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## **MY FIFTH YEAR**

### IN THE

## Imperial Legislative Council

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#### INTRODUCTION

In issuing my annual pamphlet with a brief account of my public work both in and out of the Imperial Legislative Council, I consider it my duty-a duty that a representative owes to his constituency-to acquaint my numerous voters, and through them my community and co-religionists in South India with the nature and extent of the work, however feeble it be, done by their representative on the Council. But for the gigantic war and the extraordinary conditions created by it, far more legislative work would have been done during the last three years. Nevertheless, the year 1917 will ever remain a memorable one in the annals of modern India. H. E. Lord Chelmsford's sympathetic attitude towards the legitimate and reasonable aspirations of educated Indians, and his statesmanly speech to the Imperial Council in September last, indicate a bright future for India. And the visit to India of the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. E. S. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India,-indeed a significant event of the times-marks the beginning of a new chapter in the history of our political progress.

While it is easy to exaggerate differences amongst ourselves, it is really difficult to discern points of unity. This is not a time for any community, particularly the Moslem community long known for its cohesion and solidarity, to create artificial divisions and engender separatist feelings and tendencies within the community. While differences are bound to exist in any community, they need not keep them from realising their common interests. This is pre-eminently a time for united action, for making up differences and presenting a united front. Common concerted action alone between the two great communities, the Hindus and the Moslems, and between the different communities inhabiting this ancient land, will obtain for India an honourable place within the Empire. Owing to ill-health I was obliged to be' absent from the Simla sessions of the Council. Hence there is no record in this pamphlet of my Council work during September last. I hope and trust that this pamphlet will be found useful and enable my voters to take a more intelligent interest in the public life of the country. Questions and resolutions affecting the Moslem community—of an imperial character are invited from them. In fact, all practical suggestions for the uplift of the Moslem community will be thankfully received.

5, MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS, 81st January, 1918.

MIR ASAD ALI

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