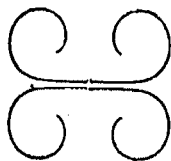


REPORT
OF
THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE 38786
ELEVENTH SESSION
OF THE
National Liberal Federation of India
HELD AT ALLAHABAD
On December 30 and 31, 1928.



ALLAHABAD :

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THE ELEVENTH SESSION
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National Liberal Federation of India
HELD AT ALLAHABAD,
On the 30th and 31st of December, 1928.

THE FIRST DAY

The Eleventh Annual Session of the National Liberal Federation of India opened in Mayo Hall at about 2-30 p. m., on December 30, 1918. The hall was very artistically and profusely decorated with numerous flags, festoons and bunting as well as inspiring mottoes and portraits of such honoured national leaders as Mr. Dadabhai Nawroji, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Sir Surendranath Banerjea, Pandit Ajodhya Nath, Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mahatma Gandhi, Lala Lajpat Rai, Mr. C. R. Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Sir Rashbehari Ghosh, Sir Dinsha Wacha, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, and a few others. Some of the mottoes which were hung on the walls were—'Home Rule is my birthright and I am determined to have it' (B. G. Tilak); 'I recognise no limits to my aspirations for our Motherland' (G. K. Gokhale); 'There is but one panacea for Indian ills—Home Rule or Self-Government' (Lala Lajpat Rai); 'There is no room in the India of today or tomorrow for a governing class' (M. K. Gandhi); 'Liberty is not a means to a higher end, it is in itself the highest political end', and 'Liberty is the best antidote for discontent and disloyalty' (Asquith).

Long before the session commenced streams of delegates and visitors including many ladies, poured in and the hall as well as the galleries above were filled to their utmost capacity. Some of those who arrived late had to keep standing for want of accommodation.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, the President-elect, arrived in a tastefully decorated motor-car. He was escorted in procession to the *dais*, preceded by the volunteers and Mr. Chintamani, chairman of the Reception Committee, and accompanied by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir Shankar Rao Chitnavis, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu and several others. Among those seated on the *dais* were Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, the hon. Munshi Narayan Prasad Asthana, the hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, Rao Bahadur K. G. Damle, c. i. e., Kumar Rajendra Singh and others who had accompanied the President's procession. A few ladies including Mrs. Chintamani and Mrs. Shamlal Nehru were also seated on the platform. The whole gathering in the hall rose and kept standing until the President-elect was seated. Among the prominent Liberals who attended the session from the various provinces may be mentioned :

Madras : Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, Mr. G. A. Natesan, Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri and Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar.

Bombay : Mr. D. G. Dalvi, Mr. M. D. Altekar, Mr. N. K. Pranipye, Mr. V. R. Bhende, Mr. R. H. Kelkar, Mr. D. V. Ambekar, and Mr. K. G. Limaye.

Central Provinces & Berar : Sir S. M. Chitnavis, Mr. V. T. Deshmukh, Rao Bahadur R. V. Mahajani, Rao Bahadur R. G. Mundle and Rao Bahadur K. G. Damle.

Bengal : Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, Mr. Jitendra Nath Basu, Mr. Nibaran Chandra Ray, Babu Basant Kumar Chowdhry and Rai Bahadur Fanendra Lal De.

Punjab : Pandit Hardatta Sharma.

The United Provinces of Agru and Oudh : Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the hon. Munshi Narayan Prasad Asthana, Babu Bisheswar Nath Srivastava, Pandit Hirdayanath Kunzru, Rai Bahadur Lala Behari Lal, Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, Pt. Brij Narain Gurtu, Kunwar Rajendra Singh, Rai Bahadur Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra, Mehta Jagannth Prasad, Babu Gauri Shankar Prasad, Munshi Harmandan Prasad, Babu Ajodhya Das, Pandit Manohar Nath Sapru, Pandit Nand Kishor Joshi, Mr. Kishori Prasad, Babu Radhamohan, Mr. Jagat Narain Tandon, Babu Bindeshwari Saran Singh, Pandit Shri Ram Bajpai, Babu Surendranath Verma, Babu Hirdaya Ram, Mr. S. P. Andrews Dube, Pandit Parmeshwar Nath Sapru, Raja Avadesh Singh of Kala Kankar, Pandit Nanak Chand, Rai Sahib Pandit Chandrika Prasad of Ajmer, Pandit Raj Nath Kunzru of Agra, Rao Baijnath Das of Benares, Pandit Vishwanath Tholal of Cawnpore, Lala Girdhari Lal Agarwala, Munshi Newal Kishore, Mr. P. N. Sapru, Dr. Jairaj Behari, Mr. Nehal Chand, Mr. Jawahir Nath Sapru, Pandit Manohar Nath Sapru Pandit Kishan Prasad Kaul, Pandit V. N. Tivary and several others.

The proceedings commenced at 2-30 p. m. with the singing of the *Bande Matram* in melodious tunes by a batch of young girls belonging to the Arya Kanya Pathshala, Allahabad.

MR. CHINTAMANI'S SPEECH.

Essentials of the Constitution.

MR. CHINTAMANI, chairman of the reception committee, in welcoming the delegates, said :—

Speaking at the seventh session of the Indian National Congress held at Nagpur in 1891 under the presidency of the late Mr. Ananda Charlu of Madras, Mr. A. O. Hume, the father of the Congress, congratulated the assembled delegates on the Congress having reached its seventh annual session. We here have now met in the eleventh annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India, and it appears to me, fellow-Liberals, that we have still greater reason to congratulate ourselves upon the event. It was with regret and reluctance that we took the decision, in the middle of the year 1918, to organize ourselves separately from the Indian National Congress, to which we belonged and in which our public spirit was nurtured. The course of Congress politics since then has, to my mind, completely vindicated the step we then took. But our Party has throughout had to contend against many and serious difficulties, due both to the propaganda of our compatriots who did not agree with us and to the policy of the British Government, which during the last six years and a half has steadily grown from bad to worse. Staunch in our loyalty to our ideal of dominion self-government and firm in our conviction that constitutional agitation is the right political method in the circumstances of our country, we have refused to deviate from our chosen path and are determined as ever to serve the Motherland in our own humble way, equally indifferent to the frowns of authority and the displeasure of a section of our own countrymen. If we are not larger in numbers the reason is to be found in the policy of the Government which puts a premium upon extremism, having deprived Indians of the faith they once had in British statesmanship, but also in the insufficient activity of the members of our Party as a whole, who, possibly, could have made a more fruitful contribution to the building-up of this organization. Let this be as it may, we are naturally gratified that the periodical predictions of our approaching demise have been falsified by our obstinate refusal to die and that proofs have not been wanting that other parties do attach some little value to our counsel and cooperation.

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Fellow-Liberals, it is my most pleasant duty to accord to our distinguished President-elect and you all a most cordial and respectful welcome to this city. Allahabad has never been rich in material resources, and our arrangements for your comfort are, I fear, even more inadequate than they might have been because of the uncertainty of the dates of this session. Owing to the All Parties' National Convention at Calcutta, of which our organization was a constituent body, we were in doubt when it might be possible to hold this session and in fact, it was not until twenty days ago that the dates could be fixed definitely. Since then several of us have had to be away at Calcutta, so much so that our President-elect himself arrived before any of us could return. On behalf of the Reception Committee I apologise to you, brother delegates, for our defective arrangements and beg you to judge us by our effort and not by our achievement. We honour you as public-spirited workers in the national cause, and I pray that complete success may crown your deliberations in the public service.

Lord Sinha and Lala Lajpat Rai.

Fellow-Liberals, we have passed through a year of heavy losses. Early in the year was lost to the country one of the most illustrious Indians who rose to fame by dint of his uncommon qualities of intellect and character and who will be long remembered as a man who demonstrated, in every office he filled, the capacity of Indians to do full justice to duties the most arduous. Mr. Gokhale said of Sir Bhashyam Iyengar, India's greatest lawyer, that the very existence of such men was a service to the country. This was true of Lord Sinha, as it was of Mr. Gokhale himself and as it is of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore and Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose among others happily still with us. Never technically of our party, Lord Sinha was with us on most questions and India is the poorer for his demise. Moderate to a fault as he was, his countrymen recollect with satisfaction his declaration as President of the Congress that 'the only satisfactory form of the self-government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of what President Lincoln so pithily described as "Government of the people, for the people, and *by the people*". It was his suggestion that bore fruit in the historic Declaration of August, 20, 1917, that Responsible Government was the goal of British policy in India, made in Parliament most appropriately by India's great friend and benefactor and best Secretary of State, Mr. Montagu of honoured memory. As a member of the Indian Liberal Delegation to England of 1919, I recall with gratitude the invaluable service Lord Sinha rendered in liberalizing the Government of India Bill then before Parliament. His qualities of sincerity, rectitude, judicial calm and impartiality are worthy of emulation by all public men, whatever opinions they may hold on public questions.

In the closing weeks of the year has passed away a different type of Indian whose name was a household word throughout the country. India produced greater statesmen than Lala Lajpat Rai but there were few to equal and almost none to surpass him in the qualities of courage and determination, patriotism and sacrifice. His passion for India's freedom was only equalled by his unceasing service of the Motherland in nearly every sphere of national life, and the name of Lajpat Rai will be inscribed in letters of gold among the fathers of self-governing India. The circumstances of his death have invested it with a peculiar pathos, and the failure of the Government to set up an independent expert inquiry to ascertain what connection there was between the conduct of their matchless police and his death soon after, is but one illustration of their unresponsiveness and irresponsibility, which must be ended by India's united effort.

During the year the Liberal Party in particular has sustained serious losses in the death of Sir Homusji Wadya of Poona, of Sir Ramanbhai Mahipatram of Ahmedabad and, but three days ago, of Babu Durga Charan Banerji of this city. A disciple of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and a colleague of Sir Pherozeshan Mehta and Mr. Gokhale, Sir Homusji Wadya represented the fast declining numbers of the older generation of public

workers and was at once a wise man, an ardent patriot and a generous philanthropist. His valuable help to the Deccan Sabha, a Liberal institution sacred to the memory of Messrs. Ranade and Gokhale, will not be forgotten for long. Sir Ramanbhai Mahipatram belonged to a family of social reformers, and was himself a keen reformer. He was a Liberal to his finger-tips and was deservedly respected as a good man and true. Allahabad has lost in Babu Durga Charan Banerji, of whose death I only heard on return from Calcutta yesterday morning, a veteran citizen who was one of the staunchest adherents of the Liberal creed and whose services in the cause of education were meritorious.

We mourn the death of these patriots and we offer to their families our sympathy and condolence in their bereavement.

The King-Emperor.

The whole Empire has for the last five weeks been watching with alternating hope and fear the course of the grave illness of his Majesty the King-Emperor. More than once has the Empire had to prepare itself for the worst, but improvement fortunately set in and until yesterday morning it could be felt that the crisis was over. There is, however, cause for anxiety again. The issue is not in man's hands, and all his loyal subjects, united in devotion to his Throne and person, can but pray for his Majesty's restoration to health to serve the Empire as he has done for over 18 years in one of the greatest but also one of the most difficult positions given to man to fill.

The Statutory Commission.

The political situation of the year is a subject for review by our President and it will not perhaps be appropriate for the chairman of the Reception Committee to stand between you and him with a lengthy recital of events nor an elaborate appreciation of their meaning and potentialities. Neither could I attempt it in view of the All Parties' National Convention, which perhaps has not yet concluded its momentous session. At the same time it will not be in accordance with precedent if I omit all reference to the situation. I will, therefore, say a few words with your leave.

Fellow-Liberals, the year opened with the Statutory Commission, which is an epitome of some of the worst evils of the present system of government. The Commission was not wanted at this juncture; therefore, it was sent out. When it had been asked for, the authorities, in the abundance of their sympathy and wisdom, declined to accede to our request. A Commission that included in its personnel an adequate element of competent and representative Indians on a footing of absolute equality with the British members thereof, would alone have answered India's requirements. But here is a body charged with the greatest responsibilities, from which Indians have been excluded because they are Indians and most concerned with the future of the country. The voice of protest has remained unheeded, and the Commission has been going about its business in a truly farcical manner, shunned by all that is self-respecting in public life, protected in its movements by the police, signaling its visitation to a place by the breaking of the heads of innocent and honourable men by the police acting under the orders of the executive, recording evidence in public where the evidence is worthless and behind the *pardah* where our provincial Governments unburden themselves of their anti-Indian schemes. Thanks to the enterprise of a news agency, we could get a glimpse into the political mind of one Governor in Council, and that agency was promptly penalized for its violation of the *zenana* in which Sir Malcolm Hailey and Sir Geoffrey de Montmorency preferred to seclude themselves. We have since seen the contents of the memorandum laid before the Commission on behalf of the Government of the United Provinces, and what shall I say of it, the more distressing because of the association of one of our own countrymen with it. While Indian nationalists are divided in their allegiance between dominion status and independence outside the British Empire, we of the Liberal Party definitely standing for dominion status without equivocation

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or mental reservation, here are Governments wavering between the *status quo* and actual retrogression. And this, in the face of the plighted word of the Sovereign and the Parliament of Britain that India shall advance to the status of a self-governing dominion and be an equal member of the Commonwealth. No wonder that neither the authors of these amazing proposals nor the Commission want the public to know anything about them. This Commission is a calculated and an inexcusable affront to the national honour and the national interests of India, and we would have been unworthy of our position as Liberals and Nationalists if we had not adopted the policy of absolute boycott of the unwanted, unwelcome and police-protected Simon Seven. We had no doubt when we declared the boycott, we have none now.

Police Assaults.

And let all whom it may concern realize, if they can and will, that far from the opposition weakening, the wanton misbehaviour of the police which is a notice to the people that the Commission has descended upon their locality, has aggravated the public feeling so much that, outside the ranks of professional loyalists, there is almost none so poor as to do it reverence. The outrageous police assaults upon unoffending public men at Lahore and Lucknow have shocked the country, while the failure of the Government to protect the innocent and punish the guilty is a warning to the people that they can feel no sense of security under the rule of the bureaucracy and that in Swaraj lies alike their safety and their honour. The Legislative Council of these provinces censured the Governor in Council for his attitude, the Government not daring even to ask for a division, but to this moment there is no sign of any action taken or contemplated by them in pursuance of that motion. Not even such a man as the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, who was Home Member himself and in charge of law and order until less than three years ago, was immune from insult and annoyance because he supports the boycott. The position is as nearly intolerable as it could well be, and it is a clarion-call to the people to work for Swaraj without giving themselves rest or the Government peace until victory crowns their righteous Will to Freedom.

Constructive Effort.

The hope-inspiring feature of the year about to close is the great constructive effort that has been made to bring together members of different organizations, political and communal, to draw up a scheme of constitution on the basis of dominion status. Both the Congress and the Liberal Federation passed resolutions in this behalf at their annual sessions of last year, and what is known to fame as the Nehru Committee's Report was the result of the arduous labours of wise and patriotic men in the first half of the year. To us Liberals it is a source of genuine pride that our President of this year, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, took so conspicuous a part, along with the chairman of the Committee, Pandit Motilal Nehru, in the production of a political paper of capital importance. The report was welcomed by the country as the embodiment of statesmanship, and this estimate of its value was confirmed by the All Parties' Conference at Lucknow in August last. Since then the All Parties' National Convention has been held at Calcutta and by its first resolution, it ratified the basic principle of the Report, the foundation of its whole scheme, *viz.*, that India shall be a self-governing dominion in the Commonwealth on the same footing as Canada, South Africa, Australia, the Irish Free State and New Zealand. There has been a certain amount of disagreement on some of the clauses of the Constitution relating to matters communal; but I do not despair of an amicable solution as a result of further deliberation. The subject of these differences is of a difficult and delicate nature. It was brought into being by the policy deliberately adopted by the Government itself twenty years ago in the face of Indian nationalist opposition. The Government sowed the wind, we are obliged to reap the whirlwind. In no country in the world have such disagreements been composed without prolonged negotiation. Here we get no help from the Government—to say nothing worse—and.

the wise and patriotic men of all the communities have to labour patiently and with single-minded devotion to bring about a settlement. It is fortunate that there are such men, among whom I should like to make honourable mention of the Maharaja of Mahmudabad and Sir Syed Ali Imam. I myself think that the conclusions reached by the Nehru Committee and the resolutions passed by the All Parties' Conference were eminently fair to all interests. But if the *ipissima verba* of the Report be not found acceptable to any party there is no reason why alternative proposals should not be examined, in the spirit of reason by minority and of generosity by majority communities. The members of the Nehru Committee were alive to this possibility and they said with great sagacity in their Report: 'We would earnestly recommend to the Conference that if, in addition to, or in substitution of our recommendation, the settlement of the problem of minorities is possible by agreement on any other basis, such basis should be accepted in the larger and more abiding interests of the country.' Fellow-Liberals, you will be glad to know that this was precisely the line which your Council took at Calcutta. Self-government being the supreme need of India, it is the paramount duty of Indian patriots of all communities and all parties to adjust their differences on comparatively minor matters on whatever basis agreement may be possible without any party feeling a sense of defeat. And speaking from this non-communal platform I venture to address a respectful appeal to Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Indian Christians alike, not to be too meticulous but to remember the over-riding necessity of achieving self-government in the interests of all and every of them and not to hesitate to take a broad national view of the whole problem.

The Essentials of the Constitution.

Fellow-Liberals, we exist as a party on the basis of the attainment of Dominion Status by India at the earliest possible date. Deny this, and there is no justification for our party. For those Indians who think that political salvation lies in the severance of the British connection—they are the children of unsympathetic, irresponsible and arrogant alien rule, as Bolshevik Russia is the child of Czarist Russia—the National Liberal Federation is not the place. We mean by Dominion Status neither more nor less than, and nothing else but Dominion Status. To us it is not a first step but the one and only step. On the other hand the sophistry of bureaucrats who seek to make a distinction between responsible government and dominion status and allege that the latter has not been promised, is meaningless to us and we have no use for it. We must have a constitution founded upon Dominion Status. It should be a rigid constitution, and among its leading features should be (1) the vesting of residuary powers in the central government; (2) a bicameral central legislature, representation in the lower house being on the basis of population and in the second chamber of provinces; (3) provincial autonomy, and (4) the abolition of separate electorates.

Our Duty.

Brother-delegates, here I conclude my observations. I again accord to you a cordial welcome to our city, where you are assembling for the second time, and again I beg you to be indulgent in judging the reception committee. If I may say one more word, it is to beg you all to do active service to the Liberal party in the coming year and to justify its existence still more. There is room for it, there is need for it. The far-sighted patriots who laid the foundation of the Indian national movement for Swaraj thought not only for their time but for ours when they gave us the ideal of dominion self-government to strive for. It is equal to independence and is more beneficial than isolated independence. Mr. Gokhale held up this ideal in his memorable address to the Benares Congress; this was what Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji defined as Swaraj in the following year at Calcutta in an address that was described by Sir Surendranath Banerjea as India's Political Scripture. This Swaraj is what India must achieve, and it is for us to prove that the members of the Indian Liberal Party will do

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their duty faithfully and assiduously in the national effort to win it. Freedom is the natural law, subjection is evil. It is our Dharma to get out of a state of dependence. This is the teaching by which we are bound, and I pray that we may not be found backward in rendering the national service which is our greatest duty.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

Mr. Chintamani next called upon Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to move the election of the president.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who received an ovation as he rose to speak, said:—Mr. Chairman of the Reception Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen, —I rise to put before you the motion that Sir Chimanlal Setalvad be invited to take the chair to guide our deliberations at this session of the Liberal Federation. His long and varied experience both in the judicial line and the executive administration and his eminent services to the country in various spheres eminently qualify him to occupy the chair which we have asked him to occupy. There never was, according to my humble judgment, an occasion when it was more necessary for all of us for each party, howsoever big or howsoever small it might be, to consider and deliberate upon the important—and, indeed, I might say, the momentous—issues which are now facing the country and I think it is not only the right but the duty of every party to make its contribution to the solution of those difficulties.

Mr. Chintamani has referred to the association of some of the Liberals with the Nehru Committee in the evolution of a constitution which, I am glad to say, is now an accepted fact practically among all parties. What pleased me, however, much more than anything else during my recent visit to Calcutta was the firm, unmistakable and unambiguous action of the Liberals assembled there. It was a pleasure to me to know that not only those who were intimately associated with Pandit Motilal Nehru in the evolution of that constitution but also all other Liberals stood shoulder to shoulder with Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders in supporting the constitution which was embodied in the Nehru Committee Report. Whatever differences may divide one section of Indian politicians and another section of Indian politicians, one thing emerges clearly from the discussions that have been going on at Calcutta and elsewhere and it is this,—that at the least Dominion Status is one which has brought forth the maximum amount of agreement among all parties and I think it is up to us on this occasion in our meeting to make our contribution to the solution of those difficulties by formally considering and as far as possible agreeing to and ratifying the constitution which has been considered and which is being considered at Calcutta today. (Hear, hear.) I shall not ask you to despair, for there are differences between one party and another party on some minor points or even on some vital issues. Remember the history of agitation in various other countries, remember how many Conventions Australia had to get through before she could finally decide the constitution. It may be, as some of our critics might say, that there has not been complete unanimity on every single matter in the Convention, but I venture to think that it is the beginning of a series of agreements which are bound to follow, provided there is the desire on all sides to cooperate with each other and provided also there is the desire to make a common contribution to the solution of this problem. It is in that spirit that I shall invite you, fellow Liberals, to approach your task. Do not fight shy of the conclusions which you have arrived at and I certainly think it would be a fatal mistake on your part to bring your flag lower than Dominion Status. (Hear, hear.) I do strongly hold that the time has come when we should press, and press vigorously and zealously, our claim to the establishment of Dominion Status and I have no doubt that our success will be achieved, the sanction being the united will of the country. (Hear, hear.) It is in that spirit that I hope we shall go through our task.

I need not say more in introducing Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. I am sure you will give him the patient, courteous and respectful hearing to which he is entitled by virtue of his services to the country and by virtue of the position to which he is being called today. (Applause.)

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer.

In seconding the election of the President, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer. (Madras), said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—In associating myself with the remarks let fall by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, let me on your behalf and on my behalf congratulate ourselves that we have secured the services on this momentous and important occasion of one who by wide experience of affairs and intimate knowledge of mankind is very well fitted to guide our deliberations. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Chintamani have in their characteristically felicitous manner expressed to us a gist of affairs as they are at present and, with your leave, I may emphasise and re-emphasise one aspect of recent Indian activities and that is this: whereas until recently party and party, organisation and organisation, and community and community were anxious and solicitous to accentuate their differences and to proclaim them so vitally, it has been a happy and lucky feature of recent Indian political activity that there is a conscious and strenuous endeavour to minimise differences and to accentuate unity. It is in that spirit, it is in the spirit of endeavouring by cooperation and trying to get harmony of feeling and of action, that I trust that the work of this Federation will be conducted. (Hear, hear.) The Liberal Federation from the beginning, through good weather and through bad, has stood for one or two fundamental principles—firstly, for constitutional work and constitutional action as differentiated from direct action; and secondly, for the attainment of Dominion Status. Some of us who have had experience of other ideals than Dominion Status from inside and some of us who have observed its working from outside, are all agreed that there is no point in making further experiments and that no half-measures will satisfy the country. (Hear, hear.) No half-measures will do now and we feel that on these matters there is not really very much difference between party and party. When we accentuate and emphasize that position, let us remember that the All Parties' Convention convened under the auspices of the Indian National Congress and sponsored by it has, notwithstanding certain divergences of opinion that manifested themselves, unequivocally accepted Dominion Status and all parties are bound to work for it. Some of us may have our own opinions upon the work of the Congress and upon particular resolutions passed by the Congress.

But speaking as members of the National Liberal Federation surely we are not claiming too much when we say this, that just as the opinions, the objects and the objectives of the more impatient parties have affected the other parties so likewise the participation of men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and others in this Nehru Committee and the participation of Liberals in the recent agitation has also affected the other parties. (Hear, hear.) Those of us who have had the pleasure to hear and those who will read Pandit Motilal Nehru's speech, find in it, I submit, a vindication of the Liberal policy because notwithstanding the enunciation of certain specific proposals I still hold that Pandit Motilal Nehru's speech as president of the Congress is in effect and in essence, despite certain embroideries and fringes, a reaffirmation of that for which the Liberal Federation stands. (Hear, hear.) That is a success for the Liberal Federation.

Last year we witnessed one spectacle which is of great moment. That was a reproach levelled against the Liberal Party. The Liberals were supposed to be dialectical arm chair politicians living in centuries past with no eye to popular feelings. We have now shown that we believe in something strong and that if we believe in anything strong, we are willing to take strong action to implement that belief. It is that which has brought us nearer to other parties and which also brought other parties nearer to us. But as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has said, let us not change our ideals. By

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all means, let us cooperate and work with others in conformity with our faith for a united and common formula. I do not despair of a common formula and I am sure the President will give us a wise and firm lead in that matter. (Applause.)

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari.

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari (Calcutta), in supporting the election of the President, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—Time was when as a Bengali I should have been proud of the sage, the seer and the poet of the *Bande Mataram* song with the lofty strains of which this Federation opened its session, but it would be an impertinence now on my part to claim a monopoly like that. (Laughter.) That great hymn, that great *mantram* that has brought all parties and all provinces of India together leaves now no room for any such parochial congratulation and not one of those who have adopted that *mantram*—as Liberals, Moderates and Extremists—dare go away from that banner. That being so, there is no reason to despair. What is the extremism of today will be the moderation of tomorrow. It is by coming together and exchanging our views as was done in the momentous conference at Calcutta about which we have all heard that we strengthen our hopes and aspirations. There is no reason to despair and this makes the duty of the Moderates and the Liberals all the more onerous from today. Today we assemble in our Federation to clarify our ideals and to take a firm determination that another step forward must be our objective during the next year. The flag of Dominion Status is now raised and no lovers of the country can go back so long as there are stalwarts like those at the door (pointing to the portraits of national leaders.) That struck me before I signed the creed. (Laughter.) And in signing the creed I was reminded of the lofty ideal set forth by Sir Surendranath Banerjea in 1884 in what I call the first National Congress held in Albert Hall in Calcutta. That has never been lost sight of but has gone on from day today and from year to year and we have been clarifying our ideals and raising our aspirations. In the year to come we shall have most anxious and difficult times because constructive work will be necessary and in shaping and guiding that work you could not have a more rigid leader who would not go astray by a hair's breadth from the path chalked out than Sir Chimanlal Setalvad who by training, tradition and experience is eminently fitted to lead us in the gigantic work that lies ahead. (Hear, hear.) In speaking of that work I should like to raise another note from what some of our friends tried to do in the National Convention by playing upon words and resorting to pun. They made use of the argument that those who were not for independence were for dependence and that they were actuated by a slave mentality. I am reminded of a legal point made not many years ago by a great judge—at least he thought he was great (laughter)—that disaffection was the opposite of affection and anybody that had no affection for the Government was guilty of disaffection. Those of us who are now raising the flag of Dominion Status take our stand on an equal footing of partnership with other Dominions of the British Empire. After long years of our struggle Mr. Montagu declared from his place in Parliament that equal partnership was the birthright of India and the whole of his reforms scheme was based upon that. We are now taking another step forward in attaining that which had been the life ambition of Nationalists ever since nationalism was born in this country. In these critical and momentous times there must be sustained and at the same time restrained work. When we have succeeded in getting the Dominion Status resolution carried at the National Convention, an obligation rests on us to work for it with devotion and fervour, with enthusiasm and energy. In that great and difficult work the Liberals can have no better guide and leader than Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. (Hear, hear.)

I do not agree with Mr. Chintamani when he says that our party is small. I think all who are not extremists, all who are not outside our ranks, are really Liberals because they would not like to see the country plunged in revolution and disorder. We want Dominion Status and there is no question of dependence or independence. Firm in that determination, we are sure to go one long step forward. (Cheers.)

Sir Shankar Rao Chitnavis.

Sir Shankar Rao Chitnavis (Central Provinces), further supporting the election of the President, said: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution that has been placed before you. On this momentous occasion, as it has been said, we could not secure a better president than Sir Chimanlal Setalvad who has received his political education at the hands of that distinguished leader, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. He has been a member of the Bombay Government and has gained considerable administrative experience. He is also the Vice-Chancellor of one of the older universities in the country and nobody better suited than Sir Chimanlal Setalvad you could have secured on this occasion. I have great pleasure in supporting the proposition.

Mr. Chintamani said: I desire to associate myself most cordially with the tributes which have been paid to Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and I now invite him on your behalf and in your name to take the chair.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad then took the presidential chair amidst loud and prolonged cheers after being garlanded by Mr. Chintamani, the chairman of the Reception Committee. Sir Chimanlal next delivered the following presidential address:—

Mr. Chairman, Fellow-Liberals, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I very much appreciate the honour you have done me in asking me to preside over the 11th session of the National Liberal Federation of India. This session is of special importance by reason of the momentous questions that are exercising the minds of the people and the Government of this country and which require the highest statesmanship and balanced judgment for their proper solution. The responsibilities, therefore, of the person invited to guide the deliberations of this session, are, indeed, heavy, but I am sure you will extend to me your reasoned advice, support and cooperation in discharging my duty as the president of this session.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is very gratifying that we are getting every day better news about the progress that his Majesty, the King-Emperor is making towards full recovery. At one time great anxiety was felt but by the grace of God his Majesty is now out of danger and is steadily gaining strength. The loyal devotion to his Majesty that was manifest in this country along with the rest of the Empire during those anxious days, testifies to the universal regard and esteem in which his Majesty is held.

Last year when the Federation was in session, we lost a great patriot by the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan. This year we have to mourn the loss of another great patriot who like Ajmal Khan was a tower of strength to Indian nationalism and to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity. The circumstances connected with his sudden and tragic death have left a very sad impression throughout the country. India can ill-afford to lose at this juncture a leader of that eminence. We have also lost in Lord Sinha a great Liberal and a great and patriotic Indian who had shed lustre on his country.

Principles and Methods of Liberal Party.

The Liberal Party has a proud record extending over a long period of valuable work for the political, social and material advancement of this country. Upto the time when the Liberals left the Congress, that body stood and worked for constitutional advance by constitutional methods. The Congress of those days valued and wanted to retain the British connection and claimed full responsible government within the Empire. The Reforms of 1921 were the direct result of the work of the Congress

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of those days. When the Congress strayed away from those principles and methods, the Liberals stood steadfastly by those constitutional principles and methods, and unswayed by fear of popular displeasure, had the courage to separate from the Congress.

The task of politicians, who violently declaim against the existing order of things and promise to the people the attainment of Swaraj within three, six, or twelve months, is easy. The task of those who face realities and want to make progress on solid foundations and have, therefore, sometimes to counsel patience, is necessarily not very popular. Those who want to keep their hold on the uninformed populace by making glib promises and by spectacular fire-works are compelled of necessity to go further and further. What pleases the populace today is not enough to please it tomorrow and they must, therefore, produce something still more spectacular at every stage. That is how some of the Congress politicians have got pushed further and further into non-cooperation, civil disobedience, direct action, non-payment of taxes, independence, socialism and communism.

When the wave of non-cooperation swept the country, the Liberals kept their heads, put their shoulders to the wheel and worked the Reforms, inadequate though they considered them to be, and worked them well under very difficult and adverse circumstances. Those who styled themselves independents refrained from joining the party of civil disobedience and non-violent non-cooperation, but still abstained from coming into the legislatures and working the constitution. The Liberals and others who then went to the Councils worked under a double handicap. On the one hand they were bitterly attacked and abused by the non-cooperation party; and, on the other hand, Government, when it suited it to disregard their views and advice, made no scruples in saying that they did not represent the people because at the elections a large proportion of the electorates had abstained from voting.

The Congress politicians and the so-called Independents realized after some years what Liberals had instinctively realized from the beginning that the wise and profitable course was to get into the Legislatures and work the Reforms for what they were worth. The Swarajists stood for the elections of 1923 and came into the legislatures in large numbers, pretending, however, that they were going to non-cooperate from within. After making heroic gestures of throwing out budgets and the Finance Bills, they settled down to the normal work of the legislatures.

Government Responsible for Creating Extremism.

Paradoxical as it may seem, it is Government who have by their blundering and hesitating policy at every step, created extremism and helped it at every stage to gather greater strength just when it was about to lose ground. Their unwise action in putting the Rowlatt Act on the statute book in defiance of united Indian opinion throughout the country gave birth to civil disobedience. The Punjab Martial Law administration and the horrors for which it was responsible, created the cult of non-violent non-cooperation and non-payment of taxes and the obstructive and hostile attitude of the Swarajists in the legislatures. The Simon Commission muddle of last year brought into existence the party advocating complete independence. Government have always failed to respond adequately and timely to legitimate Indian aspirations as voiced by sane and responsible political sections, and by their hesitation and delay have lost opportunity after opportunity of catching the imagination of the people and securing their contentment. They are so much lost in admiration of what they have done for India and of the efficiency of their administration that they wonder and resent that Indians should be dissatisfied with the present order of things and should demand full self-government.

Simon Commission Blunder.

The action and attitude of Government in respect of the Simon Commission, are typical of this mentality. Under the Government of India Act, they were not bound to set up the Statutory Commission till the end of 1929. They decided to accelerate the appointment of the Commission in order to

meet united Indian public opinion, but then they proceeded to do so in a manner that has aroused hostility and opposition throughout the land. They forget that no constitution however well-designed can work with fruitful results and that no Government however powerful can rule a country like India with its vast area and population, except with the general acquiescence of the people. It is obvious common sense that a Commission of such importance dealing with the future constitution of this country should have been constituted with general good-will. In spite of grave warnings, they persisted in constituting the Commission entirely excluding Indians therefrom and thereby alienating very large and important sections of public opinion. It is inevitable that the conclusions of the Commission are bound to suffer from the fatal infirmity of having been arrived at practically *ex parte* in the absence of the recognised political organisations and leaders of the Indian people and will not find acceptance.

The Liberal Party has always accepted the Government of India Act and the authority of Parliament to legislate in the matter of the future constitution. The Liberals were therefore not people who would range themselves against the Commission unless for substantial cause. After full deliberation, they were driven to the conclusion that abstention from taking any part in the work of the Commission was the only course open to them consistently with national self-respect. The reasons for this conclusion were very ably stated by your President of last year Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and were embodied in the statement that the Federation issued at the conclusion of the last session, and I do not propose to re-state them. Nothing has happened since our session at Bombay last year that can alter our decision. We always made it clear that if Indians were included in the Commission or equality of status, authority and functions in substance and in form were secured for what is given by the authorities the dignified name of 'The Indian wing of the Commission,' we were not averse to reconsidering the situation.

Lahore and Lucknow Incidents.

Government have however neglected and failed to do anything adequate to secure general cooperation. We have the lamentable spectacle of the Commission ushered into every important place with police protection to check and shroud from their view hostile demonstrations, leading in some places to conflict between the public and the police, in the course of which respected popular leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and others were injured. In Lucknow the police grossly insulted a highly respected all India leader, the Maharaja of Mahmudabad, who till lately was the Home Member of the U. P. Government. We of the Liberal Party have disapproved of *hartal* and black flag processions and other demonstrations of a like nature, but when popular resentment is aroused different people have different ideas and methods of giving expression to it. The bitter memories of these unfortunate events will last for a long time and be a great obstacle in the way of harmonious understanding and cooperation between England and India which is very much to be desired. Sir John Simon and his colleagues of the Commission deserve sympathy for their unpleasant experiences. It is really unfair to them that Government have so hopelessly mismanaged the matter that the Commission would not get the valuable materials and assistance necessary to lead them to correct conclusions. The situation is not of their creation, but they lay themselves open to criticism when they join in the propaganda to make out that the Commission is receiving cooperation from representative bodies and men and to belittle the volume and importance of the abstaining sections.

An Untenable Claim.

The claim made that the Commission is receiving a large measure of cooperation from representative men and bodies will not stand close examination. The Legislative Assembly which was at one time during the preliminary debates on the constitution of the Commission, described in Parliament, as the body preeminently representing all India, rejected the proposal to elect the Central Committee to work with the Simon Commission. Attempts

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have been made to deprecate the value of the decision of the Assembly on the ground that it was passed only by a majority of six. It is conveniently ignored that the minority consisted largely of the Government official bloc and nominated members. If the elected members were considered, an overwhelming majority of such members voted for abstention. The majority of elected Muslim members cast their vote for abstention. When the Assembly decided for abstention, its representative character was questioned. It was argued that the Assembly members were not in intimate touch with the people in the provinces and that the members of the provincial councils more truly reflected the views of the masses who were for cooperation. Starting with this premise, it is said that inasmuch as most of the provincial Councils have appointed committees, it is evident that the country as a whole is in favour of cooperation with the Commission. But here again, it is conveniently forgotten that, in the provincial Councils, if you eliminate the official bloc and the nominated members, in almost every province the majority of the elected members was against cooperation and surely it is the elected members and not the official bloc and nominated members who can rightly claim to reflect the real public opinion. How unfounded is the claim that representative bodies and men have cooperated with the Commission is clear, if one considers by way of illustration, the bodies and men who appeared before the Commission in the Bombay Presidency. Any one with any acquaintance of the Presidency will have no hesitation in saying that those who submitted memoranda or appeared before the Commission, in no sense represented the views of the bulk of the people of the Presidency. One looks in vain in the list of those who sent memoranda, for the recognised representative bodies of standing in the Presidency, like the Bombay Presidency Association, the Indian Merchants' Chamber, the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, the Deccan Sabha, the Gujarat Sabha and others that can be mentioned. And what is true of Bombay is also true of the other provinces.

It is to me wonderful how the Government of India and the British Cabinet do not yet realise the futility and tragedy of attempting to evolve and inaugurate a big and important step in the political advance of India in an atmosphere of such general dissatisfaction and strife. They are representing in a very intensified degree the tragedy that surrounded the inauguration of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. It should not be beyond their genius to take hold of opportunities even now to restore harmony and solve the constitutional problem of India in close cooperation with all sections of public opinion and with general good will which alone can secure the successful working of any scheme that may be devised.

Unity Essential for Progress.

In order to meet the deplorable situation created by Government, it was considered extremely desirable and necessary that all political parties should put their heads together and produce a generally agreed constitution and make an united demand for the same being accepted by Parliament. If the political evolution of India is to be on satisfactory and stable lines, it is essential that conflicts between different parties and communities should as far as possible be eliminated and all disruptive tendencies and forces should be got rid of and a common national ideal should be created. It is only solidarity of Indian opinion that would tell. Those who organised the All Parties Conference and Convention have rendered inestimable service to India. The able work done in this connection by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Chintamani has maintained and enhanced the reputation of the Liberal Party. That Conference and its Committee have done very valuable and patriotic work and the Report that has been produced by them is one entitled to a high place among state documents dealing with topics of such importance, by its fairness, clear and logical thinking, restraint and moderation and commendable statesmanship. It is a grand effort made to secure the greatest measure of agreement in the country and however much one may differ from some of its recommendations, it should be received and considered with the greatest consideration. It

need not be taken as the last word and as far as I can see various adjustments and modifications of its recommendations may become necessary to secure for it complete and universal acceptance; but such negotiations should be conducted in a friendly and helpful spirit by those who may not be prepared to subscribe to it fully. It need not evoke the criticisms and opposition that have been levelled at it in certain quarters, some of which is misinformed and is due to want of proper understanding of the real nature and implications of the proposals and principles underlying the Report.

Dominion Status and Independence.

The fundamental proposal and keystone of the Report is the demand of Dominion Status for India and it is a very happy augury that this proposal has now been accepted and adopted by the All Parties Convention without any reservation. While the Congress at its Madras session declared independence as its ultimate goal, a section has now declared that complete independence outside the British Empire is their immediate goal. Curiously enough, some of those who declare independence as their goal are prepared to join in the demand for Dominion Status with the reservation that thereby their liberty of action in working for complete independence is not restricted and in the hope that the attainment of Dominion Status will make it more easy for them to attain independence. The Congress is asked as a compromise to accept the formula that while reaffirming the Madras resolution for independence, Dominion Status is acceptable as a common measure of agreement. In the alternative, the Congress is asked to subscribe at present to Dominion Status but with the ultimatum that if it is not given within a stated period, then independence would be declared and non-cooperation started. To my mind while every effort should be made to secure unity in politically-minded India, such unity should not be a camouflage. Nothing makes for sound action in politics as does clarity of thought and avoidance of self-deception. Speaking for myself, I do not see how those whose immediate or ultimate goal is complete independence, can have anything in common with those who want Dominion Status within the Empire. The whole outlook and methods of those who want independence must in the very nature of things be different from those who want Dominion Status. Any nation or country that wants complete independence takes measures first to achieve independence and when it succeeds in securing independence, it drafts and creates its own constitution. It is out of place for those who want independence outside the Empire to join in drafting the constitution for Dominion Status and asking the British Parliament to grant such Dominion Status. Those who want Dominion Status within the Empire cannot countenance the ultimatum mentioned above. Those who reaffirm independence as their goal and threaten non-payment of taxes cannot be honest believers in Dominion Status.

I venture to think every reasonable mind should accept the goal of Dominion Status. As pointed out in the Report of the Nehru Committee, what is needed is the transference of political power and responsibility from the people of England to the people of India and that essential object will be fully served by India becoming one of the self-governing dominions. At the Imperial Conference of 1926, the position of self-governing dominions is described in the following terms:—

“ They are autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.”

Dominion Status meets all national aspirations and carries with it the protection, safety and all other advantages of partnership in the most powerful Empire in the world

Defence and Army.

It is sometimes objected that, unless India is prepared to assume responsibility of its defence, both internal and external, it cannot claim Dominion Status. But this was never insisted upon as a condition in the case of self-governing dominions when they obtained that status. Defence against internal disturbance was no doubt laid upon them, but no obligation of defence against external aggression was required to be taken up, and as regards naval defence the Imperial Government is still carrying the burden. India however has been maintaining an army at a very heavy cost which is sufficient not only for her own purposes but also serves and is available for imperial needs. It would indeed be strange, if England after thwarting and hampering India to learn and be ready for her own defence, were to urge a state of things which England herself had brought about, as a ground for withholding Dominion Status from India. The persistent neglect and refusal to give practical effect to schemes for Indianisation of the army within a reasonable time, including the virtual rejection of the Skeen Committee's Report only recently, are well known to all. What India wants and claims is the same autonomy in the sphere of military organisation and administration that is enjoyed by the self-governing dominions.

Communal Problem.

The most important problem that the Nehru Committee in its Report has attempted to solve is the communal problem. This question has assumed a fictitious importance far beyond its real merits. The principal communities concerned in this question are the Hindu and Mahomedan communities. The separatist principle was first recognised in 1909 and it was confirmed by the Lucknow pact in 1916, whereby it was agreed that Mahomedans should have their own separate electorates and the number to be returned to the various provincial Councils by such electorates and also to the Central Legislature were fixed with due regard to their numerical strength as well as other considerations. The Hindu and Mussalman leaders who were parties to this pact entered into it in the full hope that separate electorates would last only for some time and were to be confined only to the legislatures. They accepted separate electorates only as a means of dealing with a temporary aberration which was expected to vanish on the growth of national unity. Unfortunately, however, the separatist idea has spread like a wild weed. It has extended to the municipalities and local boards, and has invaded in some places even the seats of learning. It has infected other communities and sections, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, Sikhs, non-Brahmins, depressed classes and others too numerous to mention. It has unfortunately extended to the region of public offices to such a degree that fitness, efficiency and needs of the State are no longer principal considerations, with the inevitable result that the public services show a decline which must in its turn weaken and debase the national character. Some of the blighting effects of separate electorates might have been minimised if unfettered choice of candidates had been given to the communal electorates and option had been allowed to the minority community members to go into the general register if they so desired. The present rigid water-tight compartments system is very unfair to the members of the minority community themselves. Under the present system any enlightened Mahomedans of national outlook who may prefer to go into the general register and whom the non-Muslim electors may desire to elect as their representatives, are prevented from making any choice in the matter. Similarly, a Muslim electorate is prevented from electing as their representative a non-Muslim in whom they may have the completest confidence. Unbiased thought and large national view rising above petty personal considerations of providing jobs for members of any particular community, will make it evident that there is really no divergence of interest between the different communities. They are all subject to the same laws, same taxes, same disabilities and enjoy the same rights and privileges. A study of the proceedings of the Central Legislature as well as the provincial

legislatures will reveal that during the seven years that have elapsed since the inauguration of the Reforms in 1921 there has hardly been any occasion on which any legislation or measure affecting only a particular community was debated or that voting took place on purely communal lines.

Separate Electorate Harmful.

The following observations of the Nehru Committee Report on the extremely undesirable effects of separate electorates give a true picture. It says: 'Everybody knows that separate electorates are bad for the growth of a national spirit, but everybody perhaps does not realise equally well that separate electorates are still worse for a minority community. They make the majority wholly independent of the minority and its votes and usually hostile to it. Under separate electorates, therefore, the chances are that the minority will always have to face a hostile majority, which can always by sheer force of numbers override the wishes of the minority. Extreme communalists flourish thereunder and the majority community, far from suffering actually benefits by it.'

The correct ideal therefore is a general register of voters not taking into account birth, race or religion. All that any community should have and is entitled to is that the constitution should secure to it fullest religious liberty and cultural autonomy. For any community that is backward special facilities should be provided for speeding up the education of the members of such community. Failing the acceptance of this correct ideal, general electorates with reservation of seats for the minority and backward communities who enjoy at present separate electorates is the next best expedient. But such reservation of seats must be recognised only as a transitional stage between separate electorates and general electorates, for it is clear that such reservation of seats makes the community enjoying it steadily lose in self-reliance.

The fact is that the present situation in which the Mahomedan community want to cling to separate electorates as a valued privilege essential for their safety, has been created by want of trust and confidence between the majority and minority communities and the situation is exploited by those who can maintain their predominance only by perpetuating communalism. But whatever the causes and however undesirable the present state of things, you have to face the fact that the minority community has not that trust and confidence in the majority community which one would like to establish. I strongly think it is up to the majority community to be generous and to agree to make concessions to the furthest limit consistent with national interests, in order to wean back their erring brethren of the minority community.

Nehru Committee Proposals.

The Nehru Committee Report recommends the abolition of separate electorates and agrees as a transitional measure to the reservation of seats for the Muslim community in the central Legislature and the provincial legislatures, except Bengal and the Punjab, in proportion to their population, with the right to contest additional seats. As regards the Punjab and Bengal where the Muslim community is the majority community, it recommends general electorates without any reservation of seats. The facts collected and the arguments and reasoning of the Report in favour of these conclusions appear to be sound. But here again one has to face hard facts and it is a fact that although the proposals are acceptable to certain sections of the Muslim community, there are others who are not prepared to accept them. The only solution is further negotiations and adjustments.

It is further to be remembered that the solution of the communal problem presented by the Nehru Report is based on adult franchise. Speaking for myself, I venture to think that at this stage of India's political evolution, adult franchise is neither desirable nor safe. I am one of those

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who seriously doubt that the present low franchise has worked well. It is low enough although it brings in a small proportion of the population, but to lower it still more or to adopt universal suffrage without any property qualification would, I am convinced, be dangerous. The poverty and illiteracy of the large masses of the people raise very serious doubts of a proper exercise by them of the franchise and fears are entertained that they may appreciate more the pecuniary value of their votes than its political significance. But whatever the franchise, it is desirable to my mind, to base it on the qualification of ownership or exercise of some calling and receipt of income liable to taxation in some form or another. To vest political power at one bound in this country, in the hands of masses of people with no stake and who therefore are not likely to appreciate the benefits of a stable and ordered government, is, under the present circumstances, I venture to think, not desirable. Adult franchise has come in England after nearly 100 years of political training and vast progress of education and material prosperity. When the Reform Act of 1832 was passed, only 3 per cent. of the population was enfranchised. In 1867-68, the proportion was raised to 9 per cent., in 1884 to 16 per cent. But whether adult franchise is desirable or not desirable, it is not practical politics to proceed on the assumption that it will be granted. If that is so, a solution of the communal problem based on adult franchise would necessarily be required to be reconsidered and recast.

Speaking for myself, I would be prepared to concede to the Muslim community reservation of seats every where on a reasonably generous proportion for a particular number of years in order to restore trust and confidence and to secure unity of demand for Dominion Status or for substantial advance towards it. At the end of such period either the reservation of seats should automatically disappear or the matter should be open to reconsideration and adjustment by the communities concerned. I do not think the majority community would in any way suffer by such concession.

If the system of reservation of seats is to be brought into existence for the Musalmans, the same will have to be done with regard to other communities like Europeans who have at present separate electorates as well as for those communities like the Maharattas who have at present reservation of seats.

Declaration of Rights Essential.

It is not possible to deal within the limits of a presidential address with all the provisions which should form part of the new constitution. One can only indicate the general lines and principles on which the constitution should be based. A Declaration of Rights and the securing of all existing property rights on the lines indicated in the Nehru Report are essential. There is an overwhelming consensus of opinion in favour of provincial autonomy, but some people while demanding provincial autonomy try to hedge it round by various safeguards and limitations. I advocate full provincial autonomy with transfer of all provincial subjects including Law and Order and I have no misgivings as to the result. Provincial autonomy should be real and any safeguards that may be considered desirable should as far as possible be provided in the provincial machinery and constitution itself. I would deprecate the vesting of any extraordinary powers in the Governor of superseding the administration of any transferred subjects by the Ministers. There may be mistakes committed but it is only by committing mistakes and the electorates learning to visit such mistakes with their displeasure at the elections, that responsible government can thrive. Suitable safeguards against hasty action can however be provided by the creation, if necessary, of a second chamber constituted on a franchise which would secure among its members men of ripe and sound experience.

Responsibility in Central Government.

But any scheme of provincial autonomy would not be productive of good results if no element of responsibility is introduced in the central

Government and the present structure of that Government remains unaltered. The present state of things there is one that demoralises both the Legislature and Government. The Legislature often acts in an irresponsible manner because it knows that the King's Government will be carried on and that Government will see that effect is not given to such irresponsible acts of the legislature. On the other hand, Government get into the habit of not attaching that value to the opinion or vote of the Legislature which they would otherwise do. The introduction of responsibility in the central Government means for the present the introduction of the dyarchy, as it will, I apprehend, be desirable for sometime to keep at least foreign and political relations and the army as reserved subjects. I have no apprehension about dyarchy working satisfactorily in the central Government as a transitional measure provided an atmosphere of good will is created. The failure of dyarchy in some provinces was due to exceptional causes.

Indian States.

The position of Indian states and their relations with the Government of India when India becomes a self-governing Dominion are questions of great intricacy and difficulty, but a proper solution acceptable to British India and the Indian states will have to be found. It is regrettable that at present the situation is befogged by considerable mistrust and misunderstanding on either side. It is a great mistake to suppose that all Indian states are misgoverned and represent absolute autocratic government. It is only the worst cases that come prominently to public notice and it is unfair from such cases to generalise as regards the rest. It is a misunderstanding to suppose that the Indian Princes are opposed to or want in any manner to obstruct the attainment of full Dominion Status by British India. Many of the enlightened rulers among them, are as patriotic and feel as nationally as any of us do and are willing to help British India in attaining its goal. Some of them are prepared to introduce representative institutions in their states. It is also a misconception that Indian Princes by inviting the Butler Committee enquiry are trying to entrench themselves against any inroad on their authority by British India. The way in which their treaty rights and sovereignty have been dealt with in the past by the British Government, whenever differences between them have arisen, made it necessary for them to have their position and rights *vis a vis* the British Government investigated and defined. It is equally a misapprehension on the other hand that British India wants in any manner to derogate from the independence and sovereignty of the Indian states and to make them in any way subservient to British India and the Indian Legislatures. Efforts should be made to evolve a scheme in which British India and the Indian states can march together for the prosperity and advancement of the whole country and with mutual trust and confidence make India as a whole take her proper place among the nations of the world. This can be done by discussion and negotiation between the representatives of British India and the Indian states.

Extremists in All Camps.

Our trouble is extremists in all camps who make the task of adjustment and understanding by inspiring mutual trust and confidence, extremely difficult. We have extremists among the Hindus, among Mahomedans, among Nationalists and among the Europeans. It does not conduce to better understanding if one side describes Europeans who are trading in this country and have invested capital as mercenary exploiters and for the spokesman of Europeans to describe Indians as highwaymen ready to rob the Europeans who claim to be innocent travellers.

Before I conclude, I feel bound to draw the serious attention of all who are interested in the welfare and prosperity of this country, to the growing menace that is threatening not only the ordered progress of the country but the very foundation and existence of society and the State. There are indications which cannot be ignored that Communist ideas are being dissemi-

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nated among the working classes and the ignorant agricultural population with the avowed object of subverting the present structure of society and ownership of property. The repeated and long continued strikes in important industrial centres which have very nearly ruined the staple industries of the country, are engineered not merely for the purpose of redressing the legitimate or supposed grievances and improving the condition of the labour, but as part of a plan to break up the present order and structure of society and are subsidised partly by foreign funds. A party has come into existence who is openly proclaiming revolution and destruction of the present structure of society and ownership of property as its goal. It behoves Government and all right-thinking men to take all measures to stop this exploitation and misleading of the masses for revolutionary purposes before it is too late. In this connection, speaking personally, I regret the action of the Assembly in turning down the Public Safety Bill. One always deprecates all repressive legislation and is unwilling to clothe the executive Government with power that can be misused but the Bill as it emerged from the select committee, had, I think, sufficient safeguards and they could have been further improved at the second reading stage by the Assembly. The grounds on which the consideration of the Bill was opposed appear to me to be entirely unconvincing. It was said, why did not Government take measures earlier? But surely that is no ground for not taking any measures at all now. It was objected that it was useless dealing with non-Indians when Government were taking no steps to deal with Indians who may be doing greater mischief and Government were urged to take action against some Indian labour agitators under the discredited Regulations of 1818 and 1827. The Repressive Laws Committee urged in 1922-1923 the immediate repeal of those regulations and the Assembly and the whole country have unequivocally protested against the continuance on the Statute Book of those Regulations that have been described as 'lawless laws', under which various people and also the erstwhile ruler of an important Indian state are at present deprived of their liberty indefinitely without ever having been informed of the charges against them and without being given an opportunity of refuting such charges if any, and yet we find it seriously urged in the Assembly that blame attached to Government for not taking action under those Regulations against some agitators engineering labour strikes and that as Government can take action under those Regulations no legislation was needed.

What we are suffering from, in our public life at present, I am afraid, is want of clear thinking and a serious lack of men willing to take the responsibility of saying what they know to be right. The intoxication of public applause and the fear of losing popularity appear to benumb the capacity of rational thinking and the courage to express one's real convictions.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have tried to place before you my views on some of the questions which you will deal with in this session. It may be that some of my views may not exactly coincide with yours. But of this I am sure that you will apply your minds earnestly to the questions you will be considering and that your collective wisdom will result in advancing the cause of our dear Motherland.

MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY.

Mr. Surendra Nath Verma, one of the secretaries of the reception committee, then announced the receipt of messages of sympathy from the following gentlemen regretting their inability to attend the Conference and wishing the session every success:—

UNITED PROVINCES.

Rai Bahadur Jagdish Prasad, Mr. Sankata Pershad Bajpai, Mr. Sadayatan Pande, Mr. Brijmandan Lal, Mr. S. N. Mukerji of Gorakhpur, Rai Anand Swarup Bahadur, Mr. Kalka Prasad of Shahjahanpur, Rai Bahadur Jagmandar Das of Najibabad, Mr. Shyam Lal of Cawnpore, Mr. C. C. Das of Gorakhpur, Rai Bahadur Sarju Prasad of Basti, Rai Bahadur

N. K. Mukerji, Raja Durga Narain Singh of Tirwa, Rai Bahadur Pandit Benarsi Prasad Misra of Moradabad, Raja Indrajit Pertap Bahadur Sahi, M. L. C., Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, M. L. C., Rai Bahadur Triloki Nath Kapur of Tanda and Rai Krishnaji of Benares.

OTHER PROVINCES.

Dewan Bahadur Govind Raghav Iyer, Mr. G. K. Deodhar, Mr. B. S. Kamat, Sir Phiroze Sethna, Mr. Faiz Tyebji, Mr. N. Subba Rao, Mr. Gadgil of Poona, Mr. S. B. Gokhale, Mr. J. R. Gharpure, Rao Bahadur Subramaniam, Rao Bahadur Jatar, Mr. S. K. Sharma of Trichinopoly, Rao Bahadur V. M. Kelkar, Mr. C. M. Gandhi, Mr. N. M. Joshi and Mr. Kesho Rao of Hyderabad.

The President next announced that the subjects committee meeting would take place at 5 p.m. and that in accordance with the usual practice all the delegates would be members of the Subjects Committee.

After a few delightful songs by the girls of the Arya Kanya Pathshala to the accompaniment of instrumental music the session adjourned till the following day.

THE SECOND DAY.

31st December, 1928.

The eleventh session of the National Liberal Federation reassembled to-day at 12-30 p.m. in Mayo Hall, Allahabad, to discuss resolutions. The proceedings commenced with the *Bande Matram* sung by a batch of girls of the Arya Kanya Pathshala, Allahabad.

The first resolution was one of sympathy and condolence put from the chair by Sir Chimanal Setalvad and carried by the Federation, the whole assembly standing. It ran as follows:

Lord Sinha.

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India places on record its deep sense of the loss the country has sustained in the death of Lord Sinha, one of the most illustrious Indians who rose to fame by dint of his uncommon qualities of intellect and character and who will long be remembered as a man who demonstrated, in every office he filled, the capacity of Indians to do full justice to duties the most arduous.

Lala Lajpat Rai.

- (b) The National Liberal Federation records its sense of deep sorrow at the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the greatest of Indian patriots, the more keenly felt because of the circumstances in which it occurred. In Lala Lajpat Rai the Motherland has lost a public worker whose love of country was passionate and profound. He bore much and braved much for winning freedom for his countrymen, and he laboured with equal zeal for the advancement of education, social reform, and philanthropic causes.

Other Leaders.

- (c) The National Liberal Federation expresses its sense of deep regret at, and of the loss the country has sustained in, the death of Syed Ameer Ali, Sir Hormusji Wadya, Sir Ramanbhai Mahipatram and Babu Durga Charan Banerji who all served the country faithfully for her political uplift as well as in other spheres of public utility.
- (d) The Federation offers its sympathy and condolence to the bereaved families.

The Statutory Commission.

MR. J. N. BASU.

Babu Jitendra Nath Basu (Bengal): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—The resolution which I have the honour to move runs thus :—

- (a) The National Liberal Federation urges upon all Indians the imperative necessity of continuing the boycott of the Simon Commission in full vigour.
- (b) The Federation emphatically condemns the police assaults committed in the name of peace and order, which have marked the reception accorded by the officials to the Simon Commission at certain places.

Mr. President and Friends,—We have arrived at a momentous stage in the life of our people. The policy that has so far guided those among the people of this country who have followed the principles of the Liberal Party has been one of cooperation with the British Government in its acts relating to India, and with the Government of India, wherever such cooperation is considered by us to be for the benefit of our people, and we have also always come forward to oppose any act whenever we have considered such an act to be detrimental to the best interests of our people. The difference between us and other political parties has been that we have been alive to the realities that surround us. We know that over 200 years ago the people of India were in the front rank among the peoples of the world. During the last 200 years our progress has been nominal, while the others have progressed, and we have been left far behind in the race for progress. For the last 20 years we have been ruled from England and no notice has been taken, or very little note has been taken, of our needs and aspirations. Now a Royal Commission has been appointed to devise means for the better government of India for some time to come. In appointing that Commission the Government in England has thought it fit to exclude Indians. Sir, after 200 years of British rule, and having regard to our past history and to the capabilities of our people, it is inconceivable that in a body constituted to make an enquiry into the constitutional working of India and to devise the constitution for the future, Indians should be left out altogether, that England should turn her back on India and should constitute a Commission composed entirely of Englishmen to decide as to what is for our good. As I have already pointed out to you the decision as to what is good for India has so far rested entirely in the hands of Britain with the result that instead of progressing forward we are having a set-back almost every time. We have seen peoples all around us in Asia and in other parts of the world progressing fast while we are left behind. It is because the constitution of India has been framed from outside and the springs which give force to the working of our national life have been regulated not by our own ideas, outlook, needs and aspirations but by the deeds of other people.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Commission that has been appointed is a Commission composed of men of distinguished public life in their own country and we have no quarrel with the men of whom the Commission is composed. But however good they may be, however able they may be, we cannot forget that they cannot look at things Indian from the same angle of vision, from the same point of view as we Indians do. At the time when the question of this Commission was being considered in Parliament the Ministers of the British Government and the leaders of the Opposition, both of the Liberal and Labour parties, came forward with the argument that it was not possible to appoint Indians to the Commission on the ground that Indians were divided among themselves in communal matters. But the Government in England forgot this, that the question that the Commission was going to decide and to consider was a question of general political advance. Indians might be divided into different groups, may hold different opinions on communal questions and on certain other questions; but those are small parts of what

a general constitutional advance is. The constitutional advance for which all parties in this country have been working for is an advance which meant the transference of ultimate political control from England to India, so that the Government here may not work merely under the directions of a Government thousands of miles away with an orientation entirely foreign to us, but may work as an Indian Government with a sole eye to what is good for India. In that matter of supreme importance there is no difference of opinion among all our countrymen. Even if members of different communities had been appointed on the Commission, they would have been Indians and would have given expression to what India held and what India thought to be good for her future. But all these considerations were completely brushed aside and an entirely English Commission was appointed. After some length of time it was ultimately felt by the Government in England that a wrong had probably been done and the remedy for that wrong was the device of appointing the Committee of the Central Legislature and the Committees of the various Provincial Legislatures to cooperate with the Commission. But we can never forget the fact that these committees will be merely subordinate committees. Sir John Simon has made it abundantly clear that the opinions and the decisions of these Committees would be taken into consideration but that these Committees would not mould their opinion, as the Commission itself would mould, for regulating our destiny. Ladies and gentlemen, it is this brand of inferiority, it is this want of confidence in us, that we resent most. The Liberal Party gave its most careful and its most anxious consideration to the attitude we should adopt towards the Commission. We have always to work in the best interests of our country and having regard to those interests, we felt that we could not ignore the slight that has been cast upon us as a people. We felt that on the central and the provincial committees we will always sit on a lower platform than the members of the Royal Commission itself and that whatever decisions we might arrive at in those committees would be considered merely as a piece of evidence which might or might not be taken into consideration. It would not have been the joint opinion of Englishmen and Indians assisted by a mutual discussion and by a mutual give and take, which could only be possible if they had sat together on the same Commission. In view of that fact we along with a large majority of the people of this country gave expression to our views and said that we could not have anything to do with the Commission and that we thought it derogatory to our position to assist the Commission in any way. From the way that the work of the Commission has proceeded you can easily see that the people of India have generally kept aloof from it. The evidence that has been led before the Commission has been mostly sectional evidence, evidence urging the claims of a particular community or group among the people of India, whether it is a particular caste or a particular class like the landholders. We have seen very little evidence led before the Commission on the question of the general political advance like the transference of political power from England to this country about which we are so anxious. If the Government of India Act of 1919 meant anything it meant that India should have complete responsible government like the self-governing colonies of the British Empire. We have heard very little of any evidence leading up to that ideal in the proceedings of the Commission up to the present day. You will see, therefore, that our boycott of the Commission is a real vindication of the real heart of the people.

You will see the second part of the resolution deals with the attitude of the executive government towards popular opposition to the Commission. You have all heard of what was done by the police at Lahore and at Lucknow. Even at Poona notifications were issued by the Government when the Commission arrived there. We have not heard yet that these large crowds of people who wanted to peacefully exhibit their opposition to the Commission were like armed mobs out for committing acts of violence. That they assembled in large numbers shows the strength and the depth of popular opposition to the Commission. It was the police who had gone out of their way to commit acts of violence and to injure and insult inoffensive

men. At the city of Lucknow some of our respected national leaders like the Maharaja of Mahamudabad were insulted. That shows that the Commission is not only doing an injustice to the people of India, but that it is leaving behind it a trail of ill-feeling which will not be soon forgotten. (Applause.)

MR. A. RANGASWAMI IYENGAR:

Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar (Madras): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I heartily second the proposition and commend it for your acceptance. So far as this boycott of the Simon Commission is concerned, I take it that there is absolute unanimity of opinion in the country except in regard to one single party in Madras which I will name presently. The circumstances under which that party came to support the Simon Commission are rather extraordinary. At the psychological moment certain high offices in that province of Madras fell vacant. As a reward for getting certain specified offices in Madras this party as a party bargained for them and promised to support the Simon Commission. It was under such circumstances that that party began to support the Simon Commission. Otherwise that party called the Justice party would have been out for boycotting the Commission. Therefore, I take it that there is absolute unanimity of opinion throughout India in respect of the boycott of the Simon Commission and this unanimous opposition to the Commission is itself a great argument in support of this resolution. No further reasons are necessary and I submit that this resolution may be heartily carried. (Applause.)

PANDIT KRISHNA PRASAD KAUL.

Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul (Lucknow), speaking in Urdu, said that a resolution urging the boycott of the Simon Commission was moved only as a matter of formality, for after the boycott demonstration scenes witnessed at Lahore and Lucknow, no such resolution was needed. The nation had already given proof of its indignation against the Commission by adopting boycott measures to the greatest possible extent. The expression 'Simon go back' was, the speaker noticed, on the tongue of every single individual in Lucknow, like 'Lahol'. After the Lahore and Lucknow demonstrations, Mr. Kaul was in a position to say that men, who were not in favour of boycott would also admit that such measures were really very effective and he knew that since then men had been talking little in praise of the Simon Commission. Some of them even complained that they felt extremely disgraced at Lucknow and Cawnpore. The only object of the demonstration was that they should know that the Commission and those associated with it were not liked by the people.

Referring to the police assaults on the occasion of the boycott demonstrations, Mr. Kaul submitted that it would not be right to throw the entire blame for the action of the police on the police force alone. The policemen themselves could not have dared, the speaker asserted, to attack such respected leaders as Lalâ Lajpat Rai and such devoted countrymen as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant. Everything must have happened at the instance of the men in authority. The procedure adopted in attacking people at Lucknow during some of the days on which the boycott demonstration was organised was almost identical. For 10 or 15 minutes in the beginning the police continued assaulting men who had assembled to make demonstrations; then a deputy superintendent of police used to come and inquired about the injuries of persons and asked them to go to the hospital and thereafter he used to say that the procession might be taken out. The speaker wondered why, if the object in imposing restrictions on the procession was to avert a breach of the peace an offer ultimately was made to take out the procession. Mr. Kaul concluded, from what he witnessed at Lucknow, that whatever happened at Lahore and Lucknow was the result of a deliberate policy of the Government. If only the policemen were at fault, could the Government not have stopped the recurrence of assaults, if it was not a party to such a conduct of the police? The result of such a policy, asserted Mr. Kaul, would not be good for the British administration.

RAI BAHADUR MEHTA JAGANNATH PRASAD.

Rai Bahadur Mehta Jagannath Prasad (Benares): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I cannot shut my eyes to the very grave responsibility which I incur in speaking on the resolution. The responsibility is more marked as I shall incur the displeasure of the tin-gods and their satellites but I need not be afraid of it because I find myself in the company, nay, under the protection of you, Mr. President, and so many other knights, not the carpet knights (laughter) but the knights who have earned their distinction by their true devotion to the cause of nationalism and their patriotic services to the mother-country. Gentlemen, I am afraid I shall have to differ from the previous speakers. I will not condemn the police because unfortunately I am a retired superintendent of that mercenary department. (Laughter.) I would rather congratulate them for their most chivalrous action and heroic deeds in preserving law and order in protecting those seven Simon Commission worthies of Lord Birkenhead. I am sure the glorious traditions of the nine worthies of this great empire of India would pale into insignificance before these seven people from Britain. To you, eminent lawyers, and especially the ex-Law Members of the Government of India and the Madras Government, I would say that in your enthusiasm to protect the rights and liberties of your people you have forgotten one very important thing, and it is this. When the police have on the top of their head that red cloth which is symbolic of blood, what do they care for these petty affairs—breaking a bone here and injuring a man there? Now, sir, confidence begets confidence. If the English people have no confidence in us, if they did not want us to join the Commission, we on our part will shun them and will not have anything to do with them. That is the most considerate reply which our leaders gave to the British people. No other arguments are required to defend our position. I am exceedingly sorry for one thing. It pains me to find that there are certain knights who are enjoying their company and are delighted to see our own countrymen beaten and have not said one word in protest against that. (Shame, shame.) I would submit a request to the superseded knight who is in charge of law and order in our provinces, that these heaven-born officers who charged the innocent people should be awarded the King's police medal with this inscription: "I protect my people." Have they not protected the people at Lucknow? They have protected them in the right royal way. I would also request you to ask that knight to issue a confidential circular that a good character entry should be made in the character rolls of those people who took part in this function. The officer who insulted and injured Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant should have come forward courageously and declared that there was an unlawful assembly and taken proceedings under section 144, should have dragged Mr. Pant to the court and made him unqualified to sit in the Council, so that the representative of the Partabgarh *pasas* (laughter) would have lost one of his henchmen while recently moving that censure resolution in the Council. It was a most disgraceful affair. Every Indian who has an iota of self-respect and is decent-minded will with all the emphasis at his command condemn this brutal action. If the Government so wants, there is time still for them to keep the Liberals on their side. If they want the Liberals to co-operate with them it can only be by adopting conciliatory measures and not by these brutal and callous actions. My friend, Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul, one of the victims of this illustrious show, has already described to you what happened at Lucknow. In my capacity as superintendent of police I had also occasions to deal with all sorts of people during the non-cooperation days. I felt that I could win people by persuasion instead of persecution. (Hear, hear.) In Jaunpur district when the non-cooperation movement was raging like anything, when the Kisan Sabha movement was started, I had to deal with the masses. When I sent for the secretary of the Congress committee, and the secretary of the Khilafat committee, I spoke to them and they came round. In fact I told them: "You may go on abusing me to your heart's content, I will not mind it. But talking in this strain will do you no good." I am not

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bragging. The result was that there was no resignation from the force, there were no proceedings against anybody under section 188, and there was absolutely nothing noteworthy. The late Mr. Campbell, commissioner of the division, came to inspect the district and asked me why my district was the quietest district and why there was no fuss. I told him: "I am an Indian and I would never like to send a brother of mine to jail. I would always speak to him, argue with him and bring him to my side." The result of such an attitude on my part was that when I was leaving the district—excuse me, it is a personal matter—the function to bid me good-bye which was attended by my friend, Mr. Chintamani, in his capacity as a Minister of these provinces, was organised by the Khilafat and the Congress people, simply because I did not want to show my authority and my force but wanted to tell them that I was only a public servant.

Now, sir, I will not take much of your time because I know that the more I speak the more work I give to that hard-worked department to which I had the honour and the privilege to belong for several years. My friend Mr. Chintamani told me yesterday that after the shackles and the bondage of service had been removed from my lips which were sealed with the seals of the Official Secrets Act, I should perform my *prayashchit* today. (Hear, hear) I hope I have now performed it and if anything is wanting I would request you as the head pandit of this assembly to let me know, so that I may complete it. I should have been failing in my duty and I would not have called myself an Indian if I had not come forward to condemn this brutality and callousness of the Indian police. These heaven-borns think that autocracy and autocracy alone will reign supreme. I defy and challenge them and tell them that it will never reign supreme. If we are true to ourselves I am sure that a day will come when we will march forth triumphantly and say as I once said to a magistrate at Fatehpore—"Give the same facilities to Indians and they will never in any way prove inferior to your heaven-borns but in most respects they will prove superior to you of the Indian Civil Service". The result of my frankness was that a black note was left by that magistrate against me. I valued that black note because it encouraged me to fight with these people and show them that Indians have got stamina and that Indians have produced men like Tilak and Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dadabhoi Nowroji and so many others and have also produced eminent judges and lawyers. We can tell them that we can run the administration of India by our sheer dint of patriotism and prove that we Indians know how to rule our country. (Applause.)

The resolution was then put to the Federation and carried unanimously.

DOMINION STATUS FOR INDIA.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru:—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—The resolution which I have been asked to move for your acceptance runs as follows:

'This Federation is strongly of opinion that the system of government to be established in place of the present system should be the same as that which prevails in the self-governing dominions which are equal members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and that this step should be taken immediately. Any further delay and postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England'.

My friend Mr. Chintamani in the address which he delivered to you yesterday as Chairman of the Reception Committee traced the history, though in a very brief manner, of the idea of dominion status as it is evolved in our political history during the last 25 years. I am not going to cover the same ground over again, beyond reminding you that it was in 1905 when Mr. Gokhale as President of the Congress at Benares first put forward the idea in a concrete form. In 1906 when Mr. Dadabhoi Nowroji, the grand old man of India, presided over the National Congress he gave us the rich

inheritance of a word which has remained with us as an ideal to be achieved in our own time. I am referring to that word Swaraj. A few years later when we had the Minto-Morley scheme of reforms introduced in this country, it did not take us many years after working them with all sincerity to discover that the Councils which were established in pursuance of that scheme were in truth no better than mere debating societies. I was a member of the old Provincial Council as well as of the Imperial Council under that scheme and I remember the days when reason very often, if not always, used to be on our side but votes on the Government side. I remember distinctly in the year 1913 attending a meeting of the Provincial Legislative Council when I moved a resolution on primary education in this very hall under the presidency of Sir James Meston when he was the Lieutenant-Governor of these provinces. I was congratulated not only by my non-official friends on the speech that I made—I thought I was going to get a prize for the excellence of my speech (laughter)—but I was also congratulated by the official members. And take it from (me?) that when the news went round from that end to this end of the hall that my speech was being appreciated by even official members, one Nawab who used to be a prominent figure in the public life of those provinces at once directed his private secretary next morning to write a speech for him in support of my speech, because it had been approved by the officials. (Laughter.) It was quite obvious to me and to other members that the speech, notwithstanding the compliments that it received from official and non-official members, had resulted in nothing. The resolution was solidly defeated by the official votes. That was not a solitary experience of mine in the old provincial Council. That was the experience of nearly every non-official member. I will only remind you of the great name of Mr. Gokhale who dedicated himself to the cause of primary education in the Imperial Legislative Council. Time after time, year after year, he moved the resolution in favour of primary education for the amelioration of the masses and yet what was its fate, we all know. Sometimes the resolution was defeated on the ground that the people of this country did not want primary education, sometimes again it was defeated on the ground that there was not a sufficient supply of trained teachers available, sometimes on the ground that there were no funds available for any big scheme of primary education. While I can tell you from my intimate knowledge of Mr. Gokhale that even he—I use the words ‘even he’ because he was in a great measure responsible for the establishment of the Minto-Morley scheme—came to realise the futility of that scheme which gave no power at all to the legislatures but which gave them unlimited opportunities of raising discussions ending in nothing.

That was the system which prevailed right up to the time when Mr. Montagu introduced his reforms. I was intimately associated with the evolution of the reforms which are embodied in the present Government of India Act. I was in a way behind the scenes. I was taken into confidence several times by Mr. Montagu himself during his stay in India and it was at his request in particular that I agreed to serve on the Southborough Committee which had certain functions assigned to it. In pursuance of the policy which had been laid down by Mr. Montagu and which was understood to have met with the approval of all the leading statesmen in England of that time, the Southborough Committee consisting as it did of Europeans and Indians—and among the Indians our distinguished chairman was my colleague—met together in India, went from province to province recording evidence, the evidence of officials to the effect that India was not ripe for any further step, the evidence of non-officials to the effect that a very large measure of autonomy should be introduced, and indeed their evidence was to the effect that the time had arrived for the establishment of responsible government. As a result of the recommendations of the Southborough Committee and as a result further of the discussions which took place in England after the evidence was recorded by the Selborne Committee, a Bill was introduced in Parliament which was sponsored by Mr. Montagu. At that time when there were no differences at all among Congress ranks, there were many of us including some very advanced politicians who thought that although the scheme which was being introduced was faulty in a very large

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measure, yet it might well be tried and an honest effort might be made to get the best out of it. It was under that impression—it may be that our impression was wrong—that we agreed to work the reforms and I can say conscientiously without any fear of contradiction that so far as many members of the Liberal Party were concerned, they offered to work the reforms knowing fully well that they were incurring great unpopularity with their own countrymen. Whatever the criticism of their own countrymen, it surely did not lie in the mouth of the Government, it does not lie in the mouth of the Government and if there is any official who says that, I say he is speaking an untruth, to state that the Liberals did not give a fair trial to this scheme. (Hear, hear.) But I maintain and I do say so with all the sense of responsibility attaching to my position in public life and with the knowledge that I possess, that the spirit which actuated Mr. Montagu in introducing those reforms was a very short-lived spirit. The moment Mr. Montagu left the India Office, the India Office became a different one and from that day, the 16th of March, 1921, right up to now the record of the India Office has been extremely discreditable to the British tradition of statesmanship and to the British sense of fairness. (Hear, hear.) It did not take me—I say that publicly—many weeks to discover after the retirement of Mr. Montagu that it was a different atmosphere in which I had to work in the Government of India. That was the position in 1922. Right up to the year 1927 the position has gone on steadily deteriorating until we find today the Government of India, the Government of Lord Irwin—I use his name with all respect but with all emphasis—have specialised themselves in the art of losing friends and alienating public support and public sympathy. (Hear, hear.) I never recollect within my experience of the last 25 or 30 years of public life when the Government of India has had less credit with people or has inspired less confidence than it has during the last three years. With regard to the appointment of the Simon Commission I hope the British will not say that they took that step in a fit of absent-mindedness—a phrase, which is very common to British historians when they deal with India. Lord Irwin and Lord Birkenhead decided to take that step most deliberately with their eyes open, after receiving warnings from the best friends of Government. If they received advice to the contrary from high-placed Indians occupying official positions or occupying eminent positions in non-official life, then they have got to blame those Indians, not us who gave them a friendly warning at that time. I wonder whether it occurs to them now after the deterioration that has gone on in the situation that they were mistaken. They have not the courage to admit it and very few Governments have got the courage to admit their mistakes. That is how the situation has gone on deteriorating in the country and in the Government during the last 7 or 8 years. Meanwhile political feeling and political sentiment in the country have gone on developing from year to year. I do not think it is discreditable to any political party, be it an extremist party or be it a moderate party, to say of it that it has to take stock of the surrounding circumstances to adjust its views to the new situation which arises from year to year. It is of the essence of a living political organism that it must change from year to year, from time to time as the situation and as the occasion requires. Well, you find the extreme political thought represented in this country by the Congress. You find a more reasonable—I do not use that phrase in any offensive sense—frame of mind represented by a backward party such as that to which I have the honour to belong. But what is it that you find? If you carefully analyse the position this backward party got itself committed so far back in 1921, and I believe in this very hall under the presidency of Dewan Bahadur Govindaraghava Aiyer, to the scheme of dominion status. That was in 1921. The Liberal Party, therefore, definitely committed itself to the idea of dominion status in the year 1921. The Liberal Party was then a party strongly represented in Provincial Councils and in the Central Legislature. In the year 1923, as a result of the general elections, the Liberal Party was almost wiped out and the Swarajists went into the Councils. Towards the end of 1923 I happened to be in England. Many English statesmen spoke to me about the situation in India and I was asked at that time to contribute an article to the *Contemporary Review*. I gave a forecast of the

situation. I had not the least doubt in my mind in the year 1923 that the result of the general elections would be that the Liberal Party would be more or less wiped out and that its opponents would come into political power. It did not take many months before my forecast turned out to be true. There were some retired Governors and one retired Viceroy who asked me the reason why I thought like that. That was the time when Mr. Montagu himself was alive. I told them frankly, not one or two but several Englishmen in England, that if the Liberal Party was going out of the Councils it was because of the policy of the India Office. I said to them that during the last year and a half the India Office had so considerably changed, the whole position of the Government of India had so considerably changed, that there was absolutely no chance for the Liberal Party to retain its position in the country. I do blame and most deliberately cast the blame on the Government and I do say that it is due to the action of the Government, that it is due to their refusal to listen to the advice of their friends who were prepared to work the constitution in the spirit in which it should have been worked, that so much extremism has grown in this country and I think the time has come that the Government should recognise that it is beyond their power to deal with extremism by a merely repressive policy or by merely repressive legislation.

Well, gentlemen, one other incident to which I will invite your attention is a famous resolution which was moved in the Legislative Assembly in the year 1924 by no less a person than Pandit Motilal Nehru. That resolution is known in our popular language as the resolution of the national demand. Now I have been at pains comparing the terms of that resolution with the resolutions of the Liberal Party and I do say in no spirit of party triumph that in the year 1924, when Pandit Motilal Nehru moved that resolution in the Legislative Assembly, he expressed not only the sentiments of his party but the sentiments of the Liberals outside as well. (Applause.) It was a perfectly moderate and a perfectly reasonable resolution. But the strongest possible opposition was put up by the Government to that resolution through its Home Member at that time and a very subtle distinction was sought to be made between dominion status and responsible government. It was said plainly by Sir Malcolm Hailey, the present Governor of these provinces, that Parliament had never promised India dominion status and that all that Parliament promised was responsible government. We have attempted to meet that position in the Nehru Committee Report and I venture to submit with confidence that if British statesmen come to study their own declarations during the last seven or eight years and the declarations of the highest personages in the British Empire, they will find that so far as Parliament is concerned, so far as British statesmanship is concerned, it stands itself committed to dominion status for India.

Therefore, it did come to me and it did come to many of us as a surprise when in the year 1924 or early in 1925 Lord Birkenhead made a famous speech in which he threw out a challenge to India and said that if Indians had any clear notions about their future, they ought to define what they meant exactly by Swaraj. Lord Birkenhead at that time thought that the position in the country was so hopeless, that Indians were so hopelessly divided from each other, that there was no chance of any agreement when they came to clear their ideas as to what Swaraj meant. I regret to have to say that none of the political parties took that challenge very seriously at that time because I feel sure that if the challenge had been taken up at that time somewhat seriously and if the various political parties had met in 1925 or 1926 as they did meet in this year, probably the situation might have been different. To that extent I am prepared to take the blame on our shoulders. But the fact remains that we did take up the challenge. We did take it when a strong challenge was offered to Indian nationalism, when a deliberate and calculated insult—I can use no other language—was offered to India, though several excuses have been made about it by persons in high and eminent positions. That insult offered was when the Simon Commission was appointed. It has been said that the Simon Commission was appointed as it has been appointed, because Lord Birkenhead and his advisers thought that no Indians were available who could be taken to represent the general Indian view.

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No Hindu could be taken into the Commission who could be taken to be absolutely impartial, fair or just, and no Muhammedan could be taken into the Commission who could be similarly described to be absolutely just, fair or impartial, and therefore it was that they decided to appoint a Commission consisting exclusively of Europeans and not consisting at all of any Indians. Well, this view was put before some of us in England by some very distinguished statesmen and also by some very distinguished people in India. We contested that view. Very well, our view did not prevail and there was no option left to us as self-respecting men but to accept that challenge. Speaking for myself, I do not attach so much importance at all to the campaign of boycott as it has gone on during the last several months as to the constructive side of our work. If all that we had done by way of accepting that challenge was to boycott that Commission, frankly speaking, I should not have been very happy. But I do maintain that we have every reason to feel happy that we decided not only to boycott the Simon Commission but forward a constructive scheme to the best of our ability.

Therefore, I do say that it was a happy idea of some of the leaders of the Congress to invite the All Parties Conference and then to appoint a committee to draw up a scheme. I now wish to speak in the fewest possible words of the scheme in the preparation of which I took a humble part under the leadership of Pandit Motilal Nehru. There can be no denying the fact that the proposals put forward there on the basis of dominion status have carried with them the largest amount of agreement in the country. To my mind, therefore, the idea of dominion status has cleared the air to a very great extent. It is no longer open to our hostile critics like Lord Birkenhead who, be it said to his discredit, having retired from the India Office, is now devoting his time to a persistent campaign of vilification of India in the columns of the British press to say that Indians have not defined their idea of Swaraj. We have recorded most solemnly in our report what we mean by Swaraj, and that report has been considered nearly on every political and public platform.

Therefore, so far as the Liberal Party is concerned, so far as several other political parties are concerned, it may be said without any fear of contradiction that the idea of dominion status is an accepted idea. I am perfectly well aware that there is growing up in this country a school of thought which is not prepared to accept dominion status but which is urging the idea of independence. Now let me make the position of our party absolutely clear. When we, the Liberals, and when many of the politicians generally talk of dominion status, we use that phrase without any equivocation, without any ambiguity, without any mental reservation. We mean by dominion status nothing more and at the same time nothing less than dominion status. (Hear, hear.) That is our idea of dominion status, and if there is a school of independence growing in this country I can quite understand the psychology behind it. But the responsibility for that cannot be taken by us. The responsibility must be taken by a government whose last refuge is stagnation. (Hear, hear.) They are the people who are responsible for the growth of this idea and they must be prepared to take the responsibility for it and not we politicians who do not belong to the independence school.

Speaking for myself, I say that the situation in the country is by no means a happy one and by no means an easy one. It is open to the Government, it is open to their advisers, it is open to their informers to hold the view that the 20,000 or the 25,000 men who have assembled in Calcutta and the few hundreds who have assembled here represent only themselves, that they do not represent the 315 million men inside the country and that the sentiments, the feelings and the aspirations of the 315 million men of India are represented by men like Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Sir Reginald Craddock and may I add—Sir James Meston, or Lord Meston as he now is. (Shame, shame.) If they derive any solace from a view like that, they are quite welcome to entertain it. Most Governments are unwilling to face realities, most Governments are unwilling to understand the mentality of an alien people, and I am not at all surprised that the British Government in India at the present moment—living as it does in a state of isolation, cut off as it is from

all avenues of independent information, thriving as it does upon the support of those men who start a country league here or another league there, who are prepared to say 'yes' to everything that comes from them should be unwilling and should be unable to take a correct measure of the situation. (Hear, hear.) We are not accustomed to the language of threat and I would beg of you not to take the last portion of our resolution in the nature of a threat. But I do say it is up to us to warn and we shall be wanting in our duty to the country and to the Government if we did not even at this stage venture to give a warning to the Government. We say that further delay and postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England. I say so deliberately because one thing which was obvious to my mind when I attended the Convention was that among the large surging crowds of young men and old men in Calcutta assembled there, there was a distinct and unmistakable cleavage between the older politicians and the younger generation of politicians in India. The young men with all the enthusiasm of their youth, with all the idealism which it is their privilege to entertain and to cherish, are thinking on different lines and even leaders of the distinction of Pandit Motilal Nehru—and may I respectfully add, Mahatma Gandhi—are finding it difficult at the present moment to have their word accepted by their own following as they used to a few years ago. Now I say all honour to those leaders who are fighting for their own ideas in their own following in the hope and the belief that they are leading their following to the true goal, but if even their position is going to be weakened it will again be a repetition of the story of the Liberals being extinguished by the Government. That is really the position at the present moment.

Now, gentlemen, having reviewed the situation, I will just ask you to consider what exactly it is that we mean by dominion status and I wish to meet the criticism of some of my Indian friends. It is said that the dominion status idea is a very low idea, that it is not an idea which can arouse any enthusiasm among the younger generation, and that dominion status will keep us under the heels of England. I repudiate that idea very strongly. The idea of dominion status as it is, as it has grown and as it is growing in the self-governing dominions is a dynamic idea. It has changed from generation to generation, it has changed in every decade. Every Imperial Conference that has met in England has made a contribution to the growth and the development of the idea of dominion status, until you find the Imperial Conference of 1926 meeting in London and coming to some conclusions which give the self-governing dominions even the liberty to separate themselves, if they like, from England. (Hear, hear.) You could not have a larger and broader idea of dominion status. Well, if the dominions have not separated—if the dominions are not going to separate, and if the dominions will not separate from England, it is because they feel that in their own homes they are absolute masters. They can shape their own policy, they can pass their own laws and they can have their own tariffs. It is because they feel that they occupy a position of perfect equality with England, that they are in truth and in fact equal members of the British Commonwealth, that they consider it desirable, that they consider it expedient, that they consider it necessary to remain members of the British Commonwealth. And so long as those relations continue to subsist between England and the self-governing dominions I have not the least doubt in my mind that the dominions will stand shoulder to shoulder with England. But it is said by our critics that the case of the self-governing dominions is absolutely different. The dominions consist of the white people. They are descendants of the same stock. Their religion is the same as of the English people, whereas in the case of India, where is the guarantee that if India gets dominion status, she will not separate herself from England? My answer to this is this. It is an argument of despair. It implies and it means that if these are the suspicions which are being harboured by English statesmen in England and in India, then the talk of dominion status and responsible government is nothing but a sham and delusion, and inasmuch as we cannot have a common history, a common religion, common ties of blood, it follows that all the declarations that have been made by English statesmen in behalf of dominion status must be taken as mere paper declarations. The

true fact is this. You may not grant dominion status to India but you cannot prevent men's minds running on dangerous lines. They are already running on dangerous lines.

You may deal with the situation strongly. I have not the slightest doubt in my mind that England is in a position to deal with any critical situation at the present moment in India by the force that she possesses. But there is one thing which has got constantly to be put before our friends in the Government here and in England. You can do everything with your bayonets but you can't sit on them. (Hear, hear.) What men of my generation bore in our younger days, what we are prepared to bear even at the present moment, though our experience has blighted our enthusiasm, I feel absolutely certain, the younger generation in India is not prepared to bear or to suffer. (Hear, hear.) Herein lies, to my mind, the whole danger of the situation and it is absurd to think that these young men whom we sometimes deride in our superior wisdom for their enthusiasm are isolated units. Each one of them, I say and I maintain, and I give that warning to the Government, is a centre round which so many lives turn, is a radiating centre from which so much light and so much heat flows in other directions. Therein lies the danger and I do maintain and I do strongly hold that the situation even now is not uncontrollable. The key to the situation lies and I say so very strongly, in the hands of the Viceroy. If the Viceroy is going to entrench himself behind the advice that he receives from men who are out of touch with the country, if he thinks that he can carry on the administration of this country as his predecessors had been carrying on for an unlimited time, then I do so say that he is living in a fool's paradise. (Cheers).

Well, I honestly believe that prestige is a very good thing to cultivate. Not only do the Government here care for their prestige but even political parties do care for their prestige. But there is a point beyond which you carry this love of prestige at your own risk. I certainly think that there is plenty of time for them to recover the lost ground, to retrieve the mistakes which they made last year. But, speaking frankly, I have not the least hope that the Government of India, as it is at present constituted, will rise equal to the occasion. I regret to have to say that. I cannot say what might happen next year when the Simon Commission tenders its report. I do not know whether Sir John Simon is going to be another Lord Durham for India. I have my own doubts and my own misgivings. Lord Durham was made of different fibre. I say so without meaning any disrespect to Sir John Simon. I cannot expect that any Commission or any body of British statesmen can rise superior to their surroundings, and those surroundings have been of the most poisonous character. (Hear, hear.) I feel that for the last two or three years the most venomous campaign of misrepresentation against India has been carried on in the Anglo-Indian press here and in the English press in England, so much so that the average English voter has come to hold the opinion that the Indians are a great nuisance, that Indians ought to be grateful for what England has done and that they ought to have trust in the men on the spot. These are the views that have been spread in England. I doubt, therefore, very much whether you can hope to get anything out of this Simon Commission. What I do believe is that a very much bigger gesture of statesmanship is needed to save the situation, and not a mere gesture unaccompanied by action. (Hear, hear.) It is said—ob, well, during the last eight years you have been given a system of government in which you have had Indian members of the Executive Council and Indian Ministers, and they have been looking after your affairs. We know what sort of Indian Ministers we have been getting in the past, and we know what sort of Indian Ministers we have at the present moment. The other day when I returned here from Calcutta I read in the columns of the *Leader* a memorandum sent by the local Government, to which I regret to have to say I find my friend the Nawab of Chhatari has put his signature. (Shame, shame.) Well, if it is possible for an Indian Executive Councillor or Minister in a constitution like this to put his signature to a document of that character, then I venture to think that so far as the present constitution is concerned, it

stands discredited in the eyes of all Indians, irrespective of their party shibboleths. It seems to me, sir, that the time for half measures is gone. It will not do for you or for anybody now to talk in terms of dyarchy whether in the Provincial Governments or whether in the Central Government. (Applause.) What we are determined to achieve, and achieve in our own generation and in our own time, as soon as possible without wasting any unnecessary time, is responsible government at the centre and in the provinces and nothing less than responsible government. (Hear, hear.) Unless the blighting influence of Whitehall is removed from India, unless the Government of India becomes an independent Government of India, responsible to the people of India and responsible to the legislature, and unless the local legislatures acquire a similar amount of independence within their own sphere of action, no political party is going to be satisfied with half measures whether they are intended to be introduced in the provinces, or whether they are intended to be introduced at the centre. The time has come when we ought to press and press strongly for nothing less than complete dominion status for India. (Hear, hear.)

I have been very often asked by my young friends in Calcutta and elsewhere as to what are the sanctions behind us for enforcing our demand. My answer is this. I radically differ from those who think that by forging the standard type of sanctions which they have in view they can achieve anything. I believe in one sanction and one sanction only and that is the united will of the country. (Hear, hear.) If once we can remove the common misunderstandings, if once we can show to the minorities and show to them most unmistakably that the minorities stand to gain everything and lose nothing under a system of responsible government, if we can readjust our social relations, if we can broaden our ideas of economic questions, if we can bring about a general amount of unanimity on vital national questions, I personally think you will not require another sanction because I feel absolutely persuaded on one point, and it is that the Englishman is such a practical-minded business-like sort of man that when once he comes to know that India is indeed earnest about dominion status and responsible government he will not wait for other sanctions. He will come to you and say—'Now come to a settlement.' Therefore when my young friends talk of other sanctions I always remind them that the very first sanction that has got to be forged by us is the sanction of unity, the removal of those differences which have disfigured our public life, the removal of those differences which have rent our society into pieces and if any effort is made in bringing about that harmony, in bringing about that cooperation between one section of Indian society and another section, I venture to say not only on my humble behalf but on behalf of my party that you will find the Liberals standing shoulder to shoulder with every other party whatever may be its label in the country. (Loud applause.)

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer (Madras): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—It is always a disadvantage to follow a speaker like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. (Laughter.) I assure you that I had prepared very elaborate notes for the purpose of addressing myself to this topic of such vital importance, but to my dismay as the speech of Sir Tej Bahadur proceeded from sentence to sentence, from period to period, those notes subsided into my pocket. (Renewed laughter.) And so here I am standing before you, defenceless and helpless. But the cause is great and I buckled myself to the task. Friends, the resolution which I have the greatest pleasure in seconding contains two divisions. The first asserts unequivocally that we are convinced that nothing other than dominion status, nothing less, no smaller bargaining will suffice the needs of the hour. The second portion of the resolution warns the authorities that they are blind to the essential features of a very grave and critical situation, that they do not realise where they are going, that they are blind to the teachings of history and that more is expected of men who have the destinies of a great people in their charge.

Now as to the first part of the resolution, let me put before you what is happening elsewhere. But before I do so, let me tell you at once that I

do not propose to speak otherwise than from the most practical point of view. As in a very memorable address Pandit Motilal Nehru declared only the day before yesterday, ideals to be held aloft and cherished and pursued are great things, but in the following out of those ideals, when stern, strenuous and continuous action becomes necessary, practical considerations must also prevail. I say with all humility but with sincere conviction that dominion status is an intensely real and practical proposition (hear, hear), and indeed there can be no other practical proposition before the country—and why? Why, because what is needed in a country is its status and its prosperity. In the case of an individual what matters most to him is his prestige and his status. India's status, India's prestige demands that she should take a place with the sister nations of the world on a level congruent to her tradition, her history and her work in the past and her indubitable work in the future. (Hear, hear.) But that is idealism. There is much more behind that than mere idealism. What means a nation today? In the combative and competitive spirit which civilisation exhibits at the present moment a nation means nothing more and nothing less than the resources—material, intellectual and physical of the race. Is it possible to develop our physical resources, to augment our moral heritage, to keep aloft the banner of India flying, unless we have complete internal sovereignty? The answer can only be one and that is the answer we are giving. And why? Let me give you an illustration. One would have thought that both England and Scotland were both self-governing. That is our idea. But I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, that within the last two years a movement has been gaining ground in Scotland for the purpose of obtaining Home Rule for Scotland. That little country which has given its sovereigns to England, which is supposed to rule the commerce and the trade of England and which is causing loss to Calcutta because the jute trade of Bengal is in Dundee, Scotland now says: "This union of England and Scotland is not to the advantage of Scotland. Our trade, our commerce, our fiscal policy, suffer from being in juxtaposition with the trade and commercial ideals of England. We want Home Rule." A party has been started to run the next elections in May for the purpose of winning Home Rule for Scotland. And we say that if two countries born of the same stock, nurtured in the same atmosphere, nourished by the same faiths and beliefs, belonging to common traditions, can feel that juxtaposition in political unity is not perhaps as advantageous as that federation of sister nations which goes by the term of the Commonwealth of Nations, and if, therefore, they are attempting to reorganize the British polity so as to produce a commonwealth within Great Britain, we are not asking too much when we make the same demand ourselves because is it to be gainsaid, can any observer of Indian conditions deny that Indian commerce has to be treated individually *suo moto* with reference to its own conditions, that Indian fiscal policy has to be regulated with sole advertence to Indian needs and Indian aspirations, that Indian representation in foreign countries charged with the mission of expanding Indian industry and developing Indian trade should be established, that Indian banking system should be elaborated with regard solely to Indian prosperity? Can these things be doubted any longer? I had the advantage of being present at one of the sessions in Geneva of the League which dealt with international economic problems, which dealt in fact with the results of the deliberations of the Supreme Economic Conference. Nation after nation came forward and gave detailed reasons, elaborating the history of their own efforts in order to make that nation self-sufficient and aggressively self-sufficient amongst the comity of nations in respect of its trade, its manufactures, its fiscal policy and its banking system. At the end of it, what was I asked? Every nation, after having suffered from the horrors of tariff barrier walls, was today endeavouring to break down these walls and I was asked why it is that India continues a protectionist policy today when every other country is seeking to get rid of that protectionist policy. And it fell to my lot to explain to that gathering that for 50 or 60 years India had suffered a system of "exploitation"—I emphasized the word and liked to put it within inverted commas—and that we were only trying to rebuild a ruined fabric. I pointed out, for instance, that it was for some time penal for a man in England to wear Indian silk and that it was a matter for heavy fines if a

man was found wearing Indian material at a time when India could send her material to other countries. From our experience we have found that without an essential national bias and a national outlook we cannot reconstruct our national wealth and a bankrupt nation, a poor nation, a starving nation, cannot be a fit sister amongst the sisterhood of nations. It is that national wealth and prosperity that we are seeking to build up and we are only following the humble example of Scotland which is demanding Home Rule. That is why we ask for dominion status.

But then you are told: "You are so divided into communities, your Hindus and Muhammedans will have nothing to do with each other and there are peculiar, social observances and social boycotts among them." The mover referred to Lord Durham. Those of us who have read Lord Durham's speech remember that exactly the same conditions prevailed between the French and the English in Canada as between the Hindus and the Muhammedans here. They would not go to the same house of worship. There were social boycotts, there were almost tribal jealousies and local antagonisms. Unlike others who are false prophets Lord Durham said: It is because they have nothing better to do, it is because they have no greater tasks to perform, it is because they have no greater joint obligations to fulfil, that they are fighting for these little things. Similarly I say, make the Hindus and the Muhammedans joint rulers of this kingdom. There may be a little disturbance here and there and there is bound to be disequilibrium. No man is born into the world without the pangs of birth throes and a nation cannot be born without such pangs. But that moment over, every thing would be all right and so it was in Canada. Why should history be completely disregarded and why should geogaphy alone be insisted upon? (Laughter and cheers.)

Then we are told—but how can you think and dream of dominion status? Do you understand that dominion status means a self-reliant and a self-sufficient nationality. Where is your army, where is your navy, where is your air-craft and submarine equipment under the present conditions? Yes, I admit it is a very baffling argument, a very able argument. But may we ask, what about Australia? Was it found necessary before giving self-government to Australia? Suppose Australia is not safe from the predatory intentions—let us say most hypothetically, most impossibly,—either of Japan or of America and assume for a moment that England stands aside. Can Australia defend herself? The argument is that England should stand aside when India is being attacked by somebody from the north, east, or west and then we can't with *satyagraha* meet those people. You must have your army and navy and as you have not got it, therefore you can't get dominion status. Let the same argument be applied to Australia. How many minutes will it take for Australia to be overrun if England stands aside? If it is so today when Australia has really built up her own navy, what was it when Australia was given dominion status? These arguments are merely pretexts to refuse our demand.

The Liberal Party stand for dominion status because for one thing it has been the consistent and constant demand of this party and of all sensible thinking men for over 50 or 60 years. Why? Because Indians are essentially practical idealists. They realise that in this world absolute independence can no longer exist and that there is no country in the world which is either fiscally or economically or otherwise independent of other countries. Nations imagine it is impracticable to stand aloof from one another and groups of people and leagues of nations are coming into existence and sooner or later that will be the order of the day. The British Commonwealth itself is a miniature league of nations, of people banded together for common purposes, and banded together because each isolated unit would not easily develop and spontaneously evolve as they would if they were joined together for common purposes. It is that ideal which India has always pursued. Not many days ago in Calcutta there was placed in my hands a very small pamphlet published by Acharya Roy, containing the views of that great man, Kristodas Pal, uttered in 1874. This idea of

dominion status was really adumbrated not in 1834 or 1835 or 1905 or 1906 but in 1874 by Babu Kristodas Pal. What does he say? "Our attention should, therefore, be directed to Home Rule for India, to the introduction of a constitutional government for India in India. If Canada could have a parliament, if such small and little advanced colonies as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, New Zeland could have councils and governments of their own, surely British India has a fair claim to a similar representation. Home Rule for India ought to be our cry and it ought to be based upon the same constitutional basis that is recognised in the colonies." From 1874 therefore, the same demand has been made. Why is that demand reiterated to-day? Because, as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru justly observed, we Liberals believe that there is nothing to lose but a great deal to gain by being within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

True it is that Great Britain has no imagination; true it is that they have not awakened to the realities of the situation, true it is that they are always late in giving and not always generous in giving anything. But nevertheless it is well to be banded together in that union which is of very great promise and perhaps the greatest promise to-day in the history of constitutional experiments. Well, that is the offer, the demand that is made by us. The second part of the resolution says that the demand is made by thinking India in a spirit of spontaneous good-will. We believe that if only we can prove that we make the demand unitedly, Great Britain would be too shrewd not to accede to that demand. When all is said and done, take it from me that sanctions such as are constantly invoked would do much less to bring about that result than the union of which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru spoke. It is easy to meet sanction by counter-sanction. It is easy to meet isolated acts of impatience by acts of repression and easy to get into a backwater. But it is difficult, nay, it is impossible for anybody to resist our demand if only the Hindu and the Muhammedan, the Brahmin and the non-Brahmin, the Liberal and the Home Ruler and the Congressman should unite and say—let us have dominion status, we will take nothing less, we will give you no peace and rest until we get it. (Hear, hear.) Government knows that and Government counts upon our not realising that. Let us, therefore, work so as to make our dream a reality. If we really feel strongly, we shall achieve dominion status. As Dr. Besant has more than once said, if we are in earnest everything will be easy. The question is, are we in earnest? If we are, this resolution is an attempt to translate that earnestness into action. (Loud applause.)

The hon. Mr. G. A. Natesan.

The hon. Rao Bahadur G.A. Natesan (Madras): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—If you really believe that my friend Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer suffered any kind of disability in following Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, I ask you to give me honestly your genuine sympathy in the very difficult position and predicament in which I am because I am to speak upon a resolution of this importance after Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer have spoken. The resolution, as you have already read and as you must have understood by this time from the very clear, concise and cogent speeches delivered by the preceding speakers, asks in the name of the Liberal Party that we want full responsible government as it obtains in the dominions and in the colonies, the essence of which is that the executive must be responsible to the legislature and the legislature responsible only to the people of this country and to no outside authority. We want in short to be in our country what a Canadian is in his country, what an Australian is in his country and what every colonial is in his country. We want to be masters in our own household. We want to shape our policies and govern our country, unhampered and unrestricted by any other extraneous considerations. This is what the resolution demands and this is all that we demand in the name of the self-respect and the honour of our country. We sometimes think in moments of pride and perhaps ill-considered ebullition of spirit how proud India is when some of our best men like the Right Honourable V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer and others represent us in the League of Nations and in the great Imperial Conference. Some others too in humbler positions have gone to other countries and spoken

on behalf of India. But I tell you, you cannot possibly feel the humiliation of the very unfair political status which the tallest of our countrymen occupy when they leave the country and when they particularly have to visit and deliberate amongst the representatives of the various parts of the British Commonwealth, all else enjoying self-government, all else enjoying responsible government and India alone without it. I hope I am not exaggerating the situation when I say that you feel the hall mark of political inferiority all the more keenly when you leave India and when you are taking part in deliberations in other parts of the British Commonwealth. I feel this and others who have gone to some of these countries have realised this most painfully and keenly. In the dominions and in the colonies, particularly our own countrymen have no status. In some parts they are treated as inferior beings and they are subjected to humiliations and insults, and all this is due to the fact that we are not a self-governing nation. Never before more keenly did I realise this than when day after day, for over a month in Canada when the Empire Parliamentary Association was holding its deliberations. Speaker after speaker coming from various parts of the British dominions and the colonies talked every day about the problem of migration within the Empire and the marketing of Empire goods, and I realised what little place India had in this great Empire. The Britisher got up day after day and said: Please take more of our countrymen in the various parts of the dominions of our Empire, and also more of our goods. I was a witness to this day after day, when England said: I shall send more and more thousands of my young boys to your countries and colonies. I was listening to this in the Dominion of Canada and in the presence of representatives from various other parts of the British Commonwealth. When our own people are not allowed to enter that and when our people who have already settled there are not allowed to pass their lives in peace and enjoy the elementary rights of British citizenship, I ask you whether a self-respecting nation can continue in the present state of things and whether, therefore, it is not high time that we ask to be placed in a position of equality with the other members of the British Commonwealth. If you reflect for a moment on the various parts of the British Empire you will find that India is the largest, rich in numbers. We are proud of our history, we are proud of our civilization, and we are prouder still of the fact that for thousands of years conqueror after conqueror has done us damage in many ways, and with all that we have preserved the unique character of our civilization. But our position today is one of inferiority and I really think that if we are to make any headway among other nations, we cannot possibly suffer this situation any longer. Our distinguished leader Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru said that the second part of the resolution should not be taken as a threat. I would go further and say that if anyone has paid attention to the real difficulty of the situation in India, he would find that the truth lies in the fact that of late we have a large and considerable number of our people who have lost faith in the *bonafides* of British rule. I am not making this statement at random. I will only cite as my authority such a brilliant writer as Sir Valentine Chirol who has said so in more than one of his publications. If this feeling of want of distrust in British rule and British statesmanship is to be removed, I think proof should be given and the only proof which Great Britain can give to us in this direction is the granting of self-government.

I quite recognize we cannot get self-government unless we have unity and I think, therefore, that whatever our differences it should be our endeavour to make them up. And if we can present, as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru rightly remarked, a united front we can be sure that more than all sanctions unity of all castes and creeds will put us on a better footing to achieve the object we have in view. To our rulers I would only say this: for God's sake, do not convert India into another Ireland, and to the Christian statesmen who guide our destinies I say in all seriousness and I appeal to them—you should when the time comes be able to say, "We came not to destroy but to build." (Applause.)

Rao Bahadur R. V. Mahajani.

Rao Bahadur R. V. Mahajani (Berar): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—After so many distinguished leaders have spoken on this resolution I have to say very little and I consider myself fortunate in having an opportunity to come after them. In brief I may say that when we are discussing this resolution, I am reminded of a rich man whose agent does not, really speaking, do anything to carry out the intentions of the master. Although the Royal Proclamation may have said one thing and although the Imperial Conference may also say another thing, still the Indian bureaucracy would try to pass commentaries on what they say and would try to go back upon the declarations made even by the King, and it is really due to that that we find this spectacle of men like Sir Malcolm Hailey saying that dominion status was never the ideal of Parliament for India. Even when they are prepared to consider that India should have self-government, they try to say that dominion status is the highest goal and that India could never expect to realise it. What I say is that this really is not proper for them to do. In view of the fact that India is given a place in the League of Nations and in the Imperial Conference, it does not behove the British Government to say that dominion status should not be its ideal. Our distinguished leader, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, has taken you over the whole historical retrospect about this situation and has explained to you how there has been a set back since then. Unless the British Government try to retrace their steps and unless they grant us this ideal immediately, and they substitute the present form of government by the one suggested in the resolution, we as Liberals give a warning to the Government that there is another school rising which will prove even worse for them. We, therefore, ask them to take care and to see that this ideal is realised soon. Just as we have to say to the Government that dominion status is the only goal that is possible under the circumstances, we have also to say to the younger generation.—“Please don't get impatient but look to the practical side of things and look to the advice which is given by our distinguished leaders like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru.” If we get dominion status we really get what we want. In support of this resolution I will read only a small passage from Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer's recent book: “Equality of status was declared to be the root principle governing inter-imperial relations. With regard to the conduct of foreign policy it was recognised that though the major portion of responsibility must for some time continue to rest with the Imperial Government and though practically all the dominions are engaged to some extent in the conduct of foreign relations, particularly with foreign countries on their borders, the governing consideration underlying all discussions of the problem must be that neither Great Britain nor the Dominions could be committed to the acceptance of active obligations except with the definite assent of their own Governments. It will thus be seen that the status of a self-governing dominion within the British Empire is as high as can be wished for by the most ardent patriot, and that it offers the fullest scope and security for the realisation of national aspirations, while it carries with it all the great advantages of partnership in the most powerful empire in the world.”

I further submit that unless this dominion status becomes actually a fact we can never find time and opportunity to look to the social organisation, social uplift and uplift in other directions which is very badly wanted in our present conditions. (Applause.)

Mr. D. G. Dalvi.

Mr. D. G. Dalvi (Bombay): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I should have thought that in a meeting of Liberals many speakers were not needed to commend to you the ideal of dominion status. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and those who have followed him have pointed out the various stages through which this idea of dominion status has passed until this day. Standing as I do in this hall, I cannot help being reminded of the meeting of the Convention committee of 1908 when this very issue of dominion home rule *versus* independence was discussed in this hall for three

long days after the break-up of the Surat Congress, and I see it before my eyes now how those of us who were in the conference and many of those who are in the Congress deliberated for three days here together and came to the conclusion that for the Congress of that time as well as for the conference of that year the ideal of dominion status should be the ideal to be placed before the country. Now 20 years hence that same issue has come to the front and whereas in 1908 we were the dominant party in the Congress, today we are out of it. I am glad to find that, coming as I do from Calcutta, the same decision that was arrived at in this hall in 1908 was arrived at in the *pandal* of the Convention at Calcutta. (Hear, hear.) I am glad to find that this ideal has commended itself to the bulk of the country at the present day. In the Convention *pandal* I found that among an attendance of 1,500 persons the large bulk was still in favour of dominion status, and I warn the Government to realise that before it is too late and to see that this large body of solid opinion that is in favour of this ideal is kept on their side by taking suitable and early action in terms of our resolution, (Hear, hear.) because at present we are faced with two schools of opponents. One is the school of the bureaucracy represented by Sir Malcolm Hailey who, speaking as the Home Member of the Government of India, tried to draw a distinction between dominion status and responsible government. Now I should like to ask that ex-Home Member again today whether it is possible to have full responsible government without dominion status. What does full responsible government mean? If the provinces are not autonomous, if the central Government is not given full powers and if the control of affairs is left in the India Office and in the British Parliament, how is responsible government to be carried out in all its implications? The logical conclusion of full responsible government is that India must be given full dominion status.

I just told you that in 1908 what was implicit up to that time was made explicit in the creed of the Congress as we framed in this very hall. Since then we have passed through three stages of reforms. First came the Minto-Morley reforms, and as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has told you they did not recognise that ideal at all. Lord Morley in his speech said at the time that he was not giving India any parliamentary institutions. But the experience of a very few years was sufficient to satisfy the country and the Government also that without implementing that ideal to a certain extent there could be no real progress, and hence came the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. If my memory serves me right, when the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme was brought to the notice of Lord Morley, he said: "I see the delineations of my scheme in these reforms." All I am pointing out is that the trend of British thought since 1908 was to make progress towards dominion status. Mr. Montagu said: 'I have given you dominion status and a scheme to work up to that status.' Now we have experience of that scheme for eight years and it is not necessary for me to further explain that position except to ask you to read the minority report of the Muddiman Committee in which the five years' work of the reforms has been so ably argued by a body of four eminent gentlemen, almost all of whom belong to the Liberal Party. Therefore, a case has been made out for advance up to the stage of full responsible government and dominion status in that valuable document. But apart from the arguments there, it is very easy to understand why it is that any further progress of a satisfactory character is not possible without full dominion home rule. Take a few instances. In Bombay we had recently the Universities Act. We want educational progress and our experience has been that with the present political system we could not get that cultural advance which we have a right to expect. Then take the case of economic progress. We have Mr. Haji's Bill before us and what little advance is sought to be made in the economic direction, namely, shipping, is being denied to us by the Government. Then take social advance. We have Mr. Sarja's Marriage Bill before the country. The Government of India should have welcomed that Bill as a very reasonable Bill. But they have appointed a committee to consider the question of the age of consent and God knows if the official *bloc* would not ultimately vote against Mr. Sarja's Bill. I am only

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mentioning these few instances to point out that unless we have full responsible government, it is not possible to make any real advance in any direction whatever. I don't think it is necessary to argue the case for dominion status any further. So far about the first school of opponents.

There is a second school of opponents who call themselves the advocates of independence. I do not wish to deal with that school here except to say that at present that school is like a small cloud rising on the horizon and if notice is not taken of that school betimes and if advantage is not taken of the majority in the country who passed the resolution for dominion status in the Calcutta Convention, I am afraid the last warning given in the last sentence of the resolution will prove to have had a great significance of its own. Without any more words I commend this resolution for your acceptance. (Applause.)

PANDIT GOPINATH KUNZRU.

Pandit Gopinath Kunzru, supporting the resolution in Hindi, said that when a demand for self-government was made it was argued that India was not yet fit for it as she had neither an army nor unity, between different communities. Mr. Kunzru's reply to such an argument was that formerly in Europe too there were no armies and men were trained for field service in a very short time as need for such men arose. An army could be prepared, therefore, at any time and communal quarrels would not last long. The argument in question against India's fitness for self-government was, therefore, an argument with no substance. If, Mr. Kunzru said, there was no third party, for whom would the Muslims quarrel? The disputes in legislatures arose only because Muslims wanted to vote for the Government. Therefore, if Indians had their own Government there would be no quarrels and every thing would be settled in no time.

Concluding, Mr. Gopi Nath Kunzru, said that he was surprised to hear even some Indians say that they were not fit for self-government. It was the result of the state of constant slavery that they had lost confidence in their own capacity. His advice to the people was that they should have confidence in their own capacity and should show some courage and then every thing would be well automatically.

BABU RADHA MOHAN.

Babu Radha Mohan also supported the resolution in Hindi. He said that Indians were not trusted in the constitution of the Simon Commission. How long could an administration, the speaker asserted, last if the trustees did not put any confidence in the beneficiaries? Such a system, therefore, stood self-condemned. Therefore from the action of the British administrators themselves, the conclusion that followed was that the present conditions did need a change. The question would then arise, Mr. Radha Mohan continued, that if they were not successful in attaining the end what further steps should be taken to continue the struggle? In that connection he wished to say that it would be a mistake to think that they were offering any threat. The policy of the Liberals was to proceed on constitutional lines. But they wished to warn the Government that the excitement prevailing among the younger generation was very high and a time might soon come when the situation might get out of control.

The resolution was then put up and carried *nem con.*

NEHRU COMMITTEE REPORT AND THE PROBLEM OF MINORITIES.

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari.

Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari : Mr. President, Fellow-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I beg to place before you for your acceptance the following resolution :—

- (a) This Federation accords its general support to the report of the Nehru Committee and the resolutions of the All-Parties

Conference held at Lucknow, in particular with reference to the establishment of complete provincial autonomy without second chambers and of full responsible government in the Government of India with all residuary powers.

- (b) This Federation is further of opinion that if, in addition to or in substitution of the recommendations of the Nehru Committee, the settlement of the problem of minorities is possible by agreement on any other basis, such basis should be accepted in the larger and more abiding interests of the country.
- (c) The Federation appoints a committee consisting of Sir Chimanal Setalvad (Bombay); Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (Allahabad); Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer (Madras), and Babu Jitendra Nath Basu (secretary,) to cooperate with the representatives of other organizations for the settlement of communal questions.

This resolution appears to me to be in legal parlance the residuary clause of our present political testament and I call it so, also because it purports to deal with residuary powers. I call it a residuary clause because the major portion of the report has already been dealt with in connection with the resolution on dominion status. In the resolution that is to follow, namely, the fifth resolution, other reservations than those contained in this resolution will be dealt with. Having said that I ask you to give once again your general support to the Nehru Report and the recommendations of the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow. Ladies and gentlemen, last year the Liberal Federation did give general support in advance to the ideals underlying the Nehru recommendations. The Nehru recommendations were then not in existence, but the Liberal mind had been made up and had been made clearly well-known. Now that the recommendations have been formulated and that they have received the assent of the Lucknow Conference—I am sorry I am not in a position to say that they have received the assent of the All-Parties Convention at Calcutta because we are not possessed of up-to-date information and knowledge—and on the whole I think it may fairly be claimed that not only the Liberals but the majority of the other communities and classes are in support of those recommendations. That the Congress had brought this Convention into existence shows that it is a great feature of the Congress activities for which we cannot be too grateful. That no dissent against the acceptance of dominion status by the Convention had been recorded on behalf of the Congress, at least when we left Calcutta, is also another satisfactory feature of the Congress session. What might happen in future is another matter. Whatever differences of opinion it may be possible to entertain with regard to minor matters here and there, it would not be improper or unreasonable, foolhardy or presumptuous, to claim that on the whole the politically-minded organisations of India are entirely in favour of those recommendations as a whole. There are, however, differences of opinion here and there on comparatively minor matters and this resolution proposes to deal with those possibilities in an absolutely statesmanlike way. In the first place, after giving general support this resolution specialises in two matters upon which public attention must be concentrated as next in importance only to dominion status, namely, complete provincial autonomy—and mark the reservation—without second chambers, and also full responsible government in the central Government, with residuary powers in that Government so far as they are not delegated to the provincial governments themselves. These are three propositions of the utmost prime importance. Nothing short of provincial autonomy is our insistence. Nothing short of responsible government in the central Government is also our insistence. The residuary power which now resides in Whitehall in the sacrosanct hands of the Secretary of State, who has abused them as much as powers could be abused, we demand, should be distributed between the provincial Governments and the central Government. Here in a nutshell is self-contained self-government. When His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, in opening the Central Legislature in

1921, ended his speech with a note of "Victory to Swaraj", he could not have meant anything less, however much later statesmanship attempted to whittle down those Royal pronouncements conveyed under the King's command to the Indian people. These, therefore, are the three outstanding matters in the Nehru recommendations, short of dominion status, upon which this Federation desires to lay special emphasis. And so far as they go, the Convention in Calcutta has not said one word in derogation of the position that this resolution seeks to take up.

In the second place, we cannot shut our eyes to the differences and difficulties about what are called the minor problems and also communal problems. Those two matters are attempted to be dealt with in the second and third parts of the resolution. Certain conclusions have been arrived at and embodied in the Nehru Report, but some of them may be yet open to objection and not free from difficulties. Therefore, this Federation thinks it wise, thinks it necessary, to provide machinery that will make it possible in the year before us to arrive at and to accept such substitution and compromise as may be necessary for the better effectuating of the Nehru recommendations. Therefore, the second part of the resolution asks you to approve that the settlement of the problem of minorities ought to be made possible by agreement on any basis other than that which has been agreed, and if any such basis is arrived at the Federation in advance gives its blessings and approval to such a settlement because real statesmanship requires that we should not live in water-tight compartments, making it impossible for us to make such a departure, such a deviation, and such a modification as may be found necessary in the light of later considerations. Then there is the supreme communal question regarding which we know that no settlement has yet been arrived at. In fact, according to this morning's telegrams, the Muslim League has suspended its final deliberations suddenly and has postponed them to some future date. The final acceptance by our Muhammedan friends of the Nehru recommendations either in their present form, or in such modified form as may be possible later on in agreement with the Hindu representatives, is necessary and in order to make such a settlement possible the Federation thinks that a machinery ought to be provided in the shape of a small committee. It is mentioned here in the resolution that this committee will have the power to arrive at such settlement as may be necessary. These are the important outstanding matters to which it would not be enough for this Federation to give mere general support but also to suggest some definite course of action as was done last year and as is again being done by this resolution this year.

It need not be reiterated that very critical times are before us when momentous issues will be either settled or attempted to be settled one way or another. The Liberal Federation has always stood firm in its determination for the attainment of dominion status. The researches of Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer take the demand for dominion status to the year 1874 instead of 1884 when the Congress started. Whether it was in 1884 or still earlier in 1832 when Raja Ram Mohun Roy made his political declaration before the British Parliament when the Reform Act was on the anvil, Indian reformers and Indian nationalists, never mind when they were born, have always been standing out for entire self-contained self-government which is only attainable by dominion status. All these things must stand together and cannot be viewed from any detached or isolated position. Not only the Liberal Federation but all the Liberals throughout the country have been unanimously demanding dominion status and the time has now come for us to reiterate our demand and to provide for the machinery and the necessary appliances by which it may be possible to carry out the Nehru recommendations. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has regretted that the challenge of Lord Birkenhead, now in his economic-journalistic-financial isolation enjoying the mischief that he has done, had not been taken up early. But is he so very sure about it? Was he not a party to that Bill that Dr. Annie Besant prepared at Delhi and later on presented to the Labour Party which adopted it as its own. Political opinions grow and move and the provisions of that Bill, which was an acceptance in advance of Lord Birkenhead's challenge,

provided the essentials of what we have agreed upon today. It will never lie in the mouths of our political opponents to say that Indians are not able to prepare, or are not willing to clarify their ideals and opinions about responsible government. If that was the plea available to them it is a poor claim and an utterly unsustainable excuse. Ideas are strengthening all round and Sir Tej Bahadur asked whether the 20,000 in the Calcutta Congress session and the few hundreds here are to be treated as a negligible minority in the country, not representing the wishes of our people. Would our friends desire, would our friends like that the example of the 50,000 labourers that marched on the Congress *pandal* and captured it for their own purposes should be followed by others and that a machinery should be brought into existence for the purpose of extorting our demand from an unwilling Government? It is a consummation never to be devoutly wished for. It is the birthright of our people to demand dominion status and nothing less. I think the Government will be ill-advised in not agreeing to the moderate demands that have been put forward in the Nehru Report, which we have great pleasure in endorsing today. Public opinion is expanding all round. Look at this platform. Look at all Liberal platforms. Ex-members of Government, ex-Ministers, and even ex-police superintendents are now coming into our ranks. What does it betoken? It shows that these friends of ours who have rightly shouldered the burden of office, who have seen the inward working of Government, who have seen the difficulty of working the governmental machinery, insist when they come out of office upon their countrymen accepting their advice that the present machinery must be changed and that the shackles of the Secretary of State must be thrown off.

That has been the war-cry of the Liberals from the very beginning, right from the moment that nationalism was born. Look at Bankim Chander Chatterji who was a deputy magistrate, before he became a celebrated novelist in Bengali; look at Ratanlal Banerji, the first of our national poets. He was also a deputy magistrate. So also was Dhirendralal Roy and so also was Ravindra Chandra Sen. These men who were in the service of Government are the men who have given a great lead to nationalism. So also our ex-members of Government and ex-Ministers, having done all they could to serve the country and the Government to the best of their lights, lay down the burdens of their high office, come out and tell you that you should take your stand firmly and demand not only a change of mentality on the part of our rulers but also a change of machinery, without which there can be no good future for our country.

All honour to the Congress of last year that it accepted the motion for a national convention which has now functioned with great credit to itself and great credit to all the parties concerned, including the Congress. We Liberals have also contributed our share to the work of the Convention and are met together in this serene atmosphere of Allahabad after the heat and dust of Calcutta to deliberate in a quiet and calm manner and to give our determined and whole-hearted blessings and support to the Nehru Committee recommendations. Before I conclude I wish to emphasize that this Federation has a duty to discharge and that is to signify in an unequivocal manner our sense of gratitude to the yeoman work of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and his colleagues on the Nehru Committee. I ask you to carry this resolution. (Applause.)

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri.

Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri (Madras): Mr. President, brother and sister members of the Federation, ladies and gentlemen,—I have great pleasure in seconding the proposition so ably moved by Sir Devaprasad Sarbadhikari. You will remember that there are three very important outstanding things requiring solution at our hands. The first is to work out our liberation from external control. That has been dealt with by the proposition which we have already passed, demanding dominion self-government for India so that she might occupy in the British Empire the same position that the colonies occupy at this moment and might occupy

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hereafter as years roll on. A second aspect of equal importance is our relation to Indian states—one of the internal problems within the limits of India. That proposition comes up for consideration hereafter. Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer will deal with it and I have no desire to say anything about it. The third matter is how when we have achieved liberation from external control, we shall order our internal affairs. That is a matter that this proposition deals with.

The first matter dealt with in clause (a) of this resolution calls upon us to give general support to the Nehru Report. We have taken up dominion status as a matter of prime importance and dealt with it and expressed our approval of the conclusions of the Nehru Report in the third resolution that we have passed today, because we cannot go beyond dominion status and we have expressed ourselves as not willing to accept anything less. The support that we have to give to other parts of the Nehru Report is not so imperative. As has already been explained to you more than once, the support of the Nehru Committee's recommendations does not mean that every part of it is acceptable to everybody. It must be recognised that there may be here and there items with which you don't entirely agree. But you must at the same time recognise that the particular item with which you may not be in agreement may be an item of importance to another person or to another group which has given its assent to the Nehru Report on the strength of all the items hanging together, so that you are called upon to give general support to the recommendations contained in the Nehru Report. But we have chosen in this first part of the resolution three particular matters, specially such recommendations to which you attach a great deal of importance. The first one is complete provincial autonomy. All of you must have heard that there is an idea of having what is called provincial autonomy, but which in reality is not provincial autonomy. It is proposed to take away subjects from the provincial sphere. Otherwise you will have what is called provincial autonomy. You are supposed to exercise your powers within the limits so fixed and even then if you go beyond what might be considered to be reasonable or proper by the powers that be, the central Government which will be relieved from the control of even such legislatures as it now possesses will be able to rectify what in the exercise of your provincial autonomy you may be advised is good for your province. That is the kind of provincial autonomy that is now in the air, and this resolution asks you to accept nothing less than true and complete provincial autonomy. (Hear, hear.)

The next matter that it addresses itself to is the question of second chambers. I know there may be a difference of opinion as to whether you require a second chamber in each province or not. I know that there are provinces in Canada where there is a bicameral legislature. At the same time, I may tell you that some provinces which had originally a bicameral legislature have now gone to uni-cameral legislatures. It requires no argument for you to realise that a second chamber is more often a hindrance than a help to the transaction of business in a government. And we attach a great deal of importance to there being no second chambers in the provinces because we don't want to hamper our provincial activities by the existence of a second chamber which might make it for a considerable time difficult for you to carry out any reform that you want with the help of a uni-cameral legislature.

The third point to which we attach great importance is that residuary powers should reside in the central Government and the central legislature. There should be full responsible government in the Government of India. There is no need to lay stress on it because we have already passed it when we passed the dominion status resolution. What we really want in this resolution is that the residuary powers should reside in the central Government and not in the provincial Governments. There are many matters in regard to which the vesting of residuary powers in the Government of India will be of great advantage. They are well-known and I don't think it necessary for me to argue it, though I know that the Muslims demand that the residuary powers should be vested in the provinces and

not in the central Government. Very well, it is enough for me to say this, that we attach great importance to the residuary powers being vested in the central Government because it would admit of rectifying many things and bringing the provinces into line with one another on matters of great importance.

I leave it at that and pass on to the second of the propositions involved in this resolution in clause (b). Gentlemen, the question for you is this. The supreme need of the hour, you have been told, is unity. The only sanction that at this moment you are going to consider is that of a united demand presented in the name of the whole country, all organisations standing together shoulder to shoulder and marching on to their goal and presenting their demands to the Government. Therefore, you must achieve unity in as high a degree as possible. You know that the Nehru Report has already secured a great volume of support all over the country in all the provinces. But there is one group that has stood up as a group,—I say, as a group, because the Nehru Report has already been signed by the most influential members of the Muslim community, but as a group the Muslims have not accepted the Nehru Report entirely. They want certain safeguards. They are apprehensive that in a self-governing India their position may not be as secure as it is at the present moment. You and I may not agree. We may tell them that their position in a self-governing India will be much more strong than it is at present. Most of their leaders know it. But the vast mass of the Muslim population either say, or it is said that they say, that until certain safe-guards are given to them they cannot fall into line with other groups and march with them together to their common goal. This demand on the part of Muslims has given rise to certain difficulties. In Bengal in the All-Parties Convention there were at least four speakers presenting this ultimatum. If the Muslims accept the Nehru Report just as we do all will be well. But if they make any further demands and you intend to deal with those demands so as to reopen the Nehru recommendations and give them anything that they demand, then we shall have to withdraw our support to the Nehru Committee's Report and our position will also have to be considered as the position of the minorities who require protection. One group was represented by two speakers, who were Indian Christians. I rather think that so far as they were concerned, they were only canvassing for unanimous support to the Nehru Committee and even if you yielded to the Muslim demands to a certain extent they are not likely to put forward a case of protection for themselves. The next group was represented by a speaker who was a Sikh. He stated that the Nehru Report is already communal in its outlook in so far as it yielded to the demand of the Muslims for a certain well-defined and fixed limit of representation to the Muslim minorities. Thus, they have deviated from the true principle of democratic equality, which ought to be accepted by a self-governing India. Each man should count for one and no more, and each group should count for its strength in its proportion to the population of the country. You have departed from this principle in the Nehru Report. But when you are reconsidering any part of that report, then we shall have to present our claim and you will have to consider what protection you will devise for our security in a future self-governing India. I thought then and I hope I was right in thinking that if ultimately it should happen that we had to consider the demands of the Muslims, the Sikhs will not make a demand of the kind they threatened at the All Parties Convention but would stick to their acceptance of the principle of democratic equality. This morning's telegram to which the mover referred says that a number of Sikhs left the Convention in a body when their representations were not heeded by the Convention. That does indicate that it is probable that the Sikhs might insist upon some guarantees for themselves. But as I stated, I still hope that the threat which they have given to the All-Parties Convention by walking out of it, they will not stick to.

At any rate, the committee which we propose to appoint under the third head of this resolution will be able to persuade them that, realising as they do the true democratic principle of equality, they will stick to that principle even though they are unable to get the Muslims to accept that

principle in connection with their community. It seems to me that in dealing with the Muslim demands we have to remember, and I will remind those present here and those outside, that life is often a choice of the second best, and the sphere of politics in particular is one where very rarely we are able to stick to our first best. We are left with nothing but a choice of the second best, because the first best is not available. It would be very well that we should present ourselves in united strength if we could all accept dominion status for India, and march forth together without the smallest hesitancy in our hearts about the position which we shall occupy in a future self-governing India. But if that is not possible, and apparently it is not possible because the Nehru Report has accepted a slight deviation from the democratic principle, to that extent making a concession to the Muslims, we shall have to consider the position. Further concessions are asked for and very likely we shall have to give them. Other smaller communities also ask for guarantees and protection for themselves in a self-governing India and, therefore, there will be great difficulty in achieving that unity we are after in the degree in which we shall like to have it. As I say, the Muslims are likely to stand out. There is no doubt about that. We shall have to deal with their claims in a spirit of compromise and in a spirit which accepts the second best when the first best is not available, and it is not, after all, a matter of such vital principle that we should wreck the supreme need of the hour, namely, unity. We must also recognise that these make-shifts are only temporary in their nature and in a future self-governing India, with the experience of years, these special guarantees and bargains are bound to disappear. Therefore, I ask you to accept what is contained in paragraph (b) of this proposition, that the democratic principle of equality may be given up to a certain extent, if it becomes absolutely necessary. You must have your eye on that unity which is necessary for the immediate liberation of India. If you remember the importance that you ought to attach to that unity you don't hesitate to give in here and there to the Muslim demands, or even if there be any demands from the Sikhs, remembering that it is, after all, only a temporary phase of our political life of the future. Here sitting in a group by ourselves, we shall not be able to carry on any negotiations for the purpose of settling this question with the Muslims. It will have to be done elsewhere, where all the parties of this country meet in a convention, and for our part we suggest four members of our body, named in the resolution, and we appoint them as a committee to cooperate with the representatives of other organisations for the settlement of this communal question. It is hardly necessary for me to say anything about the persons whom we have appointed as our plenipotentiaries to settle the question in any manner they consider it necessary in the larger interests of the country. (Applause.)

Rao Bhadur K. G. Damle.

Rao Bhadur K. G. Damle (Berar): The resolution which I have been asked to support is already in your hands in black and white. It deals with the necessity on behalf of our Liberal Federation to offer our general support to what we know as the Nehru Report. Everyone who has read the report very carefully will feel convinced that the illustrious authors of that report have spared no pains to come to a final settlement of the most troublesome questions that have been confronting our political work. The previous history which has brought forth this report has been so very lucidly given by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru that it is no use now traversing the same ground. Dominion status which forms the most important feature of the Nehru recommendations has been, we must congratulate ourselves, accepted by the whole country. There are other matters next to that which are also in a way very important, though not so important as dominion status. As a political party, it is the duty of the Liberal Party to offer their support to certain outstanding aspects of the problems that are dealt with there, namely, provincial autonomy without second chambers, and full responsible government in the Government of India with such residuary powers as are not granted to the Provincial Governments. These are matters which are so obvious to us all that there is no necessity on my part to elaborate those

points. My learned predecessor has emphasized the necessity of our giving support to these two broad aspects. The Nehru Report is an excellent document. It is really a great achievement. It shows that the whole country is now coming round to the view that we have been propounding from the time that our worthy predecessors, the illustrious organisers of our country's battle, formulated our needs. We are now coming to the common goal of our national efforts, namely, Swaraj. That term Swaraj has now been definitely identified with dominion status and we are deeply indebted to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru for the excellent manner in which he has explained to us what that ideal means. Now it is really my privilege—and I deem it an honourable privilege—to support this resolution which embodies all these principal aspects of the Nehru Report which we as the Liberal Party support whole-heartedly. With a view to compose differences we are setting up a body of our members who by their non-communal inclinations are best fitted to explore all possible avenues for the settlement of these communal differences, and the names proposed for this committee are the most suitable names that we can think of. With these observations, I recommend for your adoption the resolution moved by my worthy friend. (Applause.)

Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu.

Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu (Benares): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—The resolution that we have passed previously laid special emphasis on two points. One was that what India wants now is dominion status of the type of Canada, Australia, South Africa, Ireland and other dominions, that nothing short of that status will ever satisfy our present needs and demands. The second point that that resolution emphasised was that there should be no tampering with that in the future constitution of India that we expect at the next stage, that that should be the immediate constitution of India. Now, bearing these two facts in mind, we shall understand the necessity better of the resolution under discussion. We say unequivocally that we shall have nothing short of dominion status and that too immediately. But there are still some very fundamental points left which it is necessary the Liberal Federation as a federation of an important party in India should clearly express its views on. The Nehru Committee has made a solid contribution to our political thought this year and this is the first time that the Liberal Federation has met after the report has been issued. It is, therefore, necessary that we should say something more beyond our general support to that report. You will, therefore, find that on questions of franchise, of residuary powers and so on, which are of a very fundamental and vital character, although a country like India may have dominion status, like other countries, there are slight differences on those points, and there are some special conditions also in India which have to be taken notice of with regard to the relations between different communities and so on, and it is with these important problems that the Nehru Report has so ably dealt with. The first question, of course, in any constitution of vital importance is the question of franchise and you will notice that in this resolution nothing has been specifically mentioned about franchise. The reason is that the question of franchise, as recommended by the Nehru Committee on which our distinguished leader, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, has worked with such earnestness, enthusiasm and devotion, has recommended adult suffrage. You will notice that that is the pivot of the solution which the Nehru Committee has offered of the communal question. On account of that recommendation you will find that our Muhammedan friends in the Punjab and a good many of them in Bengal have enthusiastically become supporters of the Nehru Report. There are progressive groups among Muhammedans and other minorities in other provinces also who are enthusiastically supporting the Nehru Report because of the recommendation of adult suffrage, so that the franchise recommended in the Nehru Report has a peculiar importance of its own under the present circumstances. The second point that is there in favour of adult suffrage which they have recommended is this. Our critics especially the Anglo-Indian critics both here in India and in Great Britain, are never tired of saying that our demands at present are only aimed at getting power into the hands of the educated community, which is after all a small

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minority. What they say is that all that we are trying to do is to create a sort of oligarchy consisting of the intelligentsia of this country. Now the moment you say that what you want is adult suffrage you at once shut the mouths of your critics, (Hear, hear.) because by means of adult suffrage you allow every man equal opportunities. It cannot be said that we have not taken the interests of the masses into our view, or that we want to have the power in our own hands, for after all the masters are the electors and not the elected. So the question of adult franchise has a peculiar importance of its own in India, not merely because in other constitutions especially after the war adult suffrage has been introduced but also because of those considerations which I have placed before you.

Then there is the question of the depressed classes also. We have been attacked on that point as well and it is said that you are doing nothing for the depressed classes. Well, if you don't have adult suffrage, what will happen? Millions of people who belong to the depressed classes, who are poor economically, backward in education and neglected hitherto will be deprived of any chance of having a voice in the administration of their own country. If you want to meet that criticism, as I feel you must, then you have to come necessarily to the conclusion that the only way you can effectively do it is by having a system of adult franchise.

I know that on this point there is some difference of opinion. Yesterday our worthy President, in the weighty remarks that he made on this question, expressed an opinion which is different from the opinion which I am venturing to place before you this afternoon. The reason perhaps why there are some people who are against adult franchise is, as was expressed by the President in his presidential address, that it is rather premature under our present conditions of political growth and development. I am trying to place the whole question before you from an absolutely impersonal point of view, where I understand people can legitimately hold different opinions. What we have to examine is the opinion and we have not got to criticise any individual. Now it is generally believed that even in a country like England adult franchise was not introduced in the very beginning. In 1832, it is said, the franchise in England was of a very limited character and from that it is argued that if in England adult franchise was not granted in 1832 but long afterwards, how could it be done in India. Now if that be the line of argument, there is another point which we have to consider. We find that in England women were not allowed votes before 1918 and the votes that they had were of a very restricted character and that was altered only last year. Are we to argue from that, because in the English constitution women have no votes, therefore women should have no votes in India and it would be too premature to introduce it. I do not find any difference of opinion in the country on the question of woman suffrage. No body says because in the English constitution women were not allowed to vote till now, therefore in the Indian constitution women should have no votes. If that be so, why should it be said that because in England adult franchise was not granted till long after 1832, therefore it would be premature to introduce it in India today. The idea of adult franchise is not at all a revolutionary idea. I will, with your permission, quote from an authority. This is a book by Hedlam and Morley on the new democratic constitutions of Europe, only printed this year. You find in this book how in the new constitutions adult suffrage has been granted in so many countries. "In accordance with the democratic principle sovereignty is divided equally among the whole body of citizens. The citizens express their sovereignty by the right of political franchise. The new constitutions have with one accord adopted the principle of equal universal suffrage. The right to vote is the inalienable right of every citizen. The people must exercise their sovereignty directly, not through the medium of certain classes, the more intelligent or wealthier members of the community. Every attempt has, therefore, been made to establish as wide a suffrage as possible. The age qualification in most of those countries is low. The disqualifications are in all cases reduced to a minimum. The right to vote is denied only to the physical or mental incapables and to those who have been deprived of their civic rights by a court decision. Except in Finland bankrupts and paupers retain their right to vote. In

accordance with the same democratic principle that has made the franchise so wide, the new constitution had put but few limitations on the eligibility of citizens to election to the popular assembly." So that is in accordance with the democratic thought in so many countries in Europe and there is no reason why, when we are now asking for dominion status, we should ourselves ask for a constitution where the franchise is very much more limited. In fact a suggestion was made that the franchise, even as it is now, is much too low. Now, sir, that would be disastrous indeed, when all over the world you find adult universal suffrage introduced in the constitutions of so many countries, that we in the year of grace 1928 should in our wisdom suggest that the franchise should be made still higher. It would be something which seems to me to be of the nature of a disaster. (Hear, hear.)

Then coming to the question of provincial autonomy, we find that practically everybody says that provincial autonomy should be granted. That is what everybody says. Everybody wants to pay his lip homage and loyalty to the idea of provincial autonomy. But when you read what is mentioned by the various local governments in their memoranda, when you read what is being said by various groups of people who have thought it wise and reasonable to give evidence before the Simon Commission, what do you find? There is always some qualification—take away law and order. If you don't, then heavens would come down. When in one breath we ask for dominion government for the entire Government of India, I fail to understand how we can ask for provincial autonomy without law and order or without any other subject. Let us, at any rate, be consistent in our own line of thought. Let us be free from the confusion of thought which people generally call wisdom. (Laughter.)

Then there is a suggestion which is being pressed from various quarters, that we might have provincial autonomy but we should introduce a new safeguard in the shape of second chambers in the provinces. In the Nehru Report the second chamber has been accepted for the Central Government. But the Nehru Report says clearly, and I think quite wisely, that there should be no second chambers in the provinces. Now the idea of second chambers is a very old idea and it is still very much respected and has been accepted, I know, in most of the constitutions. But a second chamber for the Central Government is quite different from a second chamber for every Provincial Government as we are going to have in future. Now I know that there are for instance, in Australia second chambers for provinces also and it is very often said that if in Australia there are second chambers for the various states, why should we not have second chambers in the provinces. Now there is a serious fallacy underlying that argument. Our provinces and our provincial governments have never been, and should never be, and can never be like the states as they were in Australia before the federal government was introduced. Let us not forget the fact that the states in Australia in the beginning before the federal government was introduced, before the Commonwealth was established, were independent autonomous states. Has the history of our constitution in India for the last 300 years been of a character which would enable us to say that our provinces and our provincial Governments have been like independent states of an autonomous character? Surely, they have not been so during the last 150 years of the British Government. Even before that you find that in the heyday of the Moghul Empire, the provinces were subordinate to the central Government in that portion of India which was under the Moghuls. With that tradition and with that history of the last 300 years it is absurd to talk of provinces as states and to say that they should be of a federal character and that, therefore, they should have second chambers. But there are some people who support the idea of second chambers, because they feel that if you have only one chamber in the provinces, there may be hasty legislation. How is that hasty legislation to be guarded against and how is that to be rectified? Now there are some suggestions made that powers should be given to the Governor to certify or override decisions of the Councils. Some people think that it would be after all better to have second chambers which will act as a sort

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of brake rather than allow large powers to the Governor. Now there is some force in that argument and in that view. But in the new constitutions which have been introduced after the war in countries where there are uni-cameral legislatures you will find that they have introduced certain safeguards against hasty legislation. I am sorry I have not the time to point out to you the safeguards that have been introduced in countries like Finland, Czechoslovakia and others, but there are certain safeguards thought out there, and if you want that there should be some safeguards in provincial legislatures against hasty legislation I submit that the new constitutions in Czechoslovakia, Finland and other countries do provide certain safeguards which it would be worth our while to study and think out how far we can introduce them in our own provinces.

I now pass on to the other important question of residuary powers in the central Government. When we ask for dominion status of the type of Canada, Australia and other countries we must be clear in our minds about one thing. Let there be no humbugging about it. If we are serious about dominion status it seems to me unthinkable that we should try to introduce dyarchy in the central Government. (Hear, hear.) Our Muhammedan friends are very anxious to have the residuary powers in the provincial legislatures and not in the central Government and they want to have these provinces on a federal basis. I have already pointed out the differences between states as we find them in Australia and the provinces as we have here and I cannot understand how the provinces here could be considered to have developed into independent and autonomous states where they could be federated. In India, gentlemen, the fissiparous tendencies are so visible and so strong that we have to do our utmost to get over that evil. We have to substitute in their place, in the place of that narrow fissiparous outlook, a national outlook. Therefore, it is necessary that in our constitution we should not introduce factors which will perpetuate and strengthen the narrower and fissiparous tendencies, but we should have a constitution which would be a safeguard against those evils and, therefore, I submit it is absolutely necessary that the residuary powers should be in the hands of the central Government. (Cheers.) Let us not forget the fact that it is the central Government which will have to deal with the Indian states and if you give residuary powers to provincial legislatures and defined the powers of the central Government rigidly under the statute, then you will soon find you will be landing yourselves in very embarrassing and awkward situations. Therefore, it is wise to leave the central Government strong and it would be right that we should have the residuary powers in the central Government. It is absolutely wrong to look at these questions of a vital character from a narrow communal point of view, merely because it is feared that in the central Government Muhammedans will be in a minority and, therefore, the central Government should be made weak and ineffective. Such a policy would be suicidal and no sensible person who will try to look at this question free from communal prejudice and bias will ever come to the conclusion that, regard being had to the previous history of the last three centuries of India, regard being had to the functions of a delicate nature in which the central Government will have to deal with Indian states as well as with foreign powers, residuary powers should not be left in their hands. To do so would be nothing but suicidal and it would be a monumental folly to take away the residuary powers of the central Government and to grant them to the provincial legislatures. The whole question as it resolves itself is this: What is it that we want? Do we want that our constitution should be one that is imposed upon us by the authority of Parliament of another nation, or is it that we want that our future constitution should be determined by ourselves? I know the word "self-determination" stinks in certain nostrils. (Laughter.) It is said that this self-determination is a new hobby, a new fad, a popular warcry and catchword which has been introduced during the war and it has been taken up by other countries and by the political agitator in India. But my submission is that if you look into the history of the constitutions of the dominions within the British Empire, although the word "self-determination" was

not much talked about, even there you find that those constitutions have been established through a process of self-determination. I will quote from no less an authority than Sir John Simon himself who, when he was speaker in the House of Commons when the Irish Free State Bill was under consideration, made certain weighty statements which apply with equal force to the condition of India today. He said: "I think it is one of the encouraging features of the situation that this constitution is a constitution which has been drafted in Ireland by Irishmen for Ireland. In that respect it differs from the two Gladstonian schemes, from the Act of 1914 and from the Act of 1920. The procedure that has been followed is, however, by no means a novel one or a revolutionary one. As the Prime Minister pointed out, the constitutions under which different parts of our Empire are now working are in a very large measure constitutions which have been settled on the soil where they were to operate by the people who were to live under them." Then he goes on to point out how in Canada, how in Australia, how in South Africa, that was done. He says: "Perhaps the most remarkable case of all is the most recent. For the constitution of the Union of South Africa was at length arrived at as a result of discussion in South Africa itself and it was carried through this House within the recollection of a good many hon. members in the year 1909 without the alteration of a single sentence. Constitutions in our empire have usually been found to have a permanent basis in cases where they have been arrived at and settled on the soil affected by them. It is by no means limited to the different federal unions under the British Crown. At any rate, there is a real element of hope and confidence here in that this constitution is not a constitution which the British Parliament formulates and confers upon Ireland. It is a constitution which Irishmen themselves have drawn up." With that point in view, I maintain that although the word "self-determination" was not freely used before the war, yet you do find that in the case of all the colonies of Great Britain, whenever dominion status was ultimately granted, it was really according to the wishes of the people of those colonies. (Hear, hear.) So that if you take this view of the whole thing, you will see the importance of the labours of our leaders at the present moment, you will see the importance of the Commonwealth of India Bill that was drafted and of the Nehru Report which is being discussed by the country today, you will see the importance of the Convention and of the negotiations that are going on at the All-Parties Convention in Calcutta. It may be that we have not yet succeeded and it may be that we have not yet arrived at a conclusion which would be unanimously accepted by all communities. No country was ever able to do it. Canada could not do it, Australia could not do it, South Africa could not do it. So let us not lose hope. Let us remain in an optimistic mood and do the best that we can, only keeping one point of view clearly in our minds that we shall never be able to succeed in our fight for freedom unless we are able to unite ourselves. (Hear, hear.) That is the thing to which we have to turn our attention and it is on that point that clause (b) further asks that if we have not yet been able to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the communal problem, let us see whether there are any principles still left which could be introduced, by which we may be able to satisfy the minorities which are yet remaining dissatisfied. Now, gentlemen, it is said that unless you have sanctions, you cannot succeed in gaining freedom. My submission is that the sanctions will only be created when you are able to unite in your demands and then go ahead. Sanctions are not created on paper. You may satisfy yourselves that you have passed certain resolutions, but how can you ever be able to bring the necessary pressure to bear upon your opponents if you are divided in your own house. Although it is not so clearly visible to our eyes today, the sanction will only take its birth when different parties find it possible for themselves to unite on a certain common formula. That birth of a new sanction we are awaiting and that birth will only be when various parties unite. When we have that position, then that sanction will be created and it is then that we shall be endowed with a new outlook and fresh energy which will be irresistible and which even the mightiest powers on the face of the earth cannot possibly resist. (Loud applause.)

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MR. M. D. ALTEKAR.

Mr. M. D. Altekar (Bombay): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution. My predecessors have gone deep into the intricacies of the questions involved in the two clauses of this resolution. About the third clause according to which we appoint a committee, I suppose there is absolute unanimity amongst us. So very naturally it is unnecessary for me to refer to it. With regard to the first clause, I don't propose to say a word because better men than myself have done full justice to that part.

I shall with your permission, ladies and gentlemen, make a few observations as a younger member of the Liberal Party in giving my support to the Nehru Committee Report. In the first place, I for one give my support because this Report vindicates the Liberal principles entirely and completely. (Hear, hear.) For several years we were told that our criticism is purely destructive. Now my second reason for supporting the Nehru Report is that here is an eminently successful constructive effort towards solving the problems that face us. Of course, those critics who consider that we are always destructive now turn round and say that our constructive effort has been made on the western model. I do not know why western people who are so anxious to bestow their civilization upon us should feel afflicted when a committee composed of distinguished Indians makes a report, basing it upon the western model. The reason should be obvious. Those who have come into this country, finding here a system which left the door open to any foreigner that liked to come in, want that, that old system should continue, so that we need not ask them to get away. They always want the older systems in this country or in any other country to remain and they are afraid of democracy springing up in our country, though they always pay lip homage to democracy. My main reason in giving my support to the Nehru Committee Report is that it is based on the western model or the democratic model. We do not want to make India a collection of larger native states as they exist today. One of the objects of British rulers is to divide this country into native states and give all the power to the autocratic rulers of those states. We don't want anything of that kind. We distinctly want a democratic constitution in which the people of this country would control the policy and administration of the country. My third reason for giving support to this Report is that it is a genuine effort towards unity. I cannot say that the attempt has been quite successful so far. But it is the beginning, I am sure, of that unity that is to come in the not distant future and this Report will be the basis of that unity that is bound to come.

With regard to the second clause of this report, I may say one word. I am referring to the clause that deals with the recommendations of the Nehru Committee with regard to the settlement of the communal problem. I wholeheartedly support the proposals of the Nehru Committee with regard to the communal questions and we must be grateful to the authors of that report because they have made those proposals. Our communal problem is the knottiest problem, because it is a problem of self-interest and of getting posts. I know something of the struggle of Brahmins and non-Brahmins in the Bombay Presidency. I frankly say it is not a political struggle, or a struggle to get any spiritual equality. It is a struggle to get a few more posts. As a Brahmin if I may make a suggestion, I would say—let the Brahmin community declare once for all that they don't want any posts. (Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru: Hear, hear.) That would be the best remedy in Madras as well as Bombay to bring round our brethren from communalism, because after all the running of the Government is not in our hands and I feel confident that they are not particularly anxious to introduce any efficiency in their Government beyond a certain limit. Upto that limit they will give posts to useless people who are unfit to fill those posts. We have seen certain spectacles in recent years of wonderful people occupying higher posts. It is a big joke. I have seen people who do not understand the ABC of arithmetic appointed to carry on the administration of finance and such subjects. My point is that communalism within the Hindu community

is a quarrel for posts. Between the Hindus and Muhammedans there is the same trouble. The question is, who will have more posts. I suppose Dr. Paranjpye has written a humorous book in which he says that people might go to the absurd length of claiming that there should be communal representation even in the matter of hanging. Good-will is, after all, the key to these communal questions. I would request the major communities, and I hope my request would not be taken as unsatisfactory in the United Provinces, the better educated communities to put up with the spirit of the minor and the less educated communities for some time to come. I would beg them just as I would request the Brahmins to proclaim their intention not to stand in the way of the minority communities in the way of getting posts. After all, if the word 'Brahmin' is properly understood, it was never meant to include service. A Brahmin who serves is a Sudra. He at once loses his caste and he has no business to be a Brahmin, or to say that he is a Brahmin. Either we are orthodox or heterodox. Let the Brahmin community proclaim that they are not going to run after posts. With regard to the differences between Hindus and Muslims I would say, let the Hindus strengthen themselves by all means. Just now reference was made to the granting of political franchise to women. It is a good thing. In the same manner the Hindus should concede the demands of Muslims for sometime to come, as after all we have to live together. Nothing will happen that will drive either Hindus or Muhammedans out of this country. For good or for evil they have to live together and if we make up our minds that we will live together for good, the solution is easy. It is a good fortune that here we have certain distinguished Indians occupying the foremost ranks in the public life of India who have offered a certain solution which has been accepted by the reasonable portion of the country.

Lastly I will say one word. In finding any solution of the communal problem I would utter a word of warning. No solution should be found that will be found mischievous in future. We must take care that nationalism is made the first article, the second article, and the third article of any communal solution. If you base it on any kind of religious fanaticism, it is bound to lead to mischief after some time. Therefore, please don't do anything that will give preponderating influence to any other idea than nationalism. Time was when distinguished leaders like Dadabhai Nowroji, Sir Pherozesha Mehta, Ranade and others used to say—'I am an Indian first and a Hindu or Parsi afterwards.' But now some people occupying important positions declare loudly that they belong to their religion first and to their nation afterwards. Let us be certain that in this country where there are so many religions, castes and communities, the basis of our national life must be nationalism and anything that goes counter to nationalism must be sternly rejected. Whatever solution we may arrive at must be a solution based on nationalism. The proposals of the Nehru Committee are based on nationalism and any further solution that we may come to must be based on nationalism. (Applause.)

MR. P. N. SAPRU.

Mr. Prakash Narayan Sapru (Allahabad) : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I do not propose to make a long speech in supporting this resolution which has been ably moved and seconded by distinguished leaders. In the first part of our resolution we give general support to the Nehru recommendations. When the Nehru Committee was appointed it had a very difficult task before it and it must be admitted that it has performed its task most admirably. We not only give general support to the recommendations, but we particularise certain recommendations which in our opinion are of vital importance. The most vital recommendation of the Nehru Committee is, of course, dominion status. On the question of dominion status we have expressed our opinion in resolution No. 3, which we passed just now. The other vital recommendations to which we give particular support are that there shall be complete provincial autonomy and that residuary powers shall be given to the central Government. Now, when we

talk of provincial autonomy, we mean provincial autonomy and nothing less than provincial autonomy. We do not mean Sir Malcolm Hailey's scheme, or the scheme of the U. P. Government, or the scheme of the Associated Chambers of Commerce. We mean by provincial autonomy a government responsible to the people, with a Governor who has no higher powers than a constitutional Governor in any self-governing dominion has. Then we go on to say that we are opposed to bi-cameral legislatures in provinces. You will remember that so far as the central legislature is concerned, the Nehru Committee recommend a bi-cameral legislature. But we make a distinction between provinces and the central Government and we say that in our opinion it is not necessary to have second chambers in the provinces. We do not want Councils of State in our provinces. We do not want to multiply the Nawabs and Rajas in our second chambers. Then we go on to say that we want complete responsible government in the centre. We want a strong central Government and it is because we believe in the unity of India that we suggest that the residuary powers should vest in the central Government. Now this question of residuary powers is not a communal question. It is a constitutional question and it must be looked at from the constitutional point of view. I submit that if you look at it from the constitutional point of view, you will arrive at the conclusion that it is necessary in the larger interests of the country to vest residuary powers in the central Government.

Then so far as the second part of the resolution is concerned, we express our opinion with regard to the communal settlement recommended in the Nehru Report. The foundation of that communal settlement is adult suffrage. I am free to confess that I have rather a cautious habit of mind and when I found that the Nehru Committee recommended adult suffrage, I was a little surprised. But I have come to the conclusion, and I think it is the correct conclusion, that there is no danger attached to adult suffrage. (Hear, hear.) You must remember that if you disturb this adult suffrage, you disturb the whole foundation of the report so far as the Punjab and Bengal are concerned. The position is that while the Muslim community are in the majority, the Hindus are in a majority in the voting registers. The position in the Punjab is even more complicated because you have also the Sikhs there. If you do not accept adult suffrage, the Muslims will insist on reservation of seats on population basis and the problem will become most complicated—almost insoluble. Therefore, in order to carry the Muslims and the depressed classes with you, you have got to accept the solution of adult suffrage. After all, the dangers of adult suffrage are more imaginary than real. Many countries much less advanced than India have got adult suffrage and why not India. Then we go on to say that we do not regard the communal solution proposed by the Committee as final. The spirit in which we should approach the communal problem is that of give and take. It is quite clear that while the Nehru Committee has the support of very distinguished and eminent Muslims, it has not yet received the sanction of the chief Muslim communal organisation and we as the majority community have got a special responsibility in this matter. If we can by giving up something which we regard as even vital in the Report take a considerable body of Muslim opinion with us, we should have achieved something far more valuable for national unity. We are a non-communal organisation (Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru: Hear, hear.) and it ought to be our endeavour to approach this whole problem in a non-communal spirit and our representatives on any committee which may be appointed to consider further avenues can make a great and effective contribution. We have appointed some of our most trusted leaders as our representatives on this Committee (applause) and they will be able to help in the solution of this communal problem. I have no doubt that if we approach this task in a broad catholic spirit, victory will be ours and we shall march on to the promised land. (Applause.)

Pandit Hardatt Sharma (Punjab) next supported the resolution in Hindi.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

INDIAN STATES.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer : Mr. President and friends,—The resolution which I now place for acceptance by this house runs as follows :

(a) While in general agreement with the recommendations of the Nehru Committee in regard to Indian states this Federation welcomes the suggestion made recently in some quarters that representatives of British India and Indian states should meet to discuss their points of view to arrive at a conclusion which will be acceptable to both parties.

(b) This Federation, while appreciating the efforts made by some states to introduce representative government, is strongly of opinion that more systematic and liberal measures should be taken to introduce responsible government and associate the people with the administration of their own states.

Friends, I am deeply sensible of the responsibility of any one who sponsors this resolution inasmuch as it appears to me that in tackling this subject we are dealing with one of the most inherently difficult matters with which constitution builders here will have to deal with. Both our un-friends, and they are many, and some of our friends—alas! they are too few—are gravely sensible of the problem and its complexity, for remember that the Indian states have two peculiarities which distinguish them from other entities in the Indian body-politic. It is true that so far as Indian states are concerned, in many cases their boundaries run parallel to those of Indian provinces, and indeed let us take the case of states like the Kathiawad states, or Baroda. There are bits of those states interspersed in the midst of British provincial units, so that you walk five miles along or within an Indian state territory and then come into British territory and then walk again into Indian territory and so forth. Thus they are tremendously intermixed with British India. But, on the other hand, their political status is very peculiar, and indeed *ipso jure* it is very difficult in the language of the law exactly to specify what position they hold. Are they independent units? The answer was given by Lord Reading. Are they entirely dependent units? They say no and hold that they are governed by treaties differing in their tenor, greatly differing in the extent and the amount of limited sovereignty which is inherent in the various states under those treaties. There are feudatory under-states, there are persons occupying small territories of three square miles or twenty square miles, there are men who in point of territory and population would equal many of the great states of the world like Czecho-slovakia. Therefore, both by differentiating circumstances inherent to the states by their physical proximity to British India and by their constitutional distances they occupy a very peculiar position indeed. And before I make any other statement, let me be allowed to make a few prelatory remarks.

I wish to say as publicly as I can, and I venture to think that in my observations I shall encounter little or no opposition, that the attitude of British India and of British Indians generally is not, as is imagined in certain quarters or sedulously cultivated in other quarters, one of antagonism to Indian states as such. How could it be? Imperfect as their constitutions may be, do they not represent to us fragments of sovereignty which still inheres in this country, imperfect sovereignty perhaps but surely fragments of our own sovereignty? (Hear, hear.) Do we not all realise that? Therefore, let me say it as publicly as I can from this platform that those argue very wrongly, those are not true friends either of the Indian states or of British India, who seek to play upon an imaginary antagonism which, I venture to assert, does not exist between Indian states as such and British India. On the other hand, is it not equally true that Indian states cannot remain in a state of complete isolation? There is a process in physics known as osmosis or the inter-penetration of two substances brought into close physical proximity. How can the subjects of Indian states born of the same people, bred in the same traditions, inheriting the same cultures,

sharing the same historical accidents, be expected to have other ideals, a different outlook, an entirely antagonistic point of view from those neighbours of theirs who are three miles, five miles, twenty miles, or even a hundred miles distant? And those Indian states are antiquated and blind to the world forces which forget that they must march with the times and which forget that the impulse towards responsibility which is animating British India can be kept out of their states by barriers, either laws or invidious prohibitions or various vexatious restraints. Thus, therefore, we arrive at two propositions, the first proposition being that British India and the majority, indeed the whole of British Indians rejoice at the existence of the Indian states, wish them well and would welcome them as part of the great body politic of the future. That is the first proposition, the second proposition is that they welcome the Indian states and with that welcome goes a hope, a belief and a certainty that sooner or later, sooner rather than later, these states will remodel their institutions and constitutions, will reorganize their government, so that their government, Indian in the genus as it is, is yet not a personal rule but a government by the people and for the people. Those are the two propositions with which we start.

Now having started with those two propositions, what does this resolution come to? Let me outline to you the history of the last 10 or 15 years in this matter. When Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford came out for their constitutional enquiry they were confronted with the problem of Indian states. They suggested the beginnings of the Chamber of Princes. Before then there was no association of one prince with the other and there was some kind of feeling or apprehension that if one Indian prince came across another or met another, there might be things which might not be quite welcome either to the princes themselves or to the paramount power. Therefore, it was a wise thought that they must be made to deliberate together. Then we have it on the high authority of two princes that they were parties to that suggestion. Indian princes have been feeling for a long time—and I am speaking from inside knowledge because I have had a humble share in the work placed before the Butler Committee by some of the southern states that as in the case of British Indians their rights have not always been respected. They have felt that their treaty rights have been infringed or encroached upon, and therefore they wanted protection from such encroachment or infringement, they wanted greater facilities for mutual discussion on matters of common import, and they also wanted an opportunity to take part in problems which are common to them and the rest of India. Sometime later, other difficulties arose by reason of the happenings in certain states and the action taken by the paramount power in regard to those states. The action was resented in certain cases, but that again is a source of difficulty. It is not necessary to get into the detailed history of all these things. But let us start with Lord Reading's famous letter to the Nizam of Hyderabad which made absolutely no secret of the exact position of the Government of India *vis-a-vis* the Indian states. And then came a certain amount of agitation on the part of the states as a result of which the Butler Committee was constituted. It is curious that in all these discussions and talks nobody ever talked of the subjects of the Indian states. They were not taken into consideration at all. So that the Butler Committee suffered entirely and exactly under the same difficulty and started under the same auspices as the Simon Commission. (Hear, hear.) They had restricted terms of reference. However restricted those terms of reference were, they involved certain problems which affected the people of the states as well as the princes. My distinguished friend Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao to whose valuable and creditable work in England on behalf of the subjects of Indian states I wish to pay my tribute, found he was not heard by the Butler Committee. No one knows whether the Butler Committee report is going to be published and, what subjects they are going to report upon. Nobody knows anything excepting this, that they were asked to report upon things which did not really occupy their time. (Laughter and cheers.)

And in this connection let me say a few words upon the action of the princes. One has to exercise great restraint in dealing with this matter when one does not want to offend the susceptibilities of exalted personages unnecessarily. A new constitution was sought to be devised by the princes in which they were assisted by an eminent counsel in England absolutely unassisted by Indian legal talent, setting up the theory of direct relationship of the Crown with the Indian princes, setting up a very elaborate machinery, ignoring British India and British Indian institutions, ignoring the people in Indian states, having a cut and dried constitution whereby, it may be asserted, they want the present state of things to continue for ever. Mark you what took place. Sir Leslie Scott pleaded for 45 days, I think, before the Butler Committee. (A voice : for Rs. 30 lakhs) The number of lakhs need not be counted now. (Laughter.) But what did he plead for? We do not know. The proceedings were confidential. But we do know this, that Sir Leslie Scott soon afterwards published an article in the *Law Quarterly Review*. And what did he say in that article? He said the Indian states were sovereign states, they contracted with the Crown, that contract was indivisible and unalterable. If the Crown and the British Parliament is going to give representative institution to British India that contract goes by the board. The British sovereigns contracted to keep intact for ever these Indian states just as they were when the contract was first entered into and, therefore, if you increase the number of members, in the Legislative Assembly, if you grant more powers to British India you are breaking that contract. What is the meaning of that? Sir Leslie Scott endeavoured by this theory to put forward as the argument of the princes or the contention that because of an imaginary contract between the Crown and the Indian states British India should never advance in political growth. It is not my purpose, nor have I the time to deal with the fallacious theory of the direct relationship of the Crown as apart from the British Parliament. Suffice it to say that instructed opinion holds a very different view from that of Sir Leslie Scott on the matter, well briefed and well paid as he was. That apart, the curiosity of the whole procedure was that the Butler Committee were not authorised to deal with any such constitution as it was not a part of their terms of reference, and I am not revealing a secret when I say that when humble mortals wanted to criticise the scheme of Sir Leslie Scott, they were told that that scheme and the new constitution proposed by him were not part of the terms of reference. Why do you do this? Why then all this attempt, all this briefing, all this endeavour to cloud the issue? Fortunately after a number of sittings, 40 or 50, suddenly everybody found that all the work was wasted and the constitution that was being built up was pigeon-holed. And so the princes are now exactly where they were before they engaged Sir Leslie Scott, (Laughter and applause.) and started on the new constitution. This is not a matter for laughter. It is a very sad matter from the point of view of finance. But where are we just now? Let us now realise that the problem of Indian princes is a problem which must be solved in the interests of the princes and of British India only by such pourparlers and negotiations between the people of Indian states, between the people of British India and between the ruling chiefs as would produce the most fruitful results. (Hear, hear.) That is the way to proceed, not by consultations in secret in London, not by arguments which are not delivered to the outside world, not by building up constitutions which impinged upon realities, not by erecting theories which cannot stand coldblooded examination, but by placing all the cards on the table. We assure the princes of their solidarity and integrity. The Indian states demand that they should be given some opportunities for advance and constitutional growth. The subjects of the British Indian provinces and the British Indians do not desire to encroach to the slightest extent on the privileges and the treaty rights of the princes, but tell them that they would be welcome partners in this great fabric that is sought to be built up. It is in that spirit that this problem must be solved and I hope—it is too extravagant a hope—that the princes are waking to the necessity for such a solution. If all of them do not, some of them do.

For let me say this. The Indian states represent very different evolutions, very different traditions, very different standards of progress. Coming from the South of India as I do, I would ask you to take a place like Travancore or Cochin, for in a way they are the most educated parts of India. In Travancore and Cochin the state of primary, secondary and collegiate education is 35 to 50 years ahead of British India. (Hear, hear.) Living contact between the sovereigns and the ruled has proved very wholesome and very beneficial in those states. Take Mysore, where there is a sovereign who has been aptly described as the modern Janaka who always thinks with the people and acts with them. There are those extremes like that on one side and there may be extremes on the other side. But if what may be called the common instinct of the princes makes them lean on British India and on their own subjects, they must begin to realise that only by negotiations with men of their own flesh and blood can they protect their own rights and be sure of their own position. Well if they do that, the problem of the future is solved. Otherwise, what will happen? Whenever we ask for constitutional advance they say,—what about one-third of India, what about the Indian princes? Then they ask for the protection of their treaty rights. The present system encourages absenteeism, sloth and an absence of living contact between the rulers and the ruled in the states. Taking advantage of the failures and the mistakes of the rulers the paramount power is able to tell them—you won't have all these incidental advantages, you won't be entitled to spend nine months of the year in England, you won't be able to have a country seat or a pig farm in England unless you do this and don't do that. (Laughter and cheers.) Unless we realise, therefore, that they are with us, unless we realise that we must work with them and bring them by our side, not by criticism but by slow, sympathetic understanding of their needs and rights and champion them on our side and unless we also realise that our problems are essentially theirs and theirs essentially ours, we shall not prosper. Therefore, the first part of the resolution calls upon us to discover some method of living contact between Indian princes, their subjects and British India and unless that is reached, our problem of dominion status will never be solved. How do I envisage the India of the future?—as a congeries of independent states which would not be interfered with except in matters of common danger. But to have that autonomy, to have that independence, you must develop your institutions until you become equal partners with that Commonwealth of India and that is what the second part of the resolution calls upon the princes to do. I have great pleasure in moving this resolution. (Loud applause.)

MR. R. A. KELKAR./H.

Mr. R. A. Kelkar (Poona): Ladies and gentlemen, in seconding this resolution I have to bring to your notice one fact of great importance and it is this. It is perhaps for the first time that in a gathering of this kind a resolution bearing on Indian states has been introduced. Up till now or at least till some years back, we were more or less dealing with our own local problems and slight improvements here and there were all that we were demanding until we came to the conclusion or we came to a position when some of us British Indians drifted so far back from the Indian subjects of native states that a school of thought arose, which recently gave expression to its feelings in Calcutta that native states ought not to be there, that another Dalhousie should wipe them out altogether. On the other hand, princes went so far as to believe that their interests were better safeguarded by the Viceroy and his servants than by their own kith and kin, the British Indians. Thirdly, the third party—the subjects of the British Indian states—ultimately came to believe that they were the neglected ones, and one of them so aptly expressed it in a recent gathering at Calcutta that if the princes were the slaves of Britain, the subjects of these princes were the slaves of these slaves. In fact, what we have to do for the sake of unity is to bring all these three factors together in one common conference and settle their differences just as differences between Hindus and Muslims were settled by the Nehru

Committee. In fact, the two parts of the resolution do refer to the two aspects of this question. The one is the internal aspect and the other is the external aspect, so far as the Indian states are concerned. In the second part of the resolution we express our hopes, and welcome also the achievements of certain Indian princes and the subjects of these states,—that the system of government that we are demanding from Britain ought to be to a certain extent extended to the subjects of these native states, for when we are envisaging the Indian problem as a whole, I submit that it would be impossible for all of us to ignore these 70 millions of our own countrymen, who are for all practical purposes men of our own flesh and blood.

The other part of the resolution concerns the relationship between British India and Indian India and there again I do not propose to offer any solution to you, for even where the Nehru Committee has not proposed any solution it would be presumptuous on my part to offer any solution. What I, therefore, attempt to do in seconding this resolution is simply to press for some kind of conference between the leaders of British India and the representatives of the princes and the leaders of the subjects of Indian states. They should all come together in a kind of round table conference and hammer out their problems until something like another Nehru Report is produced on this matter.

I shall lay before you some of the difficult problems confronting the subjects of native states. They demand that the princes should not be absentee-rulers. At the same time they demand that the rights that are being extended to the British Indians should be extended to them. On the other hand, the external problems are equally difficult. We cannot say to the princes and their subjects that they ought not to be participants in the boons or the rights that we are going to secure for our country, for the simple reason that the central Government in the new constitution that we have devised will be taxing them by way of customs, by the increase of railway rates, by the increase in postal rates and by the increase in salt duty. The result of all these increases and duties will be that the subjects of the Indian states will be paying indirectly to the treasury of British India, without at the same time having any voice in India's legislatures. I do not say what proportion of seats they should have. I simply urge now that there should be some sort of a committee or conference to thrash out all these problems and to arrive at some equitable and just solution. (Applause.)

The resolution was then put and carried *nem con.*

Council and Office-bearers.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad (President): The next resolution is a formal one and as usual it will be put from the Chair. It runs thus :

- (a) Resolved that Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M. L. C., and Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, M.L.A., be re-appointed honorary General Secretaries of the Federation for the year 1929. (Applause.)

We cannot have better secretaries than these two who have served us so well. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

- (b) Resolved further that the undermentioned persons do constitute the Indian National Liberal Council for the year 1929 :—

The Indian National Liberal Council for 1929,

Chairman.

1. Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad, K.C.I.E., LL.D., Malabar Hill, Bombay.

Vice-Chairmen.

2. Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Mylapore, Madras.
3. Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M.L.C., Hamilton Road, Allahabad.
4. Diwan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghava Aiyer, Mylapore, Madras.
5. The right hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C., Royapettah High Road, Madras.

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6. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. C. S. I., LL.D., Albert Road, Allahabad.
7. Dr. R. P. Paranjpye, Poona.
8. Sir Morapant Joshi, K. C. S. E., Amraoti.

Secretaries.

Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M. L. C.
Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, M. L. A., 1, Katra Road, Allahabad.

Nominated by the President of the Federation.

9. Mr. N. Subbarau Pantulu, Rajahmundry.
10. The Hon'ble Sir Phiroze Sethna, Canada Building, Hornby Road, Bombay.
11. Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, C. I. E., C. B. E., LL.D., 20, Suri Lane, Calcutta.
12. The Hon'ble Sir Shankar Rao Chitnavis, I. S. O., Nagpur.
13. Mr. A. P. Sen, Charbagh, Lucknow.

Elected by the Federation Madras.

14. Dr. Annie Besant, P. T. S., Adyar, Madras.
15. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, K. C. I. E., Cathedral P. O., Madras.
16. Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao, Ellore.
17. Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju, C. I. E., Vizagapatam.
18. Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar, C. I. E., Egmore, Madras.
19. The Hon'ble Sir S. R. M. Annamalai Chettiar, Vepery, Madras.
20. The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur G. A. Natesan, Esplanade, Madras.
21. Rao Bahadur S. V. Narasimha Rao, Kurnool.
22. Mr. T. R. Venkatarama Sastri, C. I. E., Mylapore, Madras.
23. Rao Bahadur Dr. C. B. Ramarao, Bangalore.
24. Rao Bahadur C. S. Subramanyam, Mayavaram.
25. Mr. Bantmal Sitarama Rao, Mylapore, Madras.
26. Mr. G. Krishna Rao, Kimberley, Kilpauk, Madras.
27. Mr. M. G. Mukundaraja Iyengar, Devakota.
28. Mr. A. Rangaswami Aiyangar, Devakota.
29. Mr. M. Kolandavelu Mudaliar, Sunkuraman Chetty Street, Madras.
30. Mr. R. N. Aingar, Triplicane, Madras.
31. Mr. E. Vinayak Rao, Advocate, Mylapore, Madras.

BOMBAY.

32. Sir Cowasji Jehangir (Junior), Malabar Hill, Bombay.
33. Mr. B. S. Kamat, Ganeshkhind Road, Poona.
34. Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, Malabar Hill, Bombay.
35. Mr. G. K. Devadhar, C. I. E., Servants of India Society, Poona.
36. Mr. N. M. Joshi, M. L. A., Servants of India Society, Sandhurst Road, Bombay.
37. Rao Bahadur R. R. Kale, M. L. C., Satara.
38. Mr. Chunilal M. Gandhi, Surat.
39. Mr. D. G. Dalvi, 217, Charni Road, Bombay.
40. Mr. H. G. Gharapuray, I. C. S., (retired) Poona city.
41. Mr. G. K. Gadgil, Poona city.
42. Sir Byramjee Jeejeebhoy, Alice Building, Fort, Bombay.
43. Professor S. Y. Pongshe, Poona City.
44. Mr. J. R. B. Jeejeebhoy, Alice Building, Fort, Bombay.
45. Mr. Faiz Tyabji, Malabar Hill, Bombay.
46. Mr. V. N. Chandavarkar, Pedder Road, Cumballa Hill, Bombay.
47. Mr. Vasantarao S. Raout, near French Bridge, Bombay.
48. Mr. K. S. Jatar, C. I. E., Poona City.
49. Mr. M. D. Altekar, Haji Cossim Blocks, near French Bridge, Bombay.
50. Mr. Manu Subedar, Sudama House, Ballard Pier Estate, Bombay.
51. Mr. Jehangir C. Vateba, c/o Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Church Gate Street, Bombay.
52. Mr. Sorabji E. Warden, opposite Post Office, Colaba, Bombay.
53. Mr. K. J. Dubash, Medows Street, Fort, Bombay.

54. Mr. N. R. Wadia, 120, Warehouse Road, Bombay.
55. Mr. J. R. Gharpure, Law College, Poona city.
56. Mr. H. P. Chahewala, Ahmedabad.

Bengal.

57. Sir Benode Mitter, Elysium Row, Calcutta.
58. Babu Jatindra Nath Basu, 17, Balaram Ghose Street, Calcutta.
59. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, 6, College Square, Calcutta.
60. Rai Ramani Mohan Das Bahadur, Karimganj, Sylhet.
61. Principal Heramba Chandra Maitra, 65, Harrison Road, Calcutta.
62. Sachindra Prasad Bose, 6, College Street, Calcutta.
63. Babu Manmatha Nath Sen, 44, Ramakanta Bose Street, Calcutta.
64. The rev. B. A. Nag, 1/2, College Square, Calcutta.
65. Mr. S. M. Bose, 3, Federation Road, Calcutta.
66. Mr. D. C. Ghose, 23, Debender Ghose Road Bhawanipore, Calcutta.
67. Rai Fanindra Lal De Bahadur, 99, Gray Street, Calcutta.
68. Mr. C. C. Biswas, 58, Puddupoker Road, Bhowanipur, Calcutta.
69. Babu Nibaran Chandra Ray, 29, Beadon Row, Beadon Street, P. O., Calcutta.
70. Mr. B. K. Chaudhuri, 99/1 C. Cornwallis Street, Calcutta.
71. Pandit Shankar Lal Chaube, 183, Raja Dinendra Street, Calcutta.
72. Mr. Prafulla Nath Tagore, 1, Durponarain Tagore Street, Calcutta.
73. Mr. Ramani Mohan Sen, Berhampore, Bengal.
74. Mr. B. K. Basu, Goaltuli Road, Calcutta.
75. Khan Bahadur Ekramul Haq, Berhampur, Bengal.
76. Mr. Devi Prasad Khaitan, Canning Street, Calcutta.
77. Babu Manoranjan Mullick, 3, Chakraberia Lane, Calcutta.
78. Dr. Santiram Chatterjee Medical Club, 62, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta.
79. Satnath Roy, 12, Holwell's Lane, Calcutta.
80. Babu Suresh Chandra Basu, 11, Krishnaram Bose Street, Calcutta.
81. Mr. H. M. Bose, Rowland Road, Ballygunge, Calcutta.

The United Provinces.

82. The hon. Munshi Narayan Prasad Asthana, Canning Road, Allahabad.
83. Pandit Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, M. L. C. Kamacheha, Benares city.
84. Rai Krishnaji, Pandepur, Banares Cant.
85. Babu Bisheshar Nath Srivastava, O. B. E. Lucknow.
86. Munshi Harnandan Prasad, George Town, Allahabad.
87. Pandit Venkatesh Narayan Tivary, M. L. C. Allahabad.
88. Pandit Gopinath Kunzru, Edmonstone Road, Allahabad.
89. Rai Bahadur Thakur Hanuman Singh, M. L. C., Kurri-Sudauli, Rai Bareli District, Oudh.
90. Rai Braj Narayan Gurtu, Hamilton Road, Allahabad.
91. Babu Kishori Prasad, M. L. C., Banda.
92. Kumar Rajendra Singh, M. L. C., Trilokinath Road, Lucknow.
93. Rai Bahadur, Lala Mathura Prasad Mehrotra, M. L. C., Biswan, Sitapur district, Oudh.
94. Babu Gauri Sankar Prasad, Bulanala, Benares city.
95. Mehta Krishna Ram, Leader Buildings, Allahabad.
96. Pandit Krishna Prasad Kaul, Aminuddowlah Park, Lucknow.
97. Babu Bodhraj Sahney, Sipri Bazar, Jhansi.
98. Mr. Surendra Nath Verma, Stanley Road, Allahabad.
99. Mr. P. N. Sapru, Edmonstone Road, Allahabad.
100. Rai Bahadur Lala Bihari Lal, M. L. C., Ranimandi, Allahabad.
101. Pandit Paramesuar Nath Sapru, Fyzabad.
102. Mr. Ayodhya Das, Anand Bhavan, Gorakhpur.
103. Babu Vishwanath Prasad, Leader Buildings, Allahabad.
104. Khan Bahadur Munshi Muhammad Ismail, M. L. C., Gorakhpur.
105. Babu Radha Mohan, Jaunpur.
106. Mr. S. P. Andrews Dube, Aminuddowlah Park, Lucknow.

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The Punjab.

107. Rai Bahadur, Dr. Moti Sagar, Lahore.
108. Mian Abdul Aziz, Zakki Gate, Lahore.
109. Khan Bahadur Mian Chiragdin, Muzang, Lahore.
110. Lala Kesho Ram, Wakil, Amritsar.
111. Lala Durga Das, Fane Road, Lahore.
112. Chaudhari Ata Mohi Uddin, Hoshiarpur.
113. Pandit K. N. Agnihotri, c/o Devanand Brothers, Nila Gumbed, Lahore.
114. Pandit Hardatta Sharma, Servants of India Society, McLeod Road, Lahore.
115. Khan Bahadur Shaik Amir Ali, Mohanlal Road, Lahore.
116. Rai Bahadur, Lala Dhanpat Rai, Ferozepur Road, Lahore.
117. Mr. Chumilal Mathur, Bar-at-Law, Lower Mall, Lahore.
118. Khan Sahib Gul Mohammad, Ferozepur.
119. Lala Faqir Chand, Fane Road, Lahore.
120. Maulvi Mahbub Alum, Paisa Akhbar Street, Lahore.

Bihar and Orissa.

121. Babu Bhagvati Saran Singh, M. L. C., Maksudpur House, Gaya.
122. Mr. Lakshmi Narayan Sahu, Servants of India Society, Cuttack.

The Central Provinces.

123. Sir Bipin Krishna Bose, K. C. I. E., Civil-Lines, Nagpur.
124. Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis, K. C. I. E., the Mahal, Nagpur.
125. Sir Sorabji Mehta, C. I. E., the Empress Mills, Nagpur.
126. Sir Bisheshar Das, Daga, Nagpur.
127. Rai Bahadur D. N. Chaudhuri, Raipur.
128. Rao Bahadur V. M. Kelkar, Craddock Town, Nagpur.
129. Rao Bahadur A. S. Bambewalla, Craddock Town, Nagpur.
130. Rai Bahadur N. G. Bose, Civil Lines, Nagpur.
131. Rao Bahadur M. G. Deshpande, Nagpur.
132. Rao Bahadur D. Lakshmi Narayan, Kamptee Nagpur.
133. Mr. M. E. R. Malak, Craddock Town, Nagpur.
134. Mr. Sridhar Rao, B. Gokhale, Sitabulli, Nagpur.
135. Mr. N. A. Dravid, Craddock Town, Nagpur.
136. Pandit Sitacharan Dube, Hoshangabad.

Berar.

137. Rao Bahadur K. G. Damle, C. I. E., Akola.
138. Rao Bahadur R. G. Mundle, Yeotmal.
139. Rao Bahadur D. V. Bhagavat, Akola.
140. Rao Bahadur R. V. Mahajani, Akola.
141. Rai Bahadur Seth Ganesh Das, Amraoti.
142. Rao Bahadur B. R. Angal, Amraoti.
143. Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma, Amraoti.
144. Rao Bahadur Dr. W. R. Bhat, Amraoti.
145. Rao Bahadur R. M. Khare, Amraoti.
146. Rao Bahadur B. V. Dravid, Yeotmal.
147. Mr. V. K. Rajvade, Akola.
148. Mr. Janrao Bajirao Deshmukh, Amraoti.
149. Mr. Shankar Rao Bhalchandra, Yeotmal.
150. Mr. T. R. Gadre, Akola.
151. Mr. R. K. Thombre, Akola.
152. Mr. V. T. Deshpande, Yeotmal.

Assam.

153. Rao Bahadur K. L. Barua, Gauhati.

Ajmer.

154. Rai Saheb Pandit Chandrika Prasad Tripathi, Ajmer.

The resolution was duly carried.

Next Session of the Federation.

Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer (Madras): Mr. President and friends,—The very agreeable task of inviting the next session of the National Liberal Federation to Madras has fallen upon me and I discharge it with the greatest pleasure. I do hope that Madras may have the opportunity and the pleasure and the privilege of having a record gathering. We shall do our best to make you happy at Madras. We are too poor a province but a hospitable province. (Loud cheers.) I formally move :

Resolved that the twelfth annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India be held in Madras in the last week, or on such other dates as may be later determined, in 1929.

The hon. Rao Bahadur G. A. Natesan (Madras): In seconding this invitation, if it needed any seconding at all, I wish to assure you that the reception in Madras will among other things undoubtedly be warmer than what we have had at Allahabad. (Laughter.)

The resolution was carried.

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT.

The hon. Munshi Narayan Prasad Asthana (Allahabad): Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I consider myself to be the most fortunate speaker, fortunate and all the more fortunate because I will not have to put in the same amount of energy and use the same force which has been used by other speakers. Ladies and gentlemen, I rise to propose a hearty vote of thanks on behalf of this Federation to our worthy President Sir Chimanlal Setalvad who has presided over this session with such ability and has guided its deliberations with such circumspection that we cannot but feel very grateful to him. Busy as he is, he has found time to come over to Allahabad from Bombay to take the trouble of presiding over this session for two days. He has also presided over the deliberations of the subjects committee. For the trouble that he has taken and for the able guidance that we have got at his hands, we members of the reception committee as well as those who have assembled at this session offer our heartfelt thanks to the President. We thank him for the very able manner in which he has conducted the proceedings of this session. I have the greatest pleasure in proposing a very hearty vote of thanks to the President. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

Babu Jitendra Nath Basu (Calcutta): Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have great pleasure in seconding this resolution. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad is an avowed fighter in the cause of the uplift of his countrymen and it is worthy that we should express our confidence in him and our appreciation of his services. It was a happy idea of the Reception Committee and of the All-India Council of the Liberal Federation to suggest his name for occupying the office of President of our present session. You have seen, ladies and gentlemen, the conspicuous ability with which he has filled that difficult position. You have seen the great patience, the tact and the keen desire to understand and to appreciate his opponent's point of view that he has shown in the course of our deliberations. I very heartily second the resolution that has been proposed and I trust it will be carried by acclamation.

The resolution was accordingly carried amidst loud and prolonged acclamation.

President's Concluding Speech.

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, the President, was next garlanded by Mr. Chintamani, Chairman of the Reception Committee, amidst deafening cheers. The President who received a loud ovation as he began to reply, said :—

Munshi Narayan Prasad Asthana, Fellow-Liberals, Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am indeed very thankful to you for the very generous manner in which the vote of thanks to me has been proposed and has been received by

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you all. The proposer has in his kindness attributed the success of this session to the humble efforts that I made in guiding its deliberations. But the truth of the matter, ladies and gentlemen, is that the real credit is due to the delegates who have attended this conference, because it was only the spirit of give and take and the moderation and tact of the delegates in the subjects committee which has really contributed to the success of this session. Whatever humble contribution I may have made, would not have been fruitful of any good result unless I had got the support of all the delegates here who were anxious to make this session a real success.

I am not surprised that the Liberal Federation session in Allahabad has been a great success, because ever since I left the college as a young boy I have known that Allahabad has made a very large contribution to national interests. It has produced national leaders of great eminence. I remember that in old days when I first attended the Indian National Congress in 1889 at Bombay, the great outstanding figure that caught my imagination at the time was the late Pandit Ajudhia Nath (cheers) whose able and brilliant son is one of our secretaries for so many years. (Cheers.) I was also struck at that session, 1889, of the Indian National Congress by the earnestness that was displayed by another great national leader who is still happily among us—I mean Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. (Cheers.) Leaving those two, you well know many others that Allahabad and the U. P. have produced. At this table itself we find distinguished representatives of Allahabad itself. I have on my left your distinguished citizen, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who through thick and thin has been a great national leader, endowed with great national spirit. (Applause) On my right I find my friend Mr. Chintamani who though not a citizen of Allahabad in that sense and though hailing from Madras has been here for several years. It is during his residence in Allahabad that he has blossomed forth into a great national leader. (Laughter and applause.) Therefore, as I said, I do not wonder that the Allahabad session of the Liberal Federation should have been the great success that it has been.

Ladies and gentlemen, we need not be pessimistic and lose courage because our numbers are comparatively small. We cannot emulate the 25,000, or the 30,000, or the 50,000 that gather together at the Indian National Congress. Our President is not driven to the *pandal* in a carriage with 34 horses yoked to it. But still I do claim that the Liberal party and the Liberal Federation sessions year after year make really a very solid contribution to the national advancement of India. (Hear, hear.) We are now passing through very momentous and anxious times and it must be remembered by all those who are interested in the welfare of this country—and I include in that description not only ourselves the citizens of this country, but also the British Government who in the wisdom of Providence have been brought into partnership with us—that the times through which India is now passing are really very anxious times. Though the indications may be small, those indications have to be taken note of by those in authority, that the India which they administered all these years is not the India that they have to deal with now. (Hear, hear.) The India that all these years bowed tacitly to British rule leaving its progress and material prosperity to the care of the British Government, its so-called trustees, is not the India that they have now to govern and deal with. They have now to govern an India that is quite alive to its own responsibilities, to its own potentialities and to its own aspirations. The so-called trustees have now to deal with *cestui que trust* that has attained majority and is demanding from the trustees the control of his own property and is also asking for an account of their trusteeship and administration of the trust. (Applause.) If the British Government will realise that situation they will change their mentality but unfortunately they are not fully realising this position. They must also realise the lesson of what is happening in various parts of the country. They must also realise the lesson and implications of the events and happenings in Calcutta. They must realise that a mentality is growing in this country which is absolutely impatient with the present state of things and which, if not guided in the

proper channel, if not met in a reasonable manner, will swallow everything. The communistic ideas and socialism are the coming menace. If that mentality grows, it will swallow dominion status, it will swallow independence, it will swallow the present structure of society, it will swallow the British connection, and it will also swallow the British trade of which Britain is naturally so anxious. (Applause.) Let them, therefore, take heed in time. The only way of meeting the impatient idealism that is growing in the rising generation and preventing the spread of socialism and communism is for the authorities, if they have any imagination in them to take a bold step, to take courage in their hands, and to concede at once what we have been asking for, *viz.*, Dominion status. (Applause.) It is only in that manner, it is only by that generous gesture that the situation can be saved. If they believe and if they imagine that they can deal with symptoms here and symptoms there by repressive measures, by their strength and might, they are very much mistaken. (Hear, hear.) As I ventured to say in my presidential address no Government, however powerful can govern 300 millions of people except with their tacit acquiescence and consent. Unless the British Government secure the contentment and acquiescence of the masses of the people, let them remember that government will become more and more impossible. We of the Liberal faith are pointing to them the right way of meeting the present dangerous situation. (Hear, hear.) If they don't heed our voice, if they don't take our modest counsels into their consideration and if they don't meet our views, it is impossible to foresee the consequences (Hear, hear.) At any rate, we have relieved ourselves of any responsibility in the matter by the warning we have given. We of the Liberal faith have served the country all these years and value and cherish the British connection and have stood by Government, believing that the British connection in the wisdom of Providence is good for both countries. If our wise and moderate counsels are not heeded, there are very troublous times ahead with the growing discontent against the Government and the present order of society. No doubt we will all suffer, India will suffer, England will suffer, but we shall have this satisfaction that while there was time, while there was opportunity we sounded the note of warning as the best advisers of India and England. It is for Government to heed or not to heed our advice. At any rate, we shall have discharged our responsibility.

Before I conclude, we must all tender our thanks to the members of the reception committee and to the secretaries whose indefatigable labours have contributed to the success of the conference, and particularly to Mehta Krishna Ram of the *leader*, Babu Surendra Nath Varma, Babu Vishwanath Prasad, Mehta Mahipatram Nagar, Pandit Moolchand Malaviya, and Babu Sarju Prasad of the managing committee, the volunteers and the girl students of the Arya Kanya Pathshala (Applause).

I don't want to detain you further. I only wish that we Liberals will carry on our useful work throughout the next year in the country. We shall watch the situation very closely as we shall have to do, and as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has said the great thing that we have to achieve is unity among all creeds and all parties. However good and wise our counsels may be, let me assure you that we won't make any advance unless we achieve unity. The divisions and disputes amongst us are really great obstacles in the way of our national progress and as I said in my address we ought to go to the farthest limit in making concessions to minorities consistently with national interest. If we are able, during the year, to achieve unity between all creeds and races in this country, I don't see what power on earth can prevent our future progress towards the goal which we are determined to achieve. Let me repeat I am very grateful to you for making this session a success and for the manner in which you have treated me. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

After a few songs by the girl students of the Arya Kanya Pathshala the Federation terminated amidst very jubilant and enthusiastic scenes.

APPENDIX A.

The National Liberal Federation of India.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL SESSION.

Allahabad.

President.—Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, K. C. I. E., LL. D. (Bombay).

RESOLUTIONS.

I.—Sympathy and Condolence.

Lord Sinha.

- (a) The National Liberal Federation of India places on record its deep sense of the loss the country has sustained in the death of Lord Sinha, one of the most illustrious Indians who rose to fame by dint of his uncommon qualities of intellect and character and who will long be remembered as a man who demonstrated, in every office he filled, the capacity of Indians to do full justice to duties the most arduous.

Lala Lajpat Rai.

- (b) The National Liberal Federation records its sense of deep sorrow at the death of Lala Lajpat Rai, one of the greatest of Indian patriots, the more keenly felt because of the circumstances in which it occurred. In Lala Lajpat Rai the Motherland has lost a public worker whose love of country was passionate and profound. He bore much and braved much for winning freedom for his countrymen, and he laboured with equal zeal for the advancement of education, social reform, and philanthropic causes.

Other Leaders.

- (c) The National Liberal Federation expresses its sense of deep regret at, and of the loss the country has sustained in, the death of Syed Ameer Ali, Sir Hormusji Wadya, Sir Ramanbhai Mahipatram and Babu Durga Charan Banerji, who all served the country faithfully for her political uplift as well as in other spheres of public utility.
- (d) The Federation offers its sympathy and condolence to the bereaved families.

II.—The Statutory Commission.

- (a) The National Liberal Federation urges upon all Indians the imperative necessity of continuing the boycott of the Simon Commission in full vigour.
- (b) The Federation emphatically condemns the police assaults committed in the name of peace and order, which have marked the reception accorded by the officials to the Simon Commission at certain places.

III.—Dominion Status for India.

This Federation is strongly of opinion that the system of government to be established in place of the present system should be the same as that

which prevails in the self-governing Dominions which are equal members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and that this step should be taken immediately. Any further delay and postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England.

IV.—Nehru Committee Report and the Problem of Minorities.

- (a) This Federation accords its general support to the report of the Nehru Committee and the resolutions of the All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow, in particular with reference to the establishment of complete provincial autonomy without Second Chambers and of full responsible government in the Government of India with all residuary powers.
- (b) This Federation is further of opinion that if, in addition to or in substitution of the recommendations of the Nehru Committee, the settlement of the problem of minorities is possible by agreement on any other basis, such basis should be accepted in the larger and more abiding interests of the country.
- (c) The Federation appoints a committee consisting of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad (Bombay); Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru (Allahabad); Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer (Madras); and Babu Jitendra Nath Basu (Secretary) to cooperate with the representatives of other organisations for the settlement of communal questions.

V.—Indian States.

- (1) (a) While in general agreement with the recommendations of the Nehru Committee in regard to Indian States this Federation welcomes the suggestion made recently in some quarters that representatives of British India and Indian States should meet to discuss their points of view to arrive at a conclusion which will be acceptable to both parties.
- (b) This Federation while appreciating the efforts made by some states to introduce representative government is strongly of opinion that more systematic and liberal measures should be taken to introduce responsible government and associate the people with the administration of their own states.

VI.—Council and Office-bearers.

- (a) Resolved that Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, M. L. C., and Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru, M. L. A., be re-appointed honorary General Secretaries of the Federation for the year 1929.
- (b) Resolved further that the undermentioned persons do constitute the Indian National Liberal Council for the year 1929 :

The list is published on pages 58—61.

VII.—Next Session of the Federation.

Resolved that the twelfth annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India be held at Madras in the last week, or on such other dates as may be later determined, of 1929.

CHIMANLAL H. SETALVAD,

President,

ALLAHABAD,
December 31, 1928.

Eleventh Annual Session of the
National Liberal Federation of India.