India Hindu Mahasabha which, while professing lip-loyalty to the Congress, in reality began to work for ultimate Hindu supremacy when full responsible Government is granted to India. To make the Hindu numerical superiority simply overwhelming when that time arrives, the sixty million "untouchables," otherwise called the "depressed classes", must be brought within the Hindu fold and those Hindus whose forefathers had embraced Islam centuries ago must be reconverted to the religion of their ancestors so that the number of Indian Musalmans may be reduced to comparative insignificance. This was the real import of the "*Shudhi*" movement in which Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya found in Swami Shardhanand a powerful co-worker. Moreover, the much-needed physical regeneration of the Hindu

millions must at once be taken in hand so that when the right moment arrives, they may, if necessary, be able to hold their own against any possible combination. Hence the "*Sangathan*" (physical culture) movement started by the shrewd Pandit. Meanwhile, he was too wary and prudent to follow the "No-changers" and the new party of "Swarajists" in their clamour for immediate responsible Government on lines to be determined by India herself. He and his friends would be content with the grant of complete autonomy to all the provinces except in the Punjab where, according to them, peculiar local conditions made that constitutional change inadvisable (the real reason being the existence of a virile Muslim majority in that province) and in the Central Government it would be sufficient, for the present, to transfer all departments to the control of the peoples' representatives with responsibility to the Central Legislature, excepting the Army (including the Air Force), Navy and Foreign and Political affairs. In other words, an overwhelming Hindu majority in the Central Legislature already assured, that majority should control the internal administration of

India under the protection of the British bayonets.

Meanwhile, on the removal of Mr. Gandhi from the scene of his political activities, Messrs. C. R. Das and Moti Lal Nehru, who, it is believed in certain circles, had in reality been all along opposed to the boycott of Councils, founded a new party within the Congress, called the "Swarajists", and at a special Session held in Allahabad obtained, for their party, permission from the Congress to enter the Legislative Councils, Imperial and Provincial, professedly "to non-co-operate from within" by adopting persistent and indiscriminate obstruction as their *modus operandi*. In the elections for the second Reformed Councils held in November, 1923, they were successful in securing majorities in Bengal and the Central Provinces and in forming the largest single party in the Legislative Assembly, but cut a poor figure in all the other Legislative Councils in India. They succeeded in bringing the popular side of the reformed provincial Governments in Bengal and the Central Provinces to a stand-still, necessitating re-transfer of Transferred subjects to the control of the Executive Government.

In bringing this about, they only dealt a serious blow to constitutional evolution in those provinces without doing any real injury to the administration, which was carried on more or less smoothly as before. In the Legislative Assembly they found themselves powerless to do anything without the co-operation of one of the other parties, to secure which they had to abandon their scheme of persistent and indiscriminate obstruction. The "Independent Nationalists" had, thus, really a restraining influence on the Swarajists in the Assembly and when the Government put forward measures calculated to advance India's material and moral progress, *e.g.*, "The Steel Protection Bill", "Separation of Railway Finance", appointment of Skeen Committee, etc., etc., the Swarajists could not but co-operate with Government in carrying these measures through the Central Legislature. These experiences, in the Provinces as well as in the Assembly, resulted in the birth of a new party among the Swarajists themselves, whose creed was summarised in the expression "Responsive Co-operation" which, in reality, was a reversion to the pre-war policy of Gokhale and

Tilak. The Swarajists' "walk out" in the Assembly during the spring session of 1926—intended really as a strategic move in view of the coming general elections and to escape actual voting on the Resolution advocating the introduction of Reforms in the North-West Frontier Province—brought this division in the Swarajist camp to a head. The leading Muslim members of the party left it in disgust and the Responsive Co-operationists, prominent among whom was the Maharashtra party belonging to the Tilak School, on failure of what is known as the "Sabarmati Pact", decided to fight the next elections on their own programme even against Pandit Moti Lal Nehru's followers. This provided Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya with a welcome opportunity, which he was quick to grasp, of bringing the Maharashtra Responsive Co-operationists within the orbit of his Hindu Mahasabha by offering to tour all over Northern India on behalf of the new party and by inducing Dr. Moonji to preside over the Mahasabha meeting held at Ambala. The responsive Co-operationists expressed their readiness to accept office as Ministers and to work the Montford Reforms, provided the

then existing restrictions on the powers of Ministers were removed. Against this new combination, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, the leader of the Swaraj Party, came out with a declaration threatening them with destruction as soon as the "Congress steam-roller" was set into motion. Mr. Gandhi, having handed over the reins of Congress political activities to Pandit Moti Lal, himself temporarily retiring from politics, orthodox non-co-operation or "no changism" was now absolutely dead, at least for the time being. What Pandit Moti Lal Nehru had, to my mind, in view was the hope that Mr. Gandhi's cult of boycott of Councils having disappeared, the ranks of the Swarajists would, at the approaching General Elections, be augmented by that section of the Congress Party who had hitherto abstained from participating in the Council elections in obedience to Mr. Gandhi's behest, and he would thus be in a position to crush all possible political combinations. In these circumstances, what was the right policy for the Government to adopt so that the result of the forthcoming elections should be conducive to orderly constitutional evolution and smooth-working of the administrative machi-

nery ? The answer to this question depended upon an exact grasp of the political situation as it existed in 1926 and on an intelligent anticipation of the development likely to take place in the evolution of parties before the advent of the general elections towards the end of that year.

The Indian Moderates, consisting of the Liberal and Conservative parties, had already accepted the Montford Reforms and had been earnestly co-operating with Government in working the reformed legislative and administrative machinery set up by the Government of India Act, 1919. Their immediate objective, at that time, was to see that the transfer of subjects effected by the Act becomes real, Ministers in the provinces being made masters in their own household and the Government of India freed from the control now exercised by the Secretary of State over internal administration. The "Independent Nationalists" too had accepted these Reforms, the difference between them and the Moderates being in the degree and pace of further constitutional advance towards full responsible Government. It was this difference which had, in the past, led them, on occa-

sions, to join hands with the Swarajists. But their experience, in this respect, had not been very happy and, in consequence, they had finally parted company with Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and his followers. They too wanted to see the then existing limitations and restrictions on the powers of the Ministers in the Provinces and on the Government of India in matters relating to internal administration removed and the Ministers made really responsible to the Provincial Legislatures in the administration of Transferred Subjects. The "Responsive Co-operationists" section of the Swarajist party had openly declared themselves ready to accept office and work the Reforms, provided the Ministers were made masters in their own household. Earnest efforts were made to bring about a coalition of all these parties as against the Swarajists and some of the leading Responsive Co-operationists actually joined the new Indian National Party brought into existence as a result of Mr. Chintamani's efforts at the All-Parties Conference held in Bombay. In these circumstances, the Government was pressed to take advantage of the psychological moment to take action on the Lee Commission's recommendation for provin-

cialization of the Imperial Services administering Transferred Subjects and on the recommendations embodied in the Constitutional Enquiry Committee's report,* and to issue a *Communique* to that effect for general information. The advice thus given was acted upon by Lord Irwin's Government. The main result of the steps thus taken was a distinct change in Bengal, where the Chelmsford-Montagu reforms had been in abeyance for some time, making it again possible for the Government to entrust the administration of Transferred Subjects to Ministers, and the position of Ministers in other Provinces was considerably strengthened.

The general elections held towards the end of 1926 left Pandit Moti Lal Nehru's Swarajist Party in the Central as well as in the Provincial Legislatures in a position much weaker than that occupied by them during the preceding three years. The number of Musalmans in that party had been considerably lessened and the defection of the late Lala Lajpat Rai and his joining hands with

*It was in view of the part taken by me in the appointment of this Committee that Lord Reading persuaded me to stay in his Cabinet for 6 months longer than the normal period of 5 years.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's Hindu Mahasabha section had greatly enhanced the position and prestige of the latter. This state of things necessitated a change of tactics on the part of Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, the main object being to bring the Hindu Mahasabha party within the orbit of his influence. The result was the appointment of a Committee, known as the Nehru Committee, to devise a constitution for India ostensibly in response to the challenge thrown out by Lord Birkenhead. The Committee thus organised included two Muslim representatives as well. The result of the deliberations of this Committee took the form of what is known as the Nehru constitution, a highly centralised form of Government for self-governing India, in its essence unitary in character, which, according to a supplementary report, empowered the Central Government even to suspend Provincial Constitutions in certain contingencies. The constitution thus proposed by the Nehru Committee was confirmed at the Conference held in Lucknow in September 1928 in which Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the late Lala Lajpat Rai took a leading part. It was in truth a triumph for the Hindu Mahasabha. Realising the true import of the constitution

thus formulated, one of the two Muslim members of the Committee sent in his resignation and the Muslim organisations all over India expressed their emphatic condemnation of the scheme which, instead of introducing a really representative democratic Government in India, was calculated to bring into existence an oligarchy in which the various Indian minorities would be at the complete mercy of the majority.

In order to strengthen the Nehru Constitution in India as well as in the eyes of the British politicians in England, the Nehru Committee organised a Convention to be held just before the anniversary of the Indian National Congress in Calcutta during Christmas 1928, which purported to be a Convention of All-Indian Political Parties but as a matter of fact was limited to those sections of the political world in this country who were in sympathy with the new Congress-Mahasabha combination. The All-India Muslim League had meanwhile been split into two sections over the boycott of the Royal Commission in 1927 with the result that what then came to be known as the Jinnah League held its anniversary in Calcutta, the other section holding its anniversary simultaneous-

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ly at Lahore under my presidency. The Jinnah League again held its 1928 anniversary in Calcutta and a delegation of that League headed by Mr. M. A. Jinnah himself and including as its members the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, the Ali Brothers, and others, attended the Nehru Convention with certain demands on behalf of the Muslim Community. All the major demands put forward by this Muslim delegation were rejected by the Convention and the Nehru Constitution was adopted by it practically without any modification. In spite of the protest of Maulana Muhammad Ali, himself an ex-President of the Congress, the decisions arrived at in this Convention were adopted by the Indian National Congress as well. While all this was going on in Calcutta, an All-India Muslim Conference had been arranged to be held in Delhi under the presidentship of His Highness the Agha Khan, to which all Muslim Parties throughout India had been invited. The Conference met in Delhi on the 31st December 1928 and 1st January 1929 and was the most representative Muslim gathering that has ever been held in recent years in India. In addition to nearly 200 Musal-

man members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures, the All-India Muslim League (Lahore), the Khilafat Conference, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Nadawat-ul-Ulema, the All-India Muslim Federation, the Anjuman-i-Islamia, Punjab, the Central Muslim Association, Bengal, the various Provincial Muslim Leagues, the Sindh Muslim Association and other Muslim organisations were represented at this Conference, Maulanas Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali as well as several members of the Jinnah League, having been disgusted with the treatment received by them at the Nehru Convention, came over from Calcutta and joined the Conference. A comprehensive resolution*, embodying Muslim constitutional demands, was unanimously adopted at this Conference and was subsequently endorsed all over India in public meetings as well as by various Muslim organisations and now constitutes the Muslim National creed. And subsequently there has now been a re-union of the two sections of the Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference has been placed on a permanent footing with a constitution of

* See Appendix I.

its own, provincial branches having been established all over India.

While these events were in progress, His Excellency Lord Irwin, had, during the previous winter, taken an important step which produced a profound effect upon the political situation. Soon after assuming charge of his high office Lord Irwin, being convinced that political conditions in India necessitated the appointment of a Royal Commission on Constitutional Reforms earlier than on the date contemplated by the Act, obtained the sanction of His Majesty's Government to make an announcement in India of such appointment. Had the personnel of the Royal Commission included Indian representatives, the announcement would undoubtedly have produced great effect in improving the Indian political atmosphere. But unfortunately His Majesty's Government decided upon sending out to India a purely Parliamentary Commission, consisting of representatives of the three great parties in the British Parliament, a step unprecedented in the past history of India. This grave blunder on the part of the British Government created wide-spread resentment in this country among all political

parties, resulting in emphatic protests even by Indian leaders who had hitherto co-operated with Government throughout the eventful period commencing with Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation movement in 1920. Great though was the blunder committed by His Majesty's Government in this respect, I was sincerely convinced that a boycott of the Royal Commission would be an equally grave blunder on our part. The right course, in my judgment, was for all Indian parties, Hindus and Muslims, to settle their differences and to place a united demand on behalf of India before the Royal Commission. Accordingly, in addition to issuing a statement to that effect, I published a series of Articles* in the "Muslim Outlook" of Lahore, which were subsequently printed in the form of a pamphlet and circulated throughout the country. The Punjab Provincial Muslim League and the Punjab Legislative Council were the first to follow this lead, the former by adopting a resolution which recognised the necessity of the Muslim case being placed before the Royal Commission and the latter by electing a provincial Committee to co-operate with it in accordance with

* See Appendix II.

the plan subsequently announced by Government. Similarly the Legislative Councils of all the Provinces, excepting that of the Central Provinces, elected their Provincial Committees and in the Central Legislature the Council of State elected its quota of members for the Indian Central Committee. The Legislative Assembly, however, rejected the motion for election of its representatives on that Committee by a somewhat narrow majority and Lord Irwin was thus obliged to nominate the Assembly representatives, selecting them from among the parties adopting the policy of co-operation with the Commission. Muslim deputations in every province of India appeared before the Commission to submit their views on constitutional advance in India. Similarly, deputations on behalf of non-Congress Hindus in the Punjab, N.W.F. Province and Sindh, of land-holders, the depressed classes, Anglo-Indians and of other minority interests came forward to give evidence before the Royal Commission and written memoranda were submitted by a large number of organisations from all parts of the country. On the other hand, the Indian National Congress with all its provincial and district

branches, the National Liberal Federation and a minority of the Musalmans, headed by Mr. M.A. Jinnah and the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, boycotted the Commission and the intensive propaganda carried on by them from the public platforms as well as in the public press added to the unrest already prevailing throughout the country.

There is yet another source from which this great volume of unrest has been fed which remains to be noticed. The Russian Bolshevic revolution had created a widespread disturbance in the world's political atmosphere which was inevitably bound to effect men's minds in all countries. The Central Bolshevic organisation in the Russian capital had, it is well known, been concentrating its energies in particular on the East and had sent out its agents to all parts of Asia. Bolshevic literature had thus penetrated into India. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the only son of Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, who had visited Russia during his sojourn abroad, had returned to India with his mind profoundly influenced by communistic doctrines. As a result of his activities a new party had been formed within the Indian National Congress which adopted

Complete Independence as its constitutional goal for India. The rapidity with which this party gathered strength in this organisation was indeed remarkable and furnishes an instructive commentary on the intensity of the political discontent prevailing among the Indian intelligentsia. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru achieved his triumph in the anniversary of the National Congress held at Madras during the Christmas of 1927, when that organisation adopted Complete Independence for India as its goal, in spite of the opposition of the leading elder statesmen in the Congress. In addition to his work within the ranks of the Congress, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru initiated two other movements which were bound to produce tremendous effect in adding to the unrest already existing in the country. In the rack-rented and poverty-stricken tenantry in those tracts where wealthy landowners live in luxury and extravagance upon great fortunes and large incomes made from the results of the tenants' labours, and in the ranks of our country's youths, with their imaginative and easily excitable minds, Pandit Jawahar Lal found ample material upon which to spend his great organising genius.

The result was the foundation of Kisan Sabhas, Youth Leagues and Naujawan Bharat Sabhas in different parts of the country and the propaganda carried on among these classes added stacks of fuel to the great fire of political discontent already burning in the country. In the summer of 1928, however, Pandit Jawahir Lal was persuaded to accept the Nehru Constitution as his immediate goal by his venerable father and Mr. Gandhi, who had now again come out from his temporary retirement. Even so, he carried on his own propaganda among the younger generation, the tenants and the labourers, and the flood of Indian unrest went on gathering volume as a result of all the forces, enumerated above, which were now at work simultaneously throughout the length and breadth of India.

Such were the political conditions in this country when His Excellency Lord Irwin, after having discussed the situation privately, as had been his practice from time to time, with leaders of various political parties, proceeded to England towards the end of June 1929 on four months' leave. At that time the Labour Party had come into power and a great deal of his time at home was spent by him in

discussing the Indian problem with His Majesty's Government. Imbued with a spirit of far-sighted statesmanship, full of sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of educated India and possessing the sincerity and the strength of character which is capable of rising to the necessities of a grave situation by striking a new line, calculated to solve a difficult problem, he returned to India with authority from His Majesty's Government to make to the people of this country an announcement momentous in its character. In a Gazette Extraordinary, published from New Delhi on Saturday, the 1st November 1929, His Excellency announced that grant of Dominion Status to India was the goal of British policy and that His Majesty's Government had decided to invite representatives of all interests in British India as well as of the Indian States to a Round Table Conference in London with the object of arriving at an agreed settlement of the Indian constitutional problem. This historic announcement produced a truly wonderful effect throughout the country. It was warmly welcomed by all political parties, including even the National Congress circles.

Such was the cordial reception given to this announcement throughout the length and breadth of India that the British appreciation of its warm reception was voiced in a Resolution unanimously adopted in the House of Commons. It is sad to think that events should have happened subsequently to mar the effect produced by that great declaration of policy on the part of the British Government at the instance of a Viceroy whose sincerity of purpose is universally acknowledged. After the lapse of a few days, Messrs. Gandhi and Moti Lal Nehru came forward with certain conditions the acceptance of which they made a condition precedent to their acceptance of the invitation to attend the Round Table Conference. His Excellency the Viceroy could not agree to those conditions, with the result that the Congress leaders declared a boycott of the Round Table Conference. Earnest appeals made by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. M. A. Jinnah and myself for an amicable settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem in order to present a united demand on behalf of India at the Round Table Conference went entirely unheeded. Thereafter, the political conditions

in this country went through a lightning-like change. The Indian National Congress met at Lahore during the last Christmas, adopted a resolution in favour of Complete Independence as India's constitutional goal and unfurled the National flag by way of declaration of independence. Civil Disobedience was decided upon as the course of action to be followed and the All-India Congress Committee was authorised to start the campaign when and how it thought fit. With Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru as the President of the Congress for the current year, the Congress Committee was not slow in arriving at its decision on this momentous question. The Committee appointed Mr. Gandhi as the Dictator and delegated to him absolute authority to take whatever action he thought fit in order to carry out the Congress decision. Shortly after this grave decision by the National Congress came the Budget Session of the Central Legislature. For the first time after some five years the Government of India had to face a deficit year. Instead of making up the deficit partly by increased customs tariff and partly by retrenchment of expenditure,

the Government proposed to make up the deficit of some five crores entirely by additional taxation. And in its proposals regarding enhanced customs duty on imported cotton goods, which had undoubtedly become absolutely essential if the indigenous mill industry was to be saved from ruin, the Government introduced an element of Imperial Preference. Whatever may be the merits of this proposal, this much is undeniable, that it was opposed to a strong body of opinion in the country and gave a handle to the Congress leaders to add to the volume of unrest already disturbing the political atmosphere by starting agitation against it. While the Central Legislature was still in session, Mr. Gandhi, after careful deliberation, decided upon concentrating all the forces at the disposal of the Congress in order to fight the Salt Tax. The object of this decision was obviously two-fold. In the first place, the Salt Tax was the most unpopular of all taxes in India, the effects of which were felt by the masses, irrespective of creed and locality. Agitation against it was, in consequence, likely to produce the desired effect more quickly than

against any other item of taxation. In the next place, organised agitation against the Salt Tax, if successful, would pave the way for bigger action later on when a no-tax campaign could be undertaken with some prospect of success. In the words of one of the leaders of this movement, by manufacturing salt they were in reality "manufacturing disobedience". Mr. Gandhi fixed the week commencing with the 6th of April, the anniversary of the National Day of 1919, as the National Week for the purpose of starting his Civil Disobedience campaign, and began his march, accompanied by 82 well-trained volunteers, from his Ashram in Ahmadabad towards Dandi on the Bombay sea-coast where he intended to manufacture contraband salt from the sea-water in defiance of the provisions of the Salt Act, holding meetings and delivering speeches in the villages, along the route, through which he passed and thus spreading unrest among the masses in rural areas in Gujrat. Arriving at Dandi, he began to manufacture salt on the appointed day and his example was followed in other places in the Bombay, Madras and Bengal Presidencies, as well as in the U. P., the Punjab, Behar and

elsewhere. The campaign against the Salt Tax spread all over India. More over insistence of the Government on carrying the Tariff Bill through the Central Legislature, in spite of strong opposition from the Nationalist group, resulted in Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and many of his followers, including Mr. N. C. Kelkar, resigning from the Assembly and the Pandit started an active campaign for boycott of British goods. The position thus created in the country was such that, as has been frankly admitted by Mr. Gandhi himself, Government could not be expected to remain inactive while the law of the land was thus being openly defied. Moreover, as had been anticipated by all thoughtful students of Indian political conditions, Mr. Gandhi's campaign, in spite of his eloquent appeals for non-violence, soon gave rise to outbreaks of violence in different parts of the country, an organised raid by some Bengal revolutionary society on the Police and Railway armouries at Chittagong, accompanied by cold blooded murders and incendiarism, serious riots at Peshawar, Delhi, Karachi, Calcutta, Bombay and Sholapur being some of the more promi-

nent deplorable results. At Sholapur, Martial Law had to be declared in view of the complete powerlessness of the Civil Government to control the situation. Mr. Gandhi's declaration that he would not stop his Civil Disobedience campaign simply because of these outbreaks due to the action of the Party of Violence was not calculated to prove a check upon the activities of the latter. In these unhappy circumstances, the patience even of the generous and large-hearted nobleman at the helm of the Government of India has been exhausted and the Government has been compelled to take strong action, not only in putting down the outbreaks already mentioned but also in arresting the leaders of the Civil Disobedience campaign. Scores of prominent Indian politicians including Messrs. Jawahar Lal Nehru, Valabhai Patel, Sen Gupta, Subhas Chander Bose, Nariman, Jamnalal Bajaj, Abbas Tyebji, Satyapal and others as well as hundreds of enthusiastic young men who had enrolled themselves as national volunteers have already gone to jail. And finally the great leader of the movement himself has been interned in Yerwada Jail

under the provisions of an old Bombay Regulation. The repressive action thus taken by Government, however necessary in the circumstances, has intensified the campaign started by Mr. Gandhi and the movement for the boycott of British goods started by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya is spreading all over the country.

On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of the Muslim Community have entirely disassociated themselves from Mr. Gandhi's Civil Disobedience campaign. The Khilafat Committee, once Mr. Gandhi's right hand in the non-co-operation campaign of 1920-22, has openly declared itself against it. The Liberals, the Landholders, the Depressed Classes, the Indian Christians and the Anglo-Indians have no sympathy for this campaign and the Sikh Community are as yet holding aloof from it. Nevertheless, the campaign is spreading more and more with the lapse of time, and the inaction of the Government in taking some immediate constructive step in order to satisfy legitimate aspirations is creating impatience even amongst loyal and moderate circles. It is self-evident that repression, however necessary to put down

breaches of the law and defiance of authority, cannot by itself meet a grave situation like this. Along with it, some generous gesture of a nature calculated to capture the imagination of the Indian intelligentsia is essential to meet the situation. An immediate announcement that the Round Table Conference will be held during the current year as soon as it can be arranged is, to my mind, certain to produce considerable effect in improving the situation*. And when the Round Table Conference is held, the adoption of a liberal scheme of reforms, including the grant of complete provincial autonomy and introduction of responsibility in the Central Government with reservation, for a time, of certain vital subjects should be the outcome of its deliberations. Moreover, the preamble of the new Statute should, in plain language, recognise India's right to Dominion Status and the constitution should be framed as to be capable of automatic development to that status within a specified period. Care must, however, be taken, that the new constitution for India brings into existence in this country a really

* Such announcement was made when these pages were being printed.

representative democratic Government and not an oligarchy, fatal to the best interests of India as well as of the British connection. This to my mind is the solution of the Indian political problem and I am confident, that should this constitutional change be brought about without unnecessary delay, the results will be in the highest degree beneficial both to India and to England, and the British connection with India will thereby be strengthened. There are, of course, important problems connected with certain features of the new constitution as well as relating to the protection of minority interests which will have to be satisfactorily solved in order to make the future Government of India truly representative of the entire Indian population and to make it acceptable to the various communities having material stakes in the country. But it ought not to be difficult for enlightened and far-sighted statesmanship to solve these problems and I have no doubt whatever that, if the leaders of the various schools of thought come together in a spirit of mutual co-operation and good will, the differences at present existing, will vanish as a result of their pat-

riotic efforts and India, self governing as well as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations, will thus not only come into her own but will also be in a position to play, in international affairs, that glorious part which is her rightful due.

The Right Policy for Indian Musalmans*

IN formulating a sound policy for the Indian Musalmans in the complicated political situation with which India is confronted, it is absolutely essential to bear the actually existing conditions in mind. As I observed on another occasion, sentiment if not opposed to reason is a great factor in national uplift, if allied with reason it is an irresistible force, but when opposed to reason it may bring disaster. And this is equally true of idealism. Idealism is indeed an essential element in the formulation of national policy. When coupled with a due regard to actually existing conditions, its soul-stirring influences inspire struggling nations to efforts certain to bring about glorious results. But idealism which ignores actually existing conditions is likely to result in national catastrophe. A political idealist who, at the same time, bears the limitations of the actually existing situation in mind and frames his policy as well as his methods of action accordingly is undoubtedly a real statesman: but the man who ignores this elementary princi-

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ple in his effort for national regeneration is unfit to take a leading part in modern political movements.

With the annihilation of distances as a result of modern scientific progress, life has ceased to be individual or even national: it has become international. No community, no nation in the world can now afford to lead an isolated existence. An India without railways, telegraphs, telephones, universities, hospitals and all the paraphernalia of modern civilization is an impossible conception. The days when Indians could aspire to lead the lives of the *Rishis* of old—passing their time in spiritual contemplation, in a semi-nude condition and in complete disregard of the world-forces which are moulding the destinies of nations—are now past beyond recall. For us to ignore the world-forces at present in operation is to court self-destruction. And those of us who have carefully watched the working of these irresistible forces since the conclusion of the Great War cannot but have realized that national activities are, all over the world, gradually giving place to international relations. Fabulously rich and in consequence, powerful though is the United States

of America, separated though it is by the wide expanse of the Atlantic Ocean from the continent of Europe, nevertheless even the Americans cannot afford to remain aloof from the European nations in the vortex of international existence. The League of Nations, with all its imperfections, constitutes the surest sign-post pointing towards the goal which nations of the world will, sooner or later, aim at. If there is one lesson more than another which we Indians have got to learn from the history of the last decade, it is to realise that India standing alone—self-sufficient and self-contained, safe from foreign aggression or from internal upheaval—is an utterly quixotic dream. Such being the international situation, it follows *ipso facto* that India as an equal partner in the smaller League already in existence, *i.e.* the Commonwealth of Nations known as the British Empire, is a political ideal worthy of adoption by all Indian patriots. A close study of internal and international conditions, extending over a period of 40 years, has convinced me that the future of our country lies within the British Empire and I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to all Indian

Musalmans to adopt the attainment of full responsible government within the Empire as the aim of their political activities.

But full responsible government within the Empire, while connoting equal partnership in other matters, implies complete independence in so far as the administration of our internal affairs is concerned. As I said in a speech delivered by me in Viceregal Lodge, Delhi, in November, 1924, when addressing an audience consisting of high British officials and their ladies, I want my countrymen in India to rise to the same stature to which other nations have arisen in their own countries. That consummation, as the late Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale observed in his historic Allahabad speech, is capable of full attainment by us with India as an equal partner in the British Empire. And since the delivery of this speech by that selfless Indian patriot, England has, in the solemn Declaration of 20th August, 1917, as well as in the Preamble to the Government of India Act, 1919, definitely promised that consummation to India. As I said on the occasion already referred to, that solemn pledge is now absolutely beyond recall. The issue,

therefore, is merely one of time. And when the issue is thus comparatively narrow, it is, to my mind, the very opposite of political wisdom to rouse revolutionary forces, the triumph of which will mean not only chaos and bloodshed in the country but also a serious set-back to constitutional progress. At the same time I fully recognise that the keen desire, nay, even impatience for the speedy attainment of their goal is perfectly natural in the case of people striving for political regeneration. The British Parliament should, therefore, treat the legitimate aspirations of the Indian intelligentsia in a generous spirit, bearing in mind the fact that while satisfaction of legitimate Indian aspirations is calculated to strengthen the British connection, these, if not conceded at the psychological moment, have a natural tendency to grow in volume and what may satisfy our educated classes to-day may not give them satisfaction to-morrow. It follows, therefore, that the Indian Musalmans, while co-operating whole-heartedly with the rest of their countrymen in promoting the advance of their common motherland towards the constitutional goal of full responsible

government, should, at the same time, have no part or lot in revolutionary movements calculated to check ordered progress and to set back the hands of the clock.

But, while co-operating with the sister communities in the effort for attainment of self-government, it is the duty of the Indian Muslims to see that constitutional progress in India proceeds along lines calculated to bring into existence a truly representative democratic Government, and to set their face, with fixed determination, against the creation of an oligarchy in our common motherland. This they owe not only to the vast heterogenous mass of their countrymen as a whole but also to their own political existence in this country. In a vast sub-continent like India, the evolution of a federal system along the lines of democratic constitutions obtaining in the United States of America, the Swiss, the Australian and the post-war Austrian Federations, with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent States, and providing adequate representation of all important interests in our Legislatures, is the only means for the attainment of this desirable aim. It is with this end in view

that the comprehensive resolution* adopted at the All-India Muslim Conference held in Dehli on the 31st December and 1st January last was drafted after most anxious and careful consideration and I have, therefore, no hesitation whatever in commending it to all my Muslim brethren throughout the length and breadth of India.

* See Appendix I.

*The United States of India

Federal versus Unitary Form of Government.

INDIA is a sub-continent as large in extent as the whole of Europe *minus* Russia. Its vast population is in excess of the population of that European tract by over 100 millions and is almost equal to that of the whole of Europe. From a linguistic point of view, the position in India is even more complicated, the diversity of languages here being more perplexing than is the case on the European continent. Place an uneducated Assamese from the hill tracts and another from the plains of Assam, a Bengali from Bengal, an Oriya from Orissa, a Behari from Behar, a Rohilla from Rohilkhand, a Hindustani from Agra, an Eastern Punjabi from the cis-Sutlej districts and a Punjabi from the Rawalbindi division of the Punjab, a Kashmiri from Kashmir, a Pashtu speaking Pathan from the North-West Frontier Province, a Baluch from Baluchistan, a Sindhi from Sindh, a Gujarati speaking resident of the Bombay Presidency, a Mahratta from Maharashtra, a Madrasi from Madras, a Coorgi from Coorg,

* Published in "The Star" of Allahabad, dated the 4th November, 1927.

etc., etc., in one room large enough to hold them, the resulting linguistic pandemonium would be far more bewildering than if an unducated Portuguese, a Spaniard, a Frenchman, an Italian, an Albanian, a Serb, a Bulgarian, an Austrian, a German, a Dutchman, a Scandinavian and a Briton were brought together in one assemblage.

The climatic conditions and the physical features of the various provinces of India are as variegated as those of the different parts of the European continent, with the result that the Indian people living in the north are as different from those living in the south, and those residing in the west from those resident in the east in their complexion, features and build as are the people of the various countries in that portion of Europe with which a comparison is being here instituted. And the different sections of this vast population of India are as diverse in their racial origin as are the peoples of the European continent. We have first the pre-Aryan Aborigines, numbering some 60 millions, who are as distinct from the rest of the Indian population as any two races of Europe. There are again the descen-

dants of the caste-Hindu Aryan invaders, at present numbering some 170 millions, who, migrating from Central Asia, settled in this country some three thousand years ago and have trampled the pre-Aryan Aborigines now known as " Depressed classes ", under their feet throughout the past Indian history.

We have next the purely Muslim races—the Afghans, the Moghals the Sayads, the Arains, etc., - who came into India in the series of Muslim invasions of this country and made it their permanent home. Added to these we have the millions of converts to Islam, the whole now numbering 71 millions, constituting the entire Muslim population of India. Further there are the Europeans and the Anglo-Indians, as also the Parsees, comparatively smaller though in number than the other communities, but, by reason of their great stake in the country, having an importance of their own. Finally, from the religious point of view, the position in India is far more complicated than that obtaining in the various countries constituting the parallel portion of the European continent mentioned above. While the European population in those countries is almost entirely

Christian, the proportion professing Islam being infinitesimal, in India, we have the heterogeneous mass of its population professing the Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Zoroastrian, and other faiths. And it is an indisputable fact that in the East religion still exercises far greater and deeper influence in all spheres of human life than is the case in the West. Such being the undeniable conditions in this vast sub-continent, it is, I venture to think, self evident that a Unitary form of Government in a self-governing India would be even a more impracticable proposition than a Unitary Government in the whole of Europe *minus* Russia.

A minority Government, foreign in origin, ruling over a vast sub-continent like this, must inevitably be one of a Unitary character, in which power must be vested mainly in the Central Government. For this very reason the Pathan and the Moghal Empires in India were based on the Unitary system. But even so they found it impossible to treat this sub-continent as a single administrative unit. The geographical sub-divisions of India being well recognised, even before the advent of the Muslim rule in this country, the

Pathan and Moghal Emperors placed each of those sub-divisions under the control of Subedars or Governors in order to facilitate the work of administration. But, in making this administrative arrangement, they committed two great blunders which ultimately led to the downfall of the Afghan and Moghal Empires. In the first place, the appointment of the Subedars was unlimited in tenure with the result that, often for life, it became, in some cases, even hereditary. In the second place, these Subedars or Governors were not only heads of the Civil administration but were also the heads of the army in their respective territories. The result of this state of things was that the Emperors at Delhi and Agra had many a time to send out armies against their own rebellious Subedars, appointed by them to rule over the outlying tracts, and in the course of time the great Empires of the Pathans and Moghals thus broke up into pieces.

The founders of the British Empire, however, followed an entirely different course. Realising that the permanence and stability of the British rule in India was dependent on the establishment in this

country of a benevolent autocracy, they introduced a system of administration which, while retaining essential control in the hands of the Central Government, at the same time, secured administrative efficiency in the various provincial units, into which India has been divided almost from times immemorial. Not only was exclusive control of matters of common and vital interest to the whole of the country as well as of the army and of military affairs in general reserved to the Central Government, but it was also vested with power of superintendence and control even over affairs of purely provincial concern. The Governors of the various provinces, who were to be heads merely of the civil administration in their territories, were to be changed after every five years, thus establishing a powerful Unitary system for the governance of India. But the British autocracy having, in its very inception, been intended to be benevolent in its character, a decision was taken in 1835 by Lord Auckland's Government and approved by the Directors of the East India Company which was bound to have profound effect on the future of India. According to that decision,

based on Lord Macaulay's historic Minute, Western Arts and Sciences were to be imparted to the people of India through the medium of the English language. That momentous decision could not but produce its inevitable results in after years upon the administrative system of this country. As a result of the spread of Western education and of the study of the constitutional history of England, France, and other European countries as well as of the teachings of John Stuart Mill and other great masters of the political science, entirely new ideas and aspirations were generated in the minds of the Indian Intelligentsia and began to find expression in the Press and from the public platforms. Lord Ripon's Government took the first step towards the satisfaction of these aspirations, establishing a system of Local self-Government in the provinces, which has gone on developing until we have now purely elected local bodies with non-official Presidents administering local affairs. Moreover, in order to satisfy still higher aspirations, in due course of time Legislative Councils were established in the various provinces and the Central Legislature was enlarged. Indian representation thereon,

however, for a long time remained limited and continued to be through the medium of nomination by Government.

The Minto-Morley Reforms introduced the principle of representation by election for the first time on 1st January, 1910. Meanwhile, the rapid spread of higher education in the country continued to bring about a widening and deepening of the political aspirations of the Indian Intelligentsia and, only some four years after the introduction of those reforms, came the World War, which created a profound stir in men's minds throughout the civilised world. New world-forces came into operation, changing the mental outlook of millions in the East and the West and a wave of democratic ideals spread with lightning rapidity over the face of the two hemispheres. India's remarkable devotion to the British connection in this life and death struggle of the British Empire won for her the new historic declaration of 20th August, 1917, in fulfilment of which the Government of India Act, 1919, was enacted by the British Parliament as a first step towards the ultimate grant of full responsible Government to this country. In order to give stability to the intend-

ed constitutional development, the element of responsibility was first introduced partially in the provinces, what are known as the nation-building departments being transferred to the control of Ministers, elected from among the elected representatives of the people in the provincial Legislatures and made responsible to them for their due administration. And, finally, as a result of the growing demands for further constitutional advance, the British Parliament sent a Royal Commission, presided over by a constitutional lawyer and politician of Sir John Simon's eminence, out to India for investigation into the working of the existing constitutional and administrative machinery and to formulate a new scheme of constitutional reforms for the future.

For the building of a stable constitutional structure, it is essential that the form which it will ultimately take in a self-governing India must be determined in the first instance so that whatever measure of advance may now be taken should be in consonance with the design of which completion is contemplated. It is further, essential that the design so contemplated must be thought out carefully, bearing the complicated political condi-

tions obtaining in this vast sub-continent in mind. Were any error to be committed in its conception at this stage, the consequences may prove disastrous hereafter. for then it will be impossible to retrace our steps.

When full Dominion Status is granted to India, it is obvious that the Government of the country will have to be really national. And the tendency of world movements in all civilised countries being towards the introduction of democratic institutions, autocracy is out of the question in a self-governing India. Moreover, there would be no need whatever for an autocratic form of government when full responsible government comes into being in this country, for it will no longer be a case of minority government, foreign in origin, ruling over the Indian continent. For these reasons as well as in view of what has been said in the opening paragraph of this article, a Unitary form of Government is an obvious impossibility in the self-governing India of the future. The only logical goal to be aimed at is that which was laid down, for the guidance of the Indian National Congress, by Sir Henry Cotton in the presidential address delivered by him at its Bombay anniversary dur-

ing the Christmas of 1904.

“Autonomy”, said he, “is the keynote of England’s true relations with her great Colonies. It is the keynote also of India’s destiny. It is more than this – it is the destiny of the world. The tendency of Empire in the civilised world is in the direction of compact autonomous States which are federated together and attached by common motives and self interest to a Central Power. You have already local legislatures, in which a certain measure of representation has been granted to the Indian people. A small concession has been made in this direction, but it is wholly inadequate to meet growing demands. In the cautious and gradual development of representation, in the increase of your power and influence in India itself, involving the ultimate extension of autonomy, we shall find the appropriate and natural prize and legitimate goal for Indian aspirations.

.....*The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of a Federation of free and separate States, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing Colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of Great*

Britain."

That is the goal which the National Congress has hitherto kept in view ; that is the ideal which the history of democratic countries like the United States of America, Australia and Switzerland has placed before us. A federal system of Government in India with the control of the Army, Navy and Air Force as well as of matters essentially of common interest to the whole of the country in the hands of the Central Government, the control of everything else together with residuary powers being vested in the provinces, would make the Central Government strong enough to cope with all foreign aggression and thus constitute a complete guarantee for the safety of India as well as for a satisfactory administration of what may be characterised as Imperial affairs. It will, at the same time, give complete control of their own internal affairs to the various constituent States of the future Indian Federation.

Unless the consitutional system thus briefly sketched is adopted, it is obvious that the Ruling Princes of India can never agree to enter into any other constitutional and administrative system that may be devised for

the country. In the existing conditions they are the heads of semi-Sovereign States, their internal autonomy being guaranteed to them by the British Government. Can any thoughtful person, possessing even a modicum of constitutional instinct, conceive the possibility of our Indian States accepting a constitution, such as is embodied in the Nehru Report, which would vest the supreme power of Government in this country in the hands of an oligarchy in British India, including power of interference in their internal affairs and of even suspending the provincial constitution whenever it thought fit to do so, upon the grounds mentioned in that report? And a self-governing British India having its being side by side with an Indian India, constitutionally unconnected with it and having direct political relations with outside authority, is, I venture to think, a hopelessly impracticable conception. Indeed, if the future constitution of India is to be built upon a sound footing, the only ideal to be aimed at is a Federal system on the lines of the Australian, the American and the Swiss constitutions. And in order to make such a constitutional structure solid as well as per-

manent, like all other sound structures, it must be built upwards and not downwards. In other words, the provinces must first be made self-governing and, thereafter, should become the constituent States of a fully responsible Indian Federation, on the truly democratic lines adopted in the countries mentioned above.

In the comprehensive resolution adopted at the All-India Muslim Conference * held in Delhi on the 31st December and 1st January last, Muslim representatives made it clear, in unequivocal language, that they could not possibly agree to the adoption of any constitution, by whomsoever proposed or framed, which departed from these sound democratic lines ; subsequent events have made it clear beyond a shadow of doubt that the entire Muslim India is of one mind in regard to this vital aspect of the constitutional problem ; and I have no doubt that the British statesmen will devote to it that necessary attention which the true interests of India as well as of the British connection imperatively demand. That this is also the one permanent and satisfactory solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem in this country will be demonstrated in another article.

*See Appendix I.

Federal Systems as a Permanent Solution of the Hindu-Muslim Problem.

TOWARDS the beginning of 1925, the late Sahibzada AftabAhmadKhan conceived the idea of celebrating the Jubilee of the M. A. O. College, Aligarh, during the Christmas of that year. The idea was warmly welcomed by the Muslim community all over India. During the summer session of the Central Legislature at Simla, certain prominent leaders discussed among themselves the desirability of holding an informal conference of Muslim representatives from all provinces on the occasion of the Jubilee for the purpose of discussing the political situation and formulating a sound policy for the Indian Musalmans which would be adopted by the All-India Muslim League at its anniversary to be held during the Christmas week at Aligarh. The idea of holding such an informal conference for the purpose aforesaid was not a new one. Such conferences, with similar objects, had been held previously in 1909 at Delhi and in 1912 at Calcutta, when the decisions arrived at in those conferences

had similarly been adopted by the Muslim League. In a country like India, where political conditions are undergoing changes with almost lightning-like rapidity, the necessity of holding periodical conference for revision of policy is self-evident. Subsequently, on the suggestion of my friend Sir Ali Imam made to Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmad when the latter went to Patna to deliver his Convocation address, I was asked to embody my views regarding this all important matter in a memorandum which would form the basis of discussions at the proposed conference. Accordingly, I prepared a memorandum containing my views on the policy which the Indian Mussalmans should adopt in relation to the various problems which were agitating the country. The conference, met at the residence of Nawab Sir Muzamil-ul-Ullah Khan at Aligarh on Sunday, the 27th December, 1925, was thoroughly representative of all schools of thought and the conclusions then arrived at, after lengthy discussion, were placed before the annual meeting of the All-India Muslim League in the form of the several resolutions adopted on that occasion,

Certain observations made by me in a portion of the memorandum mentioned above have an important bearing upon the vital question which is the subject matter of this article. "The question of Muslim representation on the Legislative Council of those provinces where the community constitutes a minority of the population is", I then observed, "not free from difficulty. Before dealing with it, however, there is one important matter which, in my opinion, ought to be settled in order to enable us to consider the whole question upon a reasonable basis likely to be acceptable to the principal parties concerned in the matter.

"There seems to me to be no reason whatever why the province of Sindh should continue to be tied to the apron-strings of the Bombay Presidency. Neither on an ethnological or geographical basis nor on any other ground whatever is the present arrangement whereby that province forms a part of the Bombay Presidency, justifiable. Indeed its absorption into that Presidency has resulted in its progress being materially retarded. The province of Sindh is mainly agricultural and it is only now, after nearly a hundred

had similarly been adopted by the Muslim League. In a country like India, where political conditions are undergoing changes with almost lightning-like rapidity, the necessity of holding periodical conference for revision of policy is self-evident. Subsequently, on the suggestion of my friend Sir Ali Imam made to Dr. Zia-ud-Din Ahmad when the latter went to Patna to deliver his Convocation address, I was asked to embody my views regarding this all important matter in a memorandum which would form the basis of discussions at the proposed conference. Accordingly, I prepared a memorandum containing my views on the policy which the Indian Mussalmans should adopt in relation to the various problems which were agitating the country. The conference, met at the residence of Nawab Sir Muzamil-ul-Ullah Khan at Aligarh on Sunday, the 27th December, 1925, was thoroughly representative of all schools of thought and the conclusions then arrived at, after lengthy discussion, were placed before the annual meeting of the All-India Muslim League in the form of the several resolutions adopted on that occasion,

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years, that the Government of Bombay have undertaken the first real step, *i. e.*, the Sukkur Barrage, towards agricultural development in that tract. Owing to the jealousy of Bombay, hardly anything has been done towards developing the port of Karachi, one of the biggest grain export centres in India. The Muslim League ought to agitate for the separation of that province from the rest of the Bombay Presidency. When this comes about, we will then have six Indian Provinces with a Hindu majority, *i. e.*, Madras, Bombay, C. P., U. P., Bihar and Orissa and Assam, on the one hand, and five provinces, *i. e.*, Bengal, Punjab, N.-W. F. P., Sindh, and Baluchistan with a Muslim majority on the other. The problem of adequate representation of minorities will then become comparatively simple. Whatever increased representation on the principle of minority protection is settled, by agreement, will be granted to the minorities in all these provinces. And even if no increased representation is conceded to any minority, representation on Legislative Councils being given on the proportional basis, *the state of things created by this division*

of India into eleven provinces, as mentioned above, will itself be a guarantee of fair treatment of minorities by the majorities in all provinces. For the majorities in one set of provinces will be afraid of withholding from the minorities their legitimate rights lest their brethren in the other provinces in which they constitute a minority be similarly treated. In these circumstances, the real solution of the whole problem lies in securing to the Muslim majorities in Bengal and the Punjab the rights of the majorities to which they are legitimately entitled as well as in the constitution of Sindh into a separate province, and the Muslim League should, in consequence, concentrate its energies upon these vital questions. ”

The All-India Hindu Mahasabha, on the other hand, held its anniversary at Cawnpore during that same Christmas week. presided over by my friend Mr. N. C. Kelkar who delivered his presidential address two days after the informal Muslim Conference had met at Aligarh, *i. e.*, on 29th December. In these circumstances, it is obvious that Mr. Kelkar must have been preparing his presidential address in Poona or Bombay about the

same time as I was writing my memorandum at Lahore. It is indeed a curious coincidence that our thoughts should have flown in almost exactly the same direction. Discussing the question of Hindu and Muslim representation in our provincial legislatures, Mr. Kelkar spoke as follows:—"The only position which the Hindus have taken and which, I think, they should never give up is that the Muhammadans can be allowed to claim special representation in different provinces according to a special rule of that province. In other words, they do not object to any rule of universal application which Muhammadans may choose to abide by. But they object and will object to *ad hoc* plea or rule, so that the Muhammadans may be enabled to say 'heads I win, tail you lose?' The application of any one universal rule would result naturally in hostages being given by both communities in different provinces. In the Frontier provinces, Punjab, Bengal and Sindh, the Muhammadans would be in a position of advantage. On the other hand the Hindus would be in a position of advantage in the other provinces. Does this not give a kind of automatic guarantee against the ill-treatment of any one

community by another in any province, assuming that the Hindu and Muhammadan communities are both animated by fellow-feeling for co-religionists. ”

Carefully analysed, the two pronouncements are, in reality, identical in character : Both admit the desirability of an agreed formula of general application for an amicable settlement of the question of Hindu Muslim representation in our Legislative Councils, both recognize the need for constituting Sindh into a separate province and both acknowledge the unquestionable fact that in a federal system thus organised is to be found an automatic solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem and a sure guarantee of good treatment of each other by the two great Indian communities. The introduction of a federal system of Government in India would thus constitute the commencement of a new era of mutual co-operation and good will between the two communities and, as a necessary result, the ultimate evolution of a common Indian nationality will then be in sight. I earnestly appeal to representatives of all schools of thought to give their careful consideration to this solution of the pro-

blem we have to face at this critical juncture. With a settlement on these lines having been arrived at, we can go with a clear conscience and a united purpose to the proposed Round Table Conference in London, and I am confident that British and Indian statesmanship will then be able to work out jointly a satisfactory solution of India's constitutional problem.

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Communal Electorates

Extract from the Presidential address delivered at the anniversary of the All-India Muslim League at Lahore, on 30th December 1927.

FOR some time past, there has been a well organised campaign in certain non-Muslim circles against separate communal electorates which, at present, form an integral part of the Indian constitution. In this campaign the All-India Hindu Maha-Sahba has been taking the leading part. Coming soon after the *Shudhi* and *Sangathan* movements, this campaign has a significance of its own upon which I do not propose to dwell to-day. My main object in this part of my address is to examine the grounds upon which separate communal electorates have, of late, been attacked by those who would have them excluded from our constitutional system. A careful analysis of all the literature which has gathered round this important topic shows that separate communal electorates have been vehemently criticised, more particularly ever since the Olivier-Lajpat Pact was entered into, on three principal grounds. Separate Muslim electorates, it is eloquently asserted, are opposed to the basic principles of democracy, are un-

precedented in Western democratic constitutions and, being the real cause of the present Hindu-Muslim troubles, constitute a grave menace to Indian Nationalism. An unbiased consideration of these grounds makes it abundantly clear that they are, in reality, devoid of any substance, being merely of the nature of those platitudes which it has come to be the fashion in certain political circles to indulge in with a view to giving a plausible appearance to positions essentially untenable.

Gentlemen, the two basic principles of all modern systems of democratic government, as I understand it, are :—

- (a) that the Executive of a country should be responsible to its Legislature, and
- (b) that the Legislature should be really representative of the people.

All students of modern constitutional history are aware of the fact that every democratic constitution, whether in Europe or in America, has been built on these firm foundations. No attempt at confusing the real issue, no effort at drawing a red herring

across the scent can possibly shake the sound constitutional position which I have just described. Further, it is obvious that a particular form of electorates, for the purpose of constituting a Legislature has no relevancy whatever to the first of these basic principles. It is undoubtedly with the second that we are concerned in this connection.

In order to make a country's Legislature really representative of its people, it is self-evident that the system of electorates must be so framed as to give the fullest scope to real representation of all sections of its population. No Legislature can have any claim to be regarded as truly democratic unless it satisfies this fundamental test. It is true that in Western countries, which have adopted a democratic form of Government, Parliamentary electorates have, generally speaking, been devised on a purely territorial basis. But, in this connection, it ought never to be forgotten that the democratic form of Government in the Western hemisphere has been introduced in comparatively homogeneous communities, bound together by ties of common religion, material interest and race.

In such circumstances, purely territorial electorates naturally result in the creation of Legislatures which are, on the whole, fairly representative of the people for whom they enact laws and on whose welfare and happiness they keep a watchful eye. Even in the British Self-Governing Dominions where the population, broadly speaking, consists of diverse races and creeds, a system of territorial electorates has been possible only because franchise is limited to the white settlers. It is, however, worthy of note that in the latest constitution within the British Empire, where the prevailing conditions are somewhat analogous to those obtaining in India, *i.e.*, in the Kenya Colony, communal electorates, providing representation for the Africans, the Indians and the white Settlers, form an integral part. It is significant that Lord Olivier, who champions the campaign against communal electorates in England, was a member of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's Labour Government which, I believe, had a great deal to do with the inauguration of that constitution. As was observed by that great apostle of liberalism, the late Lord Morley, during the House of Lords debate on the

Minto-Morley Reforms on 23rd February 1909, separate communal electorates formed an integral part of the Cyprus and Bohemia constitutions during the pre-war period. And finally, we have the case of Ireland, which in its extent is smaller than even some of our minor provinces, where the British Parliament has gone even further. In order to give adequate protection to the Protestant minority, it divided that small island into two still smaller parts, placing each under a separate Parliament, in spite of vehement protest by the majority of the Irish people. "Circumstances alter cases" is one of those sound principles which practical statesmanship never hesitates to follow when circumstances may so require. In the case of a great sub-continent like India, where its 310 millions of population is divided into various communities belonging to different races, professing diverse religious creeds and governed by multifarious social systems, purely territorial electorates can by no conceivable possibility result in adequate representation of all interests in our Legislatures, particularly in the transitional stage. By reason of the unfortunate conditions obtaining in India at

present, territorial electorates can only result in creating an oligarchy but can never bring into existence Legislatures really representative of all sections of our population. "Indeed, we regard the development of a broad franchise", said the authors of the Reforms Scheme in para 262 of their report, "as the arch on which the edifice of Self-Government must be raised, *for we have no intention that our reforms should result merely in the transfer of powers from a bureaucracy to an oligarchy.*" A particular form of electorates is, after all, not in itself the goal which Indian patriots can aim at—it is only a method for the realization of our constitutional aim. The essential point to be borne in mind is the adoption of the best method for reaching the goal of full responsible Government compatible with actually existing conditions in this country. In the deplorable conditions at present obtaining in India, this is possible only by maintaining the principle of the Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms under which the various important communities, having material stakes in the country, possess the right of representation in our Legislatures through their own electorates.

The third ground of attack against separate communal electorates, *i. e.*, that this system is the real cause of the Hindu-Muslim troubles and, therefore, constitutes a grave danger to Indian Nationalism, is, I venture to think, equally fallacious. An Arya Samaj procession, with bands playing, passes in front of a mosque at the time of congregational prayers and the leaders of this procession are asked to stop the music for what can only be the briefest space of time, as the noise created thereby disturbs the Muslim congregation in the performance of their religious worship. The processionists vehemently insist on their right of taking the procession along a public thoroughfare as they please, and the result is a collision between the two communities resulting in numerous casualties on both sides. The cry is at once raised from the Maha-Sabha platform and in that section of the press which follows its lead, that communal electorates are the real cause of this trouble ! Some Musalmans lead a sacrificial cow in procession towards the slaughter house on the day of the "Id" in order to perform a religious obligation. They pass through a locality inhabited mainly by our

Hindu brethren and the latter protest against the procession taking that route as calculated to wound their religious feelings. The Musalmans *insist on their right of taking the procession along a public thoroughfare as they please and the result is a similar collision with the self-same consequences.* A cry is at once raised in Maha-Sabha circles that communal electorates are at the root of this conflict! Instances like this can be multiplied *ad nauseam*, but I refrain from doing so for obvious reasons. The connection between cause and effect in all these cases of communal troubles, which have taken place between the two communities during the last three or four years, is obvious. Those causes have, in reality, nothing whatever to do with separate communal electorates and are to be found in the craze for what I have often described as *Leader-Bazi* and in the aggressive religious propaganda which, started some four years ago in certain quarters, has set the country ablaze.

That separate electorates have nothing to do with the creation of the unhappy conditions which have, of late, come into existence in this country, is further proved by

history. Separate communal electorates were first introduced in our country's constitution as the result of Minto-Morley reforms, which came into actual operation on the 1st January 1910. For a period of twelve years since their introduction, the two great communities lived in an atmosphere of mutual co-operation and good will. Indeed, as was admitted by Mr. Chintamani, in his evidence before the Indian Reforms Committee, so beneficial was the effect of the resulting satisfaction of legitimate claims and aspirations among the United Provinces Musalmans upon the improved harmonisation of the Hindu-Muslim relations, that he and our friends of his school of thought helped to extend separate communal electorates even to local bodies in that province. To me it is passing strange that in spite of the significant admission made by him on that occasion, even he has now been influenced by the Maha-Sabha agitation into adopting an attitude of opposition to separate communal electorates.

Personally, I am sincerely convinced that in the existing political conditions in this country, joint electorates, whether with or

without reserved seats, would be certain to furnish a periodically recurring cause of friction between the two communities and would, in consequence, be in the highest degree injurious to the cause of Indian Nationalism. When I recall what happened in the Punjab on the introduction of the Minto-Morley reforms, I shudder to think what would happen if joint electorates were introduced in the unhappy conditions which have come into existence since 1924. In the two elections which took place in 1909 and 1912 under the system of mixed electorates adopted in the Punjab, the ultimate conflict in each one of the constituencies was between a single Hindu and a single Muhammandan, all members belonging to the two communities voting for the candidate who professed their own religious belief. Joint electorates were, thus, joint electorates merely in name and but resulted in communal irritation. If this was the case when the relations between the two communities were comparatively harmonious, what will be the result of introducing joint electorates in any form now when, as I observed in my article published in the June number of the *Indian*

Review, "entire communities have started running amok with the result that perfectly innocent Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are butchered openly in our streets, not because they are themselves responsible for crimes committed in wanton disregard of all human laws but simply because they happen to profess their respective faiths ! "

Gentlemen, further weighty arguments can be adduced in support of the position which, in this connection, the Muslim League has consistently adopted ever since its re-birth in 1924. But in view of the many other important questions which I have to deal with to-day, I close my remarks on the subject of separate Muslim electorates with the observation that agitation recently set up against them is, in fact, artificial, the reasons cited against their maintenance as an integral part of the Indian constitution are entirely fallacious and, on the other hand, their continued retention is, in the existing conditions, absolutely essential in order to secure real representation of all the elements in our heterogeneous population on our Legislative Councils as also to the evolution of that Indian nationality which must be the

cherished object of all sincere well-wishers of the country.

Extract from the Memorandum referred to at page 89.

But it must, in my judgment, be made clear that our insistence on retention of communal electorates which is necessary only so long as the existing conditions continue, is not for all time. When all causes of mutual suspicion and, in some instances, of unfortunate antagonism are removed, when the two communities have learnt to work together within our constitutional bodies in a spirit of mutual co-operation and good will for the good of our common motherland and when they have realised the necessity of allowing each other that share in the affairs of our country to which each is entitled by reason of the stake it holds, the time will arrive when proportional representation of the various communities in our Legislatures through mixed electorates will be the next step in our constitutional advancement. My humble prayer is, as it must be that of every well wisher of the country, that this devoutly wished for consummation may be reached as soon as possible.

The Responsibility for the Existing Hindu-Muslim Situation *

THE recent manifestations of inter-communal hatred, resulting in bloodshed and incendiarism, are, beyond doubt, without any parallel in British Indian history prior to the year 1922. The appalling spectacles, witnessed during the last twelve months, in Rawalpindi, Calcutta, Lahore and other places cannot but have horrified all advocates of ordered progress and shaken the faith of those who have hitherto been inspired with confidence in India's fitness for constitutional progress towards the goal of full Responsible Government. When entire communities start running amok with the result that perfectly innocent Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are butchered openly in our streets, not because they are themselves responsible for crimes committed in wanton disregard of all human laws, but simply because they happen to profess their respective faiths, it is childish to talk of full Responsible Government or Dominion Status for India. In these

* Published in "The Indian Review", June, 1927.

circumstances, our first and foremost duty is to purge the Indian humanity of the fell disease of inter-communal hatred, which has begun to eat into its very vitals, in order to create that atmosphere of unity and co-operation without which the attainment of Swaraj is an absolute impossibility. And the extinction of this devastating epidemic is itself impossible without first diagnosing correctly the causes which have brought it into existence.

An occasional riot between two groups belonging to different communities may have occurred before 1922. But events like that, happening at intervals of many years and in places hundreds of miles distant from each other, due to particular causes, are nothing extraordinary, or surprising in a vast sub-continent like India with its multitudinous population of 310 millions. The last communal riot in Lahore took place over 40 years ago, owing to the Muharram and Dusehra having fallen on the same day, resulting in a few shops being looted and a few persons receiving ordinary injuries. But riot after riot in various parts of the country, some of them resulting in casualties the number of

which reminds one of the smaller battles fought during the Great War, acts of incendiarism horrible in their consequences, systematic preaching of religious animosity and communal hatred from the pulpit and the platform and abuse of each other's religion and religious heads, such as we have witnessed during the last five years, were absolutely unknown in this country.

Until the year 1906, Indian Musalmans had, on the whole, held themselves aloof from the political stage. During the latter half of that year, distant rumblings in the political atmosphere of coming constitutional reforms gave birth to the All-India Muslim League, founded with the avowed objects of promoting India's constitutional advance, defence of legitimate Muslim interests and promotion of inter-communal co-operation and good-will. Shortly after, was founded the Punjab Hindu Sabha with similar non-aggressive and legitimate ends. And right until the end of 1920, the activities of these two bodies, while bringing about awakening among the two communities, did not have any baneful effect on that inter-communal co-operation and good-will, which was a pleasing feature of the

situation in those days. Indeed, towards the end of 1916 the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League came to a settlement regarding Muslim representation in the various Indian Legislatures and other important problems which, in spite of its defects, was largely instrumental in promoting the cause of constitutional advance in India, some of its principal features being embodied in the Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms introduced towards the beginning of 1919. The unfortunate happenings in the Punjab and the consequent declaration of Martial Law in April 1919 proved a powerful agency in bringing the two great communities closer together and, in the following year, the over-stringent Turkish peace terms, embodied in the Treaty of Sevres, had their repercussion in India which strengthened the bonds of Hindu-Muslim unity to an extent hitherto unknown in this country. This remarkable inter-communal unity was the most pleasing feature of the Indian political situation during the three eventful years from 1919 till the end of 1921.

But in the wide-spread agitation carried on against the Government in all parts of the

country under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi during that very period, the "Nationalist" leaders committed a blunder which, to my mind, is the initial cause of the aftermath which we are facing at the present moment. It will be remembered that the various boycotts decided upon in the special session of the Congress, held in Calcutta during the month of September 1920, failed in their accomplishment among the Indian intelligentsia. Albeit, they were, in the conditions even then prevailing in this vast continent, foredoomed to failure. The leaders of the Non-Co-operation movement thereupon turned their attention to the vast masses of India for the success of their movement. And in order to influence the masses in the direction aimed at, they considered it essential to bring into requisition the powerful agencies of Hindu and Muslim religious circles. *Swamis* and *Maulanas* were let loose from their cloisters all over the country and, for the first time in the history of British India, religion was introduced actively into the field of politics. And, finally, when the Non-Co-operation movement failed absolutely, it became, as it was bound to do, a case of *main*

to kambal ko chorta hun magar kambal mujko nahin—"while I am willing to leave the *kambal* (which turned out to be a brown bear) alone, the *kambal* refuses to leave me alone". The forces thus let loose have ultimately recoiled on our own heads, producing results which far-sighted statesmanship ought then to have foreseen.

Meanwhile, the new constitutional machinery set up under the Government of India Act, 1919, started working in the beginning of 1921. While the Non-Co-operators absolutely boycotted the reformed Legislatures, the Moderates decided to work the Reforms in order to lay the foundation for India's claim to full Responsible Government, as promised by Parliament in the solemn declaration embodied in the preamble to that Act. Lord Chelmsford was himself one of the two engineers who had invented and built up that machinery and Lord Reading was sent out to India with a mandate not only from the British Parliament but also from His Majesty the King Emperor himself to devote his great knowledge and experience to its successful working. And the successful working of the reformed Councils as well as a revision, on

reasonable lines, of the Turkish Peace Terms were necessary also to counteract the Non-Co-operation movement. The Government and the Moderates within the various Indian Legislatures, Central and Provincial, therefore, co-operated whole-heartedly, during the year 1921, in demonstrating the possibilities of, as well as the power possessed by our Legislatures under the new Constitution. By the end of that year, those who had been watching the new situation with unbiassed minds as well as those who had taken an active part in the successful working of the reformed machinery were, in their heart of hearts, convinced that the foundations of democratic Government in India had been well and truly laid, that real power was coming into the hands of the elected representatives of the people and that the solemn pledge embodied in the preamble to the Act of 1919 being beyond recall, the issue, in regard to the question of Indian Self-Government was now merely one of time. Oriental temperament is, by nature, both imaginative and speculative. Certain Hindu circles began to ask themselves, "What will happen when full Responsible Government

is granted to India?" Democratic Government being, in principle, synonymous with the rule of majority, steps must at once be taken so that when the time arrives the majority may be so overwhelming as to secure the permanent establishment of its rule over Hindustan. And in order to prevent any possibility of a combination of the minority in India and a certain power from across the borders becoming a danger to the majority, its physical regeneration must at once be taken in hand so that when the time arrives the vast millions in India may be in a position to resist successfully the combination alluded to above. Hence the *Shudhi* and *Sangathan* movements were started early in 1922. The Muslim minority, on the other hand, began to ask itself, what will its position be when India is granted full Responsible Government? The results of the past struggle between the "Haves" and the "Have-nots" had already filled their minds with grave misgivings regarding their own future in a self-governing India and the new movements started in the majority camp filled them with positive alarm. The result was the organisation of *Tabligh* and *Tanzim*

movements in order to counter the activities of the majority. The Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms were thus, in a sense, responsible for the unhappy conditions which began to develop in this unfortunate country and in reality mutual distrust lay at the root of the new development. Even Lala Lajpat Rai admitted our present communal troubles to be "political and economic in their origin". (See "The People," dated 22nd August, 1926.)

The situation described in the preceding paragraph was further complicated by that increasing crave for leadership which has been the bane of our country during the last few years. Non-violent Non-Co-operation may possibly be a practical conception when adopted by a comparatively small community, such as the Indians in South Africa, bound together by identity of interests. But in a heterogeneous mass of 310 millions of population spread over a vast sub-continent like India even the intelligentsia among whom were divided into various schools of political thought—with its perplexing diversity of languages, creeds, social codes and material interests—such a movement was, as observed

above, foredoomed to failure. Indeed, in a country like India where the major portion of the population were wallowing in the mire of utter ignorance, it could not long remain even non-violent. On the top of it came the colossal blunder of boycotting His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit, with the resulting disturbances in different parts of the country. In March 1922, Mr. Gandhi was incarcerated and with his arrest and subsequent conviction the one magnetic personality which had held these really militant elements together in a non-violent movement was removed from the Indian Political Stage. It is a fact furnishing an interesting though painful subject for psychological research that Mr. Gandhi's removal from the political stage synchronized with the foundation of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, the commencement of *Shudhi* and *Sangathan* movements and the fight for leadership which followed in their wake. An examination of the correlation of these three phenomena, however interesting, is beyond the scope of this article. In the fight for leadership of new movements, it is natural for those taking a leading part therein to vie

with each other in drawing word-pictures calculated to appeal to the sentiments, and alas! sometimes even to the passions of those whom they seek to bring within their sphere of influence. The application of this undeniable proposition is not confined to one community but extends to all alike.

Had *Shudhi* and *Tabligh* movements had their origin merely in honest religious zeal, had they been started with the patriotic object of uplifting the vast heterogeneous mass of our population known as the depressed classes, resulting in the latter's unostentatious and peaceful absorption among the Hindu and Muslim communities, it would all have been to the good of the country as a whole. But conceived in an aggressive spirit and with the ultimate political end already described, this clash of political forces masquerading in a religious garb could not but produce results too horrible to contemplate. Thousands of Hindu and Muslim missionaries spread about the country attacking each other's religion, countless pamphlets defaming great religious heads held in veneration by their followers, and disgraceful literature in the Vernacular

Press inflaming baser religious passions absolutely poisoned the Indian atmosphere, creating an unhappy state of things unparalleled in the past history of British India. *And the law of the land was apparently powerless to prevent the spread of this deadly poison.* For when the writer of a despicable and scurrilous pamphlet such as the "*Rangila Rasul*" can go unpunished on the ground that its publication does not fall within the purview of section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, what hope is there of the Courts stepping in to check the advance of a poisonous gangrene which is destroying the beautiful fruit of religious toleration in a country hitherto famous as a peaceful home of all religions ?

Had a joint scheme of *Indian Sangathan* been started for the physical regeneration of the Indian peoples in order to prepare them for the defence of their common motherland when Swaraj is granted to this country, the benefits arising out of such a partiotic movement would have been incalculable. But the *Sangathan* movement started by the Hindu Mahasabha was in its very conception anti-Muslim and the speeches delivered in its support during the last five years from

hundreds of platforms in all parts of the country, couched in language of politico-religious fervour, could not but create a similar counter-movement among the Musalmans. And, strange to say, our foremost leaders, who in the past were stalwart advocates of Indian Nationalism, have been the worst sinners in this respect.

At the very first Anniversary of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Gaya on 30th December 1922, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, during the course of his presidential address, observed :—"What was the Hindu Dharma? It told them to respect other religions, to be tolerant and never to be aggressive. But it also enjoined upon them not to hesitate for a moment to lay down even their lives, if their Dharma was attacked. In the observance of this Dharma alone to its very letter and spirit lay the true solution of Hindu-Muslim Unity. He was convinced that no unity could be maintained unless both the Hindus and Musalmans individually felt strong enough to defend themselves against attacks by bad elements of the other. He did not say this in order to prepare the Hindus for aggressive

ends, but to remove the only cause of conflict. The breaches in the past were due mainly to the weakness of the Hindus. Bad elements among the Muhammadans feeling sure that the Hindus were cowards attacked them. After working for a long time in the service of the public, he had come to the only one conclusion on the question of Hindu-Muslim Unity : *it was that each should feel that the other was strong enough to ward off successfully any unjust attack by the other and thus alone harmony be maintained* ”— Shorn of mere platitudes and camouflage, this is exactly the doctrine which used to be preached by the leaders of the two European concerts during the quarter of a century preceding the Great War, *i. e.* “preparation for war is a sure guarantee of peace,” a doctrine which led inevitably to the world conflict of 1914—1918, destroying the manhood of nations, devastating some of the richest and most beautiful lands on God’s earth and bringing incalculable misery and suffering to millions of homes in all parts of the world. And it is strange that this pronouncement should have been made at a time, when as has been shown above, inter-

communal co-operation and good-will was the most pleasing feature of the Indian political situation.

And at the next anniversary held at Benares, on 19th August 1923, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya indulged in plainer and yet stronger language. He reminded the Hindu Community of the "inhuman, brutal and unparalleled atrocities" which, according to him, "were perpetrated on Hindus" in 1916 in Eastern Bengal. "Hindu Women", said he "were outraged by fanatic Muhammadans, and many Hindu women had to take shelter in rivers and tanks to protect their honour". I do not propose to reproduce at length the other portions of his address, couched in similarly violent and exaggerated language, calculated to rouse the baser religious and communal passions of my Hindu countrymen, which the Pundit thought fit to indulge in on that occasion. I consider even their repetition for establishing my position as in the highest degree detrimental to the cause of Indian Nationalism and a sin against inter-communal co-operation and good-will. A few days after that address was delivered, Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya came to see

me at Simla in connection with a matter the nature of which it is unnecessary to mention here. On that occasion, I spoke to him earnestly about the new policy which he and his co-workers were adopting and warned him that persistence in rhetoric of this type, calculated to rouse the baser passions of the semi-educated masses, was sure to result in bloodshed. Alas ! that this unpatriotic course should have been persisted in with the result that the prophecy then made by me has at last come true.

And let us turn for a moment to another prominent figure in the Hindu Mahasabha movement. Presiding over the annual meeting of the Barra Bazar Hindu Sabha, Calcutta, on 25th July 1926, Dr. Moonji traced the history of lost Hinduism during the last nine hundred years quoting Afghanistan, Kashmir and Malabar as instances in point and also mentioning that India had lost 70 millions of her men to another religion. *"The object of the Hindu movement would be to keep together all Hindus and to extend the Hindu religion so that India might be called Hindustan, the land of Hindus."* It seemed to him that the Hindus were living

under two dominations, the political domination of the English based on its strength of machine guns and the domination of the Muhammadans based on their aggressive mentality. "The mild and docile Hindu was thus a prey to domination of two kinds *and he had to see whether, while putting up with machine-gun domination as an inevitable evil, he was also to put up with the other domination.*"

(Italics are mine.) The political lesson thus inculcated by Dr. Moonji to his co-religionists has been carried a step further by him in his Presidential address at the Special Session of the Hindu Maha Sabha, held at Patna on the 16th and 17th April last. During the course of that address, speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity, he observed as follows :—

" This unity is to my mind a volatile commodity appearing very real and worth having till the price is paid, when it assumes the form of impalpability and intractibility ". And having stated that he had never been a believer in pacts and concessions in bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, he advised his co-religionists that " they should leave Muslims severely alone in their present mentality and leave them to think and act as they pleased ". As

I said only recently, whatever one may think of this astounding pronouncement, one cannot but admire Dr. Moonji's frankness in speaking out in plain language the inner feelings of the circles of which he and his co-workers are the leaders. And it is significant that he has been elected as President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha for the ensuing year, with my friends Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Raja Narendra Nath and Raja Rampal Singh as Vice-Presidents.

As regards Lala Lajpat Rai's utterances since his desertion from the Swarajists' camp and entry into the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, it is sufficient to refer to the address delivered by him recently when presiding over the Sindh Hindu Conference, during the course of which he assured his co-religionists that if they were to put their own house in order, they would be strong enough to cope with the combined forces of the British Government and the Muslim community !

I have cited above only a few of the many pronouncements made by the three great leaders of this communal movement, and where the leaders at the top have made such

anti-Muslim pronouncements, the utterances of the numerous smaller fry throughout the country as well as the writings in that section of the Press which follows their lead can well be imagined. These being the facts, is it then surprising that the resulting inter-communal bitterness and hatred have brought about the unhappy occurrences which have tarnished the fair fame of India and have filled the hearts of those who sincerely desire her peaceful constitutional advancement towards full Responsible Government with feelings of deep despondency for her future ?

The only effective solution of the grave problem, which we have now to face, is a change of mentality and of hearts on both sides. This once accomplished, the rest will follow as a matter of course. Let mutual suspicions be cast aside as absolutely groundless. Let Hindus and Muhammadans realise that they are but children of one common motherland. In the prosperity of both lies the prosperity of India, and on the recognition by each of the legitimate rights of the other rests the hope of that inter-communal co-operation and good-will which is absolutely essential if India is to attain her appointed goal. Religion,

being a matter of individual belief, should be kept out of the political activities essential to the accomplishment of India's advance towards full Responsible Government within the Commonwealth of Nations known as the British Empire, and craze after leadership should not make us forgetful of the sacred duty which we owe to our country. Let the Vernacular Press rise above that mentality which places increase of its circulation above the responsibility of giving the right lead to public opinion. Once these great needs of the moment are sincerely taken to heart, India's onward march to her constitutional goal will be accelerated and the desire of all patriotic hearts become certain of realisation.

I—India's Representation on the Imperial Conference.

Speech delivered at Simla in the Imperial Legislative Council Meeting held on 22nd September 1915 when moving the Resolution on the representation of India in the Imperial Conference.

MY LORD,

The British Empire, embracing within its sphere of control continents larger in extent and population than the Empire of Rome, wielding its sway over nations and races, some of whom are possessed of civilizations more ancient than that of Greece, administering its vast dominions not only for their own mutual benefit, but also for the general good of mankind, constitutes a wonderful phenomenon unparalleled in the past history of the human race. The gradual evolution, in a world-Empire like this, of a constitutional system of government which, while conceding to its component parts varying degrees of internal autonomy suited to their local circumstances, should, at the same time, enable them to play their legitimate part in Imperial affairs, is undoubtedly the ultimate guarantee of its permanence and stability.

But so long as British politics were dominated by the ' Manchester School, ' which regarded self-governing institutions as only a step towards ultimate separation, this idea of permanent Imperial unity could obviously find no place in the political schemes which engrossed the minds of British Statesmen in the middle of the nineteenth century. Strange as it now appears, the idea of an Imperial Federation was first mooted not in the centre of the Empire, but in its outlying dominions. The fascinating suggestion, having been first put forward in New Zealand in 1852, was, five years later, officially made in London by the general association of the Australian Colonies. The foundation of the Royal Colonial Institution with its motto of a ' United Empire ' in 1868 ; the open repudiation, in 1872, by Lord Beaconsfield of the pernicious doctrine of the ' Manchester School ' initiated by Cobden and Bright ; the advocacy of the Imperial idea by Mr. W. E. Forster in 1875 ; and the foundation of the ' Imperial Federation League ' in 1884, brought this all important subject into prominence, and paved the way for the assemblage of the first Colonial Conference in 1887. And finally, the founda-

tion of Imperial Federation was firmly laid in 1907 by the adoption, in that year's Conference, of the following Resolution :—

‘ That it will be of advantage to the Empire if a Conference, to be called the Imperial Conference, is held every four years, at which questions of common interest may be discussed and considered as between His Majesty's Government and His Governments of the self-governing Dominions beyond the seas.’

It is this Resolution which forms the basis of the existing constitution of the Imperial Conference and defines the nature and scope of its deliberations.

My Lord, to us in this country, it is a source of deep disappointment as well as of profound astonishment that, in spite of her prominent position in the galaxy of peoples and countries constituting the British Empire, of her political, commercial and strategic importance, of the obvious utility of her participation in the deliberations of the Conference and of the invaluable services rendered by her to the Empire, India should have been hitherto excluded from this scheme of Imperial Federation. Of India's prominent position within the Empire, I do not propose

to speak to-day. Hon'ble Members are, I have no doubt, perfectly familiar with the eloquent and absolutely faithful picture of our country's importance within and to the Empire drawn by Lord Curzon in his Guildhall (1894) and other speeches. Fortunately, that Imperial Statesman is a member of the National Cabinet to which I am appealing to-day. All India will watch with a vigilant and an expectant eye to see if those memorable speeches represented merely the impassioned rhetoric of an orator designed to create a momentary impression upon his audience in order to win their applause, or the sentiments expressed therein were, in reality, as they undoubtedly appear to be in the beautiful language in which they are clothed, the outcome of his sincere convictions: The request embodied in the Resolution which I am about to move, is but the logical result of Lord Curzon's utterances relating to India's position within the Empire, and not only will India of to-day, but also the future historian, judge His Lordship's sincerity as an Imperial Statesman by the measure of support which will be given by him to the earnest appeal which India is making to be allowed to take her proper place

in the Imperial Federation of Greater Britain.

My Lord, electricity and steam having bridged over the wide gulfs of space and time, the expressions the ' Near East , the ' Middle East ' and the ' Far East ' have lost their erstwhile significance. And not only have the different parts of the East, though distant from each other if measured in miles, been thus brought close together, but the East has thereby come into direct and immediate contact with the West. Under the world-conditions brought into existence by modern culture and civilization, the East is henceforward bound to play an increasingly important part in international affairs. To those who have carefully watched the trend of those political and sociological movements which have, of recent years, stirred humanity to an extent hitherto entirely unknown, it must be obvious that not only has India become in truth the pivot of the East, but the part, ever increasing in its momentous importance, which she is destined to play in the political and commercial spheres of human activity, is bound to gather volume with the advance of time. And with this practical annihilation of space and time, the strategic position of India

not only within the Empire, but also in relation to the States with whom the vital interests of the British Empire are at all likely to come into conflict in the future, near or remote, is becoming more and more important. This vital aspect of the Imperial problem is of such fascinating interest as to require a volume for its adequate treatment, and it is impossible for me to do justice to it within the absolutely insufficient space of time at my disposal. Indeed, with the immense material and military resources of India, her political, commercial and strategic importance to the Empire is a factor of ever-increasing moment in world-politics and, in proportion, is her direct participation in the deliberations of what has been called the 'Family Council' of the Empire absolutely essential to its future development and prosperity.

My Lord, is there a single problem of Imperial or even international interest in which India, as an integral and an important part of the British Empire, is not directly concerned? Is there a single Imperial question in relation to which the interests of Great Britain, of the self-governing Colonies and of India are, under the existing conditions, not indissolu-

ably bound together? Can any scheme of Imperial defence be regarded as complete without taking into account India's defensive requirements and her offensive capacity, not only in relation to her own frontiers, but, as recent events have made it abundantly clear, also in connection with the military needs of of the Empire in every portion of the globe? Is it possible to evolve any scheme of Imperial Preference, or to introduce any workable Imperial fiscal reform without taking into consideration what may be called India's inter-Imperial interests? To these and other cognate questions there can be but one answer. India is directly and materially interested in all important problems of the Empire, of which she is proud to form an integral part, to the same extent and in the same degree as any other portion of His Imperial Majesty's vast dominions. Moreover, are there not a number of domestic problems of the nature of family complications, such as immigration, tariffs, etc., which can only be satisfactorily solved by the representatives of the Imperial, Colonial and Indian Governments meeting together in periodical Conferences? And is not their solution indispensable to the smooth

working of the Imperial machinery and to the happiness and contentment of His Majesty's subjects in all parts of the world? The more or less satisfactory settlement of the South African-Indian troubles—due mainly to the firm stand made by your Excellency on behalf of this country—was, in part, brought about by the timely deputation of the Hon'ble Sir Benjamin Robertson as the representative of our Government and by the visit of that devoted Indian patriot, the late Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Gokhale, to the scene of that unfortunate conflict. The presence, in the Imperial Conference, of one or more representatives of the Government of this country, with intimate knowledge and experience of the East generally and of India particularly, would not only satisfy Indian sentiment, but also prove of immense benefit to the Empire and would help to solve, smoothly and expeditiously, many difficult problems which have, in the past, imposed tremendous strain on British statesmanship.

My Lord, in view of recent occurrences, it is hardly necessary for me to dwell in detail on India's past services to the Empire not only along or in close proximity to her

own frontiers, but also in China, South Africa, Somaliland, Egypt, the Persian Gulf and at other points of vital importance outside her statutory boundaries. These are historical facts well known to His Majesty's Ministers in England. But just as the terrible crisis, through which the world is now passing, dwarfed all previous international upheavals into insignificance, so has the part taken by India, in the defence of the Empire's honour and in support of her glory in this titanic struggle, surpassed all her previous record. Simultaneously with Great Britain's declaration of war in defence of weaker States, of sacred obligations arising out of solemn international treaties and in vindication of those principles of justice and honour which have ever appealed to the best instincts of mankind, a remarkable wave of intense loyal enthusiasm passed over the length and breadth of India. Prince and peasant alike vied with each other in their readiness to sacrifice everything in upholding the honour and glory of the Imperial banner under which they had hitherto enjoyed the priceless blessings of peace and prosperity. Thanks to your Excellency's wonderful fore-

sight, the outbreak of hostilities found India, from a military point of view, readier than any other part of the Empire to take the field wherever the presence of her armies may be needed. And when your Excellency obtained for Indian soldiers the proud privilege of fighting side by side with their British and Colonial comrades on the battlefields of Europe, and thus of attaining their full and undoubted right of upholding the King's banner irrespective of locality, the delight of His Majesty's subjects in this country knew no bounds. The share taken by India in this gigantic struggle, the part played by our soldiers in China, Africa, Mesopotamia and on the European battlefields, has not only won for them the unstinted admiration of their British and Colonial comrades, but has also been fully acknowledged by the British nation in solemn Resolution adopted at the Guildhall meeting. And if, when merely knocking at the outside gate for admission into the Imperial Federation, India has willingly and spontaneously done what she has done in this critical period of British history, what is it that she will not be prepared to do if allowed her proper place in the Councils

of the Empire ? Contented India will then place at the disposal of the Empire not only " 124 regiments of infantry with artillery, and 28 regiments of cavalry besides smaller bodies of troops, aggregating more than an infantry division ", but the martial races of India will, should occasion arise, pour forth millions upon millions of unrivalled fighters for the defence of the Empire. With the part which India has taken in this titanic war, with the conclusive proof given by her of her abiding loyalty to the British Crown in this international crisis, is it surprising that, in November last, Mr. Charles Roberts, speaking in the House of Commons on behalf of the Secretary of State, should have given expression to the desire of Government that India should " occupy a place in our free Empire worthy alike of her ancient civilization and thought, the valour of her fighting races and of the patriotism of her sons ? "

"She now claims," said he, "to be not a mere dependant of, but a partner in, the Empire." And on behalf of the then Leader of the Opposition, now Secretary of State for the Colonies in the National Cabinet, and with his full authority, Mr. H. W. Forster, recogniz-

ing India's splendid and unswerving loyalty, associated His Majesty's Opposition with these sentiments. With the eloquent words uttered by the Prime Minister and the Right Hon'ble Mr. Bonar Law in the memorable Guildhall meeting still ringing in our ears, is it surprising that the Indian subjects of His Imperial Majesty should be full of hope and trust in the future of their country? And that hope and trust are vastly strengthened when we remember that the comradeship, on the battlefields of three continents, between the British, Colonial and Indian soldiers has not only removed groundless misconceptions and brought about mutual confidence and understanding, but has sealed with blood for all time this renewed compact of fellow-citizenship of a great and glorious Empire. In the words of Eric Hammond's "Salutation to Indian Soldiers"—

. . . Through the boom of guns
 That rumbles round the surface of the globe,
 Your prowess and your courage strike the sight
 Of all men living. You have won you right.
 Our Empire needs, and has, the circling band
 Of steadfast union, part to part. Our ways,
 Our hopes are one; and onward hand in hand,
 We tread, Invincible, our Imperial strand.'

My Lord, it is impossible for me to discuss in detail all the solid grounds which lie at the basis of my Resolution within the half hour to which I am limited. I have confined myself to what is but an incomplete synopsis of this important subject, and indicated the lines upon which, in my humble judgment, the discussion of this Imperial problem should proceed in and out of this Council. It is not only absolutely unnecessary, but would, to my mind, be, in the highest degree, impolitic to dwell on the past, and to criticise the policy which has hitherto kept India out of the Imperial Conference. The dawn of a new era of hope and trust, of mutual confidence and understanding is already visible above the horizon, and it behoves all well-wishers of the country to approach the question in a spirit of hopefulness, dealing with it in the light of those principles of constructive statesmanship which alone lead to ultimate success.

My Lord, India is not content with the occasional presence of the Secretary of State at the Imperial Conference : what she wants is her own direct representation like that of the British Colonies. And just as the

glimmer of the early dawn heralds the coming of the Fountain of Light, so is the gracious permission granted me to-day the harbinger of the happy period, when this her just claim being duly recognised, India will take her proper place in the Councils of the Empire. Fortunately for her, the affairs of the Empire are at this moment presided over not by this party or that, but by a truly National Cabinet representative of the entire British nation. And the glorious example of South Africa has already furnished an object-lesson to those who may have entertained any doubts regarding the absolute efficacy of a policy of sympathy and trust. On behalf of 313 millions of my countrymen, representing over 75 per cent. of the entire population of the Empire, I appeal, through your Excellency, to His Majesty's Government and, through them, to the enlightened conscience of our British fellow-subjects in Great Britain and her Colonies for India's admission in the Imperial Federation which, with the resulting contentment in all parts of the Empire, will constitute the best guarantee not only of the happiness of His Majesty's subjects, belonging to all races and creeds, but also of the

peace of the world. With complete confidence in the justice of our claim and a heart full of hope and trust, my Lord, I beg leave to move the following Resolution :—

“ This Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that a representation be sent, through the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State, to His Majesty's Government urging that India should, in future, be officially represented in the Imperial Conference.”

Following the mover, His Excellency the Viceroy delivered a speech which began as follows :—

It has been a source of profound satisfaction to me that it has been within my power to accept for discussion the very moderate and statesmanlike Resolution, happily devoid of all controversial character, that has been proposed by the Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi, and it is a matter of still greater satisfaction and pleasure to me to be able to announce that the Government of India accept this important Resolution, which has their warmest sympathy, and, if it is accepted by the Council as a whole, the Government will readily comply with the recommendation contained therein.

We have all listened with deep interest to Mr. Muhammad Shafi's eloquent speech, and it is a real pleasure to the Government of India to be able to associate themselves with his Resolution.

In winding up the Debate, Mian Muhammad Shafi spoke as follows :—

MY LORD,

* * * * *

.....Every country within the British Empire occupies a dual position ; that dual position being on the one hand, represented by what I may call the individuality of the country itself, and the other position being that of a member of the Empire. In this dual position we have two sets of rights and privileges to which India is entitled. In her individuality India is entitled to certain rights and privileges, and as a member of the Empire, she is, in addition entitled to another set of rights and privileges. To say that we will not accept the rights and privileges to which India is entitled as a member of the Empire unless we get the rights and privileges to which she is entitled individually is logic, the soundness of which I for one am not prepared to accept. Some remarks have been made by certain of my Hon'ble friends with reference

to the use of the expression "officially represented." I should have thought that the Resolution, as I have worded it, was plain English with reference to which there can be no possibility of misapprehension. What I have said is not that India should be represented by this set of persons or that but that India should be officially represented just as British Colonies are represented on the Imperial Conference.

My Lord, the remarkable unanimity with which my Resolution has been received in this Council is an infallible index of the still wider unanimity that prevails throughout the length and breadth of India in support of the claim I have put forward in this Council on behalf of my country. Moved by the elected representative of the Punjab, whose martial races have been aptly described as constituting not only the backbone, but the whole frame of the Indian Army, the Resolution has been supported by the representatives of every province throughout the country. I regard even the Hon'ble Mr. Setalvad's observations as really supporting the Resolution, for he has admitted the necessity of India's representation on the

Imperial Conference ; only he thinks the demand for it should have been put forward somewhat later. While, my Lord, the Resolution has been supported by all the representatives of every province of India in this Council, it has been accepted by your Excellency's Government, thus showing that in regard to the claim which I have put forward on behalf of my country, the Government as well as the people of India are of one mind. My Lord, in accepting this Resolution, your Excellency has added an immeasurable weight to the debt of gratitude which India already owes to your Lordship, and when, through your Lordship's powerful advocacy, the promise of careful consideration which His Majesty's Government have, through your Excellency, conveyed to the Council, will, I for one am optimistic enough to believe, be converted into unqualified acceptance, not only will the heartstrings of the Indians of to-day vibrate with deep gratitude to your Excellency, but your Excellency's name will be remembered with veneration by generations to come, and I shall be thankful to have rendered this humble service to my motherland.

The Resolution was unanimously agreed
to.

An Examination of the Three Possible Solutions of the North-West Frontier Problem

AMONG the many solutions which have been put forward from time to time in connection with the North-West Frontier Problem, there are only three which require careful examination :—

- (a) Occupation of the trans-frontier territory up to the Durand line, subjugation and disarmament of tribes and introduction of settled government in this mountainous tract ;
- (b) Construction of a motor road across this tract with military posts at strategic points as jumping off grounds.
- (c) Close Border System and cultivation of neighbourly relations.

Before examining the relative merits of these three solutions, it is obviously essential to determine the ultimate aim of our policy. It is self-evident that correct diagnosis must precede the preparation of a prescription ; otherwise the results may be disastrous.

In the voluminous literature which has gathered round this vital problem, there has been occasionally some loose talk about civilising the trans-frontier tribes. Apart from the considerations based upon the principle of self-determination accepted at the Versailles Conference, even a casual contemplation of the existing conditions, internal and external, must make it abundantly clear that India cannot afford such a philanthropic adventure. There is within the Indian continent itself sufficient ignorance, poverty and disease calling for all the efforts that we can make towards their eradication. The various epidemics to which the masses of Indian population are periodically victims have resulted in an amount of mortality in this country which is simply appalling. From June 1918 to the end of 1919 as many as 7,767,676 deaths took place in India as a result of the influenza epidemic of that period and the total mortality during the same period amounted to the startling figure of 19,664,697. The number of deaths in the country that occur year after year due to the ravages of malaria is simply enormous. Our annual death rate far exceeds that of any other civilised coun-

try in the world. The percentage of literacy in India bears no comparison whatever with any of the civilized countries in Europe and America. The educational, sanitary and industrial needs of India are so great, the duty of Government in connection with these crying needs of the country is so urgent, as to make it unthinkable for any one to squander the tax-payers' money in launching philanthropic schemes of civilising people living in the neighbouring territories. India can ill afford the immense sacrifice of lives and money involved in the conquest of these barren tracts which obviously must precede any attempt at civilising the tribes, as well as the perpetual drain upon the Indian exchequer which must follow the occupation of these rugged hills and waterless valleys incapable of maintaining expensive administrative machinery from their own meagre resources. Indeed, placed as India is at present—its revenues inadequate not only for the satisfaction of its educational, sanitary and industrial developments, but even for its existing civil and military expenditure—it is idle for any Indian administrator to talk of assuming the grave and expensive responsi-

bilities involved in a quixotic undertaking of this character.

The Frontier Problem, considered in relation to an invasion of India from the North-West, entirely changed in character when an understanding was arrived at between England and Russia regarding the Middle East as a result of the diplomatic efforts of the late King Edward, Sir Edward (subsequently Lord) Grey and Sir Charles (now Lord) Hardinge some time before the World War. Before the conclusion of what was then known as the Anglo-Russian Convention, all our military plans on the North-West Frontier were based on a possible Russian invasion of India. The Russian progress across the Central Asian wilderness towards the North-Western Frontier of Afghanistan was at that period believed to have India as its ultimate goal. Accordingly our military policy was formulated on the basis of a defensive-offensive scheme which would enable us to advance beyond our frontiers through the Khyber and Baluchistan immediately on the outbreak of war between England and Russia. For this very reason the existence of a friendly buffer State between the Russian Empire and India

was considered an essential element in our North-West Frontier policy. With the fall of Czardom in Russia and the ascendancy of the Bolshevik in that country, the character of the Indian Frontier problem in relation to a foreign invasion from the North-West has undergone a still further change. The danger of a Russian military invasion of India is no longer within the range of practical politics. The Bolshevic danger is obviously of a propagandistic character and has ceased to be a military problem necessitating large and expensive schemes of offence and defence, Expensive military offensive-defensive schemes on the Frontier resulting in the starvation of our educational, sanitary and industrial schemes of development, constitute no remedy whatever for the new danger. On the contrary, it is on ignorance, poverty and political discontent that the germs of Bolshevic communism thrive. In these circumstances, it is beyond question that the North-West Frontier problem considered in relation to the Russian menace no longer partakes of a military character.

Turning now to Afghanistan, it seems to me that an Afghan invasion of India is a con-

tingency as remote as the North Pole. It must not be forgotten that in dealing with expensive military problems, necessitating heavy and constant drain on the public exchequer, it is probabilities and not remote possibilities, in themselves highly problematical, which ought to form the basis of our policy. Were it otherwise, the Great Powers would not now be cutting down their heavy military and naval expenditure so soon after the World War. 'But what about the Afghan invasion of 1919?' the critic might ask. The reply to this question is obvious. The Afghan invasion of 1919 was rendered possible only because we ourselves, to my mind without any justification whatever, proclaimed with a flourish of trumpets that the Punjab, "the backbone of the Indian Army", was in rebellion against the British Government. It is unnecessary here to enter into a discussion of what, in my judgment, was a grievous wrong to the one Province which, throughout the history of the British connection, had proved its devotion to the British Throne by sacrifices of blood on the battle-fields of Asia, Africa and Europe. The grave situation with which the Government of India is confronted even to-day is

without doubt partly due to that grievous wrong. Encouraged by those loud proclamations of an open rebellion in the Punjab, made by some of our own civil and military authorities, the then young and inexperienced ruler of Afghanistan thought that a revolution had broken out in India, furnishing him with an opportunity for successful invasion of the country. But as soon as the danger of an Afghan invasion was in sight, all classes and communities in the Punjab closed their ranks and loyally supported Government in the war with Afghanistan, a fact full of significance for those who are in the habit of trotting out the Afghan bogey, in season and out of season, for purposes of their own. What happened in 1919 has I believe been an adequate lesson for the rulers of Afghanistan and, in consequence, any danger of another Afghan invasion is not within the range of practical politics. Moreover, surely India is strong enough to cope with that petty State, in case Afghanistan were to be foolish enough to conceive of such a mad enterprise again. It is perfectly clear that in the event of war with Afghanistan, an immediate advance from India to Jalalabad on the one hand and to

Kandahar on the other would at once necessitate the concentration of all Afghan forces in order to meet the invasion of Afghanistan on both sides. Should the Afghans be able to spare any troops to create a diversion, a contingency in the highest degree improbable, it is obvious that such diversion could only be *via* Khost through the Kurram valley towards Thal. For that eventuality the Thal-Idak road and the existing military arrangements up the Daur valley to Miran Shah and Dardoli are quite adequate. No Afghan force can possibly advance across the rugged hills of Waziristan eastwards into the Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu districts, the physical conditions of that part of the wild, mountainous country making such an advance in force impossible. The only thing that the Afghan ruler could do would be to encourage the tribes inhabiting Waziristan to commit raids into British territory. Even in that improbable eventuality, the problem reduces itself to the defence of that portion of our Frontier against raids by the Mahsoods and Wazirs.

A combination of the Bolshevists and Afghans, the only other alternative to be

dealt with, is again highly improbable. Surely the Afghan King must be aware of the grave dangers to his own dynasty of allowing the Bolsheviks to obtain a foothold in Afghanistan, which would be the inevitable result of allowing the Bolshevik armies to enter that country in order to permit of a joint Bolshevik-Afghan invasion of India. Bolshevism and Islam are fundamentally poles apart. There is not only nothing in common between the Bolshevistic creed and Islam, but the Muslim nations, I am confident, recognise the suicidal character of a policy which would permit Bolshevism to obtain a hold in their midst. It was for this very reason that, in spite of having obtained arms and ammunition from Bolshevik Russia, Nationalist Turkey did not allow the Bolshevik armies to enter her Asiatic territories. And the subsequent welcome peace between Turkey and England would have been impossible if Mustafa Kamal Pasha had allowed Soviet Russia to send its armies into Turkey in order to help him in his struggle against Greece.

These being the facts, the North-West Frontier problem, *in any case*, consists essen-

tially in the defence of our borders against raids by the trans-Frontier tribesmen into the British territory. Protection of His Majesty's subjects residing along the Frontier against raids is, therefore, the only problem we have to face, both in case of war as well as of peace, in so far as the North-Western Frontier is concerned. This being the problem, the British Indian policy should be so framed as to furnish its adequate solution and it is from this point of view that the three schemes mentioned towards the commencement of this article have to be examined.

Whatever be its ultimate solution, in considering this vital question it is absolutely essential to bear the Indian financial position in mind. For several years in succession until 1923 India had to face heavy financial deficits, altogether over one hundred crores during the preceding five years alone. With the help of what is known as the Inchcape Committee, Lord Reading was able, with great difficulty, to balance the budget by means of a combined scheme of reduction of expenditure and additional taxation. Barely six years have passed since then and we have

again been confronted with a deficit budget which has been balanced by means of taxation. It is undeniable that heavy military expenditure, of which that on the Frontier constitutes a large slice, contributes materially towards the financial stringency which we have constantly to face, resulting in the crippling of our educational, sanitary and industrial activities. The paramount necessity of putting an end to this highly undesirable state of things, which forms a fruitful source of political discontent in the country, is recognised in all quarters. In these circumstances, it follows that even if there be two equally effective schemes furnishing a solution of the North-West Frontier problem, our financial position makes it essential for us to adopt the one involving comparatively less expenditure in carrying it into effect. India has, in the existing financial conditions, to cut her coat according to her cloth; otherwise the resulting dangers, financial and political, would be ruinous.

Forward Policy.—Keeping these important considerations in view, let us now proceed to examine the three alternative solutions mentioned at the beginning. The first of

these alternatives represents the extreme of what is known as the Forward Policy. In view of the nature of the trans-border country the fighting qualities of the tribes inhabiting the rugged hills and the fact they are all well armed with modern rifles, it must be clear even to a casual observer that, however ideal this solution may be, an attempt on our part to advance right up to the Durand line, to disarm the tribesmen and to take steps to introduce settled government in their midst would in itself involve abnormally heavy cost in men and money. Prohibitive as such an effort by itself obviously is, its serious consequences do not stop there. The tribes living all along the North-Western Frontier value their liberty and freedom to a degree which is sometimes not adequately recognised. An attempt on our part to proceed across any portion of the frontier right up to the Durand line would fill the minds of the tribesmen residing higher up and lower down along the whole border with a fear that their turn would follow. There is no doubt whatever that they would all make common cause with the tribes residing in the particular portion invaded from India. The

immensity of the task consequent upon such conflagration all along the Frontier is obvious. These tribesmen, as observed above, love their independence and are brave to a degree. They are, moreover, trained marksmen, are experts in guerilla warfare and are thoroughly acquainted with every inch of this difficult country. There can be no doubt whatever that an effort to cope with such a tremendous situation on our part would take years for its successful accomplishment and that the cost in men and money would indeed be terrible. But personally I entertain grave doubts whether even a gradual advance in force all along the frontier tribes up to the Durand line would result in the subjugation and disarmament of these tribesmen. For I am convinced that, rather than submit to a foreign yoke, they would recede into the further remote hills in Afghanistan and the result may be a war with Afghanistan itself. This most serious further complication is a possibility which can not be ignored. The widespread resentment caused in Afghanistan as a result of the bombing and other operations in Waziristan towards the beginning of 1923

furnishes an object lesson in this respect. And when after having reached as far as the Durand line, the bulk of our forces return to India, there can be no doubt whatever that constant rearguard actions would have to be fought in order to extricate our forces from this rugged hilly country. The tribesmen would again return to their mountain homes and the existing conditions would be repeated *ad infinitum*, unless we establish a sufficient number of military cantonments in various parts of this barren tract in order to keep those tribesmen who still may remain in their country under a perpetual military control. It is unnecessary to dwell further on this picture : it is sufficient to say that India cannot at all afford such a gigantic and costly undertaking.

The advocates of the Forward Policy are however, accustomed to cite the historical precedent of Baluchistan and to argue that what Sir Robert Sandeman accomplished in that corner of the Indian frontier in the seventies of the last century is capable of accomplishment in the North-West at the present time. Possession of Baluchistan being indispensable for our offensive-

defensive plan of campaign against a foreign invasion of India, it was, of course, essential in the days when the fear of the Russian invasion constituted the dominant factor in the Frontier policy, to establish the British ascendancy in Baluchistan. But the present day advocates of Forward Policy higher up completely ignore the methods adopted by Sir Robert Sandeman in his dealings with the tribes inhabiting the tracts which formed the theatre of his successful activities. What was the policy followed by that far-sighted and shrewd administrator and statesman? Even a casual study of the methods followed by him cannot but bring home to the student of Frontier affairs that *Sir Robert Sandeman's policy was one of peaceful penetration of tribal areas primarily on the invitation of tribal Khans and Maliks themselves.* In the whole history of his dealings with the tribes in Baluchistan, there was not a single occasion on which he penetrated any portion of that territory without first, in his own inimitable way, so managing things as to induce the tribal Khans and Maliks to invite him to extend his protection to their country and thereafter to assume control of their

affairs. His wonderful knowledge of the character and ways of the tribesmen with whom he had to deal, his consummate skill and tactful diplomacy were a source of wonder to all observers and enabled him to achieve results which won for him the admiration and respect of the highest authorities in India. To quote the language used by Mr. Bruce, late Commissioner of Derajat, who, for twelve years, served as Sir Robert Sandeman's right hand man in Baluchistan : " The solicitations of the Brahoe Sirdars to Sir Robert Sandeman led to the occupation of Quetta. It was on the pressing invitation of the leading men of Sibi, Harnai, Thal Chotiali, Duki, Khetran, Zhob and Appozai that he compassed the pacification of all those tracts of country." Moreover, it must be remembered that one of the principal features of Sir Robert Sandeman's policy in Baluchistan was his consistent avoidance, wherever possible, of the employment of military forces in the process of subjugation which he successfully carried out in that part of the country. With mainly two exceptions—once when, on the invitation of minor Chiefs, who were on terms of bitter

enmity with the Khan, he proceed to Kalat in order to arbitrate between the two factions (his second mission to Kalat in April 1876 which resulted in the famous settlement at Mastung) and on another occasion when the punitive expedition to punish the Marris was undertaken—Sir Robert Sandeman refrained from employing military forces in his peaceful penetration of Baluchistan. During his various progresses through the different parts of the country, his escort generally consisted of tribal Chiefs and Khans and their dependants. If the employment of Sandeman's methods could achieve, in the north-west, those remarkable results which were attained by him in the south-west corner of the Indian Frontier, I would be the first to advocate the adoption of his policy for the good, both of the North-West Frontier and of our territories adjoining that mountainous tract. It must, however, be remembered that during the Sandeman period of Indian history, the tribes in Baluchistan were ill-armed and must have been only too conscious of their own helplessness as well as of the might of the Empire with which they had to deal. Moreover, it is incontestable that between the tribes

inhabiting Baluchistan and the Mahsoods, Wazirs, Afridis and Mahomands of the North-West there is hardly any analogy in respect of their fighting qualities and stubborn character. And while the tribes with whom Sandeman had then to deal were ill-armed, the brave races inhabiting the rugged hills higher up are now fully armed with modern rifles. Lastly, the forces of liberty and freedom which, particularly as a result of the World War, have swept over countries and nations all over the world have infused among these tribesmen a spirit of independence for which there was no parallel whatever in the days of Sir Robert Sandeman. For those who advocate the subjugation of the tribes by employment of military forces, and seek thereafter to control them by show of military strength, to cite the historical precedent of the Sandeman policy in Baluchistan is to ignore the very essence of that policy and the methods which were employed by him to carry it into effect with remarkable success. If another Sir Robert Sandeman could to-day obtain from the leading Chiefs, if any, of the warlike and truly democratic trans-border tribesmen an invitation to peacefully occupy

their country and to assume control of tribal affairs, I can conceive of no one who would oppose the adoption of such a policy. But to expect such an invitation from these proud and liberty-loving tribesmen is an utter impossibility and it is unnecessary for me to dwell upon it further.

Road Construction and Military Post Policy.—The next solution of the North-West Frontier problem requiring examination is the policy which may be summed up as construction of a road across this “No man’s land” with military posts at some strategic points as jumping-off grounds.

This is by no means a new proposal. It has, as a matter of fact, been tried more than once and every unbiassed observer must admit found wanting. First Wana and then Ladha as such strategic points and the construction of the roads at immense cost to the Indian tax-payer did not stop raids into British Territory, and I am convinced that the new road across Waziristan with Razmak as a jumping-off ground, will end in similar failure. Ladha as a jumping-off ground had at least this advantage : both Makin and Konogram could be effectively shelled from there. Moreover, Ladha was in the heart of the Mahsood country while Razmak is on the dividing line between Wazir and Mahsood territory. If the construction of a road to Ladha and the location of a bridge there did not succeed in stopping

raids into the British territory, I have no doubt whatever that the new road from Isha Fort to Razmak and onwards to Sora Rogha will not achieve that object. If there is one thing more than any other which cannot but come home to an impartial observer as a result of a personal visit to this part of Waziristan, it is the futility of this measure as a preventive of raids into British territory. The whole of this area consists of range upon range of rugged and barren hills (excepting the Razmak plateau itself, which occupies a position similar to that of an oasis in a sandy desert), intercepted here and there by beds of hill torrents, dry during the greater part of the year, which fall into the three or four main rivers traversing this territory, *i. e.* Kurram, Tochi, Shahur, etc. These high ranges are cut up by deep ravines, gorges and *tangis*. And here and there on these hills there are caves where men can remain hidden even in the day-time. The main road is protected by means of picquets located at convenient distances on the tops of the hills selected by reason of their strategic position. At night the small number of men in these picquets are necessarily confined to their walled en-

closures. The position is obviously one which makes it quite easy for Mahsood and Wazir raiders to slip through these ravines, nullahs and gorges at night across the road into the eastern portion of the Mahsood, Wazir and Bhattanni tracts for the purpose of committing raids in British territory. Even in the day time, it is possible for the tribesmen on the western side of the road to creep through here and there to its eastern side ; and as the road cuts across tribal territory, there is nothing to prevent the tribesmen from crossing over from one side of the road to the other on the pretext of visiting relatives and friends. The troops at the strategic jumping-off grounds are confined within barbed wired camps from which they are not allowed to go out except during certain hours. Such being the position, it is obvious that this plan can not form an effective solution of the real problem, *i. e.* prevention of raids by trans-broder-tribesmen into British territory.

From May 1920 onwards till the end of 1922 the occupation of the Ladha line entailed the employment of considerable military forces along the road to Ladha itself. What

was the result? The casualties and losses suffered and the minor operations undertaken during that period form a sad tale in Frontier history. Indeed, not only does this sort of partial occupation not prevent raids into British territory, but the situation created thereby may be likened unto a death trap for our forces of occupation. The lines of communication are necessarily long and vulnerable. Long lines of camels slowly thread their way daily through the defiles to carry the necessities of life to the troops. The innumerable *nullahs* running into the roads provide covered ways of approach. The small escorts and the widely separated permanent piquets can not provide adequate protection against the attack of a raiding party at any particular point. And it is obvious that the choice of the particular point of attack rests entirely with the raiders. Moreover, it is impossible ordinarily to distinguish between friend and foe, and this very fact provides hostile sections with the opportunity of travelling along the road and thus enables them subsequently to select particular points of attack. And what is the position of the garrisons at the jumping-off grounds?

The conditions in which the troops are compelled to live in these camps are so utterly hard and unbearable that I was not surprised when, while sitting at lunch on a certain occasion in a certain mess in Wazirstan, I heard a British Officer quietly whisper in my ears, "*For God's sake, get us out of this hell.*"

But it may be said that the proof of the pudding lies in its eating and the fact that no raids into British territory have been reported since the construction of the Isha Fort-Razmak-Sorarogha road may be pointed out as proof of the success of the scheme. While I am not at liberty to disclose the circumstances in which this scheme came to be adopted, this much is undeniable that its completion has cost India a vast amount of capital expenditure which our tax-payer could ill-afford. And the annual recurring expenditure for the maintenance of the scheme is enormous. This expensive undertaking has got to be justified in the eyes of a critical public, at least for a time. How much of the Indian tax-payer's money has gone into the pockets of the tribesmen in order to induce them to keep quiet for a time, no one is in a position to say.

Indeed the drain on the Indian Exchequer, in one form or another, is constant as a result of the adoption of this extravagantly unwholesome policy, and the time since the construction of this road has been too short to justify any argument being based upon it.

Apart from the fact that this Road-construction Military-post Policy has not prevented and can not prevent raids into the British territory and results merely in the imprisonment of our troops in tribal area and in pouring India's wealth into the pockets of tribesmen there is another aspect of this policy which calls for notice. The location of posts in the tribal territory, whether garrisoned by Regulars or Scouts, furnishes a perpetual irritant to these liberty-loving tribes, with the result that there is an almost natural temptation on their part to indulge in sniping every now and then. As I was on a certain occasion motoring along the road in a certain part of Waziristan in a car with General....., we saw half a dozen Mahsoods breaking stones by the roadside, "Look at these devils," said the General, "they take our money in the day-time and snipe our people at night." To my mind,

it is the policy hitherto adopted which is responsible for the occasional murders of our Officers on the Frontier, which are but acts of retaliation on the part of tribesmen for the injuries which they have to suffer as a result of the policy hitherto followed by the Government of India, and the sooner this system of control (which in reality is no control at all) is stopped the better it will be for the Indian tax-payer, the troops, and our countrymen residing along the border. The soundness of a policy is tested by the nature of its result ; the results of the half measures which have been adopted hitherto have been *nil* ; and it is high time that a really effective solution of this problem were resorted to in order to bring about permanent peace on the Frontier, relief to the Indian tax-payer and safety and security to His Majesty's subjects residing on the British side of the North-West Frontier.

Close Border System.—That solution is to be found in what is known as the "Close Border System". The construction of a lateral road, fit for the motor traffic, along the border at a short distance from and running parallel to the hills of Waziristan as is now the case,

along the Mohmand Front ; the location of Frontier Constabulary posts at convenient distances and comparatively close to each other in front of the passes ; suitable increase in the strength of the Frontier Constabulary Force for the purposes of garrisoning these posts ; distribution of arms among the people residing in the Frontier villages on a liberal scale in order to enable them to cope with raiders ; perfection of the *Chigha* system in the border villages, and the linking up of the Constabulary posts *inter se* as well as with selected villages by means of an organised telephone system would furnish an effective and at the same time a comparatively far less expensive remedy for the prevention of trans-border tribal raids into the British territory and for the protection of British subjects inhabiting that area.

A lateral road, such as has been mentioned above, constructed along the border, would enable the garrisons in the various Constabulary posts to concentrate by means of motor lorries, at any given point as soon as, through the telephone system, news was conveyed to them of the commission of a raid in any village, with the result

that while the *Chigha* and the local police would be in full pursuit of the raiders, their retreat into the hills would be cut off by this concentration of the Frontier Constabulary. Those who, like myself, have witnessed the actual working of the *Chigha* system opposite the Mohmand front can realise the strength of the position thus described. Indeed, the knowledge that such elaborate defensive measures had been adopted to cope with raiding would in itself constitute a sufficient deterrent. The undeniable fact that this has been the actual result along the Mohmand front, ever since this system was completed there many years ago, is conclusive proof of its efficacy. But should any tribesmen, in spite of these effective arrangements, venture to come out into the plains in order to commit raid in any of our villages, the village *Chigha* together with the local police on the one hand and the Frontier Constabulary on the other would constitute a veritable death-trap for the raiders. One or two raids dealt with effectively in this manner would undoubtedly be instrumental in stopping the raids by trans-frontier tribesmen into the British territory. The construction

of the lateral road in the sub-montane plains and of Constabulary posts along that road would obviously be far less expensive than that of roads, piquets and Cantonments in the hilly tracts of Waziristan. And apart from the initial cost being considerably less in the case of this lateral road, the recurring cost in the way of annual repairs would be even more economical than is the case with strategic roads in the interior. The latter pass through mountainous tracts which are subject to cloud-bursts and spates in the rainy season, when bridges are washed away and portions of roads are destroyed, so to speak, in the twinkling of the eye, necessitating their renewal every year at considerable cost.

Major Handyside, late Commandant of the Frontier Constabulary, was of opinion that if his force were increased by 28 Companies, *i. e.* by 2,880 men, arms were distributed among the villagers along the Frontier, and Constabulary posts, erected at convenient distances, were connected with each other by means of telephone, he would guarantee the safety of the Frontier and protection of British subjects along the Waziristan border.

as well as in other portions of the North-West Frontier Province. Major Handyside was, no doubt, an enthusiast where the Close Border System was concerned. But he had long been in charge of the Frontier Constabulary, had had experience of the actual working of this system along the Mohmand front for many years and history shows that it is enthusiastic experts with deep faith in the efficacy of a system who are generally instrumental in securing its successful working. And it is a well known fact that at least three Chief Commissioners of the North-West Frontier Province and an overwhelming majority of the District Officers shared his enthusiasm.

The withdrawal of the perpetual irritant of the military post from the tribal territory and in consequence, the disappearance from the minds of the tribesmen of suspicion with regard to our ultimate aims, will make the cultivation of friendly relations with the Mahsood and Wazirs far easier than is the case at present. Young men from the Agencies higher up, *i. e.* Mohmands, Afridis, etc. are now receiving education in our schools and in the Islamia College at Peshawar. There is

no reason why the Close Border System, now actually in operation higher up, should not result similarly in the establishment of amicable relations between the tribesmen in Waziristan and the British authorities and the leading Khans and Maliks be induced to send their children for education in British territory. The Government of India have already a considerable hold over the Wazirs by reason of their ownership of land on our side of the border, and over the Mahsoods because they carry on their trade in timber etc. during the winter months in our Districts and depend for salt, cloth etc. upon British India. Once assured of friendly intentions, the tribesmen would become increasingly amenable to the influence of the Political Officers. Employment might be found for their young men either in the Indian Army or in our Military Police in Assam, Burma and elsewhere. The deterrent to raids provided by the Close Border System, the removal of suspicion as to the ultimate aims of the British Government, the fear of forfeiture of allowances, on the one hand, and the deprivation of the facilities for employment and for education of their

children and other advantages of friendly relations on the other, would bring about beneficial results, political and otherwise, which can never be realized by a continuance of the policy hitherto adopted in Waziristan. And if, in spite of all this, the tribesmen still misbehave themselves, there are measures which can be easily resorted to in order to coerce them into good behaviour. Closing up all the passes with a view to the stoppage of their trade with British Territory, upon which they depend for their subsistence, imprisonment of the tribesmen who may happen to be in India, the use of aeroplanes for the purpose of bombing the recalcitrant tribesmen and their villages would soon bring the particular tribe guilty of misbehaviour to its senses.

With the Close Border System of defence against raids perfected in the manner described above, with our military forces withdrawn from the trans-frontier tracts resulting in the removal of all suspicions from the minds of these independence loving tribesmen and making the cultivation of neighbourly relations with them far easier that is the case at present, not only will the Government have

solved the North-West Frontier Problem effectively and satisfactorily but it will also have relieved the Indian tax-payer of a considerable portion of the heavy military burden under which he is groaning at present. The fear of having to face deficit budgets every now and then will have disappeared, and the Government of India will be able to devote its energies and resources towards the realization of that material and moral progress of the country which all sincere well wishers of India have looked forward to ever since the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

Agricultural Indebtedness and other Agricultural Problems in the Punjab

*Presidential address delivered at the anniversary
of the Punjab Zemindars League held at
Lahore on Saturday, the 13th March 1926.*

GENTLEMEN,

When a few days ago your energetic Secretary, Sardar Mohindar Singh, and my friend Sardar Kharak Singh, conveyed to me the kind invitation of your Executive Committee to preside over this anniversary of the Zemindars League, I readily accepted the invitation, in the main, for two reasons. In the first place, as you are aware, I belong to a family of hereditary land-owners, whose estates are spread over several districts in this province, and, for years past, have had the honour of being the elected head of one of the principal agricultural tribes of the Punjab. In these circumstances, my deep interest in the welfare of the Punjab agricultural communities, ever since the commencement of my public career, is perfectly natural. My friend Sardar Kharak Singh and perhaps many others, present here to-day, will remember the period, many years ago, when

agricultural interests in this province were represented by the then Punjab Zemindars' Association of which I was the General Secretary. That organisation rendered some highly useful service to the agricultural communities, particularly during the days when the legislation connected with the Punjab colonies was the cause, unfortunately, of considerable trouble in certain parts of this province. The active interest which I took, during the many years I was a member of the Punjab Legislative Council before the commencement of my official career, in all Legislation, undertaken by Government, affecting our agricultural communities, is known to those of you who have, in the past, been my co-workers in public life.

In the second place, I willingly responded to your invitation to preside over this gathering because this League provides the biggest common platform on which all Punjabis, irrespective of community, caste, or creed, may meet together to discuss problems connected with the welfare of the vast majority of the people of this province and on which what unfortunately are known in these days as communal differences entirely

disappear by reason of that community of interests which binds together the various agricultural tribes in the Punjab. Time has now arrived when, in the interests of India's constitutional advance, there is the greatest need for inter-communal co-operation and good will. It needs no gift of great political insight to see that without such co-operation constitutional advance towards the appointed goal is absolutely impossible. But, unfortunately, at this critical juncture in India's history, the Indian political atmosphere has become disturbed by violent communal currents and undercurrents, the contemplation of which cannot but sadden the hearts of all sincere well-wishers of peaceful constitutional progress in our common motherland. In these sad circumstances, the few common platforms, available here and there, upon which workers in the cause of our country's progress may meet together to contribute towards successful constitutional evolution, constitute a refreshing feature of this deplorable situation. In the Punjab the common platform which the Zemindar League provides for joint action is particularly welcome for, alas, it is in this province that inter-communal

friction has manifested itself in a manner which, without doubt, is depressing to the hearts of those whose sincere patriotism is capable of rising above narrower considerations. Indeed, the Punjab being mainly an agricultural province, ninety per cent. of its population being dependent for their livelihood on agriculture, the Zemindars League, if properly organised upon patriotic basis, would provide a sovereign remedy for this fell disease. For here, by reason of a complete community of interests, the majority of our population would be in a position to forget the distinctive communal interests which unfortunately divide the various communities. To whatever religious section we may belong, of whatever tribe or caste we may be members by reason of our birth, on this platform at least ninety per cent. of the Punjab population can meet in a spirit of harmony and good will in order to contribute towards the happiness and contentment of the vast majority of our population.

Gentlemen, it is mainly for these reasons that I am glad to be in your midst to-day and if by my humble efforts I can contribute ever so little towards the success of your organi-

sation, you can count upon my co-operation in making your League a success.

The most important and difficult problem, for a proper solution of which earnest and continuous co-operation between Government and the people of this province is absolutely essential, is, of course, that of agricultural indebtedness. Upon a satisfactory solution of this question of questions rests the future progress of the Province not only in economic but also in constitutional evolution. Towards the end of the 19th century that problem assumed a very acute form. The process of expropriation of the agricultural communities then going on apace was gradually sapping their very existence. And though the passing of the Land Alienation Act, the Redemption of Mortgages Act, and other legislative measures similarly intended to arrest this process as well as the introduction of Co-operative Banks and Societies and the establishment of the Punjab Colonies have, in a certain measure, produced desirable results, agricultural indebtedness in this province still exists in proportions which it is sad to contemplate. According to Mr. M. L. Darling's investigations, at least $\frac{4}{5}$ ths of the cultivators in the

Punjab are steeped in debt. The size of the average cultivating holding in the Punjab is eight or at the most ten acres and only 17 per cent of these cultivators are free of debt, the average debt per indebted proprietor being Rs. 463. There are at least 40,000 money-lenders openly carrying on their operations in this province, to whom the agricultural communities owe the enormous amount of 90 crores, of which 75 crores is due by agricultural proprietors and 15 crores by agriculturists who are not themselves proprietors of land. Here is a problem which it is the duty both of the Government and the agricultural communities, constituting as they do the vast majority of our population, to set about, in right earnest by means of strenuous and persistent efforts, to solve. The problem affects the Hindu, the Sikh and the Muslim alike, and, in consequence, here there is no room for any communal differences or separate communal activities whatever. All must join hands together in a well-organised effort towards the solution of this grave problem and I doubt not that continuous and united efforts made in that direction will bring about the desired results.

The consequences of this heavy indebtedness, in so far as our agricultural communities are concerned, are manifesting themselves in every sphere of life. It is to this that the comparative backwardness of the agricultural communities in the realm of educational advance is due; and by reason of their educational backwardness they are unable to obtain a proper share in the administrative machinery of the province. It is because of this indebtedness that the vast majority of them are seriously hampered even in their ancestral pursuits and are unable to avail themselves of those up-to-date methods of agricultural development which modern scientific researches have brought within the reach of all owners of land who can afford their adoption. Indeed, this indebtedness often robs them of independence of action even in the exercise of their civic rights. In these circumstances and in view of the rapidly changing conditions all around us, it is the paramount duty of the agricultural communities in this province to put their own house in order and to make a well-organised and persistent effort, in various directions, calculated to remove this gangrene in order that

they may take their proper place in that scheme of constitutional evolution along which India is advancing towards her appointed goal.

A proper analysis of the causes which have brought about this depressing agricultural indebtedness makes it clear, that, while the responsibility for this deplorable condition rests mainly on their own shoulders, other parties must, in varying degrees, share that responsibility. One of the main causes which have reduced the agricultural communities to this state of indebtedness is undoubtedly their own extravagance on occasions of marriages and deaths in their families as well as their general want of thrift. Belonging, as the Punjab agriculturist does, to virile races, with him *Izzat* and *Nam* ("Honour" and "Good Name") come before everything else. And when, coupled with this craze for *Izzat* and *Nam*, a community is, at the same time, a victim of improvidence, the resulting consequences on its economic condition can well be imagined. It is no use disguising from ourselves the fact that the Punjab agriculturist, belonging to all classes and creeds, is not given to cutting his coat according to

his cloth. Not only on the occasions of marriage festivities but also, strange to say, sometimes even on occasions of deaths in his family, he is given to spending lavishly in entertaining his circle of relations and friends. On such occasions, the village money-lender is always ready with his purse, profuse in his professions of friendship and liberal in his promises of giving ample latitude in so far as repayment is concerned, the inevitable result being that with lapse of time and the consequent additions of interest and compound interest, the improvident agriculturist is often caught irretrievably in the spider's net. The majority of the Punjab agriculturists are owners of comparatively small holdings. As a result of their want of thrift and of the fact that a considerable slice of the income from their holdings must first go towards the payment of land-revenue, *Abiana* and cesses as well as to the money-lender, they often find themselves in an impecunious condition some five months in the year and are compelled to go to the money-lender even for their families' maintenance. It is, therefore not surprising that the smaller agricultural holder in the Punjab

is almost in a perpetual state of indebtedness.

I well remember the days when, some forty years ago, in my own family the inordinate extravagance on marriage festivities and its evil results led our elders to set an example to the agriculturists in our own and the neighbouring villages by forming a *Dastur-ul-amal* or code regulating expenditure on all occasions—births, betrothals, marriages and deaths. And subsequently when, some ten years ago, the Anjuman-i-Raiyan-i-Hind was founded, one of the first problems tackled by its Executive Committee was this very extravagant expenditure by our tribesmen. A model *Dastur-ul-amal* was framed and distributed among all District Anjumans for observance by our brethren. The results of these measures have been extremely beneficial and I venture to think that if all agricultural organisations and particularly your League were to take this matter in hand and by means of propaganda were to bring home to our agricultural classes the paramount necessity of curtailing their expenditure on these festive occasions and of cultivating a general habit of thrift, a sure foundation will have been laid for steadily increasing agricultural

prosperity.

The proverbial habit of litigation prevalent among agricultural communities in this province is another fruitful cause of this indebtedness. When Law and Order become supreme in a country and the resulting settled government renders it impossible for members of fighting races to settle their disputes by resort to violence, they are prone to go to the Law Courts to satisfy their love of "fighting it out." Litigation in our courts is indeed an expensive luxury, often resulting in even "the winners" being impoverished by the numerous exactions to which they are subjected during the long course of litigation from an original to an appellate and a revisional court as well as in executing the decrees which they may be fortunate in obtaining after many years of litigation. And as soon as litigation is started that astute "friend" of the agriculturist, *i. e.*, the money-lender, often comes smiling to his help, and the spider's net thus tightens round the poor agriculturist, so that, as has been rightly said, more often than not the winner in a cause in reality loses and the loser is virtually ruined. Here, again, there is ample field for work

for a properly organised Zamindar League, the result of which would in due course, be in the highest degree beneficial to our agricultural communities. We should, in right earnest, undertake this work of organisation and in the end establish, beside the central body at the headquarters of the Government, a district league at the headquarters of every district and a league for each tahsil. Thus organised, not only can we protect and promote those political rights and privileges to which we in this province are legitimately entitled but can also, by means of the establishment of a network of *Panchayets* all over the province, put an end to this curse of litigation and thus remove another cause of prevailing agricultural indebtedness.

Gentlemen, in discussing these two causes of agricultural indebtedness I have described, ever so briefly, the part which the money-lender plays in reducing the agricultural communities to the state of indebtedness which prevails in the rural area. The village money lender of old who was content with following his avocation on legitimate lines, acting as the village banker, was undoubtedly a useful member of the village community. To him

the zamindars were always ready to extend a hearty welcome in their midst and to give up to him willingly a reasonable share of the results of their labours in return for what he contributed towards the maintenance and prosperity of the village community. Some 50 years ago, however, a class of money-lenders came into being who, forgetful of the principle upon which their forefathers carried on their operations, became imbued with the desire to usurp the position of the land owner. It is this class who have, in a large measure, been the cause of accentuating agricultural indebtedness in this province. And our courts, unfortunately, do not always have that regard for the provisions of the Usurious Loans Act (No. 10 of 1918) which the Legislature contemplated for the protection of the ignorant agriculturist. The dire result of the operations carried on by this class of money-landers, chiefly to the zamindars but occasionally even to himself, can best be described by means of a concrete illustration. Some years ago, during the days when a number of dacoities took place particularly in the houses of wealthy money-lenders, a rich money-lender was the victim of a midnight

dacoity in a corner of Muzaffargarh District. On the morning following that dacoity he reported at the nearest police station that the Headman and some ten or eleven of the leading agricultural proprietors of the village had broken into his house, forcibly opened his safe, robbed him of Rs. 80,000 worth of sovereigns and jewellery, etc. and had made a bonfire of his account books, mortgage deeds and bonds. After the usual police investigation, these zemindars were sent up for trial and were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment by the Additional District Magistrate who was a member of the Provincial Civil Service. On appeal to the Chief Court they were, however, acquitted. Some 5 months after the hearing of that appeal, one of these zemindars came to engage me in another case and I enquired from him the real truth about that dacoity. I was told that the money-lender in question had started with the ordinary small grocer's shop in that village some 25 years before the incident which was the subject matter of the previous criminal trial. Having made money out of that business, he commenced money-lending, charging exorbitant rates of interest from the needy agricul-

turists, and had ultimately become the proprietor of a portion of the village itself and a mortgagee of most of the remaining portion, the old proprietors being converted into the position of tenants under him. Tired of his exactions and rack-renting proclivities, they had sent word to some persons across the river who committed that dacoity on a dark night and, thus, the village proprietors had taken their revenge upon a man whose avarice had brought this trouble upon himself. Those who are in intimate touch with what goes on in the rural areas can well appreciate the truth of this typical example of operations carried on by this class of money-lenders. The only solution of this problem is the wide-spread expansion of the co-operative system throughout our rural areas. The zamindars, as a class, owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Government for the initiative taken by the authorities in this respect. A well-organized Zamindar League with branches all over the province, co-operating with Government in establishing Co-operative Societies and Banks at all agricultural centres, could do a vast amount of good in eradicating this evil and

the agricultural communities could, in the process of time, be thus liberated from the meshes of this class.

Gentlemen, the root-cause of all these evils is, of course, the educational backwardness of our agricultural communities. The appalling ignorance which, for a long time, prevailed and unfortunately still prevails, though in a diminishing degree, among the agricultural communities in this province has been mainly responsible for all the social evils and litigious proclivities to which their indebtedness is due. It is, moreover, owing to this ignorance that the agriculturist falls an easy victim to the many parties who fatten themselves upon those resources which ought to contribute towards his own prosperity. Further, it is to this educational backwardness that the unsatisfactory character of their representation at all rungs of the new constitutional ladder is due. And here the responsibility for this state of things must, I am afraid, be shared both by the agricultural classes and the Government. As will be shown later, the Punjab agriculturist is entitled to special consideration at the hands of Government in all its efforts to promote

the welfare and prosperity of the Indian peoples. While I recognise that the Government is fully deserving of our gratitude for the measures which it has taken in order to arrest the expropriation of our agricultural tribes in the Punjab, I cannot help observing that measures, in the main, preventive of deterioration in the economic condition of the agricultural communities without the adoption, at the same time, of constructive methods to build up their prosperity are not sufficient to bring about the desired results. Even a casual survey of the past history of education in the Punjab makes it abundantly clear that, until recently, education received a step-motherly treatment at the hands of Government. But what concerns us in this gathering most is the undeniable fact that, for over 60 years after the annexation of the Punjab, in so far as official educational activities were concerned, urban areas received far greater attention at the hands of Government with the result that while educational progress among the urban population has, on the whole, been satisfactory, our vast agricultural population has lagged far behind. Had Government spent more money upon the

education of our people than it has done in the past, had they spread a network of schools for imparting free elementary education in our rural areas and had they adopted a system of education in these schools adapted to the practical requirements of the rural population, the results would, by this time, have been most beneficial. Only a small percentage of our boys can possibly expect to receive higher education : the vast majority of the students must necessarily stop at either the Middle or Matriculation standards. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that unless a vocational system of education is adopted in our schools, the vast majority of our boys who, having received a smattering of book knowledge, leave our schools without proceeding higher, must become practically unfit for their ancestral occupations. Had the right type of education been introduced in our schools in the rural areas, resulting in the younger generation becoming more efficient and up-to-date cultivators than their forefathers, the results on the economic condition of our agricultural communities would have been a source of deep satisfaction to all. Indeed, now that welcome measures are being adopted

in order to introduce compulsory elementary education in our rural areas, the urgent need for overhauling the whole educational system with a view to making it really beneficial to the agricultural classes is self-evident, and I trust that the Agricultural Commission, the appointment of which has been announced only recently by His Excellency the Viceroy, will devote particular attention to this problem. With the adoption of such a system of vocational education, not only will the next generation among our agricultural population realise the necessity of social reform and the establishment of a *Punchayet* system in order to avoid ruinous litigation, not only will it become too alert to fall an easy victim to the tricks and subterfuges of the money-lender, the *Patwari* and the political charlatan, but it will also become a generation of better and more efficient husbandmen and the resulting benefits, in so far as their economic condition is concerned, will be incalculable.

Gentlemen, the traditional loyalty of the Punjab agriculturist to the British Crown and the invaluable services rendered by him, at all times, in upholding the British cause, not only in this country but on the battlefields of

three continents, are well known to all. During the dark days of 1857, only eight years after the annexation of this province, it was he who helped to restore British supremacy in this country. And during the subsequent Afghan Wars as well as in Burma, Tibet, China, Somaliland and more particularly throughout the unparalleled conflagration through which the world has had to pass in the years 1914—18, the agricultural communities of this province have proved their unalterable devotion to the British Crown by unstinted sacrifices of blood. Their valour as well as their willing sacrifices in defence of the British cause have been, over and over again, recognised in glowing language by British statesmen and administrators. Moreover, it is undeniable that our agricultural population contributes to the public exchequer a major portion of the revenues by which the administrative machinery is maintained. But, in spite of these undeniable facts, the treatment which they receive at the hands of Government is not, I am constrained to observe, always commensurate with the position which the agricultural classes occupy in this province. The contentment and happiness of the people

rests not so much in the hands of the Legislature as in those of the various departments of administration, members of which come into close contact with the people in their everyday life. What is the representation of the agricultural classes in our provincial administrative machinery? There are the spending departments of Government through whose hands millions of money passes every year in the execution of vast schemes of agricultural, industrial and other development. How many agriculturists are employed in these departments? There is our Education Department upon whose activities depends the future intellectual progress of our people. Are the agricultural classes adequately represented in that department? These and similar questions, I venture to think, require close examination and upon their proper solution depends, in large measure, the future prosperity and contentment of our agricultural communities. As has been rightly observed by Mr. M. L. Darling in his admirable work "The Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt," "for land-owners..... much the best measure of debt is the land revenue, for, broadly speaking, the amount the land revenue a man pays

varies with the yield of his land. Viewed as such it is a form of income tax and is not a bad indication of his general position." In spite of this being the case, while all incomes from non-agricultural sources up to Rs. 2,000 per annum are exempt from income-tax, an agriculturist owning even 3 or 4 bighas of land, the yield of which is not sufficient to keep body and soul together, is compelled to pay land revenue on his insignificant holding! And as if the amount which the agriculturist has to pay in land revenue, water rate and cesses was not enough, only a little while ago, the *abiana* paid by him was enhanced in order to balance the provincial budget! It is passing strange that, in spite of his devoted loyalty and general impecunious condition, it is he who is made to feel the burden of taxation more than any other class of our population. And whenever a fat year enables Government to adopt measures towards the remission of taxation, it is generally the non-agricultural classes who receive the benefit of such remission. "To him who hath shall be given" is apparently the principle adopted by Government in this respect. And not only does the poor Punjab agriculturist receive no remission of

taxation, even land revenue paid by him is invariably enhanced every time a new settlement is made in any district, his cry for the extension of period of settlement remaining unheard. These problems, affecting as they do the one class who are entitled to special consideration at the hands of Government, particularly in the Punjab, will I trust, be thoroughly enquired into by the Agricultural Commission whose appointment I welcome on behalf of this representative gathering of the zemindars of this province. Meanwhile, may I take this opportunity of impressing upon the Provincial Government the necessity as well as the justice of reconsidering the question of the recent increase in *abiana* necessitated professedly by the then deficiency in our annual budget. Now that there has been a further remission in our provincial contribution and the Hon'ble Sir John Maynard is able to congratulate himself as well as the Punjab Legislative Council on the surplus budget recently presented by him, I venture earnestly to appeal to the Punjab Government on behalf of our agricultural communities for the immediate cancellation of the enhancement of the water rates made a short while ago as a

temporary measure in order to meet the requirements of a particular year and thus to lighten the already heavy burden of taxation on the loyal agricultural communities of this province.

There is another subject of considerable importance particularly to the Zemindars in the western and south-western districts of the Punjab to which, before concluding, I must refer. The Punjab Government is undoubtedly entitled to our gratitude for the establishment of the many Punjab Colonies which, as a result of our magnificent irrigation schemes, have converted extensive barren tracts into grain producing areas and have not only relieved the congestion in certain agricultural districts in this province, but also helped to reduce agricultural indebtedness. It is, however, necessary to point out that the unlimited supply of water in the Indus still remains unharnessed for the benefit of the vast uncultivated tract in the Punjab through which that great river winds its course. A quarter of a century ago, the Punjab Government, having determined to tap that river for the purposes of what subsequently came to be called the Thal Project, carried a measure through

the Punjab Legislative Council known as the Sindh Sagar Doab Colonization Act (No. I of 1902) according to the provisions of which $\frac{3}{4}$ th of the land irrigated by the Sindh Sagar Canal were to become the property of Government, the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ th being left with the Zemindars as their property. According to one of the provisions in the agreements then entered into between the proprietors and the Government and embodied in the *Wajib-ul-arzs* of the villages concerned, the proprietors were from that moment debarred from acquiring individual proprietorship in the *Shamilat* areas either by means of partition or by bringing *banjar* land under cultivation. The proprietors, believing that the Government was in earnest in its intention of constructing the Sindh Sagar Canal at an early date and taking a reasonable and practical view of the matter, readily entered into those agreements.

Nearly a quarter of century has passed since then but the Sindh Sagar Canal is not yet in sight. All efforts of the Punjab Government to get the Government of India to send up the scheme to the Secretary of State for sanction have hitherto been in vain. On one pretext or another, the Public Works Depart-

ment of the Government of India has sent the scheme back for further investigation in spite of powerful representation, submitted by the Punjab Legislative Council in its support, thus driving a coach and four through the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee of the two Houses of Parliament that "in purely provincial matters, which are reserved, where the Provincial Government and Legislature are in agreement their views should ordinarily be allowed to prevail." And when tired of this game of shuttlecock, our wide-awake Governor, His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey, at last sent up what is known as the Lesser Thal Project for sanction, the Bombay Government has stepped in with objections having no basis whatever in fact and in law. The inexhaustible volume of water in this great river is more than sufficient for the needs of both the Sukkur Barrage and Thal schemes, as higher and lower riparian owners both the Punjab and Sindh have their respective rights in the use of the water of the Indus and I trust no outside political considerations will now be permitted to override the overwhelming claims of the Punjab to what is but its just due. At all events, with the Zemindars of the

district concerned it is now veritably a case of "hope deferred maketh the heart sick" and it is high time that the Government either took steps to start the excavation of the promised canal or repealed Act I of 1902, so that the Zemindars, who are at present tied hand and foot, may be in a position to enjoy the benefits of ownership by adopting measures for the development of their lands.

Gentlemen, in conclusion I would like to make an earnest appeal to my agricultural brethren in the Punjab to make a well-organised effort in order to place their own house in order. In the new conditions which have been brought into existence as a result of modern constitutional development as well as of general political awakening, no community can succeed in maintaining its rightful position and in safeguarding and promoting its rights and privileges unless it is able to exert itself on a well-organised basis. The agricultural communities in the Punjab have not yet realised the full consciousness of their own position. Their disorganised condition is a source of the greatest weakness to themselves. If this League were to undertake in right earnest the task of organising them on

a proper basis, their social, economic and political regeneration would soon be in sight. This is the one common platform upon which, as I have said before, Hindus, Sikhs and Muhamadans can stand shoulder to shoulder, working in a spirit of harmonious co-operation for the welfare of the vast majority of our people and at the same time promote that inter-communal unity and goodwill which constitutes the greatest need of the moment. United we stand, divided we fall.

Our Educational Needs

Presidential address delivered at the Conference of Managers and Headmasters of Non-Government Schools held on Saturday the 18th December 1926.

GENTLEMEN,

I am grateful to you for inviting me to preside over the deliberations of this representative gathering of educational workers of this Province. Throughout my public career in the service of my motherland, I have taken the keenest interest in the cause of Indian education. As President of the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore, I am, at this moment, the head of a Non-Government educational organisation, which, among its manifold activities, controls a first grade Arts College, three High Schools and over forty primary schools for the education of boys and girls. My interest in Non-Government educational institutions is, in these circumstances, self-evident. I was, therefore, very glad to be able to accept the kind invitation extended to me by the organisers of this gathering, and am confident that you will give me your unstinted co-operation in bringing its deliberations to a successful

conclusion.

The urgent need for bringing education within easy reach of the vast masses of our population is now universally recognised, and, in consequence, it is unnecessary for me, at this stage of Indian evolution, to dwell upon the incalculable benefits of education in general. But there are two new aspects of this vital problem, arising out of two comparatively recent happenings, with reference to which I would like to say a few words on this occasion. The introduction of religion into the realm of politics, due to the short-sighted zeal of certain misguided leaders in order to make the non-co-operation movement a success among the uneducated masses, has unfortunately brought about its inevitable reaction. The vast torrent then let loose against a third party is, alas ! now engulfing the two principal elements constituting the great mass of our population. The uneducated millions have been hypnotized, not only by those, who are carrying on religious propaganda as a result of their honest zeal for proselytisation, but also by the wiles of political charlatans, who misuse religion for purposes of political

ascendency and craze for leadership. It has, therefore, become more essential than ever for educational workers to gird up their loins in order to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to spread the light of knowledge amongst the Indian masses so that they may not fall easy victims to the machinations of men who, for purposes of their own, are ruining the cause of Nationalism. Moreover, the introduction of the Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms has made a beginning in democratic Government in this country and, in process of time, India will reach the goal of full responsible Government. The majority of the country's representatives, in the Provincial as well as in Central Legislatures, are now elected by the people and, as time goes on, the franchise will be extended to much wider circles than is the case at present. Even now millions of our people are already in possession of the right to vote for elections to our Legislatures as well as local bodies. For an intelligent exercise of this most valuable right, a widespread expansion of education in our country has become more urgent than ever. To the great national considerations, which have in the past impelled sincere well wishers of the

country's progress to address eloquent appeals and to organise activities, calculated to bring about the educational uplift of our people, these two new factors in the changed situation must now be added and Indian patriots in all parts of the country must realise that in a widespread expansion of education among our masses alone lies the secret of India's peaceful progress along the road leading to her constitutional goal.

Nor is it necessary for me, in this gathering of educational experts, to dwell on the relative merits of Primary, Secondary, and University Education. If instead of wasting our time and energies in measuring the exact importance attaching to these three stages of education, we were to realise, once of all, that, in their own respective spheres, all three are equally indispensable to the cause of Indian uplift, a great deal of the time which is wasted in futile controversies could be devoted to the adoption of practical measures for the regeneration of our people. What this conference should concentrate its attention and energies upon is the discussion of those practical measures.

Gentlemen, the system of education which

has hitherto been in vogue in our schools has, I am afraid, failed to bring about the results which, in modern conditions, true education ought to aim at. Our educational institutions have, in the past, been of, what I may characterise as, a preparatory nature. In other words, the main object of our Primary Schools has been to prepare our boys for Secondary education and of our Secondary schools to equip our youth for University Education. The result of this unfortunate state of things has been that the vast majority of our younger generation, whose parents are not in a position to bear the expenses of University Education and who have, in consequence, stopped at the primary, middle or even the Matriculation standard, find themselves in the position of a *dhobi ka kutta na ghar ka na ghat ka*. It must be obvious even to a casual observer, that in a sub-continent like India, inhabited by three hundred and ten millions of human beings, the vast majority of the younger generation must leave the educational ladder at rungs lower than those of University Education. It follows, therefore, that our educational system must be so devised as to make this

majority of the younger generation really fit for the avocations which they must perforce adopt in their daily life. A system of education which fails to equip our young men for their ancestral or other occupations in life, while, at the same time, changing their outlook, cannot but be a source of widespread discontent. No Government in the world is in a position to find employment in its services for all the youth of the country, no matter what may be the standard of education they have received. Apart from the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake, which no doubt is a highly desirable object in itself, the aim of education must, at the same time, be to make our younger generation useful members of society, better able than their forefathers to make a proper use of their opportunities in order to follow their ancestral or other occupations more intelligently and efficiently and to promote the industrial, agricultural and general prosperity of India. Upon these grounds, it seems to me to be essential that, instead of aiming at mere literacy, our school education ought to be vocational so that the son of an agriculturist may have instilled into him the love of agri-

culture even in early life and may become a better agriculturist than his father, and the younger members of an industrial family may become more efficient industrialists than the older generation. Small beginnings have no doubt been made in this respect in some parts of the country ; but unless our school educational system is radically changed, it is impossible to obtain the desired results. To my mind the time has now arrived when Government should appoint a Committee of experts to investigate this vital problem and to make the necessary recommendations towards the attainment of this ideal.

In order to bring about the educational uplift of our people all along the line, the necessity of co-operation between the Government and the people is self-evident. The history of all civilised nations, now playing a prominent part in world's affairs, furnishes conclusive proof of this obvious proposition. In a vast sub-continent like India, with its three hundred and ten millions of population belonging to diverse races and creeds and bound by diverse social codes, a uniform system of education is obviously the most potent factor in the evolution of Indian

Nationality. Unless both the Government and the people co-operate wholeheartedly in the realisation of this goal through a widespread expansion of education among our masses, India will never attain that position in the comity of nations which is her legitimate due. In the political literature of modern India, the Departments of Education, Public Health and Agriculture have come to be regarded as "Nation-Building Departments" and now that the control of these departments has been transferred to Ministers, selected from among the elected representatives of our people, and the All-India Services administering these subjects have been completely provincialised, there can be no question whatever, regarding the necessity of co-operation between the administrators and representatives of our people in the successful working of our educational machinery. In helping to create this much needed atmosphere of mutual co-operation, this conference of teachers of Non-Government Schools in the Punjab is in a position to render signal service to the cause of educational uplift in this country.

In the year 1920, the Government of India,

realising that the changed conditions rendered the introduction of compulsory primary education a necessity, revised its policy in regard to this important problem and issued a circular letter, authorising Local Governments to undertake legislation in this behalf. As a result of this action by the Government of India, enabling enactments were passed in various Provincial Legislatures whereby Municipalities and District Boards were authorised to introduce compulsory primary education within their respective jurisdictions, wherever local conditions permitted the taking of this step. It is somewhat disappointing to see that Municipalities and District Boards have not availed themselves of the power thus given to them in such numbers as was expected and it seems to me perfectly legitimate that your conference should pass a resolution inviting the attention of local bodies to the urgent need of taking steps in this direction in order to bring about a widespread expansion of primary education in the province.

Gentlemen, no system of education in our schools can bring about the desired regeneration of our people without including religi-

ous and moral instruction among the subjects taught in our schools. It is natural that the British Government should for political reasons have, in the beginning, adopted the policy of strict religious neutrality in relation to official educational activities. But purely secular education divorced from all religious and moral teaching was calculated to bring about results in the highest degree prejudicial to the public welfare. The Government of India, therefore, thought it necessary, in the year 1920, to revise its policy in this connection and, as a result, Provincial Governments were given the fullest liberty to take steps, consistent with local conditions, to introduce this much-needed reform. There is one aspect of this problem, however, in connection with which it is necessary for me to sound a note of caution. The aim of religious and moral instruction, given to the younger generation should be to inculcate liberalism in religion and to produce that spirit of religious tolerance which is absolutely essential in a heterogeneous mass of population like that of India. Religious and moral instruction, introduced in our schools in this spirit is sure to promote the cause of Indian

Nationalism. If, on the contrary, religious and moral instruction in our schools, denominational or otherwise, is imparted in a spirit of sectarianism, it is likely to become a curse rather than a blessing. In the name of our common motherland, I appeal to you, "Nation builders" as you have been rightly called by my friend Mr. Yusufali, to avoid scrupulously the instilling of sectarian religious spirit in the minds of our younger generation and to inspire them, not only with love for their own religion but also with respect for that of their countrymen. Religion is after all a matter of individual belief and so far as the fundamental moral principles are concerned, they are more or less common to all religions. Love of one's own religion is, therefore, not inconsistent with respect for those professed by our fellow countrymen; and religious tolerance is the quintessence of modern civilisation. It is in this spirit that religious and moral instruction should be imparted in our schools, and this conference ought to be able to give the right lead in this respect to teachers and managers of Non-Government schools in this province.

Gentlemen, the great usefulness, to the

cause of education, of an annual conference like this, in which teachers of Non-Government, schools the number of which has steadily multiplied in recent years, may assemble to discuss important educational problems, cannot be exaggerated. In this conference they can meet in a spirit of friendly co-operation which will, in due course, pervade itself into the institutions in which they perform their sacred task. They can give each other the benefit of their own experiences and thus promote co-ordination of efforts and uniformity of aims. Problems such as the desirability of shortening the length of the school course, which, at present, takes up as many as 10 years of a boy's life, the proper development of physical culture in our schools, with a view to bring about a much-needed improvement in the physique of our younger generation, the provision of social unions and debating societies calculated to generate an atmosphere of mutual good will, the avoidance by managers of interference in the purely academic side of our educational institutions, etc., can here be discussed in an atmosphere free from the heat of sectarian controversy,

and in a spirit of calm and considered deliberation. The results of your periodical deliberations will, I am confident, be a source of incalculable benefit to the cause of education in this province. I bid you God-speed in the patriotic task you have undertaken, and wish this conference every success.

Religious and Moral Education in Government Schools and Colleges

Speech delivered as Education Member on the Resolution moved in the Council of State by the Hon'ble Lala Sukhbir Sinha on Tuesday, the 15th of September 1921, recommending that necessary steps should be taken to introduce religious and moral education in all Aided and Government Schools and Colleges.

SIR,—I venture to intervene at this early stage in the hope that the statement which I am about to make on behalf of Government may help to curtail the discussion on my Honourable friend's Resolution. During the earlier stage of British rule the Statesmen at the helm of Government, finding themselves in the midst of a vast population composed of communities following divers religions, adopted what has been known as a policy of strict religious neutrality. In the circumstances of this country for a European Christian Government administering the affairs of a Hindu, Muhammadan, Sikh, Buddhist and Parsi population, the adoption of such a policy was undoubtedly based on far-sighted statesmanship. (Hear, Hear!). But carried into the realm of education unfor-

Unfortunately this policy resulted in the entire exclusion of religious and moral instruction from our schools. The need for the introduction of such education was, I believe, first felt in the enlightened State of Mysore some time about the year 1908. Subsequently this matter was brought to the notice of the House of Commons by two Honourable Members of Parliament. On the 6th March 1911, Mr. Arnold-Ward, M. P., asked a question in the House of Commons inviting attention to the facilities accorded to the representatives of different religious denominations by the Government of Mysore for giving religious instruction in Government schools and colleges and to the success which had attended the experiment in that State, and inquired if the Government of India would consider the desirability of introducing a similar system in British India. In his reply, the Secretary of State promised that the attention of the Government of India would be drawn to the subject.

The matter was again referred to in the House of Commons by Sir John Jardine and Captain Murray in questions put by them to the Secretary of State on the 30th March

1911. Accordingly, the Government of India took up this question. I do not propose to weary the Council by taking Honourable Members through the multifarious proceedings and references to Local Governments that took place during those years. It is sufficient to mention that, when I assumed charge as Education Member, I found that no definite decision had yet been arrived at. In view of the somewhat strong views held by me on this question, I took up the matter in earnest, and finally, Lord Chelmsford's Government unanimously arrived at the conclusion that the time had arrived when the embargo hitherto imposed upon religious and moral instruction in our schools should be removed, leaving it to the Local Governments to take whatever action was compatible with local conditions in their respective provinces. The intention at that time was to issue a Resolution embodying this new policy of the Government of India. I may here mention that the Secretary of State expressed his entire sympathy with the object we had in view. But, meanwhile, the Government of India Act, 1919, came into operation on the 1st January of the present year, making edu-

cation a Transferred Provincial Subject. Education from that moment came under the control of Ministers selected from among the elected representatives of the people and for the administration of their departments responsible to the Provincial Legislative Councils. Indeed, from that moment Education became truly national. In these circumstances, it was out of the question for the Government of India to issue a Resolution giving any directions to the Local Governments. Meanwhile, during the last Session of the Legislative Assembly, an Honourable Member, Mr. Mahmood Schamnad Sahib Bahadur, asked a question on the 10th March 1921 in connection with this subject. In reply to that question the Government of India said that religious instruction had already been allowed in Government or other publicly-managed schools in certain parts of India under certain conditions. They were willing to see further relaxations in this direction and would address the Local Governments in this matter. Accordingly, a Circular letter we issued by the Government of India on the 19th March 1921 to the various Local Governments, a

copy of which I now place on the table of this House. As the letter is not very long and embodies a change of policy, so far as the Government of India is concerned, affecting the well-being of millions of Indian people, perhaps the Council will permit me to read one or two important paragraphs out of the letter. After stating that, in compliance with the undertaking given in the Legislative Assembly, the Government of India are circularising the Local Governments in this connection, the letter went on to say :

‘ The Government of India, so far as they are concerned, have no intention whatever of receding from their attitude of strict religious neutrality or from the principle that Government schools ought not to be used as a means of fostering any one religion at the expense of others. But they are of opinion that the embargo which hitherto has been placed on the introduction of religious instruction in publicly-managed schools may be removed. Accordingly, there would be no objection to the withdrawal of the objections which now exist or are supposed to exist in

publicly-managed schools and colleges to—

- (a) the utilization of school premises for religious teaching or simple prayers ;
- (b) the utilization of teachers of the institution for such instruction, etc., where they voluntarily undertake the work ;
- (c) making religious teaching or observance compulsory for the boys whose parents or guardians have expressed a wish that this should be done ;
- (d) deducting the time spent by any boy on religious teaching or observance from the prescribed curriculum period permanently at the beginning or at the end of the school day. '

It will be observed that the policy of the Government of India is a cautious one. It is calculated to remove the minor restrictions which at present hamper or are supposed to hamper the introduction of religious instruction in publicly-managed schools, and thus to obliterate the impression which is understood to exist that Government is hostile to the encouragement of this form of education.

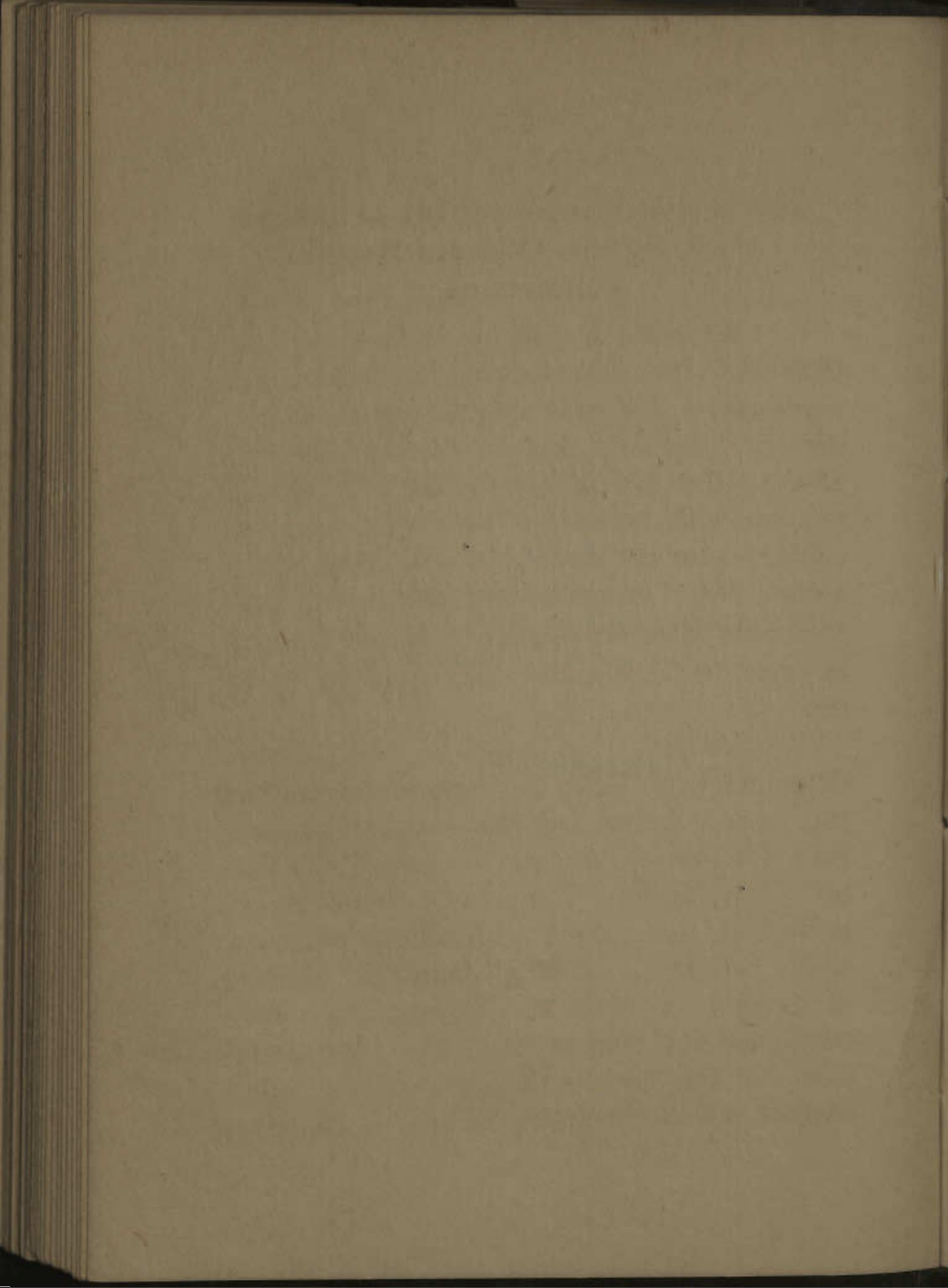
In conclusion, the Secretary to the Education Department said :

‘ I am to emphasise that the present announcement is not of a mandatory character, nor do the Government of India desire to bind them to a definite line of policy, They seek rather to remove the restrictions which possibly are regarded as hampering the freedom of Local Governments in this respect. The matter is one in which the Local Governments can now adopt such line of action as they think fit. ’

Honourable Members will notice that in this Circular letter the Government of India went as far as it was possible for them constitutionally to go. Education, as I said a moment ago, is now a Transferred Provincial Subject, and it is beyond the competence of the Government of India to issue any directions to the Ministers in charge of Education in the various Provinces. All they could do was to remove the embargo imposed on the introduction of religious and moral instruction which hitherto was supposed to exist.

They have done that. It is now the business of the Ministers who represent in the Local Government the elected representatives of the people, to take such steps as they may deem suitable in each Province, with due regard to local conditions, towards the realisation of the object which my Honourable friend has in view, and which, as I have already said, has the sympathy of both the Secretary of State and the Government of India. Beyond this, neither we, as a Government, nor, I venture to submit, this Council, in the new circumstances which have come into existence, can go. I would, therefore, advise the Council to let the matter rest there, and would appeal to my Honourable friend to withdraw his Resolution.





APPENDIX I.

**Resolution Passed on 1st January,
1929, by the All-India Muslim
Conference.**

1. Whereas, is view of India's vast extent and its ethnological, linguistic, administrative and geographical and territorial divisions the only form of Government suitable to the Indian conditions is a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent states, the Central Government having control only of such matters of common interest as may be specifically entrusted to it by the constitution ; and

2. Whereas, the right of the Muslim Community to elect its representatives on the various Indian Legislatures through separate electorates is now the law of the land and the Muslim Community cannot be deprived of that right without its consent, and, whereas, in the conditions existing at present in India and so long as these conditions continue to exist, the representation, in the various Legislatures and other Statutory Self-Governing Bodies, of the Mus-

lim Community through its own separate electorates is essential in order to bring into existence really representative democratic Government and so long as the Musalmans are not satisfied that their rights and interests are adequately safe-guarded in the Constitution, they will in no way consent to the establishment of joint electorates whether with or without conditions ; and

3. Whereas, it is essential that representation of the Musalmans in the various Legislatures and other Statutory Self-Governing Bodies should be based on a plan whereby the Muslim Majority in those Provinces where the Musalmans constitute a majority of the population shall in no way be affected and in the Provinces in which the Musalmans constitute a minority they should have a representation in no case less than that enjoyed by them under the existing law ; and

4. Whereas, representative Musalman gatherings in all the Provinces in India have unanimously resolved that, with a view to provide an adequate safeguard for the protection of Muslim interests in India as a whole, the Musalmans should have the

right of one-third representation in the Central Legislature and this Conference entirely endorses this demand; and

5. Whereas, for the purposes aforesaid it is essential that Musalmans should have their due share in the Central and Provincial Cabinets; and

6. Whereas it is essential that no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed, or passed in any Legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either the Hindu or Muslim Community affected thereby in that Legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment; and

7. Whereas, on ethnological, linguistic, geographical and administrative grounds, the province of Sindh has no affinity whatever with the rest of the Bombay Presidency and its unconditional constitution into a separate province, possessing its own separate Legislative and Administrative machinery on the same lines as in the other provinces of India is essential in the in-

terests of its people, the Hindu minority in Sindh being given adequate and effective representation in excess of their proportion in the population as may be given to the Musalmans in the Provinces in which they constitute a minority of the population ; and

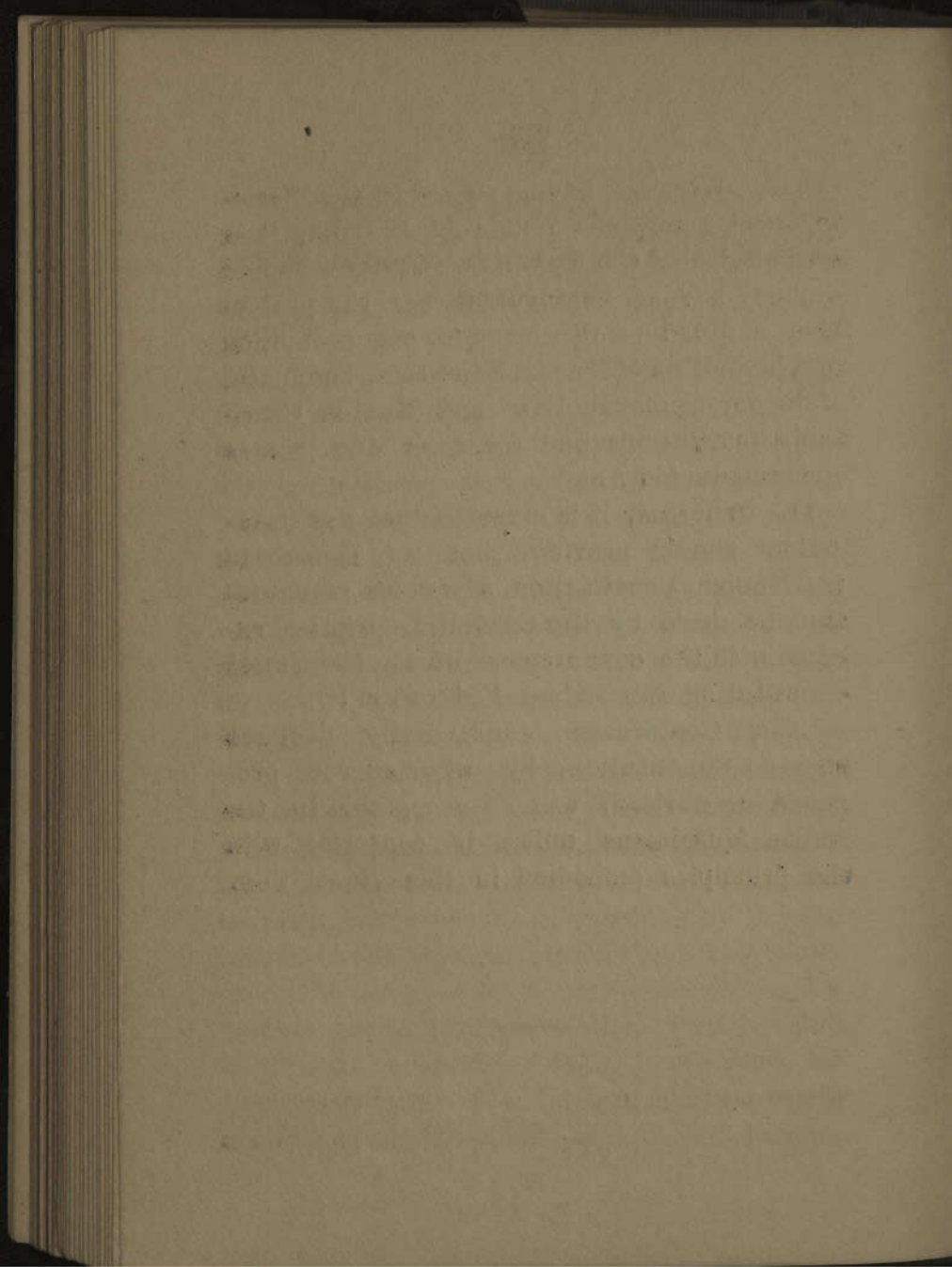
8. Whereas, it is essential in the interests of the Indian Administration that provision should be made in the Constitution giving the Musalmans their adequate share along with other Indians in all the services of the State and of all Statutory Self-Governing Bodies, having due regard to the requirements of efficiency ; and

9. Whereas, the introduction of Constitutional Reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan along such lines as may be adopted in other provinces of India, is essential not only in the interest of those Provinces but also of the Constitutional advance of India as a whole, the Hindu minorities in those provinces being given adequate and effective representation in excess of their proportion in the population as is given to the Muslim Community in the provinces in which it constitutes a minority of the population ; and

10. Whereas, having regard to the Socio-Political conditions obtaining in India, it is essential that the Indian Constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim Culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim Education, Language, Religion, Personal Law and Muslim Charitable Institutions and for their due shares in Grant-in-Aid ; and

11. Whereas, it is essential that the Constitution should provide that no change in the Indian Constitution, after its inauguration be made by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of all the States constituting the Indian Federation ;

This Conference emphatically declares that no Constitution, by whomsoever proposed or devised, will be acceptable to the Indian Musalmans unless it conforms with the principles embodied in this Resolution.



APPENDIX II.

**The Royal Commission—Should it be
Boycotted ?**

I

RESENTMENT is undoubtedly a powerful factor in determining human course of action. And where resentment is due to a just cause, tendency to extreme action is not unnatural, particularly in the case of emotional temperaments. It is, therefore, not surprising that exclusion of Indian representation from the personnel of the Royal Commission has led to a widespread resentment in Indian political circles and a cry has, in consequence, been raised that the Royal Commission should be boycotted.

As I have already stated to the Associated Press and Free Press representatives, in the interviews which were published immediately after His Excellency the Viceroy's announcement, His Majesty's Government have, in my judgment, committed a grievous mistake in not including India's representatives among the members of the Royal Commission. This action on their part is, as I then observed, unprecedented, unfair to India and impolitic.

from the point of view of Indo-British co-operation. In these circumstances, had it been proposed to hold a thoroughly representative All-India Conference or even meetings in all centres of political activity in India to urge His Majesty's Government to provide for Indian representation on the Commission, practically unanimous action would have been not only feasible but also perfectly justified. But instead of adopting that line of action, some of our foremost Indian leaders have proposed a boycott of the Royal Commission. Is this the right course for the country to adopt? I propose in these articles to discuss this all-important question in its various aspects and to point out the real solution of the difficult problem which we have now to face. And, in all humility, I earnestly appeal to my countrymen to accord dispassionate and careful consideration to what a humble servant of our common Motherland sincerely believes is the right course for us to adopt.

In forming a correct judgment upon this vital problem, it is essential to bear the constitutional as well as the actually existing political situation in mind. Conclusions arrived at on the impulse of the moment,

ignoring realities, cannot but lead to disastrous consequences. That is exactly what happened during the days of Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation and a repetition of what happened then can only result in setting back the hands of the clock in so far as India's constitutional advance towards full responsible Government is concerned.

The constitutional position can be summed up in a very few words. Whatever theorists and dreamers might say *the British Parliament is beyond question the arbiter of India's constitutional fate*. According to the preamble to the Government of India Act of 1919, "*The time and manner of each advance can be determined only by Parliament, upon whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people.*" It is no use questioning the correctness of the assumption underlying the language of the statute just quoted. We have got to take note of it, for to ignore the realities of the situation is the negation of practical statesmanship. Moreover, in deciding upon the right course of action, it is futile to shut our eyes to the political situation in India. To our undying shame, we must recognise that the two great

communities constituting the population of this country have, for some time past, been engaged in fratricidal conflict, the intensity of which is unparalleled in the history of British India. As I said on another occasion, "When entire communities start running amok, with the result that perfectly innocent Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are butchered openly in our streets, not because they are themselves responsible for crimes committed in wanton disregard of all human laws but simply because they happen to profess their respective faiths, it is childish to talk of responsible Government or Dominion Status for India." The truth of this observation is beyond all question and even ordinary common sense requires that we should bear actually existing political conditions in mind when considering the wisdom of starting a boycott of the Royal Commission.

I have carefully followed the various pronouncements made by some of our eminent countrymen in justification of the policy of boycott advocated by them. Boiled down to essentials, the reasons given in support of this policy, expressed in different languages by different exponents of this view, are in

the main only two, *i.e.*, (a) in excluding Indian representation from the Royal Commission, His Majesty's Government have been guilty of wanton insult to India and the only reply which a self-respecting people can give to this wanton insult is a boycott of the Royal Commission itself ; and (b) the course thus adopted by the British Government constitutes a flagrant breach of the principle of self-determination for which England went to war with Germany and for the vindication of which India furnished over one million recruits to the British Imperial Forces during the Great War. I propose to examine the validity of these reasons in the next article.

II

To protest against the exclusion of Indian representatives from the Royal Commission as evidencing a disregard of India's legitimate rights is one thing ; to charge His Majesty's Government with wanton insult to India is something entirely different. Is there any evidence, internal or external, on which this charge can rightly be based ? India has hitherto been ruled by a bureaucratic system of Government, the bureaucracy having, in

the past, been responsible for the control and smooth-working of all branches of our administration. Each step in constitutional advance involving further transfer of responsibility from the bureaucracy to the Legislatures of the country and to Ministers who have to render account of their stewardship to our Legislative authority means curtailment of the powers and privileges hitherto enjoyed by the bureaucratic agency. Representatives of our Services have always been included among the members of all Royal Commissions appointed in the past history of British India. Their exclusion from the Royal Commission just appointed is, therefore, unfair to the Services and unprecedented in British history. Can His Majesty's Government, on that ground, be charged with wanton insult to the Services ?

The non-official European Community has undoubtedly an important stake in the country. It has made substantial contributions towards raising India to its present financial position and political eminence. It has hitherto had at least one representative on all the more important Commissions and Committees

which have investigated India's financial, constitutional and other problems. Did His Majesty's Government intend deliberately to insult the non-official European Community by excluding them from the present Royal Commission ?

And what reason is there to suppose that Mr. Baldwin's Government intended to gratuitously insult India in appointing a purely Parliamentary Commission to investigate her constitutional and administrative problem ? I have searched the various pronouncements made by some of our most eminent countrymen in vain for a single definite fact or reason justifying this charge, over and above the one fact of Indian exclusion. May not the existing political conditions in India be the principal cause for such exclusion ?

With the conflicting claims put forward on behalf of the various sub-sections of the heterogeneous mass of our population and the necessity of an impartial arbitration in an equitable adjustment of those claims, with the communal rivalries which have rent an hitherto peaceful atmosphere into stormy

currents and counter-currents, may not His Majesty's Government have, *in good faith*, considered it advisable to appoint a purely Parliamentary Commission, representative of the three great parties in England, as the best agency for investigating the complicated constitutional and administrative problems of India as they exist at present? Is there no reason for them to believe that the appointment of Indian representatives, drawn as they must be from these warring elements in our body politic, would introduce seriously and perhaps bitterly disruptive elements into the Royal Commission itself? Are we, in these circumstances, not ourselves, at least partly, responsible for our exclusion from this agency for constitutional investigation? Why, then, attribute sinister motives and imagine wanton insult when there is no substantial basis for this unfounded charge against His Majesty's Government? Why not instead proceed at once to settle our own unhappy political differences and then raise a united voice, pointing out to them, in well-reasoned and sober language, the grievous error they have committed and ask for its rectification.

The only other ground put forward in justi-

fication of the cry for boycott is, that Indian exclusion from the Royal Commission constitutes a flagrant violation of the principle of self-determination for the vindication of which the Allies fought the Great War. By putting forward an argument like this in support of their position, the advocates of boycott are merely exposing the weakness of their own case. Mr. Wilson's theory of self-determination was exploded in the halls of Versailles, where trusteeship of backward communities in the form of Mandates in relation even to countries hitherto independent took its place. Moreover, the principle of self-determination was never intended even by Mr. Wilson to apply to territories already forming an integral part of the Allies' dominions else the Philippine Islands would have received their independence long ago. And, in the existing conditions of India it is utterly futile to talk of self-determination. Only the other day, the foremost leaders of politically-minded India assembled at Simla to determine *the fate of this country*. I have used this phrase advisedly and of set purpose for, *to my mind, the fate of India rests entirely upon a satisfactory solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem.* The

President and the President-elect of the Indian National Congress were present at that Conference as were also all the most prominent figures among the All-India Hindu Mahasabha and the All-India Muslim League. Millions of eyes were turned towards those Olympian heights to see if these advocates of self-determination can settle the various controversies which have set this unhappy country ablaze during the last three or four years. What was the result? The Conference ended in a miserable fiasco. In these circumstances, for Mrs. Annie Besant and those of her way of thinking to talk of self-determination and charge His Majesty's Government with a flagrant breach of that angelic principle is to ignore realities and to base their case on catch-phrases which, apart from their having lost all significance in international politics, are entirely inapplicable to India in the conditions which at present obtain in this country.

III

Speaking, not to an audience of my own countrymen but to a gathering consisting mainly of high European officials and their ladies, in the Viceregal Lodge, Delhi, on

November 14, 1924, I said : “ I am an ardent advocate of my country’s advance towards full responsible Government within the British Empire. In the language used by that selfless patriot, the late Mr Gopal Krishna Gokhale, I want my countrymen in India to rise to that stature which has been attained by other people in their own countries.” There were present at that banquet at least seven persons who, *being acquainted with what had happened within the Holy of Holies from November 3, 1923, onwards until the end of 1924*, were in a position to appreciate the full significance of these words. And as one imbued with this ardent desire for my country’s constitutional advance, I have, ever since my interview with His Excellency Lord Irwin on the 4th instant, asked myself, over and over again, “ What is the best course for India to adopt in view of the personnel of the Royal Commission ?” The more I have deliberated anxiously over this vital problem the more am I sincerely convinced that a boycott of the Commission will be highly detrimental to the best interests of India.

Section 84-A of the Government of India Act provides that the Royal Commission to

be appointed thereunder is to enquire "into the working of the system of Government and the development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith " and it "shall report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible Government, *or to extend, or modify, or restrict the degree of responsible Government then existing therein*, including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of local Legislatures is or is not desirable." Even a casual consideration of the language of the Statute reveals the momentous character of the functions to be performed by the forthcoming Royal Commission. While every thoughtful student of Imperial and world politics must hold that the solemn declaration embodied in the preamble to the Government of India Act regarding the ultimate grant of full responsible Government to India is now beyond recall, the provision quoted above makes it perfectly clear that the Royal Commission will, after investigation, be perfectly competent to report not only for or against further extension of the degree of responsible Government as

existing at present but also, should it arrive at that conclusion, to recommend to the British Parliament any modification or restriction thereof which it may think fit. Bearing this significant statutory provision in mind, the likely effect on the minds of its members of a boycott of the Commission by those who ought, as in duty bound to their Motherland, to take the fullest advantage of this opportunity, not likely to recur for another decade, of claiming further extension of the degree of responsible Government at present enjoyed by India is, to my mind, self-evident. Should the proposal to boycott the Commission assume practical shape, the result may be the reverse of what is desired by every sincere well-wisher of India's constitutional progress.

The Royal Commission, as appointed by His Majesty's Government, is representative of all the three great political parties into which the British nation is at present divided. Its President is a Liberal statesman occupying a very prominent position in British public life. Bearing in mind the feelings to which human nature is subject, what we have to consider seriously is not only

the effect, on the minds of the members of this Commission, of a boycott by the very class which, in the normal course of events, is expected to promote the smooth working of our constitutional and administrative machinery and the opinion which they will carry away of our fitness for responsible Government, but also the effect which will be produced by this conduct on our part among the three great parties in the British Parliament, whom the members of the Commission represent and who, it is obvious, have the fate of India's constitutional advance in their hands. I earnestly beg of my countrymen to ponder well and dispassionately over this aspect of the problem and, putting aside feelings of resentment or personal disappointment, consider the serious consequences of this ill-advised action in its effect upon the minds of the Unionist, Labour and Liberal leaders in the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

There is another aspect of this important problem which, I venture to think, is deserving of careful and anxious consideration. Owing to Mr. Gandhi's blunder, the Indian Parliamentary Committee, the newspaper

"India" and other propaganda in England on behalf of this country became extinct in 1920. The harm already done to the Indian cause as a result of that ill-advised action has been undoubtedly great. For the last seven years the battlefield has been almost exclusively in the possession of anti-reform forces who have been active in demolishing the defence works built in England as a result of many years of persistent effort. And recently Miss Catherine Mayo's book has still further poisoned the minds of the British public regarding our fitness for the great responsibilities of self-government. In boycotting the Royal Commission my countrymen will be simply playing into the hands of the enemies of India's constitutional progress, thereby arming them with a powerful weapon which, it is obvious, they will not be slow in making use of to the infinite injury of the Indian cause. When the conflict between progressive and reactionary forces is so intense, is it wise, is it even prudent for the advocates of progress to leave the field entirely to the forces of reaction instead of husbanding all their resources and marshalling all their strength

to fight the battle of freedom ? Indeed, it seems to me to be utterly suicidal for us to adopt the course advocated in the circles which have raised the cry of boycott when the end in view can be achieved only by putting forward our just claim for India's constitutional advance before the Royal Commission. The British Parliament, in this case, stands in the position of a Court adjudicating upon that claim. The Court is issuing a Commission to make a local investigation into its merits. If the claimant takes no part in that investigation and commits the colossal blunder of staying away from it, the result can be easily imagined.

IV

Having in my last article placed before my countrymen certain considerations which have led me to conclude that a boycott of the Royal Commission would be detrimental to the cause of Indian constitutional advance, the question which I have next asked myself and to which I have devoted my most anxious and careful consideration may be summed up in a few words : " Is a boycott of the Commission within the range of practical poli-

tics ? ” Here our past experience ought to furnish us with an object lesson of the highest value.

On the conclusion of the World War, in which India had given conclusive proof of her devotion to the Empire by, among other things, furnishing to the great armies of England a larger number of recruits than all the self-governing Colonies put together, Indians of all schools of political thought were ardently looking forward to the fulfilment by England of her sacred pledge embodied in the historical declaration of August 20, 1917. Instead came the Rowlatt Act, in spite of the unanimous warning given by non-official Indian representatives in the Imperial Legislative Council, including the writer. As a protest against this defiance of Indian public opinion, Mr. Gandhi started his *Satyagraha* movement. Then came a bolt from the blue in the shape of Martial Law in the Punjab—the province which had provided to the British Army 60 per cent. of the combatants recruited in the whole of India ! I do not wish to recall the painful incidents of that period which, it is no exaggeration to say, sent a thrill of horror throughout the

length and breadth of India. This was followed by the Treaty of Sevres, with its overstringent terms practically destroying the Khilafat and sounding the death knell of the Turkish Empire. The resulting resentment among the Indian Musalmans was both deep and widespread. The cumulative effect of these catastrophic events constituted a provocation far more intense as well as extensive than that furnished by the present announcement regarding the Royal Commission. There was, unlike the present instance, not a single voice raised in India on the other side. Yet what was the result of Mr. Gandhi's non-co-operation movement?

As I said on a former occasion, non-violent non-co-operation may possibly be a practical conception when adopted by a comparatively small community, such as the Indians in South Africa, bound together by identity of interests. But in a heterogeneous mass of 310 millions of population spread over a vast continent like India, even the intelligentsia among whom were divided into various schools of political thought—with its perplexing diversity of languages, creeds, social codes and material interests—

such a movement was foredoomed to failure. If that was the end of Mr. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, in spite of the far graver character of the provocation which brought it into existence, what will be the fate of the proposed boycott of the Royal Commission ?

I entirely agree with what my friend Sir Abdul Rahim, for whose genuine patriotism I entertain the highest admiration, said in his Calcutta speech on the 16th instant. " If we can boycott it successfully," said he, " then I am sure we would have gained the first step towards self-government. *But it is obvious that any action of this nature to be effective must be supported by the united national will, not otherwise.*" As practical men we must seriously ask ourselves if there is such a thing in India to-day as "*national will*" and if there is any reasonable prospect of its being so "*united*" as to have any chance of success ? For, according to his own showing, it is only then that the boycott can have any prospect of success, and "*not otherwise.*"

To answer this question correctly we have to bear certain undeniable facts in mind.

The All-India Hindu-Mahasabha has repeatedly claimed to be the real representative organisation of our Hindu brethren. Its great founder, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who is the real leader of this communal movement, has steadfastly maintained a strange silence over this burning question. He has apparently not subscribed even to Mr. Jinnah's manifesto. Between his silence on this occasion and his silence at the time when Mr. Gandhi started his non-co-operation movement there is a highly significant parallel.* Dr. Moonje, its President for the current year, is waiting and watching—waiting to see what the attitude of the Muslim Community will be before he declares himself. Raja Narindra Nath, an ex-President of both the All-India and the Punjab Hindu Sabhas and a Vice-President of the former at this moment, is of opinion that “*the Hindus in provinces where they are in a minority cannot afford to have recourse to boycott.*” In other words, he cannot advise the Hindus of the Punjab and Bengal to adopt this policy and would leave the responsibility of doing so to the

* It was some days after the publication of this article that the Pandit came out with his declaration.

Musalmans of these two provinces ! And Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, President of the Punjab Hindu Sabha, goes even so far as to consider the provision regarding the collaboration of a representative Committee of the Central Legislature and the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament “ as a provision which to a certain extent will mitigate the total exclusion of Indians from the personnel of the Commission.”

The majority of the Ministers now assembled at Delhi, Dr. Subramanya, Chief Minister of Madras, Sir R. N. Mukerjee, Sir Sankaran Nair, Sardar Jogindra Singh (Punjab Minister), Lala Kesho Ram, M. L. C., Hindu Sewak Sabha (Amritsar), Sardar Ujjal Singh, M. L. C., the Sikh Akali leaders, the U. P. Adi Hindus, the representatives of the depressed classes in the Madras Legislative Council and other Hindu publicists are opposed to the proposed boycott ; while Mr. K. C. Roy, M. L. A., considers such a decision “ unfortunate ”. And if my friend Sir Ali Imam is in its favour, if Sir Abdul Rahim would support the policy provided a united India were to launch the movement *and not otherwise* and if Mr. M. A. Jinnah would

take no share in the work of the Commission, should the British Government refuse to reconsider their decision regarding its personnel, the Bombay Presidency Suni Conference, the Council of the Punjab Muslim League, Mian Sir Fazl-i-Hussain, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan, Hon. Syed Ali-i-Nabi, M. Ghaznavi, M. L. A. and numerous other Musalman public men have declared themselves against the proposed boycott. And of the Muslim newspapers, the "Muslim Outlook" the leading Muslim Daily, the "Inqlab," "Paisa Akhbar," "Young Muslim", etc, have similarly expressed their emphatic disapproval of this course. That veteran Parsi leader the Hon. Sir Dinshaw Wacha, entirely supports our policy and I have similarly received a number of letters and telegrams from different parts of the country expressing approval of the action taken by the Council of the Punjab Muslim League.

V.

If a boycott of the Royal Commission is both undesirable and impracticable, what is the real solution of the problem which India

has to face at this important juncture in her constitutional history? In finding the right answer to this question we have, again, to bear the existing political conditions in the country, as well as the exact constitutional position, in mind.

A careful consideration of the Indian political conditions must, I am confident, bring it home to every sincere and impartial thinker that the real solution of the problem lies in a settlement of the inter-communal political differences which, in reality, constitute the root-cause of all the difficulties in which our country is involved at the present moment. Sincere well-wishers of India's peaceful constitutional progress have, during the last three years, been giving repeated warnings regarding the urgent need of such a settlement in view of the approaching appointment of the Royal Commission in accordance with the provision embodied in Section 84 (A) of the Government of India Act. Had these warnings been heeded in time, I am perfectly certain that the present serious contingency would not have arisen. With a united India, fully prepared with a carefully considered scheme of constitutional reforms, on the one hand,

and Mr. Baldwin's Government taking the necessary action as required by the Statute on the other, the Royal Commission would necessarily, and albiet, automatically, have been a composite body including representatives of the British Parliament and the Indian peoples among its personnel and India would, thus, have played her legitimate part in its own constitutional development within the Empire. I trust my friends of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha will pardon me if, because of my sincere conviction, I say that they are mainly responsible for the non-fruition of that consummation. In this connection, it should be remembered that when full responsible Government is granted to India, our Hindu brethren will have a permanent majority in the Indian Legislature and the Central Government will, therefore, be permanently in their hands. And in the majority of the provinces, the position will be similar. It is only in a few provinces that the Muslim Community will have a majority at all and in two of these their majority will obviously be almost nominal. In these circumstances, one would have thought that, in order to promote India's constitutional advance, the Hindu

Mahasabha's leaders would even act generously by their Muslim countrymen in order to bring about an amicable settlement and would, in fact, take the first step towards the realization of that much needed consummation. But it is an irony of fate that it should be the Muslim leaders, though fully realizing the inferior position which their Community will occupy in the democratic India of the future, who should, because of their genuine patriotism, have invariably made the first move and every time their offer should have been rejected by the Hindu Mahasabha leaders ! This is what happened to their Delhi proposals ; that was again the fate of their earnest efforts at Simla. And if the Calcutta Unity Conference succeeded in devising a formula calculated to settle three of the matters in controversy, the fact is full of significance that the Hindu Mahasabha leaders were conspicuous by their absence from that Conference. And it is still more significant that while the Council of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, bearing the country's vital interests in mind, accepted the principles of the decision arrived at in Calcutta, it was the Punjab Hindu Sabha

leaders who spurned them almost with contempt.

The evolution of an Indian nationality, which is the greatest need of the country at the present moment, is obviously impossible so long as tactics like these are not abandoned. There are still 11 months to elapse before the Royal Commission will commence investigation. Let us settle our political differences and then present a united demand on behalf of all India regarding the next step in constitutional advance and a unanimous demand thus made would be simply irresistible, no matter what the constitution of the Royal Commission may be. This is the real solution of the problem we have now to face and it is in this manner alone that we can render lasting service to our common Motherland at this critical juncture in her constitutional history ! In the absence of such a settlement the mere appointment of a few Indians on the Commission would only result in washing our dirty linen in public—the controversies which divide the two camps would be carried on before the Commission and, in addition, mar the harmony of the Commission itself. Is there such a dearth

of farsighted statesmanship in this country, in spite of our boasted intellectual and political progress, that even our foremost leaders are unable to read what is written in such broad lettering on the walls of destiny ?

The next best thing, in my opinion, is a modification in certain items of the scheme as formulated by His Majesty's Government. According to the announcement issued by His Excellency the Viceroy, it is proposed that the Commission should " invite the Central Legislature to appoint a Joint Select Committee, chosen from elected and nominated un-official members, which would draw up its views and proposals in writing and lay them before the Commission in such manner as the latter may decide. This Committee might remain in being for any consultations which the Commission might desire at subsequent stages of the enquiry." As I said in my interview to the representative of the Associated Press, this device is no substitute for the appointment of Indian representatives as members of the Royal Commission. In substance it only means that the Central Legislature, through its joint Select Committee, will be able to present a written statement

embodying its views on the constitutional problem before the Commission.

Now, the personnel of the Royal Commission consists of gentlemen who have hardly any knowledge either of the working of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms or of the various constitutional and administrative problems with which they will have to deal. It is, therefore, clear that they will not be in a position adequately to cross-examine the witnesses who will appear before them. It is obvious that intelligent cross-examination is the best means of elucidation of constructive proposals and exposition of fallacious statements. The representatives of the Central Legislature would be in the best position to discharge this task. Moreover, after the Commissioners have recorded the evidence taken at Delhi, there ought to be a regular consultation between them and the Joint Select Committee of the Central Legislature. I would, therefore, suggest that the Select Committee should present their written statement to the Royal Commission before any evidence, whether official or non-official, is tendered before them so that they may be in possession of the views of the

Central Legislature before they commence their investigation. And the Joint-Select Committee should remain in being not only for the purpose of any consultation which the Commission may wish to have with them, but its members should also have the right to cross-examine the witnesses produced before the Commission. Finally, at the end of the enquiry thus held, there should be a Round Table Conference between the Royal Commission and the Joint-Select Committee. This will go a long way to satisfy the legitimate desire of Indian public opinion that India's representatives should play an effective part in the investigation to be held by the Royal Commission. A similar procedure should be followed with the Provincial Legislatures during the investigation which the Royal Commission will make in the provinces. India will, of course, have another opportunity of taking part in formulating the final proposals before they assume the form of a Legislative enactment by the British Parliament, as has already been stated in the official announcement.

In conclusion, I again appeal to my countrymen to give a careful and dispassionate consi-

deration to the views which, in all humility, I have ventured to express in this series of articles. I ask them to believe that, as a sincere advocate of my country's constitutional progress, the one end I have kept in view, in forming my own opinion upon the vital problem before us, is how best can our country be advanced another stage on the path to full responsible Government within the British Empire. After all that is the main end which all Indian patriots should keep before them, the method by which that end may be achieved being a matter of secondary importance. I am sincerely convinced that, the course suggested by me is the right course for us to adopt in the existing circumstances and that the boycott of the Royal Commission will not only serve no useful purpose but is, on the other hand, calculated to injure the national cause.

APPENDIX III.

Chelmsford-Montagu Report

(Being the last of fourteen articles published in the Civil & Military Gazette reviewing the Report.)

WHAT has been said in previous letters makes it abundantly clear that the Chelmsford-Montagu scheme of constitutional reforms, while requiring certain highly desirable modifications, constitutes, in my humble judgment, a generous fulfilment of the pledge embodied in the memorable declaration made in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State on behalf of His Majesty's Government, on 20th August last year, and is a substantial step forward in the direction of the ultimate goal of responsible government. And if further argument is needed to substantiate this incontrovertible position a comparison of the existing state of things with the position as it will be when the scheme is actually brought into operation clinches the matter beyond all possible doubt.

Under the existing conditions, local self-government, particularly in our rural areas,

is self-government, more or less, merely in name. With outside official control, official chairmen, official members possessing the right to vote, membership in many instances wholly nominated, and in others partly elected and partly nominated, and powers of taxation and initiative circumscribed within narrow limits, our municipal and district boards are, at present, leagues away from autonomy and responsibility. Under the scheme formulated by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State they will have at least four-fifths elected majority, will possess the right to elect their own chairmen, the nominated officials will be mere advisers without vote, the boards will have large powers of initiative and of taxation and will be materially relieved of outside control.

In the sphere of Provincial Governments, our elected representatives in the Legislative Councils are, at present, in a minority: henceforward there will be a substantial elected majority in these Councils. The right of interpellation is materially restricted: the scheme will bring about its extension to a degree equivalent to the existing practice in the British House of Commons. Our Provin-

cial Legislatures are now too small to admit of adequate representation of all important interests : they will be so enlarged as to make them thoroughly representative of our people. They have, at present, nothing whatever to do with the actual departmental administrative work : henceforth standing committees, to be elected by the Councils themselves, will be actually associated with each department or group of departments. The Councils do not now possess any right to frame, or modify their rules of business : under the new scheme they will be able to modify the existing rules, with the sanction of the Governor. Nominated official members, at present, have no freedom of speech or vote, and must mechanically support all Government bills : in future, they will be possessed of such freedom, except when Government otherwise directs. At present, with a nominated majority, the elected members are not able to have an effective and final voice in any matter, except in the event of a combination between them and the nominated non-officials : in future, the elected majority will possess an effective voice in all Bills referring, at least, to "transferred subjects."

The franchise for these Councils is, at present, limited and indirect, except in certain specified instances : it will henceforward be direct and as wide as possible, our Provincial Councils will thus become substantially representative of the people at large and the responsibility of the elected members to the public will be real. Except in the three Presidencies and the Province of Bihar and Orissa, there is one-man-rule in all other Indian provinces, the head of these local Governments being a Lieutenant-Governor or Chief Commissioner invariably belonging to the Indian Civil Service : in future not only the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh and the Province of the Punjab, but also the Central Provinces and Assam, will be presided over by Governors in Council, the Governor not being necessarily an Indian bureaucrat. The Executive Councils, wherever they exist, now consist of two British and one Indian member : henceforward the Indian element in all Provincial Executive Councils will be exactly one-half. At present no department in any province is under the exclusive control of an elected member of the Legislative Council : in future " transferred

subjects " will be placed in exclusive charge of a Minister, or Ministers, selected from among the elected members, who will be fully responsible for the proper administration of the departments entrusted to him. Five years after the first meeting of the reformed Councils, the list of "transferred subjects " is to be revised with a view to its expansion and curtailment of "reserved subjects, " so that, to my expectation, at least one-half of the entire provincial administration will be under the exclusive control of the elected representatives of the people within the short space of six years. And, finally, the Provincial Governments are, at present, subject to extensive control of the Imperial Government: under the Chelmsford-Montagu scheme they will become almost wholly autonomous.

In the Government of India, the Indian element in the Governor-General's Executive Council will be enlarged, thereby bringing about results in the highest degree beneficial to the interests and welfare of the Indian people. At present, there is effective official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council: in future, there will be a two-thirds elected majority in the Legislative Assembly, a subs-

tantial elected minority and non-official equality in the Council of State and a large elected majority in a joint session of the two Houses. Under existing conditions our right of interpellation is restricted as in the case of Provincial Councils : under this scheme, the same extension, as mentioned above, is to be granted in the Imperial Council. The Council is, under existing circumstances, too small to admit of due representation of all important interests: henceforward the two Houses will be sufficient to afford representation to all sections of our population. And as every Government Bill will, in the first instance, be introduced in the Legislative Assembly with its large elected majority, the influence of the people's representatives on legislation will obviously be far more effective than is the case at present. The nominated official members, instead of constituting a silent voting *bloc* bound always to support Government, will have freedom of speech and vote, except when otherwise directed by Government. The Assembly and the Council of State, will, in future, have the power to modify their rules of business where, at present, the Legislative Council is not posses-

sed of such right. And while the existing Council has nothing to do with actual departmental work, henceforward joint standing committees of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly will be associated with as many departments of Government as possible.

The Parliament and the Secretary of State, at present, enjoy in theory unlimited power of control over Indian affairs, Lord Morley's *dictum* being well-known to all who have read his "Recollections": in future that control will be relaxed in proportion to the increasing measure of responsibility granted in the country. The Secretary of State is now practically free of Parliamentary control: henceforward, his salary being placed on the Home Estimates, his powerful wings will be securely bound. And with the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on Indian Affairs and reform of the Secretary of State's Council the new condition of affairs will be far more beneficial to India than is the case at present.

Instead of 9 per cent. as at present, under the Chelmsford-Montagu scheme, 48 per cent. of the higher appointments in the Indian

Civil Service will, at the end of the first decade, be held by our countrymen, the state of things in the other services being at least similar. And with elected Indian Ministers in exclusive charge of at least one-half of the administrative departments, the remarkable nature of the advance thus effected by the scheme within one decade towards the ultimate goal of self-government becomes too obvious to need any comment.

These are, in brief, the great constitutional changes which the scheme formulated by His Excellency the Viceroy and the Right Hon. the Secretary of State will have accomplished within the short span of ten years. And what about the new forces of progress which its successful working will have given birth to in this country, forces that will assuredly accelerate the pace of constitutional advance on an increasing scale until, in the fulness of time, India shall have reached the goal of responsible government within the British Empire? Then will England have gained the crowning triumph of having raised India from the depth of subjection to the great height of self-government,

not only to the infinite good of both but also her own overlasting glory.

To those of my British fellow-subjects, in India as well as in England, who would grudge India this measure of constitutional reform, I earnestly appeal for more generosity than they seem to be inclined to show towards "the brightest jewel in the British crown." I appeal to them to cast aside all suspicion, to disabuse their minds of even the slightest misgiving about India's fidelity to the Empire of which she is proud to be an integral part. The British and Indian blood has flowed freely together in its defence on the battlefields of three continents in this devastating war: the union of England and India has thereby been consecrated afresh. The Empire is henceforward our common heritage, and in the increasing strength of India the British race will find the ever-increasing might of the mightiest Empire known to history. Let us then sink our racial prejudices and, inspired with the high pride of a common citizenship, join hands and hearts together in a spirit of genuine co-operation and good will in raising India to her proper place within the Empire.

To my own countrymen I appeal with

equal earnestness to recognize that our British fellow-subjects in India have as permanent an interest in her future well-being as ourselves, and are entitled to play a leading part in her constitutional development. Let us realize that in their co-operation and good-will for India's regeneration lies our sure and certain success along the path of constitutional development. We, too, should cast aside all distrust and imbued with a feeling of mutual confidence, meet the British elements in this country more than half way. In union lies strength and with Indo-British union there is no height to which India may not rise. Let us then sink our differences, unite in welcoming the Chelmsford-Montagu scheme of Reforms and, thereafter, when it is brought into operation, extend our fullest measure of co-operation to its successful working. Thus alone shall we deserve the confidence which the British Paliament is about to place in us: thus alone shall we strengthen our country's scheme to full responsible government.

