

CONGRESS GREEN BOOK:—NO V

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES

DELIVERED IN DECEMBER 1913

AT KARCHI AND AGRA

BY THE

HON. NAWAB SYED MAHOMED.

AND THE

HON. SIR IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA

CONGRESS GREEN BOOK.—No. 1

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PRESIDENTS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

AND THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE.

LONDON :

PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH COMMITTEE
OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,

84 AND 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

February, 1914.

PRICE THREEPENCE.

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NOTE.

IT is at all times desirable that the British public and Parliament should understand the feelings and wishes of the Indian people. But at the present moment a responsible expression of independent Indian opinion (as voiced in the enclosed Addresses) is of special importance, (1) because of the concord now happily established between the Hindu and Moslem communities, and (2) because in this session Lord Crewe will ask Parliament to amend the constitution of his advisory Council at Westminster.

At the close of his visit to India, as a "message of loving farewell," His Majesty King George commended unity and concord among all classes and creeds: also, speaking on behalf of the British people, he has enjoined sympathy as the basis of Indian administration; and has urged a rapid advancement of education, as a panacea for the social and political evils from which India is suffering. These gracious sentiments appeal direct to the hearts of a loyal and law-abiding people, as testified by the spokesmen of a United India; and it is hoped that in its wisdom Parliament will provide that among the statutory advisers of the Secretary of State shall be found a sufficient proportion of Indian representatives duly authorised to make known to him both the grievances and the aspirations of the Indian people.

W. WEDDERBURN,

Chairman.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE

OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,

64 and 65, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

February, 1914.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION, KARACHI, DECEMBER, 1913.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The Hon. NAWAB SYED MAHOMED, President of the Congress, said :—

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—The Congress has from its very inception set before itself the ideal of a united Indian Nationality, and has been consistently advocating the cause of the Indian people as a whole without being influenced by party or sectarian considerations incompatible with that high ideal. The changes that the country has undergone during the last one generation—that is, since this organisation came into existence—are immense, and the Congress, I think, may well take credit for bringing about not a few of them. My predecessors have advocated reforms in the administration of the country for which they considered it was ripe, and it is my good fortune to preside at a time when some of the more important reforms have been carried out and are in working order. The concession made to the Indian public opinion as represented by this assembly are in no small measure due to the sympathetic consideration which it received at the hands of Lords Morley and Minto. The foresight and statesmanlike grasp of the problems affecting our country displayed by them at a critical time saved it from drifting into a situation extremely disastrous and alarming, raised the reputation of British statesmanship higher than ever, and earned for them the abiding gratitude of the people. . . .

THE ROYAL MESSAGE.

Gentlemen, fortunately for us, our interests are placed by Providence under the fostering care of a benevolent Monarch whose first concern is the happiness and well-being of his subjects. In reply to the address presented to his Imperial

Majesty at Bombay on the eve of his departure to England after the historical and ever-memorable Coronation Durbar at Delhi, our beloved Sovereign exhorted us, his subjects, in these words: "We fervently trust that our visit may, by God's grace, conduce to the general good of the people of this great continent. Their interest and well-being will always be as near and as dear to me as those of the millions of my subjects in other quarters of the globe. It is a matter of intense satisfaction to me to realise how all classes and creeds have joined together in the true-hearted welcome which has been so universally accorded to us. Is it not possible that the same unity and concord may for the future govern the daily relations of their private and public life? The attainment of this would indeed be to us a happy outcome of our visit to India. To you, the representatives of Bombay, who have greeted us so warmly on our arrival and departure, I deliver this our message of loving farewell to the Indian Empire." These are noble words, and they have won our admiration and respect for his Majesty, and our hearts are filled with gratitude for such kindly sentiments. It is abundantly clear that his Majesty is fully conscious of the responsibilities of his exalted position, and should therefore be rightly regarded as the "Shadow of God" on earth. When we are the subjects of the same Sovereign, are living in the same country which is our home, are governed by the same laws, are desirous of making progress in all walks of life, and have the same aspirations, then, may I venture to ask what prevents us Mahomedans, Christians, Parsis, and Hindus of all classes from joining hands together for achieving the common object? It is my firm belief that our united and joint action will prove more advantageous and beneficial to ourselves than making an advance by divisions. Whatever progress we have been able to make, and I may say we have made remarkable progress during the last thirty years, is largely due to the progressive tendency of our Government and their sympathy with the wants and aspirations of the people. And we look forward to the liberal instincts of our Government for granting to us, from time to time, concessions which we may claim that we deserve. It is a matter of common knowledge that the British Government are always

desirous of lifting up the people under their charge, and if we show that we deserve success by working on proper lines, "there is no height to which, under the ægis of the British Crown, we may not rise."

A WELCOME RAPPROCHEMENT.

In the eloquent address delivered by the late Mr. Budriddin Tyabjee, as the President of the Third Congress held at Madras in 1887, he said: "It has been urged in derogation of our character as a representative national gathering that one great and important community—the Mussulman community—has kept aloof from the proceedings of the two last Congresses. Now, gentlemen, this is only partially true, and applies to one particular part of India, and is, moreover, due to certain special, local, and temporary causes." These temporary causes alluded to by Mr. Tyabjee are now gradually disappearing with the progress of education, and it is a happy sign of the advancing times that there is an increasing rapprochement between Hindus and Mussulmans—a rapprochement emphasised this year by the fact that the "All-India Moslem League," during its session held in Lucknow, has adopted the following resolution—viz. :—

"That the 'All-India Moslem League' places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend in the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities, and hopes that leaders on both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action in questions of public good."

Another resolution which the League has adopted defines its object as "the attainment, under the ægis of the British Crown, of a system of self-government suitable to India." I cordially welcome the spirit in which these resolutions are conceived, and I rejoice in the changed attitude which the Moslem League has adopted in its political course of action and in the happy and harmonious progress which it foreshadows for the Mahomedan and Hindu communities. . . .

POLICY OF "UNITE AND RULE."

Gentlemen, I do not wish that our efforts should resemble that of a captain who goes with a few followers to explore an unknown part of the globe, or one who climbs upon a certain peak in the solitude of the Himalayan region to discover its relative position with that of other hills. Our common sense teaches us that the entire population of the country, composed of all sections, united and resolute, should raise itself from the depths of disunion and dissension to the elevated plane of constitutional method for the purpose of representing our wants and requirements to the Government. My opinion is therefore emphatic that the existence of such an organisation as this is absolutely necessary in the future, as it has been in the past. In fact, our political propaganda is about to receive that accession of strength which is so very essential to the achievement of the common ideal. . . . Gentlemen, it is sometimes said that the policy of our rulers is one of "divide and rule." But the observations of Mr. Montagu in the course of his Indian Budget speech in the House of Commons in August last clearly show that the present Government, at any rate, are anxious that harmony and co-operation should exist between the various races professing different religions in India, especially Hindus and Mussulmans. Our Under Secretary of State observed: "I said something about the relations between the Mussulman and Hindu some years ago. I think it is possible to say something more to-day, because it is difficult for Indian national ideals to take any intelligible or any satisfactory form so long as the great Mussulman community stands apart from the rest of the Indian population. I am confident of the future. I believe that the Indian peoples of all races know fully well to-day that the desire and the intention of the Government, communicated to all its officers and understood by them, is that there should be complete harmony between all the races there. The maxim, '*divide et impera*'—one of the most dangerous maxims—has no place in our text-book of statesmanship. I can state emphatically that, if the leaders of the Mussulman and Hindu communities

could meet and settle amongst themselves some of the questions which from time to time arise out of, and foster, differences of opinion and tradition, they would find ready co-operation from the Government." Happily for us, the policy of Government at present is one of unite and rule, and it would be a great mistake on our part if we do not take advantage of it and utilise it to our full benefit; for our doing so would not only conduce to the progress of our country, but would be a solid contribution towards the stability of British rule.

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Gentlemen, the foremost question that is just now agitating the public mind in this country is the question of our brethren in South Africa. The tale of woe that has been reaching us from there, since the Boer country became part of the British Empire, is really heart-rending, and that the responsible British statesmen should have been so far unable to do anything by way of attempting a settlement fills us with profound sorrow, almost with despair. We know the hardships to which our fellow-countrymen are subjected, and we cannot pay a fitting tribute in words to the courageous manner in which they are enduring those hardships; for they are confident that British justice and sense of fair play will ultimately prevail. Gentlemen, this unfortunate question has assumed an acute form and reached a stage where we have to pause and ask whether we are not British subjects. The treatment accorded to Indians clearly shows that the Colonists take it for granted that we are not. At any rate, they have so far failed to recognise the claim of the Indians to consideration as British subjects. The war with the Transvaal was undertaken mainly, if not solely, on the ground of ill-treatment accorded to the British Indian subjects, and it is to be greatly deplored that their position should have become much worse after the incorporation of the country into the world-renowned British Empire than it was ever before. May I ask in your name that, when the object with which that costly war was undertaken is not gained, where is the justification for it? I have the authority

on this point of no less a person than the Marquis of Lansdowne, who was Minister for War when the conflict began, and was well qualified to make a pronouncement on the situation by reason of his having been the Viceroy of India previously. Lord Lansdowne, speaking at Sheffield in 1899, said: "A considerable number of the Queen's Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic, I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferer on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India when these poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of three hundred millions, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?" . . .

ROYAL PLEDGES.

The views expressed in 1809 by Lord Selborne, who afterwards became High Commissioner at the Cape, were no less emphatic than those of Lord Lansdowne, and I make no apology for repeating them here. "Was it or was it not," asked Lord Selborne, "our duty to see that our dusky fellow-subjects in the Transvaal, where they had a perfect right to go, should be treated as the Queen, in our name, had promised they should be treated? . . . Was the British Government going to make its name respected and to have the pledges given by it faithfully observed? Was it going to see that the British subject, wherever he went all over the world, whether he were white or black, was to have the rights which his Queen had secured for him?" . . .

H.E. LORD HARDINGE.

Gentlemen, at a time when the Indian sky was overcast with the darkest clouds of anxiety and grief for the sufferings of our countrymen in South Africa, H.E. the Viceroy made a pronouncement in Madras which has given immense satisfaction to the people of this country. In the course of his reply to the addresses of welcome presented by the Mahajana Sabha and the Madras Provincial Congress Committee, his

Excellency observed: "Recently, your compatriots in South Africa have taken matters into their own hands by organising what is called passive resistance to laws which they consider invidious and unjust—an opinion which we who watch their struggles from afar cannot but share. They have violated, as they intended to violate, those laws, with full knowledge of the penalties involved, and ready with all courage and patience to endure those penalties. In all this they have the sympathy of India—deep and burning—and not only of India, but of all those who, like myself, without being Indians themselves, have feelings of sympathy for the people of this country." We are extremely grateful to our popular Viceroy, who has gauged the feeling in the country in the right manner, and has given expression to his own sympathy with the sufferers who are engaged in the present struggle. . . .

Gentlemen, it was only the other day that his Excellency Lord Hardinge, after the unfortunate occurrences at Cawnpore, went to that city like an angel of peace and gave satisfaction and contentment to the inhabitants of Cawnpore. This was a proof of his Excellency's noble-mindedness and in keeping with his reputation as a statesman of the first rank. . . .

THE INDIA COUNCIL.

Gentlemen, notwithstanding the changes introduced in the Government of this country by the Morley-Minto Reform Scheme, the improvements necessary in the existing administrative machinery are many and varied. The most important of these, to which I desire to draw your pointed attention, is that connected with the reconstruction of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, which is at present under the consideration of his Majesty's Government. Having regard to the importance of the subject, I shall, with your permission, deal with it in some detail.

The Act of 1858, by which the Crown assumed the direct government of this country from the Company, provided for the Secretary of State for India a Council to advise and assist him in the administration of a vast dependency, but did not in the least relieve him of the responsibility which

he owed to Parliament for the proper government of this country. The constitution and character of this Council have, with very few modifications, survived to the present day, despite the many attacks which have been made in successive years in and outside this Congress. The question of reforming this body has, after all, come up for consideration, and on July 31 last Lord Crewe made a statement in the House of Lords in which he referred to its elaborate constitution and outlined certain changes which he hoped would improve the efficiency and usefulness of the body. Lord Crewe also stated that changes which he intended to make would require statutory authority, and he added that he would welcome any criticism or any fresh ideas which might be brought forward. The sole idea was, he said, "to improve and as far as possible perfect the machinery by which the daily, sometimes hourly, intercourse between those who represent the Imperial Government and those who control the actual government was carried out."

If the Congress had only to judge of this matter by the past history of that body, it is possible to come only to one conclusion, *i.e.*, that there is no use of attempting to mend the Council, and that it must be ended. Resolutions in this strain have been passed by successive Congresses, and it has been shown by a series of instances how this body consistently and steadily acted in a reactionary manner in respect of all progressive measures, and how it has managed to preserve the privileges and sustained the claims of vested interests. I need not pursue this point any further, because you are familiar with it. After the appointment, however, of two Indian members to the Secretary of State's Council, the changes in the personnel which Lord Morley introduced, and the influence of Lord Morley's own personality at the India Office, went some way to make the agitation for the abolition of the Council less strong than before. The presence of the Indian members on the Council was distinctly recognised to have been of much advantage to Lord Morley himself, as affording him the Indian point of view and giving him what he called "an Indian angle of vision." Lord Crewe has, strange to say, not laid as much stress on this aspect of the matter as one would desire. But the people of

India would attach the greatest importance to it, especially in view of Lord Crewe's statement that the Council is not to be abolished or stripped of its powers.

INDIAN REPRESENTATION.

The necessity for maintaining a body in England to advise and assist the Secretary of State for India was a matter of much discussion in Parliament at the time when the Act of 1858 was passed. Lord Stanley, who was then responsible for the Bill in its final form, explained the object of constituting the India Council to be to afford the Indian Secretary the means of ascertaining the needs and requirements of the territories for whose administration he became responsible to the Parliament. The ingrained idea of the Britisher has always been to ascertain the people's needs and requirements through their representatives, and this idea was frequently in evidence in the course of the debates on all the India Bills of that time. Mr. Disraeli, the Prime Minister, who was responsible for the India Bill No. 2, dwelt upon the desirability of introducing the representative principle in the composition of the India Council in London, but regretted that the then unsettled state of the country did not admit of a representation of the people of India itself. In the resolutions of the House of Commons upon which the last Bill was finally based, this was again referred to, but in the Bill itself the practical effect given to the principle was, curiously enough, limited to the election of a proportion of members of the Council by the Court of Directors and Proprietors of the old Company, leaving the rest to be filled by the Crown. The idea of election, moreover, was sought to be further kept up after the death of the Company by a process of self-election by the body of members originally nominated by the Court of Directors and Proprietors, who, it was assumed, represented Indian interests. In the course of his speech on the Bill, Lord Stanley observed: "If I am told that the proposed self-election is virtually an abandonment of that elective principle which the House has sanctioned, my answer is that we are willing to introduce the elective principle upon a wider scale if it were only possible to find a fitting and satisfactory constituency. I believe that recourse to the

method of election as a way to the appointments to the India Council is the first idea which has entered the mind of every person who has considered the subject. The difficulty which all persons on further consideration have felt is that of constituting a constituency which would answer the purpose." The Earl of Derby, who piloted the Bill in the House of Lords, also used similar language.

OBSTRUCTION.

Such was the state of things when the Council was brought into existence. What happened subsequently is well known. While, on the one hand, the Council entirely deviated in its character and functions from the impress which was originally sought to be given to it, the people and the administration of India have, on the other hand, progressed so far that the necessity of ascertaining their needs and requirements by their own representative institutions has been widely recognised and acted upon. The India Council, with the modifications made in the next few years, became a mere creature of the Secretary of State, to be consulted at will by him or to be overcome by him whenever it set itself in opposition to Imperial interests. On the other hand, so far as the interests of India were concerned, the Council became, by its composition mainly from the ranks of the retired Anglo-Indian officials, a means of steady obstruction at all times to all progressive measures, very often obtaining great control and influence over successive Secretaries of State, whose interest in India, with rare exceptions, has been more or less of a transitory kind and who preferred to leave the routine of administrative duties to the committee of experts which Parliament in its wisdom had provided them with.

ELECTED MEMBERS.

In view of the express declaration of the Secretary of State that he had decided to retain the Council, I do not wish to discuss its abolition; and since suggestions have been invited, I think it is the duty and the privilege of this Congress to give its best consideration to the subject. The difficulty of providing an electorate for the India Council to

represent the wants and wishes of the Indian people themselves has now ceased to exist. With the progress which has been achieved in this country within recent years, and with the large and diverse forms of electorates which have been created all over the country, it is impossible to put forward the excuse of want of a proper electorate at the present day. Non-official members of the Provincial Councils, the bulk of whom are elected and represent the diverse interests of the people, have proved a perfectly satisfactory electorate in each province to return the elected representatives of the people to the Imperial Council, and no reason could be adduced for the Government not availing themselves of these electorates and the elected non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council itself as proper constituencies for returning members to the India Council in England. We must therefore strongly urge on the Secretary of State for India that, in any reform he may contemplate in the constitution of the India Council, a proportion of not less than one-third of the members of that Council should consist of Indians elected by the non-official members of the different Legislative Councils in India.

AN ADVISORY BODY.

The next requirement will be to confine the functions of the Council of India to those of advice, consultation and assistance, and not to extend them to those of administration. It is unlikely that the Council would consist of entirely elected members; but even if it did, it would be an unsound policy to convert the Council into an administrative body. What Lord Crewe contemplates, however, is a proposal "to attach each member of the Council to particular departments of the India Office and initiate a system by which they may co-operate upon a particular work," and by this means he hopes "to initiate far more direct communication between the different official departments of the Government of India itself, without the necessity of passing through the various processes which at present are necessary." He considers, moreover, that from this point of view a Council of eight would be adequate, with a provision for ten, including a financial expert. Now, the effect of this proposed change

must be apparent to all close observers, and that is that it will tend to tighten the control of the India Office over the departments of the Government of India on the one side, and, on the other, it will make the influence and power of each member of the Council of India, in respect of the department to which he is attached, much more effective than it can ever be under the present system of committees. It is obvious that in the future such every-day control and guidance over the Government of India as may be necessary should be provided in India itself through the means of the expanded Legislative Councils, and not by means of a Secretary of State in England placed virtually under the guidance of retired officials. Lord Crewe, no doubt, says that his system would not make them controllers of the particular departments. But the result of the system which he proposes is bound to make them so. I would advocate the continuance of the Council as an advisory body, even if it involves "cumbrous and dilatory procedure," with the introduction of only such changes as would be more in consonance with the original intention of working it up to the constitutional standard, by the admission of a larger number of Indians than at present. With this end in view, I would strongly urge the fixing of a limit much higher than what has now been proposed by the Marquis of Crewe. The proposal of Lord Crewe, moreover, will create a dual control over the departments administered in India and will lead to an increase in correspondence between India and the India Office, involving considerable delay in the settlement of pending questions, not to speak of possible friction. Correspondence with the Secretary of State is a well-known means of discouraging discussion in the Indian Legislative Councils, and the more direct communication which Lord Crewe hopes to introduce is calculated to affect the rights and privileges of the representatives of the people in our Legislative Councils in a serious manner.

REFORMED COUNCILS.

Coming to the questions connected with the Reformed Councils, I need not refer to the regulations in detail which were framed by the Indian Government for carrying out the

Morley-Minto Reform Scheme. The Congress has in successive sessions expressed its regret that the regulations have not been made in the same liberal spirit in which the original reform despatches were conceived. The public in India, at the time when the regulations were issued, being anxious to give a fair start to the scheme, did not express their full sense of dissatisfaction with the proposed regulations, especially as they were reassured in this behalf by the express declarations of Lord Minto's Government at the time, which were as follow:—

"The Governor-General in Council is conscious that many of the details of the scheme which is being introduced may be found on trial to be unsatisfactory or capable of improvement. Experience alone can show how far methods which are new to India give to the different classes and interests a measure of representation proportionate to their importance and influence, and to what extent an untrained electoral machinery is suitable to the varying circumstances of the different provinces and the numerous electorates. Defects will no doubt be discovered when the rules are put into operation, but, if this proves to be the case, the law admits of the regulations being amended without difficulty." . . .

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

When the Government of India in 1908 submitted for approval to the Secretary of State the group of constitutional reforms which resulted in the passing of the Indian Councils Act, the Government of India claimed that their scheme as a whole "will really and effectively associate the people of India in the work, not only of occasional legislation, but of actual every-day administration." The fact that I want to emphasise here is what Lord Morley himself mentioned, that that scheme of reform "is not, and hardly pretends to be, a complete representation of the entire body of changes and improvements in the existing system that are evidently present to the minds of some of those whom your Government has consulted, and that, to the best of my judgment, are now demanded by the situation described in the opening words of the despatch." Lord Morley proceeded to point out that it is "evidently desirable to present our reform of

the Indian constitutional system as a whole, and that from this point of view it seems necessary to attempt without delay an effectual advance in the direction of local self-government."

It is now five years since these words were written, and the Government of India are yet maturing proposals for making an advance in this direction "without delay." The reluctance to revive the old village organisation and to establish village panchayats is particularly pronounced in some provinces, while a degree of tardiness in considering proposals for the expansion of local and municipal administration, coupled with the oft-repeated desire to hedge further advance with over-cautious restrictions, is noticeable among all grades of administrative authorities in India. Lord Morley quoted the memorable words of Lord Ripon that "it is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and started; it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education," and that there is little chance of affording any effective training to the people in the management of local affairs or of the non-official members thereof taking any real interest in local business, unless "they are led to feel that real power is placed in their hands and that they have real responsibilities to discharge." The Royal Commission on Decentralisation, which submitted its report shortly after this, fully endorsed Lord Morley's views and insisted that the village should be made the starting-point of public life in India, that village panchayats should be revived all over the country as the first unit of local government, and that the constitution and functions of other local bodies should be broadened and liberalised in various ways. . . .

PRIMARY AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

The unrest that swept over the country from one end to the other is a thing of the past; at any rate, we are no longer face to face with its turgid waters and dangerous and insidious currents, but only with some of the evils that have lain beneath the surface of the unrest and are now discernible. Now that the storm has happily passed away, let us address ourselves to the task of meeting the underlying

evils in the way they ought to be. There had been a steadily increasing feeling, on the part of the people, of dissatisfaction with their surroundings and a steadily increasing yearning for a better and more bearable existence. Even a casual observer must be struck by the desire manifested on every side for more light in the shape of education, both primary and technical. Primary education, I need not say, is the remedy of remedies that will help the masses at present steeped in ignorance, superstition, and lethargy, to get out of the slough of despond, and will teach them self-help by placing within their reach, through the medium of literature, the benefits that would accrue from adopting modern methods and principles in their hereditary and time-hallowed occupation of agriculture and other small industries; and that will surely mould in them a frame of mind that would co-operate with the Government in any measure that may be taken for public good, by removing the disposition to believe in the ascription of wrong motives and intentions to Government as regards their particular acts and measures. In short, primary education will give more food to the masses, reduce to an appreciable degree the acuteness of the economic problem, remove most of the social evils, and conduce to the stability of the British rule.

PANACEA FOR POLITICAL EVILS.

It is a source of great pleasure and satisfaction to observe that the recent visit of their Imperial Majesties was an important land-mark in the history of our country. Ever since the blessed day of their advent, and ever since his Imperial Majesty emphasised in his speeches the need for a wider element of sympathy in the administration of the country and pressed for a rapid advancement of education as the panacea for all our social and political evils, the essential importance of education as a factor of national prosperity has come to be fully recognised by the Government, and we gratefully acknowledge their earnest efforts to foster and push it forward. But, at the same time, we feel that they do not go far enough. The political fears that the Government entertain as regards the adoption of the principle of compulsion are altogether imaginary; and if the

scheme which has been put forward is carefully considered and followed by Government, the administrative and financial difficulties with which the Government believe they are confronted will soon disappear in practice. So long as the local institutions retain their strong official complexion, people would naturally hesitate to confide in them. But before these institutions are entrusted with the initiation and control of primary education, if they are made more popular and representative, the people would be glad to co-operate with them, and would even be willing to bear the imposition of a special cess which will be ear-marked for the purpose of being devoted to primary education. I may point out that when, in the famous despatch of 1854, Sir Charles Wood laid the foundation of the system of public education, a memorable advance was made. And as the authorities, with genuine statesmanlike foresight, recognised that England's prime function in India was to superintend the tranquil elevation of the moral and intellectual standard of life among the people, I fail to see any plausible reason that could be adduced against making a modest and cautious beginning to introduce compulsory and free primary education in selected areas that may be considered ripe for it.

We in this Congress have noticed with pride and satisfaction the steps that have been taken by the progressive Governments of Baroda and Mysore to push on compulsory primary education in their territories. The latest to fall into line with these States in this regard is Travancore. May we not expect the action which has been taken by the enlightened rulers of these States will be followed by the paramount Power? I think it may not be out of place to mention here that the Acts of the Legislature creating the Universities were passed immediately after the Great Mutiny, and will ever remain a striking monument of the coolness, wisdom, and foresight of the British race.

Before I leave the subject of education I must ask the Government of the country to pay more attention to technical education than they have done hitherto. The problem of the poor and of the submerged is not so acute in India as elsewhere. But with the steady increase in the population that has been going on, with the rise in the price of food-

stuffs, and with an agrarian population which has been taxed to the utmost, it requires no prophet to say that the time will come—perhaps sooner than most people imagine—when the financial resources of the country will have to be strained to the utmost to cope with the situation. It is therefore necessary that a serious attempt should be made to push on industrial and technical education by opening new schools and by subsidising at least some of the industries that deserve it. . . .

THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

The question of the employment of Indians in the higher and more responsible positions in the public service of this country is not a question of merely individual careers, but is one of much higher and wider importance. Not to speak of the material and economic drain that the exclusion of Indians from higher posts in the public service of their own country involves, it is repugnant to the nation's sense of self-respect. With the growth of intelligence and self-consciousness among the people, there is an increasing disposition on their part to compare their own position with that of the other nations of the world, and to regard their present political status as incompatible with the rights of freedom and equality conferred on them by the British constitution and guaranteed to them by British traditions. In the words of Sir Thomas Munro, "the aim of the British administration of India was to be to raise the minds of the natives, to raise their character, and to render them worthy of filling higher situations in the management of the country, so that in fullness of time Indians would be able to frame a regular Government for themselves and to conduct and preserve it." We feel that we are not in this respect treated in accordance with the spirit of the proclamations and promises made by the British Sovereigns, the Parliament, and responsible Ministers. . . .

INDIAN MILITARY COLLEGES.

You may remember, gentlemen, that soon after his arrival Lord Curzon formed a Cadet Corps, consisting of Indian Princes and noblemen, with headquarters at Dehra-Dun. The Congress of 1901 held at Calcutta welcomed it as the first instalment of a policy which will culminate in the

establishment of military colleges, as recommended by his Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, at which natives of India may be educated and trained for employment as officers of the Army. The expectation was not realised, and the Madras Congress in 1908 reiterated its demand, in view specially of the high recognition of the valour and fidelity of Indian troops by his late Imperial Majesty King Edward VII in his message to the Princes and the peoples of India. Lord Minto, true to the spirit of the policy of his Government, pressed on the authorities at Home a scheme framed by his lordship in this matter which had the full support of his Council and of the Commander-in-Chief. . . .

CONCLUSION.

The decade that is closing with the current year is a momentous period in the history of our country—a period of stress and storm such as marks great upheavals in the march of humanity. In fact, the Indian unrest from which, thanks alike to the good sense of the people and to British statesmanship, we have safely emerged, was part of the prodigious wave of awakening and unrest that swept over the whole of Asia during all this period. You are aware, gentlemen, that this period was ushered in, roughly speaking, by the victory of Japan over Russia, and it may be said to have ended with the Balkan War and its disastrous results to Turkey. In India Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty, which at the beginning raised great hopes in the minds of the people, constituted but the lull that usually precedes the storm. Through the exceedingly difficult and anxious years that followed, the ship of Indian administration was steered by the capable hands of two British statesmen who, assisted by the eye of sympathy lent to them by his Imperial Majesty, diagnosed the disease in our administration and applied the remedy. Their names will stand out prominently in the pages of Indian history in relation to this period. A wider field has been opened for the satisfaction of our aspirations by associating the people in the government of the country. The reforms that have been introduced are far-reaching in their character and are necessary steps for giving the people a much larger share in the administration of their country.

Lord Minto, in fact, interpreted the reforms in this way, if I remember right, in a memorable speech he made in London soon after his return from India, and added, in effect, that it would be unwise to withhold, for long, fiscal autonomy from India. These reforms depend for their success on the unity and solidarity of the Indian people among themselves and their hearty co-operation with the rulers. Gentlemen, it was my privilege in 1903, addressing the Congress at Madras, as chairman of the Reception Committee, to point to the harmony that subsisted, so far as that Presidency was concerned, between the Hindu and the Mahomedan communities. Now, as your president, I am exceedingly happy to bear testimony to the important fact of the misunderstanding and distrust that divided the two communities in other parts of the country having become almost a thing of the past, as shown by the trend of responsible public opinion among my co-religionists during the past few months and by their unusually large attendance within this hall. "If you want progress, be at peace with all," was said by one of our wisest men, the celebrated poet and philosopher, Hafiz. Mahomedanism, rightly understood, has no antipathy to any other religion. It is based on the widest conception of liberalism and democracy. A policy of narrow aloofness or intolerant hostility is unknown to my religion. Gentlemen, the times are with us. Let us, Hindus and Mussulmans, Parsis and Christians, all join hands in brotherly co-operation and press forward with confidence and faith in the work that lies before us. I have already dealt with the advance that is being made by my co-religionists towards a rapprochement. May I now earnestly request my Hindu brethren to embrace this opportunity to step forward and to clasp the extended hand in a spirit of earnestness, of goodwill, and of appreciation? I have many friends among you. I know that you have been anxious to join hands with your Mussulman brethren. The time is riper now for a clear understanding than it has been for years past. Concessions there must be, and sacrifices you cannot avoid. When harmony has to be restored and conjoint work has to be done we must ignore trifles which actuate small minds, and concentrate our activities upon the larger work of consolidation.

THE ALL-INDIAN MOSLEM LEAGUE.

SEVENTH SESSION, AGRA, DECEMBER, 1913.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

MOSLEMS' IDEALS AND POLICY.

Sir IBRAHIM RAHIMTULLA, President of the League, said:—

Lord Hardinge has shown what cures sincere and fatherly sympathy, not in mere words, of which we have had plenty in the past, but in actual practice, can easily accomplish. It has always been a marvel to me why the British officials in India do not make a studied attempt, by means of sympathy and consideration in practice, to win over the hearts of the people of this country. May I venture to tell them how ridiculously easy it is to succeed in this direction? One of the prominent characteristics of the Indian people is their highly developed sense of gratitude. In how many places, in times of stress and strain, have not the Indian people come to the rescue of Englishmen in the past, and in how many cases have they not gone to the length of sacrificing their own lives to protect the lives of Englishmen? If an attempt is seriously made by official India, as a religious duty, to try and see Indian problems from the Indian point of view, and if the official always keeps before his mind's eye that he is the servant of the people of India, he will capture the Indian imagination as nothing else will do. We shall not then hear the lamentations which are being constantly dinned into our ears, of the growing difficulties of the governance of this country. It is this policy, which Lord Hardinge has laid before him and which he is trying to carry out in practice, that has so endeared him to the Indian people. Will the lesson be taken to heart by the official world in India? If it is, they will not only smooth their own path, but the path of those amongst the Indian public

men who have been striving in the face of grave obstacles and impediments to make officials realise how potent the effects of sympathy and consideration are.

PLEA OF WEAKNESS.

But there is a class of croakers who have said before, and will say again, that it is all very well to talk about winning the hearts of the people; but what about British prestige? If Government are to surrender to every agitation started against official measures the work of administration will become impossible, and the British people under these circumstances may as well clear out of the country. It is this class of irresponsible people, though they may belong to the British race, which is largely responsible for any existing estrangement. It is people who imagine that the "mailed fist" is the best policy who are really responsible for the increasing difficulties which confront the official world. Let us calmly and judiciously examine what this cry logically means. It can only mean that, once an official has taken a decision, in most cases without consulting the views of responsible people amongst those who may be affected by such decision, and has got it ratified by Government on *ex parte* statements, it shall be irrevocable. If the decision proves distasteful to the people concerned, they have constitutionally two courses open to them: (1) to petition Government, bringing to their notice how hurtful such a decision is, and to request a reconsideration of the question; (2) to continue the agitation by holding meetings, by getting interpellations put in the Legislative Councils, and by agitating in the Press.

If the people affected confine themselves to the first remedy, the decision in most cases is adhered to on the ground that there was no real feeling against it amongst the people concerned.

If the agitation is carried on on the lines indicated in the second alternative, it is contended that the agitation was manufactured by a few discontented men, that they were unnecessarily exciting the people, who are always supposed to be quite content to accept decisions emanating from Government sources. When this plea, however, is found

untenable, and the officials are obliged to recognise that the agitation is well founded and calls for remedial measures, it is even then strongly urged that no change or alteration should be made, in view of the fact that such action would be regarded as weakness and that the prestige of the officials would receive a death-blow. A strong effort is then made to adhere to the decision previously announced, the logical consequence of such a policy being that the decision once taken must be rigidly adhered to. May I enquire under these circumstances how should people act who desire reconsideration and amendment of the orders and decisions announced by the authorities?

FOUNDATION OF BRITISH RULE.

I wonder whether those critics who periodically trot out the bugbear of weakness realise what that means. To my mind it can mean only one thing, namely, that the position of the British Government in India is founded on such flimsy bases that an act of tardy justice done to the people of India by the higher authorities as the result of strenuous representation against an executive order or decision, so seriously shakes the stability of the structure that a few such shocks would make the building totter and fall. Can the truth be further removed from this obvious inference? The foundation of British rule in India is laid on the bedrock of strength and righteousness, on its inherent sense of justice, and on fair play. An act of justice, call it mercy if you like, under given circumstances, far from proving hurtful to the foundations of British rule in India, to my mind has the effect of adding further buttresses to it if that was necessary, and draws from the depths of the people's hearts that feeling of gratitude and loyalty which is an asset of incalculable value to Imperial England. Has not this view been proved beyond the shadow of a doubt? The resolutions passed by Moslem representative bodies and associations all over India on the Viceroy's announcement at Cawnpore have clearly shown how far-reaching in its effects his Excellency's policy has actually proved. No one demands that Government should forthwith yield to every agitation. All that we ask for is that our representations should be examined in a

judicial spirit, and that when there is a good case for the amendment, alteration, or withdrawal of specific orders of the authorities, the necessary action should not be refused out of deference to that bugbear, loss of prestige. Can anyone venture to contend that our demand is in any way unreasonable? . . .

INDIA'S CIVIL SERVANTS.

The administrative standard which Lord Hardinge has held before us in dealing with the Cawnpore question lends point to the innovation which Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, recently introduced. I refer to the idea of inviting all the young men who have chosen an Indian career to meet him at Whitehall and to address them weighty words of counsel and advice. I am inclined to think, however, that he might have well improved the occasion by impressing upon them on the eve of their entering into the Civil Service of India the fundamental truth that they come out to this continent not to *rule* India, but to "*serve*" India. The three letters of the alphabet, I.C.S., which will remain attached to their names during the whole of their lives, and of which every civilian is justly proud, stand for *India's Civil Servants*, and do not represent any form of *rule*. If the members of the Civil Service would but constantly bear in mind the uncontrovertible fact that they are the *Servants of India*, and that they will, during the whole of the remainder of their lives, whether they are in active employ or in retirement, eat the salt of the people of India, and that, as Mr. Montagu recently stated in Parliament, they must work in co-operation with the Indian people for the promotion of the best interests of this country, not merely on the lines which may appear to them best, but on the lines which may be regarded as best, jointly by both, the work of administering the country will be greatly simplified, the progress in India will be both rapid and smooth, and the causes of estrangement and dissatisfaction will be uprooted. . . .

FOREIGN POLICY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

During the time of stress and strain charges were made against the Mussulmans of India that they wanted to dictate

the foreign policy of Great Britain, that they desired that England should go to war to protect the Moslem States in Europe and Asia. Can anything be further removed from the truth? The Indian Mussulmans fully recognise the danger to England, with all its interests spread over the face of the whole world, to hint that she should thoughtlessly involve herself in a bloody war. It is doing the Moslems of India a grave injustice to suggest that they had the remotest notion of dictating what foreign policy England should pursue. And, as a matter of fact, they have never dreamt of doing so. All that they have urged—and I think they had ample justification in doing so—was that England, as the sovereign Power of millions of Mussulman subjects, should, out of regard for their sentiments, endeavour to see that Turkey obtained in the Councils of Europe fair and just treatment. I do not think anyone could venture to assert that the request—nay, even the demand—that England should do its best in the Councils of Europe to ensure fair, just, and equitable treatment to Turkey can possibly be regarded as being in any way unreasonable. It is because the utterances of responsible British Ministers appeared to them to indicate that England's sympathies were against the Turks that Indian Moslem feelings were naturally hurt and that they felt aggrieved. Can any fault be found with them under the circumstances?

SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION.

I am appealing to you to exercise patience and restraint in criticism. In doing so, I have not failed to realise how extremely difficult it is at times to exercise these virtues. The feeling of indignation and horror which has spread throughout this country in regard to the treatment meted out to our fellow-countrymen and women in South Africa has led to the use of language which under the circumstances could hardly be controlled. But in the face of the grave provocation to Indian feelings and Indian sentiments I cannot help expressing my sense of deep gratification at the masterly pronouncement which H.E. the Viceroy made in Madras. . . . But the question that is facing us to-day is not merely the treatment that our fellow-countrymen are

receiving at the hands of the South African Government. It cannot be narrowed down to the present residents in the South African Union. That question is undoubtedly emergent and requires to be dealt with forthwith, but the wider question can no longer be postponed, but must now be faced, and that question is: "What is the position of the people of India in the British Empire?" Australia is practically barred against us. Canada is contemplating legislation to prohibit Asiatic immigration. The attitude of South Africa is patent to you. The time is therefore ripe to ask whether we are common subjects of his Imperial Majesty the King, occupying identically the same position as the other subjects of his Majesty, or are we so in theory only? . . .

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE.

The question of the separation of the judicial and executive functions has been so well threshed out throughout the country that I would not have referred to it here but for the fact of the recent discussion in the Imperial Legislative Council on the subject. I do not wish to enter into the history of the question, as it is well known to you. There is, however, one aspect of the discussion in the Imperial Council which requires to be brought out prominently. When the resolution on the subject was put to the vote, it was found that every Indian member, whether elected or nominated, voted in favour of it. It is a memorable incident in the political progress of India that all the different elements constituting Indian representation unanimously demanded that a beginning should forthwith be made in the direction of separating the judicial and executive functions. The resolution was, of course, negatived by the official majority. Whatever the technical fate of this resolution, it raises constitutional questions of far-reaching importance. If the united voice of India expressed through their chosen representatives is powerless to secure a reform which has, in this instance, received the support of many high officials, the recent Council reforms can hardly be regarded as an appreciable advance on previous conditions. It is right that the power of the majority should remain in the hands of Government, but absolutely neces-

sary that adequate safeguards should be provided against the arbitrary exercise of such power. . . .

THE PRESS ACT.

The remarks I have made on the question of the general position of the non-official members apply equally well to the liberty of the Press. It is through non-official members of the Legislative Councils and through the responsible Indian Press that Government stand to obtain direct information as regards the feelings and sentiments of the people. Just as full encouragement is needed to secure the best men to serve on the Legislative Councils, adequate liberty of expression is necessary for the Indian Press. I have no sympathy with those newspapers which regard licence as liberty and are habitually transgressing the bounds of liberal journalism. At the same time it is necessary that no undue restrictions should either be imposed, or, by any action of Government officials, should be felt to stand in the way of a full and free discussion of public matters. The only independent source from which Government can keep itself in daily touch with the feelings and sentiments prevailing in the different parts of India is through the Indian Press. If the actual effect of any measure of Government leads to a condition under which the Government are themselves deprived of this direct knowledge, it is harmful and mischievous in its results. I have been constrained to make these remarks because I am personally aware of the fact that the Press Act, with the wide powers it confers, is operating in directly discouraging even well-established and long-standing Indian newspapers from freely expressing their views. I think that time has come when the question regarding the operation of the Press Act should be carefully and judicially examined and the necessary measures applied in order to remove the disabilities now existing. . . .

UNITED INDIA.

Looking to the growth of political life in India during so short a period in the life of a nation as the last fifty years, it must strike even a casual observer that the progress made by the country is phenomenal. With the liberal edu-

catational policy adopted by the British Government we have been enabled to come in close contact with Western thought and culture and with the history of the rise and progress of democratic institutions in the West and their present ascendancy; and it is but natural that our horizon should be widened and that we should become keenly anxious to move steadily forward on similar lines. I think we should not be true to our Motherland if we did not strive to attain a high standard of progress on democratic lines. I am one of those dreamers who firmly believe that, given a sufficiently long spell of British rule in India, we are bound to become united as a nation in the real sense of the term. When that time arrives (as it is sure to do), we shall have qualified to rule the country ourselves, and self-government will be absolutely assured to us. It will be the proudest day in the history of England when, having accepted the guardianship of a people over 300 millions in number, belonging to an alien race, divided into innumerable sects and creeds, it has guided their evolution and has successfully carried out a far-sighted policy enabling them to reach a pitch of consolidation and solidarity, making them perfectly qualified to govern themselves. The debt of gratitude India owes to the Crown of England for the peace and order prevailing throughout the length and breadth of this vast Continent, the safety of life and property, the earnest and humanitarian policy for our welfare and advancement, the studious efforts to train and educate us to the highest standard possible, is nothing to what India will owe when the work for this country is completed and the heritage is handed over to the children of the soil. I have called myself a dreamer, and you are welcome to regard me as such if you like, but this I will tell you, that I have profound faith in the realisation of my dream, and it depends upon you to exert yourselves to fulfil the destiny which is inevitably yours. No country, such as India is, can remain for ever under foreign rule, however beneficent that rule may be, and, though British rule is undoubtedly based on beneficence and righteousness, it cannot last for ever. India is our Motherland, our proud heritage, and must in the end be handed over to us by our guardians. I regard the con-

nection of England with India in the nature of guardianship over minor children. If I may apply the analogy, I would say that the Hindu and the Moslem are two brothers, sons of Mother Hind and in a state of minority, and that Providence has chosen the British to be the guardians of the minors.

GRACIOUS MESSAGE OF THE KING.

The noble message which His Imperial Majesty delivered to you during his recent visit to India consists of three words — "*Educate, Unite, Hope.*" Can any message be more pregnant with far-reaching significance? Can better words be found in the English language to indicate to you in what direction your future lies? . . .

Everyone must recognise that no form of self-government is possible in India unless the two principal communities, the Hindu and the Moslem, are closely and conscientiously united. What can be a nobler aim, a loftier goal than to endeavour to secure India united? Once we become sincerely and genuinely united, there is no force in the world which can keep us from our heritage; without such union the Indians will have to wait indefinitely for the realisation of their fondest hopes. Instead of having differences and dissensions amongst ourselves at the present time on matters of remote realisation, I would earnestly appeal to all true sons of India to concentrate all their energies, all their talents on the consummation of ensuring a united India. Then we might well leave the future to take care of itself, full of hope, and full of confidence. If the two sister-communities devote their energies and concentrate their efforts on the realisation of such an ideal, in a spirit of reasoned compromise, all our difficulties will crumble away and India will rise phoenix-like from the ashes of discord and struggle to a fresh and robust life full of promise and full of hope. . . . Our policy towards the British Government should be one of unswerving loyalty, and towards the Hindus one of brotherly love and regard.