

SEVENTEENTH
BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE,

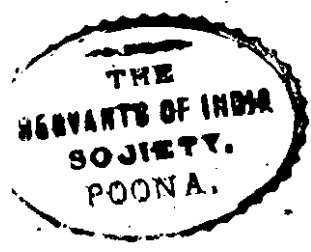
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PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY

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The Imperial War Conference.

Since this Conference met last at Ahmedabad, two events of first-rate importance have happened: the session of the Imperial War Conference at the seat of the empire, and the adoption of a scheme of post-war reforms by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow. The whole country rejoices that the representatives of India were admitted to the Imperial Conference on terms of perfect equality with those of the Dominions and that they everywhere met with the utmost cordiality and consideration, while by their personal bearing and patriotic utterances they have sustained the honour of India and are entitled to our gratitude and appreciation. Touching the actual results of the Conference, the cablegrams so far received, although they contain momentous news, do not enable us to obtain precise notions. In the first place, the members of the Conference unanimously recommended that India should have full representation at future Imperial Conferences and that the Governments concerned should be moved to give their consent to the arrangement. But what does "full representation" mean? If the representatives of each Government are to have only one vote between them, more significance attaches to the quality of the representatives than to their number. Speaking for myself, the country has been particularly lucky this time in the gentlemen chosen by Government to champion its interests. But luck cannot always be counted upon. The other Governments are composed of elected leaders of the people, and their choice may be held to be the same as the people's choice. In the case of India it may happen that the persons chosen by Government do not command the confidence of the public and that the views which they express at the Conference are conformable to the wishes of the Government but not to those of the country. It would be necessary to secure that the nominees of our Government should have been recommended to them on behalf of the public by some electorate like the elected members of the Indian Legislative Council or the elected members of the Indian and Provincial Legislative Councils. This method is obviously unsuitable to obtain the official representatives or the representatives of the ruling chiefs, should such representatives be required for future Conferences as well. On this, as on other important aspects, however, we have no information to go upon. One observation, however, may be made with absolute certitude. The idea that the Secretary of State can represent the people of India in the Imperial Conference is untenable, if not ridiculous. Says Mr. Silburn on this subject with reference to the conference of 1907, "It cannot be said that the Secretary of State for India was the proper personage to represent some 294 millions of people at a conference, the other delegates at which were directly representing the people of countries they were personally acquainted with by long residence." Another matter, but one which affords satisfaction, is that the Conference unanimously approved of the principle of reciprocity between the Dominions and India and commended the memorandum presented by our representatives on our position in those countries, to the favourable consideration of the Dominion Governments. Here, again, till we know the text of the memorandum, we can have no idea what 'reciprocity' connotes and cannot judge the exact gain to our credit.

India and the Imperial Commonwealth.

A third resolution, transcending the others in far-reaching consequence to India, enunciates some of the principles to be borne in mind when a special Imperial Conference will sit immediately after the war to consider the relations of the component parts of the Empire in the future, in other words, the basis of the future Imperial Commonwealth. One of the principles is that India as well as the Dominions should have an adequate voice in the determination of foreign policy and foreign relations. So far so good. But what about this other principle, that any readjustment should recognise the Dominions as autonomous nations of the Imperial Commonwealth and India as an important portion thereof? Does it mean that our representatives have consented to an arrangement which even in the future will place India on an inferior level to the Dominions? Or does it mean that, though India may see no change in her internal constitution, she will enjoy, so far as the Commonwealth is concerned, equal status with the self-governing Dominions? Constitutional expedients are no doubt infinite, and the ingenuity of constitution-makers is not easily baffled. But we cannot refrain from asking, how will this equality of status be made compatible with India's position as a Dependency of Great Britain? How can she, in her character as such, cast her vote in the Parliament of the Commonwealth independently of Great Britain, as the Dominions will? If the idea is that, while she has a vote, it will always be cast with Great Britain's, it is only a device to secure the domination of Great Britain, and the boasted equality of India with the Dominions is nominal. Independence of Great Britain in the Commonwealth Parliament is a greater thing constitutionally than independence of Great Britain in internal affairs. Are we to get the greater thing, while we are still to be denied the smaller? On the contrary, the self-governing status appears to us almost a *sine qua non* of India becoming an equal partner in the future Commonwealth. Perhaps, however, we are taking too much for granted in supposing that a Commonwealth with a defined constitution will take shape as a direct result of the deliberations of the special post-war Conference. Great complexities surround the problem, and informed opinion is by no means unanimous in the United Kingdom or the Colonies as to the feasibility or the desirability of a comprehensive Imperial constitution. Professor Dicey and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, to name only two, have not yet become converts to the new gospel of a Federated Empire. Indian opinion cannot count for much in this mighty issue. In the scheme adopted by the Congress and the Muslim League, it has only one clause to itself, although that clause is comprehensive enough:—"In any Council or other body which may be constituted or convened for the settlement or control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominions and with equal rights." The governing resolution of the National Congress is briefer still and embraces India's status, both internal and external. "That in the reconstitution of the Empire India shall be lifted from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions." In fact, Indian opinion is by no means enthusiastic for an Imperial Federation. For obvious reasons, it has concentrated on the acquisition of internal autonomy. The people of India believe that, so long as their representatives are nothing in internal affairs, they cannot be anything in external affairs, whatever the constitution may provide; and they believe further that, when India becomes autonomous, she will know how to secure her proper rights in the larger councils of the Empire. Powerful feelings arising from the contemplation of hopes long-deferred, pledges unfulfilled and rights

denied, impel Indian politicians to work for self-government, and those who ignore this circumstance ignore the most vital element in the situation and can never hope to understand the problem of India's aspirations. The logical mind of the Indian perceives an incongruity in the plan of his Anglo-Indian brother, who advocates a position of equality for India in the Federation of the Empire but resists the movement for internal freedom. But incongruities and logical flaws do not disturb those who have been brought up to believe in the perfection of the British constitution. To them it is enough that a constitution is workable and bids fair to become a tolerably efficient means of promoting the happiness of the community. So we find Mr. Lionel Curtis sketching the outline of a Federal Parliament with a nominee Upper House and a wholly elected Lower House, in both of which the people of India should be adequately represented, though he knows that they do not enjoy such a privilege in their own country and in fact commends the scheme to their acceptance expressly on the ground that it will provide Indians with a voice in the determination of the steps by which and the pace at which they should advance towards full responsible government in internal affairs. This assumes that the Federation movement outside India will reach consummation far sooner than the Home Rule movement inside India, which is indeed bidden to wait on such chance as the former may have of success. Which of these two movements is the simpler and more urgent? Mr. Curtis moves with confidence among the considerations that make up the question of Imperial Federation. He does not understand; and is naturally diffident in dealing with, the questions connected with Indian Home Rule. The position of the average Indian politician is exactly the reverse. He is familiar with the many aspects of the nationalist movement in this country, while he walks with unsure steps along the intricate paths that lead to the great Britannic Commonwealth. Each may be pardoned then if he has a different opinion from the other as to which of the two is to come first and which second—Imperial Federation or Indian Self-Government. Mr. Curtis, indeed, has now convinced himself that India can and must have responsible government as soon as possible and is willing to countenance her endeavours in that direction, so far as he considers them proper and legitimate. The average Indian politician is in a worse predicament. He is not satisfied that Imperial Federation must come and is not therefore prepared to grapple with the difficulties of that problem. Scanning the meagre message of Reuter, one reads a note of hesitation and doubt in the resolution of the Imperial War Conference on this particular subject. The cable says, "The readjustment should provide for effective arrangements for *continuous consultations* on all important matters of common imperial interest and for *such concerted action founded on consultation as the several Governments determine.*" The expressions I have put in italics do not lend themselves to the interpretation that an Imperial Federation is definitely decided upon. On the contrary, an easy and natural construction of the words leads us to suppose that in the opinion of the members of the Conference the problems of the Empire should be solved by frequent meetings of those interested in them, and that the final responsibility was to rest on the several Governments that met in consultation and not on an Imperial organization created for the purpose. If, however, an Imperial Parliament, such as Mr. Curtis adumbrates, is to be brought into being before India gets responsible government, we should welcome the suggestion that India should be adequately represented in both Houses, and in the Lower House by men of her own free choice. Only this condition is indispensable—that the standard of representation must be the same for all alike, population or total contribution made to the Imperial treasury. Mr. Silburn in his *Governance of Empire* sug-

gests a uni-cameral Parliament for the Federated Empire, with 216 members. When he comes to distribute them, he assigns 67 members to the United Kingdom, 37 to India, 30 to Canada, 16 to South Africa, 12 to New Zealand, 11 to Australia, and so on, thus recognising in the case of India that "to give this portion of the Empire a voice in its governance commensurate with its importance, it is necessary to make that voice second only to that of the United Kingdom." His basis of representation, however, viz., the size of the legislative bodies in the different countries represented, is arbitrary and liable to fluctuation and even manipulation. Lord Sydenham and other critics do not scruple to discount the representative character of our representatives in the various Councils on account of the smallness of the electorates who choose them. The fact is that it suits the bureaucracy, in their rooted opposition to all democratic movements in the country, to keep the franchise both narrow and indirect. To-day the franchise may be widened enormously with perfect safety and justice, and instead of the non-official members of local bodies electing to the Provincial Legislative Councils and the non-official members of the Provincial Legislative Councils electing to the Indian Legislative Council, it is perfectly feasible to create large and enlightened constituencies directly among the people. Mr. Silburn's standard then must be dismissed. When the Federation enthusiasts do not, like Lord Milner for example, abandon the notions of equality and justice, they are puzzled how to bring India into the organization without giving her a weight and potency which will cast other parts of the Empire into the shade.

Our Demand—The Tide in our favour.

My heart swells with pride as I think of the momentous resolution which, in mutual concert, our National Congress and our Muslim League came to in the recent Lucknow session, concerning the progress of our people towards self-government. An Indian patriot finds immediately placed in front of him for the first time in the history of our political effort an object worthy of the great nation to which he belongs and the great and varied culture which forms his richest inheritance. Self-government under the British flag, equal partnership in the British Confederation with the United Kingdom and the oversea Dominions, constitutes a destiny which the proudest people need not scorn. This generation of our public workers must count themselves blessed that they are privileged to see the fair vision of emancipated India gather form so quickly and come into vivid view to inspire them with hope and promise denied to their fathers. These are great days : great destinies are taking shape, great ideas are swaying the hearts of men, and great causes have evoked great enthusiasms and exacted great sacrifices. India has not been a silent spectator ; happily removed from the thick of the conflict, she still feels that she has enormous stakes in it and throbs with the most lively interest at every turn and shift in the mighty drama which is in progress in most parts of the world. If no belligerent nation can remain its old self after the war, neither can India be held down to her ancient moorings. We in India have likewise new dangers ahead, we have likewise to refashion our polity, we must likewise claim a share of the great principles of popular freedom and opportunity of unhindered self-expression which are being reconquered at terrible cost for human civilization. Come then, all of you who live for something beyond the hour, all whose hearts can feel, all whose souls can be fired to high purpose, come all and aid in this great work. Whether you bring much or little, whether you use pen or tongue, let your heart be pure and your resolve manly. Let us not think too much of the risks and the difficulties. They are great, but so

are the forces that fight on our side. Indian blood has not been shed, Indian treasure has not been poured out, in vain. Subtle bonds, unsuspected heretofore, have drawn Englishman and Indian together, new ties of brotherliness and comradeship have been confessed on both sides, and England and India have realised as never before how sorely they need each other. Do not believe it, if anybody tells you that the war should not make, and has not made, any change in our mutual relationship. Hard-headed party leaders have experienced a profound change in their dearest convictions on account of the war. Mr. Asquith, for example, is now a whole-hearted advocate of the franchise for women, and Mr. Bonar Law, alluding to his changed attitude towards the Irish Nationalists and the question of Home Rule gave fine, if somewhat reserved, expression to his newly-awakened generosity. "I do believe," he said, "that this Irish question does act as a handicap upon us in carrying on this war. I do not agree that perhaps we should do it better when the war is over—I am not sure. I know this at least that in this House I myself, and I think that it is true of many others, have a different feeling towards the gentlemen who sit on the Nationalist benches, because of the attitude taken by the leader of their party and by other members of that party who are risking their lives." Whatever some Europeans may say here, and some Indians repeat after them, the people in England and in the Dominions have had a new India revealed to them; and the best among them in all political parties have proclaimed their conviction that India should no longer occupy a low place in the Empire and that Indians should no longer be treated as political inferiors or possible rebels, whom it is wise to keep weak and disarmed. The severe tests of war have proved us beyond a doubt, and the general opinion among those qualified to judge is that England must definitely pledge herself to accord the self-governing status to India. The National Congress and the Muslim League have asked for such a declaration from responsible authorities. The idea must have gained strength from the presence of India's representatives at the seat of empire among the leading lights of the empire. One of them Sir S. P. Sinha, had himself pleaded eloquently and passionately for such a declaration when he presided over the Bombay session of the Congress. Even *The Times* of London seems to have felt the need of a changed attitude towards India. In a recent article that great paper says, "The broad lines of policy in India are perfectly clear; it looks steadily forward to the gradual increase of the self-governing function and is only concerned to regulate that increase as good order within and the security against external aggression require, but this policy is too seldom expressed in terms." Then it goes on to urge "that an authoritative declaration on the subject should be made now and not as a reply to agitation after the war."

No Revolution.

In acute controversy a disavowal or qualification of a statement cannot be repeated too often. Sometimes in innocence, but sometimes also through perversity, people go on attributing motives and views which you have repudiated and demolishing arguments which you have never advanced. The political reformers of India are accused of advocating the immediate grant of responsible government, and the use by the reformers themselves of the expressions Home Rule and Colonial Autonomy, not in their rigid constitutional significance as applied to Ireland and to the Self-governing Dominions, but as convenient and compendious descriptions of their demands, has been turned against them as an avowal of a desire to bring about revolutionary changes by such tactics as obstruction and intimidation.

The extreme nervousness of those who are responsible for peace and tranquillity in the country enables us to understand their proneness to take alarm on insufficient grounds. But it is difficult to find an adequate excuse for their indiscriminating dislike of all political agitation and their reckless condemnation of moderate leaders as revolutionaries. The scheme of changes embodied in the principal resolution of the recent Lucknow Congress is described as a definite step towards self-government. The framers of the scheme have been anxious that its introduction should not require the scrapping of existing machinery or give cause for the suspicion that they were aiming at the subversion of British rule. The forms of administration will remain untouched. The Governor-General, Governors and Lieutenant-Governors, Executive Councils and Legislatures will be there as ever. The great services, the financial system, the judicial system, and the educational system will continue intact. There will be no dislocation in the Departments. No interests like those of commerce or agriculture will be threatened. The free life of no community and the free practice of no religion will be in peril. Military matters, war and peace, and treaty-making will be in the same hands as heretofore. If none of these dire consequences is likely, is it fair or reasonable to spread a panic of coming revolution? We do not wish to conceal the fact that great and substantial changes are contemplated in the scheme. Certain vested interests will suffer; civil authority will change hands, and a great devolution of power will be effected. But these changes, profound as they are, do not involve 'red ruin and the breaking-up of laws.' What great popular movement, intended to satisfy the ambitions of a people long kept down, was ever attended with less change? Congress leaders have laid themselves open to the charge of weakness and undue regard for the susceptibilities of men in power. They have never been guilty of excess or violence. Bureaucracy, long used to irresponsible power has grown intolerant of criticism and cannot treat political opponents with the broad-mindedness and courtesy, which are characteristic of public life in communities in which civil power has ceased to be the monopoly of a class. Fed up with the belief that the people exist for them, rather than they for the people, they naturally think that anything which threatens their privileged position threatens the very root of the established order of things, and any political agitation, of which the tone is not apologetic, appears to them as dangerous and disorderly propaganda. No caste in India has ever been more jealous of its privileges than the Indian Civil Service. They firmly believe that they know everything, that no department can do without them, and that power not in their hands must necessarily be abused. When it is proposed that an elected majority should pass the legislation of the land, control the finance and criticise the executive administration, they naturally think that the proposal, if carried out, will bring down the whole structure of Indian society and cause irretrievable ruin.

Two Critics.

Neither Lord Sydenham nor His Honour Sir Michael O'Dwyer can pause, in their paroxysm of indignation, to distinguish between Swadeshism and Sinn Feinism, between constitutional agitation and anarchist conspiracy, between the enthusiastic Congressman and the maniacal bomb-thrower. "You are a saint", says the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, "and your speech is wisdom. But if I fancy that other people misunderstand you, I will shut you up and no mistake". Some assassin took a well-thumbed copy of the Gita to the gallows; that sacred book thenceforward fell under official displeasure. A revolutionary pamphlet contained a quotation from Mazzini; no owner of his works was thereafter free from sus-

picion. A professor in a town supposed to be infected with sedition delighted in expounding Burke to his pupils; the father of English conservatism was thereupon condemned as unfit for university curricula. Lord Sydenham, the angel of innocence, whose educational zeal the perverse Bombay University mistook for political jealousy, sought, happily in vain, to banish English History from the course of studies for the graduate's degree, because forsooth the virtues of patriotism, love of freedom and brave citizenship which it inculcates are unsuited to Indian youth who must be trained up in the way of submission, servility and sycophancy. Doings like these defeat their own object and create the very evil they are intended to cure. Sir Michael O'Dwyer bade us the other day cease from our propaganda, lest it should lead impatient youth to the commission of crime. May we, out of gratitude for this lesson in political science, remind His Honour and those who think like him that unbalanced speeches like his sap the faith of the public in the progressiveness and benevolence of British rule, leave the constitutionalist politician without a following, and swell the ranks of the revolutionary school of thought? The mild Congressmen in India do not need this sort of homily. We have never organized armed resistance to lawful authority and threatened open insurrection, though the career of Sir Edward Carson is not exactly a lesson in the duty of loyal submission to the decrees of Parliament. We do not intend any attempt to overthrow by force the established Government of the land, and hope that no revolutionaries in the country have been led to believe that if they succeeded, the House of Commons and the Premier of England would send them an enthusiastic and fervid greeting.

A quotation for Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

At this point I wish, with all due respect, to make His Honour a present of an apposite quotation from a recent Irish debate in Parliament. Sir Michael O'Dwyer is an Irishman and naturally feels uneasy at the parallelism frequently drawn between the movement for Irish Home Rule and the Indian struggle for self-government, and is at the pains to construct an ingenious argument against it. In one vital particular His Honour's opinion goes decisively against the cherished conviction of most Irish patriots. He would seem to think that the present distracted condition of Ireland is a consequence, indirect it may be, of the mistakes and excesses of the Nationalist Party. Without a doubt they would reply, to use a homely expression, the boot is on the other leg. At the end of a speech, as remarkable for its self-restraint and patriotism as for its pathos, Mr. John Redmond lamented the way in which the vacillation of Government was weakening his influence in Ireland and disclaimed responsibility for future consequences. He said, "The last time I spoke on this matter I said that in my opinion the Government ought to take their courage in both hands and make a definite proposal. That they have not done. I say, no matter who he is, any British statesman who by his conduct teaches once again the Irish people the lesson that any Nationalist leader who, taking his political life in his hand, endeavours to combine local and imperial patriotism, endeavours to combine loyalty to Ireland's rights with loyalty to the Empire—any one who again teaches the lesson that such a man is certain to be let down and betrayed by this course, is guilty of treason, not merely to the liberties of Ireland, but to the unity, strength and best interests of this Empire. That is the course which, in my judgment, the Irish people will recognise as having been taken by you (indicating the Government front bench), and I warn you of the consequences. How far this action

" may make the constitutional action in Ireland in the future impossible or not, I
 " cannot say, but certainly the speech of the Right Hon. gentleman (Mr. Lloyd
 " George), his utter refusal to come down, on the responsibility of the Govern-
 " ment, with some definite plan to make an appeal to the patriotism of the First
 " Lord of the Admiralty (Sir Edward Carson), makes one think, 'Why should all
 " appeals be made to us? Why cannot he—he is capable of it, I am sure—rise to
 " the height of sacrifice demanded of him and come forward and agree to a pro-
 " posal which he knows will be accepted by the whole of Ireland and would end
 " this wretched business?'"

Not the right to speak, but the right to rule.

One of our mentors gravely tells us that in the legislatures of the land we have the fullest opportunities for the expression of opinion, and he wonders what more we could want. Why, has it never struck him that we too have learnt to worship at the shrine of freedom? Opportunity for the expression of opinion? The time is gone when that would have contented us. *We want political power; let there be no mistake about it. We want the right to rule ourselves.* Within the last few weeks the world has resounded to the pæans of joy which greeted the establishment of democracy in Russia. Men's hearts were stirred, as they have been rarely in the history of the world, when they read the superb message of President Wilson to the American Congress. He said: "Civilization itself
 " seems to be in the balance; but right is more precious than peace, and we shall
 " fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for de-
 " mocracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their
 " own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for the universal
 " dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as will bring peace and
 " safety to all nations and make the world itself free at last."

Prosperous Yet Discontented!

I have recently seen a small collection of American opinions of British rule in this country published by Fisher Unwin and heard with surprise that Government had sent copies of it to newspapers. Does Government fancy, for one moment, that we lack in appreciation of the benefits of British rule here? Few understand them and realise their full measure, as the educated classes do, who have read accounts of the disorganized condition of this country when the British came on the scene. And yet is it wrong of them to desire self-government? Only a few days ago, in a debate on the condition of Ireland both Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George referred to the material prosperity that the Irish enjoyed, but neither of them wondered at the serious discontent of that people. Hear what the Prime Minister said: "I want to show that the discontent of Ireland is not material;
 " but still there remains one invincible fact after all this great record of beneficial
 " legislation—in spite of the fact that Ireland is more materially prosperous than she
 " has ever been, there remains the one invincible fact to-day that she is no more
 " reconciled to British rule than she was in the days of Cromwell. It proves that
 " the grievance is not a material one, it is something which has to do with the
 " pride and self-respect of the people. I entreat the House of Commons and the
 " British people to get that well into their minds. It is a fact which must be
 " grasped by the House of Commons or by any government which means to
 " attempt a settlement of this question." On a later occasion Mr. Bonar Law
 " emphasized the same truth. "I know what the views of Nationalist mem-
 " bers are and I do not agree with my noble friend that the only thing
 " you have to think of with respect to the government of Ireland is to-

"set up a government that will govern in the best way. I do not think so at all. I think that very often a very bad form of government, if it is with the consent and good-will of the people governed, will work infinitely better than a much better system without that consent and good-will."

What is real love of liberty ?

Historians teach us that the prosperity and glory of ancient empires were hollow, because they were built upon slavery, that even the boasted republics of old had no real freedom because it was denied to the large numbers of slaves who were never included among the citizens of the State. There is no slavery now in the British Empire, but a huge deduction must be made from the boast that it stands for the principles of individual liberty and perfect equality when it is remembered that the coloured people whom the whites hold in political subjection and occasionally treat with contempt and even cruelty vastly outnumber them. Love of liberty should include the love of liberty for other people as well as for yourself. To grant freedom voluntarily to subject peoples is an act of chivalry between nations, which is of the rarest occurrence in history. The republicans of Russia in the sudden joy of their freedom resolved to strike off the fetters of the Poles and allowed them to thrash out a constitution for themselves in a convention based on universal suffrage. In British India the people are exhorted by government officials not to worry about their political advance, because the governments in India and in England are thinking of the matter earnestly. It may be said that Polish freedom was a politic measure in time of war. That could not be said of the grant of freedom to the Filipinos by the United States of America. So far from exploiting the poor islands which they had required, the Americans, worshippers though they be of the almighty dollar, spent, it has been said, large sums of their own on educating and elevating the Filipinos. In granting these people a full measure of home rule out of free will and without threat or pressure from outside, the greatest republic of the world has proved itself likewise the noblest republic. So long as man can appreciate magnanimity and altruism, the people of the United States will be honoured as the most selfless and unsullied champions of international freedom. England, famed in history not without cause as the home of liberty, has yielded the first place in this immortal roll. The republic of Russia has taken the second place. Let England look out before the third place is occupied and bethink herself of her duty to India.

Step by Step.

The Filipinos had the whole of their political education in less than 20 years. In a generation Japan replaced her feudal institutions by a Parliamentary form of government. Canada, Australia and South Africa attained responsible government in a few quick steps. The people of India with a civilization going beyond the dawn of history during which they have evolved many forms of government and systems of administration of their own, are told after more than a century of British rule that they are not yet fit to govern themselves. His Honour of the Punjab said that we must wait till we were more educated as a people than we are, till we had laid aside our religious and social animosities and till we had gained greater political experience. Progress in all these three directions is likely to be surer and quicker if we were self-governing than under the present regime. As an abstract proposition, one cannot quarrel with the caution that you must progress 'step by step', that what India wants, to use the words of H. E. the Viceroy,

is not rapid progress but steady progress, that the genius of the British constitution is opposed to catastrophic changes. But why are these venerable and obvious maxims so frequently preached to us? We have won quite a name in the world for slowness, for patience and for 'remarkable tolerance of the existing state of things'. Japan, the self-governing Dominions, the Philippines, all began their upward career after we came under British rule, but they caught us up long ago and have left us behind by a period which, measured in mere years, is considerable, but measured by differences in education, material prosperity, social efficiency and other elements of civilization, seems almost an age, and gives cause for disquietude if not despair.

How many steps? How long?

Let us take two aspects of progress and see in what time the advice of our bureaucratic friends will take us to the promised land. First, the composition of our legislative councils. Constituted in 1853, they worked for eight years before the first Indian found entry into them by nomination. Thirty years passed before the next step was taken, a period within which other peoples found it possible to begin and consummate their political evolution. This step consisted of a slight increase of non-official Indians, some of whom came in by a subsidiary process of election, not recognised in law. Seventeen more years passed before election became a reality and the provincial legislatures had a majority of non-officials, which has proved a delusion and a snare. What is the next step to be, and when will it be taken? Perhaps we should get an elected majority, in two years more, that is, ten years after the last reform. Of course, this majority would be bare and utterly ineffective. To make it decisive, at least one decade would be necessary. Our mentors would then take us in successive decades through such fractions as two-thirds, three-fourths, four-fifths, till in another half a century we might have a wholly elective legislature in the advanced provinces. Of course a longer period would be required for the Indian Legislative Council and the Councils of the backward provinces to reach this level. Our second test shall be applied to our progress as regards the public service. Here unfortunately many of the steps to be recorded are but policy and pious promise. It was in 1833 that Parliament recognised the absolute equality of Indians with British subjects, and the Court of Directors gave the pith of the statute to be that there should be no governing caste in British India. In 1853 some members of Parliament lamented that no effect had been given to this noble policy. In 1858 the policy was solemnly enunciated in the Queen's Proclamation. In 1860 a committee of the Secretary of State's Council recommended simultaneous examinations. Of course the report was shelved. In 1870 another statute made special provision for the entry of qualified Indians into the Civil Service, but no immediate effect was given to it. In 1877 Lord Lytton on behalf of the Crown solemnly renewed the assurance of equality. In 1879 the first rules were made in a grudging spirit for the admission of Indians to the extent of one-sixth. But this proportion was not actually reached. In 1886 the first Public Services Commission was appointed to examine this question. In 1892 a Provincial Civil Service was constituted, the members of which could be appointed to 93 listed posts belonging to the Indian Civil Service. But the proportion which this number represented has not been worked up to. The next landmark is the appointment of the recent Public Services Commission in 1912. Their recommendation is that Indians should be admitted by means of an examination in India and by nomination to one-fourth of the posts

in the Indian Civil Service. The dissenting member, Mr. Justice Abdur Rahim, who is charged with reckless audacity, has recommended that the proportion should be one-third, omitting of course the judicial posts. What actually will be done one cannot say. So here we stand. Eighty-four years after statutory affirmation of our equality we are still looking forward to getting something between a fourth and a third of the chief administrative posts in our own country. And the whole history is marked by noble sentiments and promises, backsliding, bitter recrimination and paltry graceless concession. Can a people who have endured this sort of thing be accused of seeking to introduce catastrophic or revolutionary changes or effect a 'sudden upheaval' and, a 'startling transfer of political authority into ignorant and inexperienced hands'?

A New World wants New Principles.

We cannot afford to stand still or creep along at a snail's or a bureaucrat's pace, when all the world spins round with fresh and bounding energy. No, our friends must shake themselves up and adopt larger units and more generous measures. This is no time for puny programmes, faint-hearted endeavours and grandmotherly precepts. Mr. Lloyd George, whose every speech in these days is replete with stimulus and nourishment for the political reformer, said in vivid and picturesque phrase: "The future of the country depends upon how much politicians have learned. I have heard of politicians who think that when the war is over the same old machinery will be re-established and the same old methods applied. People who don't know politicians think them wild revolutionaries. A wild revolutionary is the most reactionary person in the world. Before the war there were five absolutely independent parties in this country. People are now discovering that none of these had a monopoly of wisdom or was the sole repository of political sagacity, and even the five put together. People are realising that there are more things in heaven and earth than the political philosophy of any of these parties. That is one of the revelations we have seen in the lurid fires of war. When after the war reconstruction begins, I hope, trust and pray that we are not going to dive into pigeon-holes of any party for dust-laden precedents and programmes. Let us think out the best methods for ourselves in the face of the searching facts of which we knew nothing before the war. The experience of generations has been crowded into just a few winters and we should be unworthy of the great destiny to which Providence has called this generation if we threw away all that for the sake of the formulas framed before the flood." Here is the testimony of a very different sort of man. General Smuts comes from a land not known to be a congenial soil for generous policies or liberal movements. "Let me give you one word of warning. In thinking of this matter, do not try to think of existing political institutions, which have been evolved in the course of European developments. The British Empire is a much larger and more diverse problem than anything we have seen hitherto, and the sort of constitution we read about in books, the sort of political alphabet which has been elaborated in years gone by, does not apply and would not solve the problems of the future. We should not follow precedents but make them. I feel sure that the coming years when this problem is in process of solution—because it will never be finally and perfectly solved—you will find our political thought will be turned into quite new channels and will not follow what has been anywhere else either in the old world or in the new; because after all we are built on freedom. No single man outside a lunatic asylum wants to force those young nations into any particular mould."

The Great Political Lesson.

When I read speeches like these, I occasionally wonder what the censor is doing. They may be all right in England, but when you and I and other Congressmen read them here, is not their tendency inflammatory? If I were a bureaucrat of the type of Sir Michael O'Dwyer I would prohibit Mr. Lloyd George from speaking on the Russian Revolution for the next two years. When will these irresponsible orators in Parliament learn to consider the effect of their utterances on the minds of Indian politicians? Here again is Mr. Bonar Law, thrown off his guard in the heat of debate, giving the outside world a glimpse of the secrets of the Cabinet and letting them know of the weaknesses and temptations of the rulers of men. Could he not have refrained from saying this inconvenient thing at the end of the debate on Indian Cotton Duties in the House of Commons? "This was the position in which they were placed. They knew there would be some trouble in Lancashire though they did not anticipate it would be so great. But what they had to decide from the point of view of the war was whether there was likely to be more trouble at home or in India. That was the question, and it was on that basis that they gave their vote." (Mr. Dillon: Where there is most trouble you give in?) That is another way of putting it. (Laughter.) "Whatever did give trouble politically was a thing which, if it could be avoided, ought to be avoided." The strong Indian ruler, according to Lord Sydenham, should avoid even the appearance of yielding to clamour or making a concession for fear of trouble. Such softness as Mr. Bonar Law has confessed, if manifested in India, would lead straight to disaster. That is why the ex-Governor of Bombay adjures the authorities to reject the memorandum of the venturesome "Nineteen" promptly and ignominiously. Else what would they not do next? Happily, we are not mere babes, we know a little of the way public affairs are managed. Legislators and statesmen, however far they may see into the future, cannot act till events ripen and almost force their hands. Often they have to choose the lesser of two evils, for, if challenged, they must be able to say, 'I did it only because I saw that if I did not do it there would be more harm than if I did it.' In my limited experience there has been one clear case in which a leading official said, 'I agree to your suggestion, but before I can adopt it there must be such an expression of public opinion as to make it appear inevitable.' That is the secret of constitutional political agitation. Our cause has many friends both in England and in India, but they can do very little for it till by our action we can give it such momentum as to make it inevitable.

Duty on Cotton Imports.

The subject of the enhanced import duty on cotton next claims our attention, not only because of its intrinsic importance to the economic welfare of India, but because it illustrates in a striking manner the shortcomings of our successes and the way in which every hope in human affairs is dogged by fear. In the first place let us be clear as to the precise value of this forward policy on the part of our Government. The 4 per cent. enhancement of cotton duty is primarily for the purpose of increasing the revenue and thereby helping the Government of India to pay off the annual obligations which they have incurred on account of the war gift of £ 100,000,000 made by India to Britain. But as it is not counterbalanced by a similar rise in the excise duties on local cotton manufactures, it acts also as a measure of protection to our cotton industry and has for that reason been welcomed in India as the first breach made in the free trade policy imposed upon us by our

political suzerain. The bulk of enlightened Indian opinion has demanded fiscal independence, so that before other things we may protect our feeble industries from the cheap free-trade goods of Britain. It is by such anti-British tariffs that the self-governing Dominions have built up their manufacturing industries. We wish to be allowed to proceed along the same way to industrial prosperity, but our status as a Dependency of Great Britain has deprived us of the liberty to do so. The war gift that we have willingly made to ease the burden of England's debt entails for a period of thirty years and possibly more a heavy annual liability, which our feeble financial system can bear only with great strain. It is, therefore, more necessary than ever that we should have freedom to husband our resources all we can and increase our productive powers. England, for whose sake primarily our finance is being strained, is under a moral obligation to grant us fiscal autonomy. We have the right to expect that we should be allowed to proceed farther in this direction as our interests may require from time to time. But there is reason to apprehend that we may have to retrace, even this step that we have taken, for owing to the opposition of Lancashire representatives the resolution sanctioning the cotton duties was only passed with an addendum proposed by Mr. Asquith that it will be reconsidered along with the whole question of the fiscal relationship of the various parts of the Empire to one another and to the rest of the world. Mr. Bonar Law, in supporting the duties, used the ominous words, "What had been done did not settle the principle for which they had fought so long; it obviously could not settle it, because *no political party here was satisfied with the arrangement*. It was obvious, therefore, that it was not the final arrangement." To add to our misgivings, a recent cablegram reports a unanimous recommendation of the Imperial War Conference in favour of a system of Imperial Preference. This would mean, if anything, that India's fiscal freedom would be greatly crippled and that she could not fully protect her cotton industry against the ruinous competition of Lancashire and that she might be compelled to sell her produce to England for prices lower than those that she might command outside the Empire. Some years before, when the same question was raised under the name of preferential tariffs, the Government of Lord Curzon proved almost incontestably that India would be placed at a heavy disadvantage under such a system. It is difficult to dogmatise without a full discussion of details, and it is on the whole wise to suspend judgment till we learn the precise character of the proposals. It is the more necessary to suspend judgment because in one of his speeches Sir S. P. Sinha pleaded for fiscal autonomy on behalf of India and deprecated the sacrifice of our economic interests to those of any industry or section either in Great Britain or elsewhere, and Mr. Chamberlain seemed generally to endorse the contention. Imperial Preference *prima facie* infringes the principle of fiscal autonomy or at any rate impairs its integrity. But till we know everything it is not necessary to be alarmed, as there might be ways in which, while some discrimination was made in favour of other parts of the Empire, India was still able to find means of adequately protecting both her commercial interests and her young industries.

The debate on the subject in Parliament has many features of interest. The Secretary of State indulged in a personal reminiscence which reflects great honour on his moral courage and sense of justice. The champions of Lancashire did not shine to advantage and received a severe rebuke for the glaring inconsistency of the arguments that they advanced. Their concern for the interests of the poor

consumer in India and the sweated factory operative in Bombay was shown up as not altogether altruistic, and Lord Curzon made the striking remark that for forty years Lancashire had been the powerful and almost menacing figure in the background of Indian finance and Indian tariffs. Besides, the unexpected strength of the Opposition elicited the best efforts of the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister, who felt called upon to defend their action with a degree of warmth and breadth of view not always evoked by debates on Indian subjects. The most powerful arguments were based on the necessity of redressing a long-standing grievance and respecting the unanimous sentiment of the Indian people. Such emphasis was placed on these arguments that the Irish Nationalists demanded their application to the question of Home Rule in Ireland and in India.

Lord Curzon said :—It was always the interests of Lancashire which had prevailed against the interests and sentiments of India. Was it surprising in those circumstances that India should feel resentment, that India should regard this an ancient wrong for the redress of which she had always looked to the consideration and justice of her British rulers?...He asked their lordships to look at the matter from the larger, not the smaller, standpoint. This was not a question of Free Trade or Protection; not a question of Lancashire against Bombay. It was not merely a fiscal or economic question. The idea peepily in his mind was that it was a tardy act of justice to India—a sincere reparation to what he regarded as a nation wronged. Mr. Chamberlain : “When hon. members contend that the Government, when they sanction the imposition of the increased customs duty, are bound to raise the Excise at the same time, I tell them with all solemnity and gravity that they are asking for that which neither this Government nor any Government will do. For you would so affront Indian opinion and your action would be so bitterly and deeply resented that you would not carry with you that general consent of the governed, that general good-will of the people, which is necessary to you under any form of Government—(Mr. Dillon.—Except in Ireland.) and not less necessary when you are dealing with Government so circumstanced as is the British Government in India. I would beg the House to be under no misapprehension as to the widespread character or gravity of the feeling in India on this matter. I can quote passage after passage from, I think, every Indian member of the Legislative Council. ... In this matter the course we have hitherto pursued and from which this change relieves us sets us right with Indian opinion. I am told that I am breaking the truce which has lasted for 20 years. That is not the Indian opinion. All that time it has been an open and a running sore. (An Hon. Member.—So has Ireland.) It has offered a ready weapon to every ill-wisher of our rule; it has been the theme of every seditious writer; and it rankles as an injustice and an indignity in the mind of every loyal Indian who cares about these things. (An Hon. Member.—A good Home Rule speech.)...“I appeal to him (Mr. Asquith), acting in the spirit of great imperial patriotism, to cast his vote with the whole weight of his influence into the redress of a grievance which rankles in India now, which separates Indian sentiment from our sentiment, which leaves our Government, rightly or wrongly, under the aspersion that where some English section or influence clashes with the interests and aspirations of the people of India, we are ready to sacrifice India to save our electoral fortunes.”

Mr. Lloyd George : “The first consideration is the interest of the hundreds of millions of people in India for whom we are the guardians and the trustees. (Hear, hear.) By every canon of justice, fair dealing and liberty, their interest

ought to be paramount when you come to consider any fiscal matter directly affecting them. Is there any doubt in the mind of anyone who knows anything about the opinion of the people of India of what they think about these proposals? Without exception all classes, creeds, races, and nationalities have accepted them as a measure of justice. If there were such a thing as a plebiscite possible of the whole of the people of India I have absolutely no doubt how their votes would go upon this question. At this moment we thought as a matter of policy, as a war measure, it was desirable that this great act of justice should be extended to India. And what has been the result? There has been no doubt about it that it has sent a thrill of enthusiasm right through that great Empire. (Cheers.) I have no doubt we shall reap in abundance the harvest of this peace of justice and fair play and equity, which we have extended to the population of India. That is why we choose this particular moment. Here is a grievance which the whole population of India has been feeling, and feeling acutely ... My Right Hon. friend in the course of his speech stated very fairly that the first consideration to be given when weighing the equalities of this case must be the interests of the population of India. I should not have thought there was any doubt about that at all. The first consideration is the interests of the hundreds of millions of people in India for whom we are the guardians and the trustees. By every canon of justice, fair dealing and liberty, their interests ought to be paramount when you come to consider any fiscal matter directly affecting them."

Local Bodies to be wholly Elective.

A reform in administration for which the time has decidedly come is to make our local bodies, i. e., municipalities, district boards and taluka boards and, where they exist, village committees or panchayats, wholly elective. I know officials think that we generally pay undue attention to the constitution of all bodies, whether they be legislative councils, bodies for local self-government, university senates or special organizations. We do not take, it is said, sufficient interest in the functions and actual work of these bodies. It does not strike us that an indifferent constitution with little or no election may often produce very good results on account of the personnel, while an ideal constitution in the hands of unsuitable persons may lead to inefficiency and even corruption. That is so; but it by no means follows that the pains taken in framing a constitution are always thrown away. A despot acting singly is often the centre of a wholesome and elevating influence and may confer much good on those who look up to him. Still experience has taught mankind to cultivate a decided preference for republican or democratic forms of government. In mixed organizations of which the personnel cannot always be chosen for character or efficiency, it is necessary to distribute power and responsibility so that the failure of one part need not bring about the ruin of the whole, or the spirit of faction or wanton mischief render peaceful and continued work impossible. The practice of Government in this country teaches the lesson of circumspection in devising suitable constitutions for organizations which have the power of seriously influencing the welfare of the community. Government is custodian of vast interests, especially in a country like India, and has always been slow to divest itself of responsibilities, even though the law might not cast these on it. The theory of governmental functions in western countries has enormously widened their scope, and socialistic principles acting on democratic forms have reconciled people to the interference of Government in every department of national life. But this interference and watchfulness on the part of Government may be exerted in various ways, some of which are open to serious ob-

jection. Broadly speaking, these ways fall in to two classes—external and internal. External interference is an attribute of sovereignty, and where Government shrinks from exercising it when required the condition of affairs will tend to become anarchical. Internal interference is a more intricate and thorny problem. To put the matter roughly, the greater the self-reliance and public spirit and organizing power of the subjects, the less should be the internal interference of Government in organizations for which it is not primarily responsible. Where these qualities have been fairly developed, Government stands to gain in popularity and efficiency in proportion as it withdraws its hand from the ordinary life of the community. It was therefore in the fitness of things that in the universities, and in bodies charged with the duties of local government, the central power started by providing for a certain measure of internal control. We owe it perhaps to this precaution that our municipal and rural boards, whatever their shortcomings, have been saved from falling into such depths of inefficiency and corruption as we read of in the case of English local bodies in the middle of the nineteenth century. From time to time, however, the constitution of these bodies must be revised so that they may be freed more and more from inside control. As in other matters, our Government has shown no alacrity in relaxing its paternal attitude towards them, and the result to-day is a great deal of dissatisfaction among those who are interested in the growth of local self-government and are anxious that through it the people should be taught, in an ever-increasing degree, the art of managing their own affairs.

Internal control is now exerted by Government in two separate ways, first by nominating a certain proportion of the members of these corporations, and secondly, by choosing a man who should preside over their deliberations and bear responsibility for their executive work. The members so appointed and the presidents or executive officers are in some cases officials and in other cases non-officials. From the standpoint of the advanced politician this does not make much difference. With a few exceptions non-officials take their cue from their official colleagues—and for purposes of measuring the relative strength of parties we may class the official and non-official nominees together. And it would not be doing any violence to the actual facts, if in this discussion, which has the political education of the people mainly in view, our classification of members recognizes only the elected and the nominated sections. The nominated non-official is not, however, such an anomaly as the elected official. To this day in certain provinces of India the presidents of local bodies, although chosen by election, are, with rare exceptions, the principal executive officers in the localities. Election which yields such results is a mockery, and as the report of the Decentralization Commission mildly puts it, it would be well, where Government thought it essential, to appoint the officials directly. In Madras till recently we used to hear a great deal of the evils attendant on the candidature of officials at popular elections. Attempts were made frequently in the legislative council to induce Government to disqualify officials for such candidature. These attempts have only been partially successful. Government have imposed certain restrictions on the candidature, but have not prohibited it. I understand that a similar state of things exists in this presidency. This, however, is a matter vitally connected with the purity of elections, the independence of the voter and therefore the growth of manly citizenship among the people. The practice of official candidature, once recognized as open to censure, must be definitely abandoned and the law amended accordingly. It is a pity that Government should exhibit any reluctance to carry out this principle in its integrity. Let us hope it

will not be long before our system of local self-government is purged of this mischievous excrescence.

Having mentioned the Governments of Madras and Bombay together in the above connection, I must hasten to say that they do not appear in other matters relating to local self-government to stand on the same level. Somehow or other it is the misfortune of the Bombay Presidency, as progressive and enlightened as any in the country, to labour under the disadvantage that from the time Sir James Fergusson adopted an obstructive attitude when Lord Ripon initiated his beneficent policy of 1882, the Government of Bombay have been unable to shake off altogether their excessive 'hesitation and distrust' in the treatment of municipalities and district and local boards. For reasons which an outsider cannot understand and which most of you here do not perhaps understand any more than I, the elective principle is not advanced in Bombay to the same extent as in Bengal or Madras and, stranger still, in some of the other provinces, generally called backward. In fact the extraordinary thing in local self-government in our country, which Government will do well to ponder, is that in some ways it is the backward provinces like Assam and the Central Provinces where the local bodies show the greatest constitutional advance. Will Government say, "Where the people are backward, it does not matter how advanced the constitution is; it is where the people are advanced that the greatest caution and hesitancy are required?" I do not suppose that this would be the line of reasoning adopted by Government, for it would be in manifest opposition to the reasoning they adopt in the case of larger political matters where the backwardness of the people is urged as the sole excuse for slow advance. The fact is that your Government, more than other Governments in India, are labouring under the traditional notions engendered in the days when the system was first tried and fail to realise that very large steps in advance may be taken with perfect safety to all the interests involved. The only thing requisite is the firm resolve not to be hurried into measures of interference by the sight of avoidable inefficiency of neglect or the welfare of ratepayers.

After all the ratepayers, who are primarily interested in the maintenance of a proper tone in local self-government, will never learn to exercise control over their representatives till they are convinced that Government will not look after them except in cases of extremity. Nor will the fullest sense of responsibility be evoked in the members of these bodies so long as the Government shows a readiness to save them from the consequences of their mistakes or misdeeds. In so far as the local bodies have powers of raising local taxation and regulating its incidence in individual cases, it is necessary not only to let the voice of the ratepayers be heard through their representatives, but to make them realise fully that the rates and taxes, both direct and indirect, are imposed on them by their own representatives and spent on their own welfare by executives appointed and controlled by those very representatives. The maxim of popular government, which is the very keystone of the British constitution, viz., no taxation without representation, and extended by the silent implication of law to colonies occupied by British subjects, has not been extended to India. But its full extension is only a question of time. People may be allowed to understand the principle and benefit by it as a beginning in the smaller sphere of local self-government. There is obvious advantage in Government, which is already compelled to assume direct responsibility for large Imperial taxation and much Provincial taxation which is indirect, freeing itself completely from responsibility for local taxation. At present the official representatives in these bodies have the power like other mem-

bers of initiating and promoting taxation proposals and taking a share in the actual administration of local finance. And it is well known that the official element in these bodies, except in large centres of education, exercises an influence far in excess of its numerical strength and in several cases is all-powerful.

In Great Britain, the continent of Europe and America the central governments have not found it necessary, for keeping local bodies up to their duties, to appoint any proportion of their members; whether in towns or rural areas, these local authorities are wholly elected. In fact it is not too much to say that a proposal to make nominations would be keenly resented. The principle is that the administration of local government is a concern of the ratepayers, and only they and no others have the right to choose the men who conduct that administration.

Experience too confirms the *a priori* argument that nominee officials cannot take the same interest in local affairs that representatives of the ratepayers, who are themselves ratepayers, will take. In nearly every province the attendance of officials at meetings of the local bodies compares unfavourably with that of the elected members, and I have personally known many conscientious officials who have told me that their work as members of local bodies was a burdensome addition to their official duty, while not being of much use to the ratepayers. They are birds of passage, so to say, and seldom identify themselves with local interests. Some of them are apt to domineer, and when they interest themselves deeply in local politics, acquire an influence which, apart from its being good or bad, must hinder the growth of the civic spirit in their brethren. On occasions when a local question becomes so important as to attract the attention of the superior officials of the district, the official member is naturally susceptible to influence from head-quarters, and his vote may be cast neither in accordance with his personal inclinations nor in furtherance of local needs.

It is said that the presence of officials adds to the business capacity of the boards and helps to secure thoroughness and despatch. There is something in this claim, but not enough to outweigh the violation of principle and the other drawbacks described above. Besides, the claim is less true now than it might have been several years ago. Even in small towns it is possible to find a number of non-officials of sufficient enlightenment and business habits to enable local bodies to dispense with official association.

Another ground on which Government nomination to these bodies is defended is the existence of local factions, between whom officials, being in a sense outsiders, are in a position to act as arbitrators. This, however, is scarcely the case in actual experience. A non-official as often as an official can be found with detachment enough to serve this blessed function of the peacemaker. Nor are officials specially immune from the factious spirit, and it has occasionally happened within my knowledge that the officials of a place have formed a group with a more or less defined antipathy to non-officials.

In defence of the appointment of official presidents, chairmen or executive officers, it is urged, in the first place, that as they have to move about in the district they have superior knowledge of local needs and better facilities than non-officials for local inspection. This contention has some force and is entitled to weight in the case of the district boards, but not in the case of taluka boards or municipalities. But even in the former case it is well to risk

some inefficiency and make a beginning in the direction of rescuing boards from the condition into which they have fallen—of being large but somewhat neglected departments of Collectors' offices. Retired officials and educated landlords are becoming more and more available for non-official public life, and perhaps the number of districts is small in which suitable persons may not be found at the headquarter stations both willing and competent to undertake the duties of presidents of district boards.

The fact of the matter is that there is a feeling prevalent among the higher officials of Government, not altogether blameworthy, that in the last resort they are answerable for the proper conduct of municipal and rural board business. It is no wonder that the simplest way of discharging this responsibility appears to them to be also the best; namely, appointing an official whom they can control and trust to 'carry on'. This accounts for the large number of officials engaged in the executive work of local government, whether as chairmen, secretaries or chief officers. This well-meaning theory, however, is obsolete, and the members of Government must shake themselves free from the compunction that they apparently feel in devolving the responsibility for local interests on local authorities. The burden must one day settle on the right shoulders.

Occasionally the preference shown by Government for official presidents leads to quite extraordinary results. I have known the sub-divisional officer of a district who, in addition to his regular duties, presided over a taluka board and at least two municipalities besides. Was he to blame if the meetings of these bodies had to be arranged between the arrival of a train at each place and the departure of the return train, and he had not much time for the discussion of the subjects on the agenda paper of making himself acquainted with the ratepayers? Administration in general will be none the worse if Government had a little less faith in the unlimited capacity of their officials and a little more faith in the capacity of non-officials.

The case for this reform derives its greatest strength from the necessity of training the people of the country to a full measure of self-government in local affairs as a preparation for self-government in national affairs. It is true our local bodies are even in their present condition passable schools of political education; but they will not yield the best lessons of which they are capable until they are made autonomous units. The testimony of history is not uniform in this respect. Canada had no municipal institutions when it was called upon to assume responsible government, and some nations which enjoyed great national prosperity and glory have shown great ineptitude in the management of local affairs. In India, however, the 'step by step' argument is understood in a very literal and sometimes, one might say, in an arithmetical sense. Those who advance it in season and out of season, having it in their power to afford this valuable, though not altogether indispensable, training must lose no time in placing it within the reach of the communities committed to their care.

It must, however, be recognised that the withdrawal of inside control will necessitate the tightening of outside control from the centre. The powers that Government has under the present law of the different provinces for exercising control are ample; but, if need be, there is no theoretical objection to their being made more stringent. The unsatisfactory condition of American municipalities is justly attributed to the lack of vigorous supervision of the centre, and we know as a matter of history that local government in Eng-

land which in 1835 was reported upon in very unfavourable terms entered on a career of efficiency and usefulness only after Parliamentary control was firmly established and the central government was given powers to inspect, advise and aid the local bodies. Mr. Sidney Webb says:—"A century of experience has demonstrated that it is undesirable for Local Authorities to be subject to no administrative control whatsoever from a Central Authority, for them to be left without independent inspection or audit, without access to centralised experience and specialist knowledge, without any enforcement of the minimum indispensably required for the commonweal, and without mitigation of the stupendous inequality of local rates that complete autonomy involves."

The Public Services Question.

The intense disapprobation with which the report of the Public Services Commission has been received by the Indian public throws into strong relief the extraordinary stimulus which the war has given to the ambition and the expectation of our people. There can be no doubt that, if the report could have appeared before August 1914, it would not have provoked a storm of indignation as it has done; conceivably it might even have caused mild pleasure in the breasts of some critics. There are some things in it which mark a clear advance on the existing position. For one thing there is a distinct recognition that certain services might be wholly Indian and that their salaries might be fixed on an Indian scale. Among these are the scientific services of which the higher grades are recruited in England, because men of the requisite knowledge and training are not available here. To obviate this difficulty the Commission make the sound suggestion that the technical colleges of engineering, agriculture, forestry, etc. should be raised to such a high level of efficiency as to turn out the men required for filling the highest posts in the departments concerned, and the Hon'ble Mr. Chaubal places just emphasis on the recommendation and says that it should be carried out by the Government before other items involving expenditure are taken up. A further recommendation on this branch of the subject is that half the vacancies every year should be announced as open to successful students in Indian colleges. Some advance is recommended in all the services, though it is not the same throughout. In none is it satisfactory; in some, especially the civil, police and medical services it is most disappointing. During the inquiry we heard a lot about the unfitness of Indians for higher administrative posts, and in the case of the Indian Civil Service much was made of the necessity of maintaining the British spirit of administration. Whether because the Commission do not believe in these things or because they desire to avoid bad blood, they barely refer to such racial comparisons in this report. But they do not get full credit for this forbearance. For to justify the limitations they still wish to maintain on the employment of non-Europeans, they advance the proposition that in the civil and police services it is necessary for political reasons, that is, for the preservation of British interests that the British element must have a decided preponderance. This exclusion of Indians by reason of their race only from the great bulk of the higher positions of trust and responsibility is certainly hard to reconcile with the absolute equality repeatedly promised to the people of the country in respect of any position the duties of which they are fitted faithfully and efficiently to discharge. The Commissioners have no partiality for competitive examinations, and it is with some effort that they make up their mind to retain them wherever they are used now for recruitment. Nomination is not to be haphazard as hitherto; a suitable educational qualification, which

need not be the same for all communities alike, is to be required of all nominees, and for selecting the men to be nominated committees are to be set up on which Indians and non-officials should have some representation. Increases of salary and pension, better terms of leave, higher rates of allowances of all kinds are proposed almost throughout. Some reasons are given for these recommendations, but neither the general poverty of the country, nor the financial straits to which it has been reduced seem to have been kept in mind by the Commissioners. The question of separating executive and judicial functions has not been considered on the ground that the terms of reference seem to exclude it. Simultaneous examinations, on which two generations of Indians have set their hearts as the barest measure of justice to them in the matter of the premier service, have once more been refused. The age limits for those who compete in England have been lowered from 22-24, which is the present age, to 17-19, though it is admitted that this will have the effect of nearly closing the English door to Indian candidates. The principal feature of the report is the institution of a separate examination in India adapted to the teaching in Indian universities for recruitment to the Indian Civil Service of seven officers every year. The examination will not be open as in England, but each university is to nominate twenty candidates, thus giving in all about a hundred competitors. Besides these seven there will be two more recruits every year nominated by the Secretary of State on the advice of the Government of India and called the King-Emperor's cadets. All nine candidates are to be sent to England to be trained during a period of three years along with the successful English candidates at the London examination of the same year. The courses of study and the examinations are common to all during the period of training, and it is according to the marks obtained at these examinations that the candidates are to be finally ranked. The figure 9 for recruitment in India has been arrived at in this way. To safeguard British interests it is considered that three-fourths of the superior appointments in the Indian Civil Service should be filled by Englishmen. The number of such posts is 755. Indians may thus be appointed to one-fourth of this number, *i. e.*, to 189 posts. Forty of these will be given in the judicial line to members of the bar; forty-one to selected officers of the provincial civil service, in lieu of the present listed posts; to get the remaining 108 officers, according to the usual calculations for inferior posts, leave reserve, and training reserve there should be added 102 posts. The annual recruitment for these 210 posts, according to the decremental rate of 4·17, comes to nine. The police department is guarded with even greater jealousy from the admixture of Indians. Only 10 per cent. are to be allowed into the imperial ranks, but this percentage may be eventually increased to twenty, as favourable occasion should arise. The education service should be divided into class I and class II. In class I should be included all the members of the present Indian educational service and a number amounting to one-third of them taken from the provincial educational service, so that roughly speaking one-fourth of the higher educational posts will come to Indians; but when new posts are created in the future, as far as possible, every alternative post should be given to an Indian. Class II should be recruited in India; and from it promotion may be made to class I, though the Commission feel they cannot fix the exact proportion. Besides the officers of class I and class II, there is to be a body of superior educationalists to the number of, say, twenty, who should be freed from the obligation to lecture to B. A. candidates, but should be devoted to research and the training of students who undertake original lines of work. They are to be appointed solely by reason of

their eminence in learning and without any reference to race, but whether they are to remain together with their research pupils in a central institution created for the purpose or whether they are to be dispersed amongst the several colleges, whether they are to be Government officers or University professors or professors in the individual colleges, which are to be encouraged to appoint them by liberal salary grants, are questions which the Commission have left to the Government to decide, in the light of notes submitted by individual members.

This brief and inadequate summary is all that I can find room for in my address, and I must now hasten to indicate a few points of general importance which claim attention. One fact necessary for us all to know beyond doubt has emerged clearly from the labours of this Commission. It is not altogether a revelation, for most people had realized that it lay behind all the discussions as to fitness, efficiency and other superficialities. The Commissioners have advanced in its nakedness the real reason for continuing practically unimpaired the British monopoly of the higher grades of the services. Political necessity is only a euphemism for the rooted desire to secure to Britishers the civil power and a great bulk of the loaves and fishes of office. The old abstractions and idealities about free and open competition and the absolute equality of all British subjects and the extinction of the governing caste in India, which some amiable people on both sides of the controversy have always believed, are now definitely shattered. For the future every revision of the services question will be a frank unredeemed struggle between Europeans on the one hand and statutory Indians on the other. If this is to be the true development, there is no escape from the necessity of fixing from time to time the proportion of posts in the different services to be divided between the parties. It is impossible to ignore the bearing of this question on the struggle for political autonomy which the National Congress and the Muslim League have resolved to bring to a definite issue. Clause 5 of the scheme of post-war reforms under the heading 'IV The Government of India' runs:—"The power of making all appointments in the Imperial civil services shall vest in the Government of India as constituted under this scheme, due regard being paid to the existing interests, subject to any laws that may be made by the Imperial Legislative Council." In the first place, this would eliminate the Secretary of State from all part or lot in this matter of Indian services and transfer the supreme control that he now wields to the Government of India; and as the Government of India would be subject in this behalf to the Indian Legislative Council, the progressive political party in India must look forward to the Indianising of all the services, at least in the eye of the law, as an early consummation. Vested interests would of course have to be scrupulously and generously safeguarded, and expert knowledge and assistance should be obtained to the fullest extent necessary on any terms and from any quarter of the world. The self-governing status has carried with it in the case of each Dominion the power to confine recruitment for all its services within its own borders. I do not wish by any words of mine to embitter a dispute which, dealing with power and prestige, posts and emoluments, is apt in itself to rouse ill-feeling. But it strikes me that, if we are to be true to the self-government programme that we have put forward, it is necessary to combat with all our might the doctrine that there should be a preponderance of the British element in the Civil and Police Services. This doctrine is based unmistakably on suspicion and distrust. The paramountcy of Great Britain would be amply secured by the continuance of all military and foreign affairs in the hands of the Viceroy-in-Council, without interference from the legislature; and on the face of it, it appears needless to secure it further by any guaranteed preponderance in the main services. We still hold therefore to our demand of a simultaneous examination

for the Civil Service, a common list, no racial proportion, and equal opportunities of advancement for all. Should, however, the Commission's proposal of a separate examination in India for recruitment of a certain proportion be allowed to prevail, I would suggest that the division of the service be half and half. In making this suggestion I wish to be understood not to mean any discourtesy to Mr. Justice Abdur Rahim, whose able and courageous minute of dissent it is impossible to praise adequately. But I cannot resist the feeling that in proposing one-third as the Indian proportion in the Civil Service (*minus* the judicial branch) he appears to concede the claim to preponderance of the British element, which is clearly opposed to Royal and Parliamentary declarations. Secondly, we must object as strongly as we can to all the proposals of the Commission which involve, directly or indirectly, an addition to the salaries, allowances and other emoluments of the services. On this point, I know I shall incur the displeasure of my own countrymen employed in the service of Government. But it is impossible to forget the two sovereign considerations: India is an extremely poor and undeveloped country, and the salaries of the higher grades of our services are already pitched too high. Thirdly, we must seek to extend the sphere of competitive examinations, tempered by nominations, to safeguard the interests of certain communities, as the means of selecting candidates for public employment. Fourthly, the judicial service must be made independent, recruited exclusively from the bar and placed in all respects under the control of the High Courts in the provinces. The separation of executive and judicial functions is so important that we are not likely to lose sight of it.

War Loan.

I feel it my duty to commend to the Conference with all earnestness the claim of the Indian War Loan on all individuals and public bodies who have money to spare. We have to remember that, although the revenues of India are pledged to meeting the interest charges and sinking fund on our war gift of a 100 million £, this will go only towards easing the burden of the United Kingdom in future years. It is only that portion of the gift which is raised as the Indian War Loan which helps immediately in the prosecution of the war.

The Defence Force.

I also implore you all to spare no efforts in making the Indian Defence Force a signal success. Disabilities and grievances there are. When shall we be without them? The only thing is we must not cease to struggle against them. We stand to lose heavily all round morally and politically if we let this opportunity pass. Let young men realise that the cause of India which they yearn passionately to serve requires before all things that they should acquire regular military training and that they should eagerly embrace the first opportunity, however small and restricted, of getting it. Failure in this would be a terrible blow to the national movement and we should regret it all our lives. Besides, if there be any reality in our appreciation of the tremendous issues involved in the war and the enormous drain that it causes on the man-power of Britain, we must respond readily to the slight demand made on the educated classes by the Government and mark our sense of the departure in the policy of mistrust hitherto followed in military matters.

Compulsory Education.

On the great and absorbing topic of education I do not know how to be brief. But this I will say—that I welcome with the liveliest pleasure the announcement made the other day by Sir Michael O'Dwyer that his Government would entertain proposals coming from municipalities and local boards for making elementary education compulsory, provided they had the support of public opinion and were willing to bear the

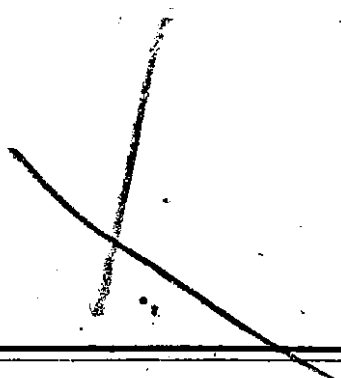
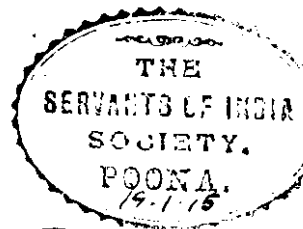
responsibility of working the compulsory system. I fervently trust that the announcement was made with the sanction of the Government of India, whose attitude of *non possumus* has hitherto discouraged other Governments from lending any countenance to the attempts made by our representatives in local legislatures in this direction. In this presidency the popular movement sustained a repulse from the Government a few months ago. But the glad news from the Punjab will put heart into the champions of popular education, and I feel sure that my redoubtable friend, the Hon. Mr. Patel, will renew his attack, and I should not wonder if the Government of Bombay made terms with him with a view to eventual surrender. I trust that H. E. Lord Willingdon will leave behind him a memorial in the form of a small Act in favour of compulsory attendance of children of this presidency before he leaves office next year. It is possible, however, that I am rejoicing too soon and I would, therefore, appeal to the leaders and local bodies of this presidency not to relax their efforts in the least.

Two Local Questions.

Of the many topics of local interest which will find place on our programme I have been advised to refer to two and propose to offer a few remarks on them. The grouping of the Konkan districts of Ratnagiri, Kolaba and Thana with the Southern and Northern Divisions is a grievance of very long standing. This arrangement has operated to the very serious disadvantage of the districts concerned in the matter of representation on the local Legislative Council. The late Mr. Daji Abaji Khare, who represented the Southern Division, urged long ago upon the attention of Government the necessity of either creating a new division for these districts or of joining them on to the Central Division. The people in Ratnagiri, Kolaba and Thana districts speak Marathi, the language of the Central Division, and they have nothing in common with the Southern or the Northern Division, where Canarese and Gujarati are spoken. Geographically, too, the districts should belong to the Central and not to the Southern or the Northern Division. It may be urged that, as we are now demanding substantial representation for each district on the Council, the question of giving separate and independent representation to these districts is rather out of date. But it is unfair that, in the interval that will elapse before the larger question will be settled, the people of these districts should go without any real representation; and the grievance can be redressed by an executive order without having recourse to legislation on the matter. In regard to general administration too the arrangement at present in force has entailed serious inconvenience. People from Kolaba and Thana would much prefer having the head-quarters of the highest revenue officer at Poona to having it either at distant Belgaum or Ahmedabad. If the posts of divisional Commissioners are abolished and the district is brought into direct and living contact with the central Government of the province, this grievance will disappear. But I think it is fair to ask that the Government should give practical effect to either of these alternatives without further delay.

I would also like to refer, though with some amount of diffidence, to the question of the *modi* script, which Government have now formally abolished as far as the official records are concerned. Being personally unacquainted with *modi*, I am at a certain disadvantage in speaking on this subject, though it is hardly necessary to know *modi* in order to understand the merits of the question. A slight effort of the imagination would enable any one to realise the difficulties of the situation. To none should this be easier than to the members of the Indian Civil Service, at whose instance and in whose interest this change has been effected. If they were asked to take down notes of depositions, issue their orders and write their judgments not in the script hand in common use, but in the Roman characters of the printed book, we can well imagine what an outcry would be made, and justly made, against the proposal. But it is this very thing that they are forcing upon their subordinates and clerks. It has been urged in support of this innovation that it makes the reading of manuscripts easier to the European members of the Indian Civil Service. I understand, however, from reliable sources that the *balbodh* hand that has replaced *modi* in official records is even more illegible and makes the reading of manuscripts more difficult. Even if this were not so, and *balbodh* had made the work of the civilian a little easier, would that be a valid ground for forcing *balbodh* on thousands of applicants and other persons who have to do with Government offices? It is unfair to the people that this burden should be placed on them in order to give possible relief to a handful of high officials.

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Mr. BHUPENDRANATH BASU'S
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.
Indian National Congress,
1914.

Mr. CHAIRMAN, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I frankly confess my utter inability to express to you how deeply grateful I feel for the great honour you have done me in electing me to preside over the deliberations of this Congress. To me it is not a matter of custom or convention, for the Congress and the ideals it represents hold me by the roots and have penetrated into the innermost recesses of my soul. To us, Indians, no higher reward is conceivable than to be called upon by the free choice of our countrymen to preside over what may be justly regarded as the assembly of the Nation; but I am not vain enough to take it as a personal tribute. Your choice has fallen on one whose faithful adherence to the Congress extends over a quarter of a century, for I had the privilege so far back as 1886 of receiving my initiation as a humble volunteer from one whose name will always remain indissolubly associated with India's progress in political life. True it is that age prevents him from lending us the support of his presence, but the words of wisdom which Dadabhai Naoroji from time to time still addresses us from his retirement carry their inspiration, wherever men's thoughts dwell upon the future of India.

Brother Delegates, if you have chosen the acolyte of 1886 as your high priest of to-day, I am still, as I hope to be always, your devoted servant; you will forgive me however if I feel overweighted by a sense of my difficulties. We meet in your great and historic City, the intellectual centre of a presidency which in the past gave to the world some of its profoundest thinkers and to us in the present has given some of our most distinguished jurists, administrators, scholars and statesmen. Nor can I forget that some of our greatest men have in this city held the seat which I have the honour to occupy to-day. Budruddin Tyabji, Ananda Mohan Bose and Lal Mohan Ghose were men who would throw lustre on any country and of whom we are justly proud. Your last President, Dr. Rashbehari Ghose, a gentleman of equal eminence, enjoys a European reputation for his brilliant scholarship and profound legal knowledge. Difficult as my position is, I feel however the uplifting influence which comes to the humble devotee on an arduous pilgrimage following the footprints of the great ones of the Earth, and, Sir, may I refer to the sense of protection that I feel under your distinguished chairmanship, for I deem it an honour and privilege to be associated with one who is held in respect and veneration throughout the length and breadth of India and who, we are all glad to see, is still willing to take an active part in the affairs of our country.

THE PRESENT SITUATION

Brother delegates, the difficulties that are personal to me are nothing compared to the difficulties under which we meet on this occasion. We are in the midst of a great and devastating war, comparable only to the fearful cataclysms of nature; we are involved in a struggle for life and death, and what is more, between the elemental passions and the higher ideals of humanity. The mind is absorbed in the great issues now hanging in the battle-fields of Europe, where our brethren, British and Indian, are mingling their blood in the cause of honour, liberty and justice. This is not the time to deal with matters upon which we may differ: all controversies must be laid to rest in the presence of the great and awe-inspiring drama of human history now being enacted before our eyes, and we must present to the world the spectacle of a united

Empire, animated by the sole desire to bravely combat the dangers with which we are threatened, and to see that not only civilization, but the very soul of humanity may not lapse into chaos and be utterly lost. We hesitated, therefore, for a long time over the holding of this session of the Congress, and though I accept the ultimate decision not to have a break in the continuity of the Congress, I confess I find my course very difficult.

CONGRESS : HIS MAJESTY'S OPPOSITION

For, one of the principal functions of the Congress is to discharge the duties of His Majesty's Opposition with this important difference, that we have at all times been ready to recognise and appreciate the good work done by our Government, which His Majesty's Opposition in England is not always willing to do. It is this function, though exercised with great restraint, that has sometimes caused irritation to Anglo-Indian administrators impatient of criticism and accustomed to look upon their system of Government as the best that human forethought could devise. Things however have vastly improved since the Congress began in 1885 : a growing sense of responsibility on our side and a growing deference to popular opinion on the other, have characterised our mutual relations for sometime past ; and we, upon whose devoted heads the late Lord Dufferin opened the vials of his wrath, have had the high honour of being received by the representative of the Crown in this country and by His Majesty's Secretary of State in England. At the present moment and in the present crisis, this function of the Congress must necessarily remain in abeyance. We have our quarrels, our differences, our grievances, but these domestic matters, however grave they may be, must wait ; and we may for the present turn to the other aspect of the Congress, namely, as the voice of United India, which recognises no distinction of creed, caste or colour, as the embodied expression of national sentiment, national hopes and national aspirations and as the great instrument of national education.

OUR FIRST DUTY

But our first duty to-day must be to express what is uppermost in the minds of us all—to convey through our Viceroy to our Gracious Sovereign the whole-hearted loyalty and devotion of His Majesty's Indian subjects to the Throne and the Empire. In this respect, as it is rapidly becoming in many other respects, Musalman and Hindu in India are one : and the reason is obvious.

BRITISH RULE NO CHALLENGE TO THE PEOPLE

British rule in India has not come as a challenge to the Indian people. The first and greatest step in the acquisition of sovereignty was taken at the invitation of the people themselves, harassed under the enfeebled grasp of a decadent administration. There have been wars since, but between brave men who have fought courageously, and have accepted the issue as between honourable combatants, our princes becoming the friends and allies of His Britannic Majesty under solemn treaties, and our people equal subjects of His Majesty under Charters and Statutes equally solemn : and this mutual relationship and understanding, worthy of those who had the boldness to conceive and found the Empire, though sometimes apt to be forgotten under the passion of dominion or the prejudice of colour to the infinite detriment of both sides, has been on the whole the guiding principle of British rule in India, well recognised by British statesmen and well understood by the princes and people of India. It is this which has reconciled the Government of England to the martial spirit of India, to her ancient civilization and her pride of race.

INDIA'S NEW HOROSCOPE

India has recognised that, at this supreme crisis in the life of

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the Empire, she should take a part worthy of herself and of the Empire in which she has no mean place. She is now unrolling her new horoscope, written in the blood of her sons, in the presence of the assembled nations of the Empire and claiming the fulfilment of her Destiny.

OUR VICEROY AND SECRETARY OF STATE : TRUE SERVANTS OF INDIA

And brother delegates, if India has been doing her part and her duty, the great statesmen who are now serving in her cause have also stood by her, faithful and loyal. I was in England when the first message of our Viceroy, tense with emotion and solemn as befitting the occasion, reached our King and the British people, conveying to them the whole-hearted devotion and enthusiastic loyalty and support of the Indian princes and the Indian people. I can hardly express to you the impression that that message created: its dignity and simplicity went straight into every heart. All in a moment, England realised the unity and solidarity of the Empire, and the great part India had played and was determined to play. Those great principles of equality and justice on which rest the foundations of British rule in India became invested with the lineaments of life and reasserted their sway over people's minds and hearts. Our Viceroy is truly a worthy servant of India and of England: would God had spared him the sorrow and anxiety of the last few months. His mind must be sore, whether in the midst of crowding work or free, if ever it is free, in the stillness of solitary rest, with an aching void which nothing can fill, for who will bring to him again that gentle companionship and sweet grace, that steadfast devotion and unselfish love, which must have won for Lady Hardinge the supreme place in the heart of her husband, and which secured her the affection and esteem of all who were ever admitted to her charming and dignified presence. And alas! the void will be all the deeper, all the keener, by the loss of his eldest son, for who will now lighten the burden of a heart overladen?

And gentlemen, if Lord Hardinge has stood by India, responsive and loyal, the Marquis of Crewe has been a noble interpreter of the sentiments of the people of India to the people of England. Amidst the solemnity of the British House of Lords and the splendour of its surroundings, in the presence of some of the great pro-consuls who had devoted years of unsparing work to India and of a distinguished assembly, he announced in tones of suppressed emotion and pleasure the magnificent message of India's loyalty, of India's devotion and India's support; and an audience, more distinguished for its dignified bearing than even the senate of ancient Rome, threw to the winds all reserve and broke forth into tumultuous applause. Truly the noble Marquis performed his duty on this historic occasion as the spokesman of India, her accredited representative in England: and no less faithfully and zealously did his gifted Under-Secretary bear his part in the House of Commons. We tender our sincere and grateful thanks to these servants of India, who, though not of our race or our faith, have justly acquitted themselves as the true representatives of India at this momentous crisis of our national life.

THE CONGRESS DEPUTATION : ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Brother delegates, I fear the limits that I have set myself in this address will not permit me to deal with a subject about which naturally you would expect some information from me. I shall refer to it briefly, leaving it to my colleagues to deal with it at greater length. The Deputation, consisting of representatives from all parts of India, which the Congress appointed at Karachi in connection with the proposed reforms of the India Council, proceeded to England last summer, and had the privilege of an interview with the Secretary of State. People here are apt to make light of this privilege of

getting access to the fountain head of all authority over India. To my mind, it is highly useful to be able to have such direct access, without negotiating through circuitous official channels in tow of red tape. A frank interchange of views, if conducted with dignity and moderation, helps to remove much misapprehension and is always conducive to better mutual understanding. The very fact that men go all this distance and cheerfully bear the expense and inconvenience of a long and arduous journey is accepted as a token of the earnestness of the mission and lends to it additional weight. We owe this recognition of the Congress to the influence and indefatigable labours of that veteran friend of India, Sir William Wedderburn, who by his single-minded devotion to our cause which he has made his own, has laid us under an obligation which we can never hope to repay and the full extent of which will never be known. To him also the Deputation owes its favourable reception by men of light and leading in England, who welcomed us with cordiality and listened to us with attention.

THE INDIA COUNCIL BILL

The Bill which the noble Marquis of Crewe introduced in the House of Lords last summer fell short of Indian expectations though it made some notable concessions. But not all the efforts of the Secretary of State, backed though he was by Lord Morley and the whole weight of the liberal party, nor the unceasing labours of the Deputation were of any avail in saving the Bill from rejection by the House of Lords. Two factors contributed to this result—the united resistance of the conservative peers misled by some of those, who by the opponents of the measure. The Council of India Bill, 1914, had two Indian affairs, and the opposition in India, which was put to dexterous use by the opponents of the measure. The Council of India Bill, 1914, had two principal features—it made statutory provision for the inclusion in the Council of two Indian members, now depending on the mere pleasure of the Secretary of State, and it enabled the Secretary of State in certain matters, where he has now to act with the advice of the majority of his Council, to dispense with such advice. The two Indian members were to be selected from a panel to be chosen by the non-official members of the various Legislative Councils in India. This method of selection excited hostile criticism both in England as well as in India, though directed from different standpoints. This is what Lord Curzon said: "I venture to say that it is an utterly indefensible proposal. . . . The men who would be put upon the panel would be public men, platform-speakers, men who would be identified with popular movements in India." His view was that the selection even from a panel would bring in public men in India into the Council: that was also the Anglo-Indian view. The Indian view was that the method of selection did not give any guarantee that men who would be a weak echo of Government would not be selected, for it was justly urged that there would be no difficulty in putting on the panel through the composite constituencies of the Indian Councils, containing, as they do, a large proportion of Anglo-Indians and Government nominees, any two persons whom the Government wanted. We overlooked the other aspect, so prominently brought forward by Lord Curzon, that though it would be quite easy for Government to have on the panel men whom it favoured, it would not be so easy for it to disregard time after time the men at the top who naturally would be men whom the country wanted. I do not say it is by any means a method of selection which we would recommend, but it would certainly be better than what obtains at present, which is nomination, pure and simple: and if the experiment worked well for a certain time, a revision of the law towards greater freedom of election would come, just as Lord Morley's experiment of having two Indian members in the Council by its success drew from

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the opposition the admission that they were prepared to give it a statutory recognition. It would no doubt mean delay, but if the current were set in the right direction, progress, even if slow, no one could stay or stop. The second clause which was vehemently opposed by Lord Curzon was the provision which would enable the Secretary of State to act independently, where he has now to act with the advice of the majority of his Council. So far as I can make out, the concurrence of the majority of the Council is necessary, firstly, in the division and distribution of patronage and power of nomination and, secondly, in the grant or appropriation of the revenues of India. I do not think, we in India need concern ourselves with patronage, for we are practically out of it. And as regards expenditure, the Council was not much of a safeguard when India was burdened with the cost of military undertakings with which she had no concern, and its use in this direction has become considerably restricted since the findings of the Welby Commission. Lord Curzon would maintain and enhance the powers of the Council, though he admitted that a masterful Secretary of State like Lord Morley could easily impose his views on the Council even under its present constitution. We in India have never been highly impressed by the usefulness of this Council: it must give to the Secretary of State a lesser sense of responsibility, when he shares it with a large body under the provisions of a Parliamentary Statute; it must to some extent reduce the effective strength of criticism in Parliament since the Secretary of State would be able to take shelter behind a board of experts. The high position that some of the members appointed under his own authority have held in India is in itself a serious disadvantage: they look upon the India of the present with eyes turned to the India of the past in which they had played an honourable and distinguished part. True, they have had great experience of Indian affairs: but it is an experience naturally one-sided: it is no disparagement to them to say that they have hardly been in touch with the main currents of Indian life which have flowed unnoticed past their feet. I do not entirely blame them. Ability and efficiency may be the heritage of the Civil Service, developed by training and tradition, and may go a long way, but they are not of much help when one has to penetrate the screen which differences in religion, language, customs and modes of thought have set between us, a screen rendered denser by a false sense of prestige on the one side and not unnatural reserve and sensitiveness on the other. Where is the invisible ray that will pierce through this tangled mass and bring to light what otherwise is hidden and obscure? Sympathy does not grow in the stifling atmosphere of power and privilege, royal words notwithstanding, for it is a gift of which the gods are jealous. This inevitable ignorance of the inside life of India necessarily grows deeper with age and distance. The members of the Council of the Secretary of State, whose sympathies would naturally incline them to uphold the views of those who are carrying on their tradition and policy in India, soon find themselves unable to differ from them, and are constrained to follow what appears to be the only safe course, namely, to lend their support to their successors in India. Thus they become a second check on the Viceroy and the Secretary of State: instead of being a guiding and motive force.

THE REFORM THAT INDIA WANTS

A Council from which the glory had departed would gradually pave the way for the reform which India has long pressed, namely, the abolition of the Council altogether, which would bring the Secretary of State for India more into line with the other Secretaries of State and place him under greater Parliamentary control. These points of view were probably overlooked in India, and the position of Sir William Wedderburn as President of the British

Committee of the Congress and of your delegates became extremely embarrassing. If the Bill had passed through the House of Lords, it would have come to the lower House, where the Indian view could be strongly urged and where the debate might give rise to declarations of policy from responsible statesmen which would be of great use to us in the future. But all this was not to be: the opponents of the measure strengthened by the support in India had their day and the Bill was lost. I would not have trespassed upon your patience with this long account of the Deputation, if I had not felt that at no distant date, the Bill may be revived, let us hope, largely liberalized. When the time comes, we must press for the reforms which we have been advocating from the Congress. The salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the English estimates. In his Council, consisting of not more than nine members, one-third should be Indians chosen by the non-official members of the various Legislative Councils in India, and of the remaining members, at least half should be public men of proved ability and merit, unconnected with the Government of India: the functions of the members should be advisory and not executive. A Council so constituted will maintain a fair balance between the different interests involved in the Indian administration, and will secure for its decisions that appreciation and willing acceptance which are essential to all Governments, specially to Governments conducted by a non-indigenous bureaucracy.

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Before I pass from this subject, there is one other matter closely allied to which I would call your earnest attention. Royal Commissions may be of great use or may, as some or all commissions do, serve to defer reforms: but there is no question that they collect a vast amount of useful information at very great expense. All this material sleeps on dusty racks. Very few of the men who form the commissions are members of Parliament, and after the submission of the reports they are unable to turn to any good and effective purpose the instruction which they have received at such great cost to India. If instead of Royal Commissions, we had Parliamentary committees of enquiry, like those that sat in the days of the East India Company on the renewal of its successive Charters, drawn from all parties, we would have a body of men in Parliament who would acquire an interest in India by means of intimate knowledge of her affairs and would be able by reason of independent information to approach the consideration of Indian questions with confidence, and create in the House an atmosphere of enlightenment about India which would continue as a tradition. A system of control and supervision like this would supply the necessary corrective to the Government of India and impart a forward impetus which the British democracy have so far failed to do and which the people of India justly claim. It is a reform to which I have ventured to call your attention, as I believe its usefulness must be recognized by all parties and as it may be treated almost as a non-controversial question.

THE WORK BEFORE US

I now come to the second part of my address—the constructive programme of the Congress, its objects and ideals, our duty to ourselves and our work in the future. For a consideration of these matters, the present occasion is not altogether inopportune; we are removed by force of circumstances from the atmosphere of controversy and if we are deeply stirred, I trust there is room for introspection.

WHERE WE STAND TO-DAY

But before I go on to the future, the present must claim our attention for a few moments. The Charter Act of 1833 provides that "no native of

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India, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent or colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company." In the memorable despatch to the Government of India accompanying the Act, the Board of Directors emphasise this provision and say: "it is fitting that this important provision should be understood in order that its full spirit and intention may be transfused through our whole system of administration. From certain offices the natives are debarred, professedly on the ground that the average amount of native qualifications can be presumed only to rise to a certain limit. It is this line of demarcation which the present enactment obliterates. Fitness is henceforth to be the criterion of eligibility." Then we come to the solemn declaration of the Great Queen:—"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian Territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fill."

These form the solid foundations on which the Government of India rests: one removes the disqualification of the subject, the other defines the obligation of the Sovereign. I shall on this occasion refrain from considering how far the injunction of the Board of Directors that the spirit and intention of the enactment should be transfused through the whole system of administration or the solemn declaration of the Sovereign has been loyally carried out and how wide is the gulf which divides our actual position from our legal status. The Government of the country is still vested to all intents and purposes in a foreign Civil Service, which is so recruited that the difficulties attending the path of the Indian, who seeks admission into it, are just as difficult to-day as they were fifty years ago, as is evident from the fact that out of a cadre of nearly 1,400 members there are now not more than 70 Indian officers. The Service is composed of men whose sole aim is, no doubt, to do their duty and sole ambition is to govern well; like the knights-errant of old they would take all the load off our shoulders, forgetting that in the economy of nature each man has to carry his own burden, to stiffen his back in self-preservation.

We cannot escape the influences of our tradition or environment. In declining to accede to the grant of further powers to the English in India, Sir Charles Wood in 1861 quoted with approval the words of a well-known philosopher and statesman. "Armed with the prestige of the ruling nation they have the feelings inspired by absolute power without the sense of responsibility". What Mill said then still holds good to-day, for the system of Government is the same, though happier influences have come into play. But the fact remains that the only responsibility which could act and has acted as a check on the Civil Service of India was its self-imposed sense of duty: it is a great check no doubt, but not sufficient when a struggle comes between preconceived ideas and rigid traditions of power and efficiency on the one hand and the nascent growth of popular aspirations on the other. Viceroys and Governors may come and go, but the great Service remains, dominating the life of the people and practically free from all responsibility except what it owes to itself. They form the Executive Council of the Viceroy, with the exception of one Indian member of recent origin. They also form the Council of the Secretary of State with the addition of two Indian members. They thus constitute a Court of appeal over themselves. They furnish rulers to six provincial Governments out of nine. The great departments of State including education are under their control and the inspiration and motive power of Government comes from them. Influence, patronage, authority, power, dominion, the government itself, are all in their hands; and they would be more than human if they did not desire to maintain their position, if from no other motive than at least from a

laudable ambition of handing on their heritage unimpaired to their successors, in an honest belief that the Service as constituted was essential for the good of India.

WHAT INDIA WANTS

Against this state of things we have a people rapidly awakening to self-consciousness; thousands of our boys are receiving education on western lines in Indian Universities based on western models; hundreds of them are daily flocking the Universities of Europe, America and Japan and on their return home spreading the knowledge that they have acquired. You may chain Prometheus, but the fire is lighted and cannot be extinguished. India wants a higher life, a wider sphere of activity and usefulness. India wants that her Government should be consistent with her growing self-respect and intellectuality. India wants that the presumption which has all along existed, and which the Board of Directors in 1833 made a vain attempt to dispel, namely, that the Indians can only rise to a certain limit, should be removed from the precincts of her Court, as it has been from the Statute Book, and the door to her services should not be closed by artificial barriers against her own sons. India wants that her children should have the same rights of equal citizenship as other members of the Empire. India wants the removal of vexatious hindrances on the liberty of speech and freedom of the Press, fruitless and dangerous alike to the Government and the people. And, above all, India wants that her Government should be an autonomous Government under the British Empire. Then only the great benefits, which have emanated from British rule and which carry with them the memory of doles, will be sweetened with the sweat of her brow.

I know of our aspirations, I have given brief expression to them; are they extravagant and unjustified in the present circumstances of the country? I do not wish to ride for a fall, but I am of opinion that they are not incapable of progressive fulfilment. Do they deserve fostering care and sympathetic attention or stern repression? The answer has been already given by the Government itself.

THE REFORM OF THE COUNCILS

The Reform Scheme of Lord Morley is the beginning of a far-reaching change. There is some scepticism in certain quarters: it has become a habit with some of us to talk of the Reforms as mere make-believes. I deprecate this habit: it is a wrong angle of vision, it lacks the sense of historical perspective. From a Council of three which the Regulating Act of 1773 gave to Warren Hastings, excluding the Commander-in-Chief, we come to a Council of four in 1833, when a law member without a portfolio and without the right to vote or sit at meetings except when laws were enacted was added. The next step forward was a Legislative Council of ten in 1853, consisting of 4 ordinary and 6 additional members who were all nominated; and in 1861, the number of additional members was raised to a maximum of twelve, also all nominated. Then through the continuous agitation of the Congress, backed by the powerful influence and energy of Charles Bradlaugh, came Lord Crosse's Act of 1892 which would have been entirely different if Bradlaugh had then been alive, and which gave to our various provincial councils the right of recommendation and for the first time allowed interpellations and discussion of the financial statement. From this stage we travelled far indeed in 1909, when the number of additional members in the Legislative Council of the Governor-General was raised to 60, of whom 27 were elected, the remaining 33 being nominated, and amongst those nominated not more than 28 could be officials. There was not only to be a discussion on the financial statement, but the budget was to be presented in all its stages, power was given to the Council to

move resolutions which might affect the administration of the country, and the right of interpellation was greatly extended. And these Councils have not been without their use. They have supplied motive force where it was lacking, they have infused energy where it was needed, they have attempted to act, though not always with success, as a brake power when the wheels of the State were running over slippery rails and they have corrected errors: what is more, they have made their influence felt on the administrative machinery of Government. Apart from the official majority in the Imperial Council, which, having regard to its present constitution, could be safely dispensed with, the greatest drawback of all the Councils is the defective and unequal representation of the educated classes in India. But even such as they are, with the composite, restricted and unequal character of their representation, the Indian non-official members gave a solid and united vote on some of the great questions affecting the position of India or its internal administration. On the question affecting the prestige and position of India regarding emigration, the Sikh and the Bengalee, the Mahratta and the Madrassee, the prince and the commoner, as well as the Hindu and the Moslem, all voted on the same side; so also on the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions. In Bengal and Madras, they have actually defeated the Government on important issues.

I have dwelt at some length on the Councils that we have got under the Reform Scheme of Lord Morley to show that they are not altogether so useless as is sometimes inconsiderately asserted. They are, no doubt, very far from being the ideals of to-day, but they mark a notable advance, and it is undesirable and unwise to treat them as make-believes. Let us treat them as mere steps which we must take to reach our goal and let us consider what that goal may be: and in putting this goal before us, let us be frank and honest and let us understand each other and be understood. It is well that there should be no *arrière pensée*, no reservation in the consideration of this great question.

PERPETUAL TUTELAGE ON THE ONE HAND

The Indian bureaucracy do not offer us any constructive programme for the future of India, no land of promise to her children. They are content to work for the day and take no thought for the morrow. An autocratic Viceroy or Secretary of State may put extra steam into the machinery of the Indian Government or try to shut the safety-valve, but the great fly-wheel is not easily disturbed. And the bureaucracy have given us honest and conscientious workmen, not troubled it may be with the visions of the future, but they have reason to be well pleased with their work: they have given us internal peace and guarded us from external aggression; the blessings of an ordered administration are apparent on every side. Why should India resent? Her Government has always been that of one man's sway whether she was an Empire or broken into small states of varying dimensions. Why should she object to the Government of an outside bureaucracy? My answer is: the days of the lotus-eater are gone, the world is swinging onward on the uplifting ropes of time, and in Europe, the war of nations, now in progress, will knock off the last weights of mediæval domination of one man over many, of one race over another; it is not possible to roll back the tide of wider life which is flowing like the warm gulf stream through the gateways of the West into the still waters of the East. You may abolish the study of English history and draw a sponge over all its enthralling story of freedom; you may bar Milton and Burke, Mill and Spenser; you may bend the Indian Universities to your will if you like, fetter their feet with obstructive statutes, but you cannot bar the imponderable influences of an expanding world. If English rule in India meant the canonization of a bureaucracy, if it meant perpetual domination and perpetual tutelage, an increasing dead-weight

on the soul of India, it would be a curse to civilization and a blot on humanity. But I am doing injustice to a large body of Civil Servants who have loyally accepted the recent reforms and who seek to remain true to the traditions of Munro and Elphinstone.

AND INDEPENDENCE ON THE OTHER

And let us take the other extreme—of separation from England and absolute independence. It may, no doubt, commend itself to the ardent patriotism of youth, for it is the privilege of youth to be fancy free. Let us leave law alone and deal with the question as one of practical politics. I would not hesitate, whatever might be the terrors of the law, from boldly accepting the ideal if I felt convinced that it was possible of attainment, and I go further, that it was desirable in the present stage of our evolution. I would not flee from my own convictions. I do not like the attitude of being willing to wound but afraid to strike. Let us be frank. Bold issues must be boldly faced. National regeneration requires manliness and is not advanced by the methods of the Camarilla. At the present stage of evolution in India, who would desire or support separation from England? The Indian princes, secure in their dignity and states, the Indian aristocracy, safe in their possessions and influence, the Indian middle classes, free in their vocations, the toiling masses, sure of the fruits of their labour, are all moving onwards to one common goal with the impetus which a central Government, a common vehicle of thought, common ideals and a growing sense of unity and nationality have given them. Will they support this separation and lose sight of their goal altogether? India, high and low, has published her answer to the world. It is but a dream and may come, as dreams do come when the senses are held in the bonds of sleep, or as they come in the impetuous days of youth when the senses lack the control of wisdom which comes with age. But when you take the idea firmly into your grasp, it breaks away into the dust of the past, bringing no solace but disappointment and sorrow.

SELF-GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE EMPIRE

The two extremes—the one of separation, the other of subordination—are both equally impossible and must be put out of our mind. The ideal that we must pursue, and which the Congress has set before itself, is that of co-ordination and comradeship, of a joint partnership on equal terms. I do not say that it must materialize to-day, but I do say that every step that we take or ask the Government to take must point in that direction. India no doubt is a continent and not a country divided into small administrative areas: it is divided into communities, castes and sects: it is divided by religion, language and race, by different types and stages of civilization and progress, and by different methods of administration. It has within its limits princes of ancient lineage and traditions, and people great numbers of whom are still in a state of mental darkness: the educated middle classes are still a small, if no longer a microscopic, minority: there are peoples within its borders who know of nothing else but personal rule, and large classes which are ready to accept a representative government. Can any system of self-government be evolved in a country like this which will bring into coherence its heterogeneous elements or must India from the very nature of its constitution be for ever subject to outside dominion? I hope I have stated the case for the other side fairly. Let us see how we can apply our ideal to a state of things like this: let us clearly realise what that ideal may be. From the very extent of India and the diversity of her population, we must have a system of Government modelled on the lines of the Commonwealth of Australia, or the United States of America, modified according to Indian conditions and presided over by a representative of our Sovereign. In this constitution all will find a place, the Englishman as well as the Indian, the

prince as well as the peasant, and all communities; by a judicious combination of the methods of election and selection in the case of the less advanced. I am only suggesting tentative lines of development and not a scheme, and I am aware that it may be laughed at as chimerical: but I shall not complain, as criticism is the touch-stone of truth. And I do not despair, for the position is not hopeless.

INDIA OF TO-DAY AND ENGLAND OF THE PAST

Let us consider our advantages. I might easily turn for analogies to the continent of Europe, but, for the present, I shall direct attention to England of the past and not a remote past, to England in the forties in the 19th century after the accession of Queen Victoria and the great Reform Act of 1832. In many parts, half of its male population and nearly three-fourths of the female population were unable to sign their names even on their marriage register. The test of literacy in India to-day is certainly as high among the higher classes, and taking the entire male population, children, hill-tribes and aborigines all thrown in, more than 1 in 10 are able to read and write. Religious differences carried then in England a more galling sense of social and political disadvantage than they have ever done in India. Even in Ireland, Roman Catholics were not allowed to hold commissions in the Army until 1793, when an Act was passed enabling them to hold commissions in the Army up to the rank of a colonel, and this restricted concession was not granted to the Roman Catholics in England until 1813. It was not till 1829 that Parliament was opened to them. The Protestant dissenters likewise laboured under cruel restrictions: they could not legally baptize their children in their own places of worship or bury their dead in consecrated grounds, except under the ritual of the established church and had no admission to the Universities. Many of us will remember that in 1880 an influential deputation waited on Gladstone to protest against the appointment of Lord Ripon as our Viceroy, because he was a Roman Catholic. Even to-day the whole question of Irish Home Rule is a question of religion, of the Protestant against the Roman Catholic; each of the great communities had organised themselves into armed forces under the leadership of eminent politicians and were ready for a civil war before the outbreak of the war. Is the condition of things worse in India at the present time? Hindus and Moslems had long lived in amity until it was found that their differences might be turned to their mutual disadvantage. I am not drawing upon imagination. It attracted the attention of a historian and statesman like Lord Bryce, who, in one of his illuminating essays, observed as follows:—"It has been suggested that when the differences of caste and religion which now separate the peoples of India from one another have begun to disappear . . . new dangers may arise to threaten the permanence of British Power." British administrators happily, and Mussalmans and Hindus themselves, are beginning to realise that these differences mean danger to the State and injury to the whole Community.

The cry is raised that not only difference in religion, but that in a country like India, so wide and diversified, proper representation cannot be secured. Take again the case of England before the Reform Act. Prior to 1832, to the British House of Commons 70 members were returned by 35 places practically without any electors: 90 members were returned by 46 places with less than 50 electors and 37 members by 19 places having not more than 100 electors, while Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester were unrepresented: seats were secured by bribery and when they rested with proprietors and Corporations, were openly sold: in fact corruption was so rampant that buying a seat was considered perfectly fair. Sir Samuel Romilly, than whom a purer and more

virtuous public man was not to be found in his day, actually bought his seat in the House of Commons so that he might be independent of any patron. The difficulty of language need not be considered. In England of the early 19th century there was a diversity of tongues greater than what exists in a similar area in India. The greatest gift of England to India is a common vehicle of thought between the different parts of India and the members of its different communities.

It may also be urged against us that the higher castes in India, the educated communities, will dominate the lower and the more ignorant. The House of Commons was practically in the hands of the English aristocracy and the upper middle classes till 1832, and to this day it is, to all intents and purposes, a house composed of members belonging to those classes. In politics, Anglo-Indian administrators are known to be inclined to the conservative view, which fought so strenuously against the curtailment of the rights of the peers. After all, the spectacle of the more enlightened ruling the less enlightened in the same community is as old as the world. The caste system in India which is thoroughly democratic within itself is losing its rigidity as between different castes.

ITALY AND JAPAN .

I may go further afield and nearer home. Italy in 1860 was more divided in tradition, sentiment and feeling than India is to-day or was at any time in its past history. Conflict between temporal and spiritual powers, rivalry of cities and states, of republics and kingdoms, mutual jealousies and mutual hatred, the domination and intrigue of a powerful neighbour, these were the difficulties which stood in the way of Italy since united under one Government. And take Japan of 1860: "The Emperor was the nominal King but the Shogun the actual ruler; a third of the whole Empire was under the direct rule of the Shogun and the revenues were paid into his treasury; the remainder was shared among 260 feudal lords, all of whom enjoyed complete legislative and executive autonomy including the right of coinage. The Daimio and the Samurai who combined to form the governing and aristocratic classes numbered two million souls. Beneath them lay the masses divided by an unfathomable social gulf, across which none could pass, divided into three orders, farmers, artisans and traders, in number about 30 millions, whose sole lot in life was to minister to the well-being and luxury of their superiors. Slavery, abject slavery, was the natural state of the great body of the people. They counted for nothing: their liberty, their property and even their lives were held at the absolute disposal of their immediate rulers: they spoke in subdued tones with bent backs and eyes on the ground. As subjection made the lower classes abjectly servile, so did despotic power and immunity from all the burthens of life render the aristocratic class tyrannical and cruel." I have not indulged in a fanciful portrayal of the condition of the people of Japan in the closing years of the Takagwa regime. I have quoted verbatim from a well-known English work on Japan. India does not suffer very much in comparison to England of the 16th or early 19th century and stands on a much better footing than Italy or Japan in 1860. I have stated the objections and have tried to meet them. Do not for a moment think, therefore, that I underrate their importance. I have not shrunk from pointing out the difficulties. To show that the obstacles in our way are not insuperable, I have referred to other countries, not dissimilarly situated; what we want is their patriotism, their devotion, their spirit of sacrifice. In Japan, the Shogun surrendered his absolute authority, the feudal lords gave up their estates and power; the Daimio and Samurai laid aside the pride of birth and caste; the upper classes from the Emperor downwards helped to bring the

masses across the wide gulf which for untold centuries had run between them, taking them by the hand as fellow-creatures with equal rights, and thus laid the foundation of a nation which have compelled the attention and respect of the world.

What others have done we may do: the basis of our life, political and social, must be self-respect and mutual good-will: it has been said that treated as we are by our own Government, lacking in sympathy and trust, it is no wonder if we slide down the pegs of national self-esteem. I have already referred to the growing consciousness of the people, to their vivid perception of the anomalies of our present position—equal subjects of our Sovereign, but unequal citizens of the State. The waves of a new life, bright with the hopes of the future, fall back into empty foam, repelled by the cold wall of ancient prejudice. Signs however are not wanting to show that the guardians of the wall are beginning to realize that the waves are friendly, and will bring to the land waters which will fertilize into abounding life and they are opening the sluice-gates. Not so slowly, not so cautiously is the cry from the land.

LORD HARDINGE'S POLICY OF TRUST

Lord Hardinge has set the example of courage and trust: he has tried to show that the Government of India is a Government for the people: he has spoken in vindication of our rights of equal citizenship, he has endorsed the action of our countrymen in South Africa in offering and organizing passive resistance; he has upheld the claims of India against the bigotry of race and prejudice of colour and he has stood by India ready to guard her honour. All honour to him for his courageous advocacy of the cause of India under circumstances of exceptional difficulties in South Africa. I do not know if His Excellency realizes what he has done for us and for England; he has revived our waning faith in the declaration of our Sovereign, in the policy of British Rule in India and, what is more, he has made the Indian people recognize that the self-respect of the nation is safe in his keeping. In his support of our rights in South Africa he has been ably seconded by Sir Benjamin Robertson who has won a victory for us where defeat would have been disastrous; to him also our thanks are due. But more is wanted, for much is wanting in those elements which constitute the self-respect of a people.

RIGHT TO CARRY ARMS

The right to carry arms, the right to bear commissions in the Army and lead our men in the cause of the Empire, the right to form volunteer corps in the defence of hearth and home, how long will these be denied to the Indian people? How long will India toddle on her feet, tied to the apron strings of England? Time is she stood on her legs for herself as well as for England. What could be more humiliating to India and to England alike, if England were obliged in the hour of some great danger as Imperial Rome was in her day, to leave India unarmed and untrained to the use of arms as her civil population is, a prey to internal anarchy and external aggression? What commentary would it be on 150 years of British rule in India, that England found the people strong though disunited and left them helpless and emasculated? And what could be more glorious both for India and England than that India, strong in her men, strong in her faith, should stand side by side with England, share her troubles and her dangers and be joint defenders of their common heritage.

INDIA A WALL AGAINST GERMANY

There is no use in vain regrets, but one cannot help thinking that under different circumstances, England could have put to-day on the battle-fields of Europe not seventy thousand Indian soldiers but a wall of men against which German militarism would have hurled itself in vain. And has not India justified faith in her? In this hour of danger the cry has come from every part of India—

from all communities and classes for a rush to the front : it is oblivious of the past and impregnate with the future. And may I, addressing myself to Lord Hardinge, tell him that this future is in his hands, that it will be a glory all his own, unparalleled in history, if India realises this future before he lays down his office : my appeal to him is not in the name of personal glory, it will be glory to the Most High, for future generations in India and England will bless his name, for he will have done incalculable good to both : and this is not an appeal *ad misericordiam* ; we stand at the bar of humanity and claim the fulfilment of obligations, of declarations and solemn pledges. It is the appeal of Belgium for the enforcement of her guaranteed rights. England is pouring forth her wealth, and what is more and no wealth can buy, the precious blood of her men for the fulfilment of her plighted word : her name will live as long as human history lives. Will India say that England has failed in her duty to India? It is not a prayer, but a call in the name of the people of India enforced by the moral sense of mankind, which, if religions are not mere myths and their teachings empty shibboleths, will survive the clash of arms and the fate of nations. But, brother delegates, I shall be failing in my duty if I failed to indicate, however briefly, what lies in us to do for the realisation of our destined future.

EDUCATION

Our ground-work must be the education of our people, the elevation of the masses. To our infinite regret, the State has not responded to our call for even a tentative measure of compulsory primary education : much as I grieve, I am not hopeless, for it is bound to come. It was not till 1880 that England recognised that no children should be shut out from the benefits of education by the ignorance, neglect or apathy of their parents. Our policy has been to follow the lead of England at a respectful distance. The education of our girls is still in an elementary stage. The Congress may well take a leaf out of the programme of the Moslem League in matters connected with education, for education is the bed-rock on which we must lay the foundations of our national life. To it alone, I look for the removal of those galling distinctions resulting from the institution of caste, of those petty misunderstandings which mar the beauty and serenity of our religious life. What does it matter if I spring from the head of the Creator or his feet? Is not the whole universe His foot-stool? And what does formula matter in religion, God reveals himself to all who seek him. Whether we hearken to the voice of the Muezzin or to the pealing of the bells, whether the minaret or the trident attracts our gaze, whether we assemble in our temples or our mosques, whether we are high or lowly born, it makes no difference : outside these, beyond these, is the sanctuary of the Mother, where the voice of humanity is calling us to worship. There we stand united before her sacred altar with our feet on the past and our gaze on the future. If only we bear in mind that we are Indians first and Indians always, what does it matter whether one community advances more rapidly than another, whether one receives more favours than another? Let us bear in mind that the advancement of a part of the body-politic means the progress of the whole, that favours to our brethren mean favours to us all : it is the pettiest of petty things that come between us, though these small things, like the grain of sand in the eye, oftentimes cause great irritation : let us brush them aside. Enlightened opinion, Hindu and Moslem, is recognizing the essential unity of our lives and striving to put down differences where they exist : these differences are capable of easy adjustment if only we bear and forbear.

STATE AID TO INDIAN INDUSTRIES

We are face to face with our great constructive work, the education and

elevation of our people and the obliteration of the lines of caste and creed in the social and political life of the country. And our efforts should not be confined to these regions alone; we have much to do in the domain of Arts and Industries: we must devote our best attention and energy to our industrial education and progress. We have had difficulties to contend with in the past: our Government following the traditions of England, the richest and most highly developed industrial country in the world, omitted to profit by the examples of the Governments of some of the countries on the continent of Europe and of Japan, which have succeeded in planting great industries among nations hitherto as much devoted to agricultural pursuits as ourselves. The war has forced on our attention new problems and new methods, and the example lately set by England in coming to the support of the newly started dyeing-industry fills us with hope as to the future of the industries that may with advantage be started in India with the aid of the State.

WORK IN ENGLAND

And if, brother delegates, I naturally lay the greatest stress on the work among ourselves, I do not forget the work we have to do outside, work of no ordinary magnitude or importance—the enlightenment of the British People about Indian affairs. In them we have got our best allies, for they have not come under the influence of the Poustas which grows on the soil of the East. They are under no illusion, they realise the great truth underlying the dictum of that great statesman who gave peace to South Africa: "Good government could never be a substitute for government by the people themselves." I have always found them, and I speak from personal experience, willing to listen and ready to help. Being on the spot, your Deputation was able to correct errors and influence public opinion. Though addresses from the platform are useful, much work may be done quietly in England through the leaders of thought and through the Press.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE

The British Committee of the Congress is doing invaluable work in instructing the press and the public. What is wanted is that representative men from India should systematically visit England to bring to the Committee fresh and first-hand knowledge: what is urgently wanted is more funds so that the Committee may extend its sphere of usefulness: and money spent for this purpose will not be ill spent: it is an investment which will bring rich profit. It may not be generally known, but it was through the influence exerted on John Bright by a retired Anglo-Indian gentleman of liberal views that India secured in 1858 the Magna Charta of her rights. It is essential that members of Parliament, who alone can decide great questions, should be properly instructed, for, knowledge means interest, and all we want is a true knowledge of India. If the future to which we look forward is to be a process of peaceful evolution, it must be by co-operation. Hostility will retard and indifference clog the wheels of progress.

OUR PLACE IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The war has come to us as a trumpet call—it has roused enthusiasm in England for India, it has moved the heart of Anglo-India and has even drawn the British colonies out of their exclusiveness. Our Viceroy has been telling us of the formation of a new policy of reciprocity between India and the Colonies. No reciprocity except on terms of equality would be acceptable in India. Would the Colonies give it? Not in the past, but now there is hope of a settlement consistent with our position in the Empire, for this is what a leading organ of public opinion in South Australia says:—

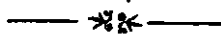
"It was only ignorance that thought of the Indians as an inferior race.

They are the equals, fully the equals, of the proudest European Nation, and they claim, in their own land, to be free citizens, governing themselves, and shaping their own National destiny, within the many-nationed 'Empire of the Free.' Who shall say them nay?"

CONCLUSION

Now is our time: we must throw away our lethargy: let us bind our waist-cloth, head forward to our goal: and that goal is not unworthy of our highest aspirations: it has satisfied the dignity and the self-esteem of the French in Canada and of the Boer in South Africa, who to-day are the staunchest supporters of England: and when it comes to us, as I hope it soon will, it will strengthen and not weaken the bonds that unite England and India. To the spiritual framework of the East has come the inspiration of the West. Let us combine the patience of the East with the energy of the West and we shall not fail. We are better situated to-day than Italy or Japan was in 1860: we are beginning to feel the strength and growing solidarity of the people of India: India has realised that she must be a vital and equal part of the Empire and she has worthily seized her great opportunity. In the melting pot of destiny, race, creed, and colour are disappearing. If India has realised, so has England. Through the mouth of the Prime Minister, the English people have said to us: "we welcome with appreciation and affection your proffered aid, and in an Empire which knows no distinction of race or class, where all alike are subjects of the King-Emperor and are joint and equal custodians of our common interests and futures, we here hail with profound and heartfelt gratitude your association side by side and shoulder to shoulder with the home and dominion troops under a flag which has a symbol to all of a unity that a world in arms cannot dissever or dissolve."

It is no use looking backward. Let us be ready for the future and I see its vision. I see my country occupying an honoured and proud place in the comity of nations. I see her sons sitting in the Councils of our great Empire, conscious of their strength and bearing its burden on their shoulders as valued and trusted comrades and friends, and I see India rejuvenated and reincarnate in the glories of the future broadened by the halo of the past. What does it matter if a solitary raven croak from the sand banks of the Jumna and the Ganges? I hear it not, my ears are filled with the music of the mighty rivers, flowing into the sea scattering the message of the future. Brother delegates, let us live as the ancients lived in the purity of heart so that the message may be fulfilled; let us forget the narrow barriers of man's creation; let us be humble and forget the pride of self; let us step across the barriers of prejudice; let us always be with our hand on the plough preparing the soil for the harvest of the future; let our heart-strings be attuned to God and Country and then no power on earth can resist the realisation of that message, the fulfilment of the Destiny that is ours. And assembled in this tabernacle of the people, let us pray to Him Who knoweth all hearts to grant us grace and strength that we may deserve and bear this future and this Destiny.



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25TH INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

ADDRESS OF

SIR W. WEDDERBURN, BART.,
PRESIDENT.

26th December 1910.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In selecting me to preside, for the second time, over your National Assembly, you have bestowed upon me a signal mark of your confidence. The honour is great; the responsibilities are also great; and I must ask from you a full measure of indulgence. At the same time, whatever my shortcomings may be, there is one respect in which I shall not be found wanting, and that is in goodwill towards you and the cause you represent. My sympathy with your aspirations is whole-hearted; and I cherish an enduring faith in the future destiny of India. India deserves to be happy. And I feel confident that brighter days are not far off. There is a saying that every nation deserves its fate; and my confidence in the future of India is founded on the solid merits of the Indian people—their law-abiding character, their industry, their patient and gentle nature, their capacity for managing their own affairs, as shown in their ancient village organisation. Further, I put my trust in the intelligence, the reasonableness, and the public spirit of the educated classes. And last, but not least, I have confidence in the Congress, whose pious duty it is to guide the people in their peaceful progress towards self-government within the Empire.

A few days ago, speaking at a gathering of friends in England, who commissioned me to bring you their hearty greeting, I quoted the words of my dear old friend Sir Wilfred Lawson, who during his long life was ever engaged in some uphill battle for the cause of righteousness. He said that we should hope all things, but expect nothing. This is the spirit which defies discouragement, and is beyond the reach of disappointment. During the last 20 years it has been difficult for the friends of India even to hope. Poor India has suffered pains almost beyond human endurance. We have had war, pestilence and famine, earthquake and cyclone; an afflicted people, driven well nigh to despair. But now, at last, we see a gleam of light. Hope has revived, and the time has come to close our ranks and press forward with ordered discipline. There is much arduous work to be

done, but the reward will be great. In the words of the poet, let us "march with our face to the light; put in the sickle and reap."

Our Watchwords.

Our watchwords must be "Hope"—"Conciliation"—"United Effort."

"Hope."

The late King-Emperor, Edward the Peace-maker, whose loss we shall ever deplore, in his message to the Princes and people of India on the occasion of the Jubilee, gave us every ground for hope. In that gracious Declaration, which confirmed and developed the principles laid down in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, he promised concessions to the wishes of the people, including the steady obliteration of race distinctions in making appointments to high office, the extension of representative institutions, and a kindly sympathy with Indian aspirations generally. Effect was given to those promises by Lord Morley's appointment of Indians to his own Council, and to the Executive Council (the inner Cabinet) of the Viceroy and of the Local Governments, and when he successfully carried through both Houses of Parliament his far-reaching measure of reform for the expansion of the Legislative Councils on a wider representative basis. A hopeful spirit as regards the near future is also justified by the sympathetic tone of the speeches of both the outgoing and the incoming Viceroy. India honours Lord Minto as a man who, under the most trying circumstances, has bravely and honestly striven to do his duty. According to his view, the unrest and political awakening in India is evidence that "the time has come for a further extension of representative principles in our administration." And Lord Hardinge has promised to "do his utmost to consolidate the beneficent and far-reaching scheme of reform initiated by Lord Morley and Lord Minto for the association of the people of India more closely with the management of their own affairs, and to conciliate the races, classes and creeds."

"Conciliation."

And this brings us to the duty of conciliation, as now the first step towards constructive work. As long as Indian leaders could only offer a criticism of official measures from outside, it was necessary that their main energies should be directed towards securing a modification of the system of administration under which they lived. And in such work it was inevitable that hard and unpleasant things should occasionally be said on either side, rendering harmonious co-operation difficult, if not impossible. But now

that opportunities have been provided for popular representatives to discuss, in a serious and responsible spirit and face to face with official members, the grievances of the people which they would like to see removed or the reforms which they wish to be carried out, the dominant note of their relations with official classes, as also among themselves, should, I think, be one of conciliation and co-operation. There is an enormous amount of good, solid, useful work for the welfare of the people of India to be done in various directions, needing devoted workers, who will labour strenuously and with a genuine appreciation of one another's difficulties. Such is the work for the economic and industrial regeneration of the country, and for the development of education,—elementary education for the masses, technical education, and the higher education of the West—England's greatest boon to India—the magic touch, which has awakened to new life the ancient activities of the Indian intellect. Besides these, there are other important items in the Congress programme calling loudly for early attention and settlement. All this means effort, strenuous, well-directed, and self-sacrificing: and it needs co-operation from every quarter. In facing this high enterprise, let us forget old grievances, whether of class or creed or personal feeling. Let us not dwell on matters of controversy, but cultivate a spirit of toleration, giving credit to all that, however different their methods may be, they are true lovers of mother India, and desire her welfare. If, as I trust will be the case, you accept these general principles, I will ask you briefly to consider the specific cases in which, from the nature of things, we must anticipate some difficulty in obtaining the hearty co-operation we so much desire. In so vast and composite an entity as India, there exist necessarily divergent views and divergent action in matters political and social, leading to friction. Among important classes and groups difficulties have hitherto arisen in three principal directions: we have the differences (1) between European officials and educated Indians, (2) between Hindus and Mahomedans, and (3) between Moderate Reformers and Extremists. Such tendencies to discord cannot be ignored. But my proposition is, that the conflict of interest is only apparent; that if we go below the surface, we find identity of object among all these classes and groups; that all are equally interested in the prosperity and happiness of India; and that the only true wisdom is for all to work together in harmony, each casting into the common treasury his own special gifts, whether of authority, or of knowledge, or of unselfish devotion.

“ Conciliation ” : (1) Officials and Non-Officials.

Let us then consider briefly the facts regarding each of the three cases above noted, beginning with that of European officials and inde-

pendent Indian opinion. In order to trace the growth of the existing tension, we cannot do better than refer to the records of the Congress, which during the last 25 years has mirrored popular feeling, and registered the pronouncements of many trusted leaders; some of whom, alas, have passed away, as Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Mr. Justice Tyabji, Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, and Mr. Ananda Charlu; others, as the Grand Old Man of India, are still with us, to cheer us with their presence and guide us on our way. Now what was the feeling 25 years ago of the Congress leaders towards British policy and British administrators? There could not be a more sincere and uncompromising exponent of independent Indian opinion than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, but nothing could be stronger than his repudiation of any feeling unfriendly to British policy or British methods. As President of the Second Congress in 1886 he said:—"It is under the civilizing rule of the Queen and people of England that we meet here together, hindered by none, and are freely allowed to speak our mind without the least fear and without the least hesitation. Such a thing is possible under British rule and British rule only." He then goes on to recount some of the "great and numberless blessings which British Rule has conferred on us," concluding as follows:—"When we have to acknowledge so many blessings as flowing from British rule,—and I could descant on them for hours, because it would be simply recounting to you the history of the British Empire in India,—is it possible that an assembly like this, every one of whose members is fully impressed with the knowledge of these blessings, could meet for any purpose inimical to that rule to which we owe so much?" Such were, not so long ago, the cordial feelings of educated Indians towards British policy and British administrators. A change of policy produced a change of sentiment. The various measures which caused this sad estrangement are well known; and I will not now recapitulate them, because I am above all things anxious that by-gones should be by-gones. Happily, also, the introduction of the reforms of Lord Morley and Lord Minto has done a good deal to mitigate existing bitterness. Conciliation on the part of the Government has already produced some effect, but it has not been carried far enough to bear full fruit. With a view, therefore, to restore old friendly relations, I will venture to make a two-fold appeal to the official class; first, to accept and work the new policy represented by the reforms in an ungrudging, even, generous spirit, and to carry it further, especially, in the field of local self-Government—in the district, the taluka and the village; and, secondly, to facilitate a return of the country to a normal condition by an early repeal of repressive measures or, in any case, by dispensing, as far as possible, with the exercise of the extraordinary powers which they

have conferred on the Executive, and by making it easy for those who have seen the error of their ways to go back quietly to the path of law and order. Any fresh offences must, of course, be dealt with, but moderate men would have a chance of working effectively for peace, if the public mind was not kept in a state of tension by indiscriminate house-searchings, prosecutions and other processes in pursuit of offences of an older date. There is a saying that it takes two to make a quarrel. May I, therefore, at the same time make an appeal to Indian publicists, in the interest of their own people, to facilitate forbearance on the part of the authorities by realising the difficulties of the administration and by avoiding the use of language, which rouses official suspicion and gives rise to vague apprehension? In this way both parties would make their contribution to peace and goodwill.

As an old Civilian, and as belonging to a family long connected with India, I appreciate the merits of the Indian Civil Service, and believe that there never existed a body of officials more hard-working and trustworthy. But the time has come for a modification of the system. The guardian, if somewhat austere, has been honest and well-meaning; but the ward has now reached an age at which he is entitled to a substantial share in the management of his own affairs. Is it not the part of wisdom to accord this to him with a good grace? During the last few years, official duties, connected with repression, have been carried out with characteristic thoroughness; severe punishments have been awarded and such advantages as could possibly accrue to law and order from this policy have been realised. But the performances of such duties must have been irksome and uncongenial to the British temperament. All, therefore, will be glad of a truce in those proceedings. It is now the turn of conciliation, which will give encouragement to the great body of well-affected citizens, whose hopes are blighted by disorder, and whose dearest wish is to bring back peace to a troubled land. This policy is both the wisest and the most congenial. I am sure, and I speak from personal experience, the Civilian will find his life pleasanter, and his burdens lighter, if he will frankly accept the co-operation which educated Indians are not only willing but anxious to afford. This was the view taken by Sir Bartle Frere, who said:—"Wherever I go, I find the best exponents of the policy of the English Government and the most able coadjutors in adjusting that policy to the peculiarities of the natives of India among the ranks of the educated Indians." But apart from the satisfaction, and personal comfort of working in harmony with his surroundings, the young Civilian naturally craves for a high ideal in the

career he has chosen, and he cannot but feel a glow of sympathy for the views of the older generation of administrators—Elphinstone and Malcolm, Munro and Macaulay—who foresaw with gladness the day of India's emancipation. Every profession needs its ideal. Without that, it is but a sordid struggle for livelihood; and every man of a generous spirit, who puts his hand to the Indian plough, must regard the present discord as but a temporary phase, and look forward to the time when all will work together to rescue the masses from ignorance, famine and disease, and to restore India to her ancient greatness.

“Conciliation” : (2) Hindus and Mahomedans.

We come next to the case of the Hindus and Mahomedans. This is a domestic question, and it is doubtful how far an outsider can usefully intervene. But I will venture to say a few words on the subject, because I feel so strongly the danger to peace and progress, if these two great communities come to be arrayed in two hostile camps. Also, in the position I now occupy as your President, I feel to a certain extent justified in my intervention, because one of the principal objects of the Congress, as declared by Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee at the opening of the first Congress in 1885, was “the eradication, by direct friendly personal intercourse, of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices among all lovers of our country.” Fortified by these considerations, I approached the subject, before leaving England, in consultation with esteemed Indian friends who were anxious to promote conciliation; and I am glad to say that a hopeful beginning has been made. His Highness the Aga Khan, in agreement with Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and Mr. Ameer Ali, has proposed a Conference, where the leaders of both parties may meet, with a view to a friendly settlement of differences; and at their request, I addressed a letter to some of the leading representatives of the various communities in different parts of India, explaining the proposal and inviting their co-operation. In this connection we may refer to the words of our lamented friend, Mr. Justice Tyabji, who presided over the 3rd Congress at Madras. He recognised that each of the great Indian communities has its own peculiar social, educational and economic problems to solve. “But,” he said, “so far as general political questions affecting the whole of India—such as those which alone are discussed by this Congress—are concerned, I for one am utterly at a loss to understand why Mahomedans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen of other races and creeds for the common benefit of all.” This pronouncement seems to place the whole question in

its true light. This also is the view taken by Mr. Wilfred Blunt, than whom there is no truer friend of Islam. He urges the Mahomedan community to join the Congress movement, "if they would share the full advantages of the coming self-government of their country." Mr. R. M. Sayani, a Mahomedan gentleman of wide experience, who was your President in 1896, carefully analysed the facts of the case, tracing the historical origin of the friction between Hindus and Mahomedans, and at the same time indicating the influences which make for conciliation. No doubt certain recent events have brought in to prominence the differences between the two communities; but these differences should not be exaggerated, and we should rather direct our attention to the solid interests in which all Indians are equally concerned. I would therefore commend to the special attention of both Hindus and Mahomedans the facts and arguments contained in Mr. Sayani's presidential address, which will be found at pages 319 to 346 of the handy volume, entitled "The Indian National Congress," which we owe to the public spirit of our friend, Mr. G. A. Natesan of Madras.

A recognition by the two great communities of the essential identity of their real interests, however long it may be delayed, is, I feel convinced, bound to come at last. Meanwhile, as practical men, it behoves us to hasten this consummation by utilising every opportunity that presents itself to promote joint action, as also by avoiding, as far as possible, those occasions or controversies which lead to friction. A good illustration of what may be achieved by the Hindus and Mahomedans standing shoulder to shoulder in the service of India is supplied by the latest news from South Africa. Here, if anywhere, the Indian cause appeared to have arrayed against it overwhelming odds. But thanks to the determined stand made by the Indian community under the splendid generalship of Mr. Gandhi, the long night seems to be drawing to a close and we already see the faint glimmerings of a new dawn. There is no doubt that the manner, in which the people of India, without distinction of race or creed, have come forward to support their suffering brethren in the Transvaal, has made an impression on both the Imperial and the South African Governments. In the new Councils, too, members of the two communities have excellent opportunities of working together for the common good, and much may be achieved by them in matters like the education of the masses, higher and technical education, and the economic and industrial development of the country. Such co-operation, besides producing substantial results directly, will also have the indirect effect of strengthening those tendencies which make for joint action in public affairs generally.

“Conciliation” : (3) Moderates and Extremists.

Lastly we have to consider the differences which have arisen among Indian reformers themselves, between those who are known as “Moderates” and those who are called “Extremists.” In 1885, when Mr. Allan Hume, Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji and Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee founded the Indian National Congress on strictly constitutional lines, there were no differences : for more than 20 years from that date all Indian reformers worked together harmoniously, and, year by year, patiently and respectfully, placed before the Government of India a reasoned statement of popular needs. But in 1907, at Surat, there was a split in the Congress. The more impatient spirits, despairing of success by Congress methods, broke away from their former leaders, and sought salvation in other directions, and by other methods. Now, as a mere matter of tactics and expediency, to put it no higher, I would ask, have those other methods been successful? It appears to me that they have resulted in wholesale prosecutions and much personal suffering, without tangible benefit to the popular cause. On the contrary, all departures from constitutional methods have weakened the hands of sympathisers in England, while furnishing to opponents a case for legislation against the Press and public meeting, and an excuse for drawing from its rusty sheath the obsolete weapon of deportation without trial. I should like to put another question, and it is this : If now the tide of reaction has been stayed, and if, in any respect, we have had the beginning of better things, is not this mainly due to the labours of the Congress? I do not wish unduly to magnify Congress results. But what other effective organisation exists, either in India or in England, working for Indian political reform? For a quarter of a century the Congress has been at work, openly and fearlessly, without haste and without rest, educating public opinion, and, at the close of each year, pressing upon the Government a well considered programme of reforms. It would be a reflection on the intelligence of the Government to suppose that such a practical expression of popular wishes was without its effect. And, as a matter of fact, Lord Morley’s beneficent measures have followed Congress lines, the reform and expansion of Legislative Councils having been the leading Congress proposal from the very first session in 1885. I would therefore submit to our “impatient idealists” that there is no cause for despair as regards Congress methods, and I would ask them not to play into the hands of our opponents by discrediting the results of Congress work. Advanced reformers should not preach the doctrine of discouragement, but rather carry the flag boldly forward, as the scouts and Uhlans of the army of progress. We have heard something about “mendicancy” in connection

with petitions to Parliament and the higher authorities. But Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, as President at Calcutta in 1906, pointed out that "these petitions are not any begging for any favours any more than the conventional 'your obedient servant' in letters makes a man an obedient servant. It is the conventional way of approaching higher authorities. The petitions are claims for rights or for justice or for reforms,—to influence and put pressure on Parliament by showing how the public regard any particular matter." Assuredly the authors of the Petition of Right were not mendicants. On the contrary, they were the strong men of the 17th century, who secured to the people of England the liberties they now enjoy. In following this historical method, therefore, there is nothing to hurt the self-respect of the Indian people.

I sincerely hope that those who have broken from the Congress, because they have ceased to believe in Congress methods and in constitutional agitation, will consider dispassionately what I have said above and revert to their older faith. But in addition to such men, there is, I understand, a considerable number of old Congressmen, whose attachment to Congress principles is intact, but who are not now to be found in the ranks of the Congress, because they are not satisfied about the necessity of the steps taken by the leaders of the constitutional party, after the unhappy split at Surat, to preserve the Congress from extinction. These friends of ours obviously stand on a different footing from those who profess extremist views, and I would venture to appeal to their patriotism and ask them not to be overcritical in their judgment on a situation, admitted by every body to be extraordinary, which could only be met by extraordinary measures. I would at the same time appeal to you, gentlemen of the Congress, to consider if you cannot, without compromising the principles for which you stand, make it in some way easier for these old colleagues of yours to return to the fold. Remember that the interests at stake are of the highest importance, and no attempt that can reasonably be made to close your divisions ought to be spared.

"United Effort."

We now come to a very practical part of our business: Supposing we obtain agreement on the principles above indicated and secure co-operation among the forces of progress, in what directions can our efforts be most usefully exerted? Hitherto Congress work has come mostly under 3 headings: I, Constructive work in India, educating and organising public opinion; II, Representations to the Government of India regarding proposed reforms; and III, Propaganda in England. The expansion of the

Legislative Councils and the admission of Indians into the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and Local Governments has vastly extended the scope of the work under the 1st heading. Independent Indians will now be in a position to take the initiative in many important matters, and press forward reforms, which hitherto have only been the subject of representations to the Government. In order to promote co-ordination and united action in this most important work, might I suggest that, in consultation with independent Members of the Legislative Councils, the Congress might draw up a programme of the reform measures most desired, for which, in their opinion, the country is ripe, and on which they think the Members should concentrate till success has been attained. As regards the 2nd heading, no doubt the Congress resolutions will, as usual, be forwarded to the Government of India and the Secretary of State. But it would, I think, be desirable to bring your views specially to the notice of His Excellency the Viceroy. This might be done by a deputation presenting a short address, showing the measures to which the Congress attaches the most immediate importance. Among these might be included such matters as the Separation of the Executive and Judicial, the reduction of military expenditure, larger grants for education, and the economic village inquiry asked for by the Indian Famine Union. It would be very useful to know the general views on such topics held by the head of the Government, and the sympathetic replies, given by Lord Hardinge to addresses from other public bodies, makes it certain that we should receive a courteous hearing. In our representation we might include a petition for an amnesty or a remission of sentences to political offenders, as also a prayer for a relaxation of the repressive legislation of the last few years. Personally I should also like to ask for a modification of the Bengal Partition. But at the present moment, on the first arrival of a new Viceroy, such a move would, in my opinion, not be judicious. I have always held that this most unhappy mistake must ultimately be rectified; a modification will be made more practicable for the Government, if, in friendly conference, all those concerned can come to an agreement on the subject, and satisfy the Government that the best administrative arrangement would be a Governor in Council for the whole of the old Bengal Lieut.-Governorship, with Chief Commissioners under him for the component provinces.

Propaganda in England.

There remains the 3rd heading, Propaganda in England. Will you bear with me when I say that you never seem sufficiently to

realise the necessity of this work, the supreme importance of making the British people understand the needs of India, and securing for your cause the support of this all-powerful ally. I pressed this upon you in 1889, when I came with Mr. Bradlaugh, and again in 1904 with Sir Henry Cotton. Once more, in 1910, I entreat you to give your attention to this vital matter. Let me remind you of the two-fold character of the Congress work. There is first the work in India : the political education of the people, having for its object to create solidarity of Indian public opinion, founded on the widest experience and the wisest counsels available. This part of the work has been in great measure accomplished. During the last 25 years the Congress programme, stated in the form of definite resolutions, has been gradually matured, and is now practically accepted as expressing independent public opinion throughout India. The Congress resolutions contain the case for India ; the brief for the appellant is complete ; and what is now wanted is a vigorous propaganda in England, in order to bring the appeal effectively before the High Court of the British Nation. The work to be done is of a missionary kind, and must be mainly directed to influencing the British people, in whom the ultimate power is vested ; and any one who, on behalf of India, has been in the habit of addressing large audiences in England, and especially audiences of working men and women, can bear testimony to the ready sympathy shown by the hearers, and their manifest desire that justice should be done. It must be borne in mind that in England public opinion guides the Parliamentary electors ; the votes of the electors decide what manner of men shall compose the majority in the House of Commons ; the majority in the House of Commons places in power the Government of which it approves ; and the Government appoints the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, who, between them, exercise the supreme power at Whitehall and Calcutta. If Indians are wise, they will keep these facts in view and follow the line of least resistance. Instead of knocking their heads against a stone wall, they should take the key which lies within their grasp. Those of the older generation will remember what striking success attended the labours of Messrs. Manmohan Ghose, Chandavarkar and Mudliar, when they came to England in 1885. And only those who understand the true inwardness of things can realize what India owes to men like Mr. Dada-bhai Naoroji, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Mr. Lalmohan Ghose, Mr. A. M. Bose, Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee, Mr. Wacha, Mr. Mudholkar and Mr. Gokhale, for the work they have done in England, by addressing public meetings, and by personal interviews with influential statesmen. But the visits of these gentlemen have been at long intervals. What is

wanted is a systematic, continuous, and sustained effort, to bring before the English public the Indian view of Indian affairs.

In India there is a new-born spirit of self-reliance. That is good; but do not let it degenerate into dislike for the people of other lands. Race prejudice is the palladium of your opponents. Do not let any such feeling hinder you from cultivating brotherhood with friends of freedom all over the world, and especially in England. It is only by the goodwill of the British people that India can attain what is the best attainable future—the “United States of India” under the ægis of the British Empire, a step towards the poet’s ideal of a Federation of the world. In his eager desire for self-Government, let not the “impatient idealist” forget the solid advantages of being a member of the British Empire; the *Pax Britannica* within India’s borders; the protection from foreign aggression by sea and land; the partnership with the freest and most progressive nation of the world. No one supposes that under present conditions India could stand alone. She possesses all the materials for self-government; an ancient civilisation; reverence for authority; an industrious and law-abiding population; abundant intelligence among the ruling classes. But she lacks training and organisation. A period of apprenticeship is necessary; but that period need not be very long, if the leaders of the people set themselves to work together in harmony. Hand in hand with the British people India can most safely take her first steps on the new path of progress.

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THE TWENTY-FIRST
Indian National Congress

(held at Benares on 27th, 28th, 29th & 30th Dec., 1905)

Presidential Address

BY

THE HON'BLE Mr. G. K. GOKHALE, C.I.E.

THE CHERRY PRESS,
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THE TWENTY-FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

FELLOW-DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great, the signal honour, which you have conferred upon me by electing me to preside over your deliberations this year. As has been said by more than one of my predecessors, the Presidentship of the Congress is the highest distinction, which it is in the power of our countrymen to bestow upon any one; and proud indeed is that moment in an Indian's life, when he receives at your hands this most conspicuous mark of your confidence and your favour. As I, however, stand before you to-day, it is not so much the honour of the position, great as that is, as the responsibility, which it imposes upon me, that occupies my thoughts. When I was first invited, nearly four months ago, to accept this office, we were able to see on the horizon only the small cloud—no bigger than a man's hand. Since then the sky has been overcast and for some time a storm has been raging; and it is with rocks ahead and angry waves beating around that I am called upon to take charge of the vessel of the Congress. Even the stoutest heart among us may well own to a feeling of anxiety in such a situation. Let us, however, humbly trust that in this holy city of Benares, the Divine guidance, on which we may securely throw ourselves, will not fail us, and that the united wisdom and patriotism of the delegates assembled will enable the Congress to emerge from the present crisis with unimpaired and even enhanced prestige and usefulness.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

Gentlemen, our first duty to-day is to offer our most loyal and dutiful welcome to Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales on the occasion of their first visit to India. The Throne in England is above all parties—beyond all controversies. It is the permanent seat of the majesty, the honour and the beneficence of the British Empire. And in offering our homage to its illustrious occupants and their heirs and representatives, we not only perform a loyal duty, but also express the gratitude of our hearts for all that is noble and high-minded in England's connection with India. The late Queen-Empress, again, was known, within the limits of her constitutional position, to exercise during her reign her vast influence in favour of a policy of justice and sympathy towards the Indian people. We can never forget that the great Proclamation of 1858, on which we take our stand so largely in our constitutional struggle, was, not only in spirit but also in substance, her own declaration of the principles, on which India was to be governed. The present King-Emperor has announced his resolve to walk in the footsteps of his mother, and we have no doubt that the Prince of Wales is animated by the same desire to see a policy of righteousness pursued towards India. We rejoice that His Royal Highness and his noble consort have come out amongst us to acquaint themselves personally with the ancient civilization of this country and its present condition. The Congress earnestly and respectfully wishes Their Royal Highnesses a most successful tour through India, and it humbly trusts

that the knowledge they will acquire and the recollections they will carry back with them will constitute a fresh bond of sympathy and attachment between the Royal Family in England and the Princes and people of this country.

THE NEW VICEROY

The Congress also offers a most cordial and respectful welcome to Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Minto. The new Viceroy assumes the responsibilities of his office at a critical juncture. The temper of the people, so sorely tried during the last three years, calls for the exercise of wise and statesmanlike conciliation on the part of those who are in authority, if further estrangement between the rulers and the ruled is to be prevented. I earnestly trust that such conciliation will be forthcoming. Meanwhile a special responsibility rests upon all to see to it that the immediate task that confronts His Excellency is not made more difficult than it already is. The difficulties of the situation are not of Lord Minto's creating, and he has a right to expect the co-operation of both the officials and the public in his endeavours to terminate a state of tension, which has already produced deplorable results and which cannot be prolonged without serious detriment to the best interests of the country.

LORD CURZON'S ADMINISTRATION

Gentlemen, how true it is that to everything there is an end! Thus even the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon has come to a close! For seven long years, all eyes had constantly to turn to one masterful figure in the land,—now in admiration, now in astonishment, more often in anger and in pain, till at last it has become difficult to realize that a change has really come. For a parallel to such an administration, we must, I think, go back to the times of Aurangzeb in the history of our own country. There we find the same attempt at a rule excessively centralized and intensely personal, the same strenuous purpose, the same overpowering consciousness of duty, the same marvellous capacity for work, the same sense of loneliness, the same persistence in a policy of distrust and repression, resulting in bitter exasperation all round. I think even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India. In some respects, his Lordship will always be recognized as one of the greatest Englishmen that ever came out to this country. His wonderful intellectual gifts, his brilliant powers of expression, his phenomenal energy, his boundless enthusiasm for work,—these will ever be a theme of just and unstinted praise. But the gods are jealous, and amidst such lavish endowments, they withheld from him a sympathetic imagination, without which no man can ever understand an alien people; and it is a sad truth that to the end of his administration Lord Curzon did not really understand the people of India. This was at the root of his many inconsistencies and made him a perpetual puzzle to most men. And thus the man, who professed in all sincerity, before he assumed the reins of office, his great anxiety to show the utmost deference to the feelings and even the prejudices of those over whom he was set to rule, ended by denouncing in unmeasured terms not only the present generation of Indians but also their remote ancestors and even the ideals of their race, which they cherish above everything else; he, who, in the early part of his administration, publicly warned the official classes that "official wisdom is not so transcendent as to be superior to the stimulus and guidance" of public opinion and who declared that in the present state of

India "the opinion of the educated classes is one which it is not statesmanship to ignore or to despise," ended by trampling more systematically upon that opinion than any of his predecessors, and claiming for his own judgment and that of his official colleagues a virtual character of infallibility. The fact is that Lord Curzon came to India with certain fixed ideas. To him India was a country, where the Englishman was to monopolize for all time all power and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration. In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country ; and having failed to amuse them for any length of time by an empty show of taking them into his confidence, he proceeded in the end to repress them. Even in his last farewell speech at the Byculla Club in Bombay, India exists only as a scene of the Englishman's labours, with the toiling millions of the country—eighty per cent of the population—in the back-ground. The remaining twenty per cent, for aught they are worth, might as well be gently swept into the sea ! Had Lord Curzon been less self-centred, had he had more humility in his nature, he might perhaps have discovered his mistake before it was too late. This would probably have enabled him to avoid giving so much offence and causing so much pain as he unhappily did during the last two years, but I doubt if the main current of his administration would even then have flowed in another channel. Lord Curzon's highest ideal of statesmanship is efficiency of administration. He does not believe in what Mr. Gladstone used to call the principle of liberty as a factor of human progress. He has no sympathy with popular aspirations, and when he finds them among a subject people, he thinks he is rendering their country a service by trying to put them down. Thus in his Byculla Club speech he actually stated that he had not offered political concessions to the people of India, because he "did not regard it as wisdom or statesmanship in the interests of India itself to do so"! Taking Lord Curzon at his highest, we find him engaged in a herculean attempt to strengthen the Englishman's monopoly of power in India and stem the tide of popular agitation and discontent by rousing the members of the bureaucracy to a sense of duty similar to his own and raising the standard of administrative efficiency all round. The attempt has failed, as it was bound to fail. Never was discontent in India more acute and widespread than when the late Viceroy laid down the reins of office ; and as regards the bureaucratic monopoly of power, I think we are sensibly nearer the time when it will be successfully assailed.

One claim Lord Curzon advanced in his farewell speech at Bombay, which it is necessary to examine a little. He told his hearers, as he had done once before—on the occasion of the last Budget debate—that even if he had incurred the hostility of educated Indians, the masses would be grateful to him for what he had done for them. This attempt to distinguish between the interests of the educated classes and those of the bulk of their countrymen is a favourite device with those who seek to repress the legitimate aspirations of our people. It is significant that Lord Curzon had never resorted to it till he had finally broken with the educated classes. We know of course that the distinction is unreal and ridiculous and we know also that most of those who use it as a convenient means to disparage the educated classes cannot themselves really believe in it. Lord Curzon mentions the reduction of the salt-duty, the writing off of famine arrears, the increased grants to primary education and to irrigation, the attempt at Police Reform as measures on which he bases

his claim. The suggestion here is that he adopted these measures for the good of the masses in spite of the opposition—at any rate, the indifference—of the educated classes, when the plain fact is that it was the Congress that had been urging these measures year after year on the attention of Government and that it was only after years of persistent agitation that it was able to move the Government in the desired direction. Four years ago, when, with a surplus of seven crores or nearly five millions sterling in hand, the Government of India did not remit any taxation, and I ventured to complain of this in Council and to urge an immediate reduction of the salt-duty, I well remember how Lord Curzon sneered at those who “talked glibly” of the burdens of the masses and of the necessity of lowering the salt-tax as a measure of relief! Lord Curzon was fortunate in coming to India when the currency legislation of Lord Lansdowne and Sir David Barbour had succeeded in artificially raising the rupee to its present level, thereby enabling the Government of India to save about four millions sterling a year on its Home remittances. This, with the recovery of the opium revenue, placed huge surpluses at Lord Curzon’s disposal throughout his administration, and he never knew a moment of that financial stress and anxiety, which his predecessors had to face for a series of years. Considering how large these surpluses have been, I do not think the relief given by Lord Curzon to the taxpayers of the country has by any means been liberal. He himself estimated last March the total amount of this relief at 7 millions sterling. He did not mention that during the same time he had taken from the taxpayers 33 millions sterling over and above the requirements of the Government. Again, how paltry is the relief, given by the reduction of the salt-duty and the writing off of famine arrears, compared with the enormous injury done to the mass of our people by the artificial raising of the value of the rupee, which led to a heavy immediate depreciation of their small savings in silver, and which makes a grievous addition to their permanent burdens by indirectly enhancing their assessments and increasing their debts to the money-lender, as prices adjust themselves to the new Rupee! Much has been made of Lord Curzon’s increased grants to primary education. Considering how little the State does in India for the education of the masses, it would have been astonishing, if with such surpluses Lord Curzon had not made any addition to the educational expenditure of the country. But if he has given a quarter of a million more to education, he has given five millions a year more to the Army; and with reckless profusion he has increased the salaries of European officials in many departments and has created several new posts for them. “A spirit of expenditure,” to use an expression of Mr. Gladstone’s, has been abroad in all directions during his time, and he has never practised the old-fashioned virtue of economy, with which the real interests of the people are bound up. Of course a ruler cannot labour as devotedly as Lord Curzon has done for seven years for increased efficiency without removing or mitigating important administrative evils; but that is quite different from a claim to champion the special interests of the masses, as against their natural leaders and spokesmen, the educated classes of the community.

PARTITION OF BENGAL

Gentlemen, the question that is uppermost in the minds of us all at this moment is the Partition of Bengal. A cruel wrong has been inflicted on our Bengalee brethren and the whole country has been stirred to its deepest depths in sorrow and resentment. as had

never been the case before. The scheme of partition, concocted in the dark and carried out in the face of the fiercest opposition that any Government measure has encountered during the last half century, will always stand as a complete illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule—its utter contempt for public opinion, its arrogant pretensions to superior wisdom, its reckless disregard of the most cherished feelings of the people, the mockery of an appeal to its sense of justice, its cool preference of Service interests to those of the governed. Lord Curzon and his advisers—if he ever had any advisers—could never allege that they had no means of judging of the depth of public feeling in the matter. All that could possibly have been done by way of a respectful representation of the views of the people had been done. As soon as it was known that a partition of some sort was contemplated, meeting after meeting of protest was held, till over five hundred public meetings in all parts of the Province had proclaimed in no uncertain voice that the attempt to dismember a compact and homogeneous province, to which the people were passionately attached and of which they were justly proud, was deeply resented and would be resisted to the uttermost. Memorials to the same effect poured in upon the Viceroy. The Secretary of State for India was implored to withhold his sanction to the proposed measure. The intervention of the British House of Commons was sought, first, by a monster petition, signed by sixty-thousand people, and later, by means of a debate on the subject, raised in the House by our ever watchful friend, Mr. Herbert Roberts. All proved unavailing. The Viceroy had made up his mind. The officials under him had expressed approval. What business had the people to have an opinion of their own and to stand in the way? To add insult to injury, Lord Curzon described the opposition to his measure as ‘manufactured’—an opposition in which all classes of Indians, high and low, uneducated and educated, Hindus and Mahomedans had joined, an opposition than which nothing more intense, nothing more wide-spread, nothing more spontaneous had been seen in this country in the whole course of our political agitation! Let it be remembered that when the late Viceroy cast this stigma on those who were ranged against his proposals, not a single public pronouncement in favour of those proposals had been made by any section of the community; and that among the foremost opponents of the measure were men like Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore and Sir Gurudas Banerji, Raja Peary Mohan Mukerji and Dr. Rash Behary Ghose, the Maharajas of Mymensing and Kassimbazar,—men who keep themselves aloof from ordinary political agitation and never say a word, calculated in any way to embarrass the authorities, and who came forward to oppose publicly the Partition project only from an overpowering sense of the necessity of their doing what they could to avert a dreaded calamity. If the opinions of even such men are to be brushed aside with contempt, if all Indians are to be treated as no better than dumb, driven cattle, if men, whom any other country would delight to honour, are to be thus made to realize the utter humiliation and helplessness of their position in their own, then all I can say is “Goodbye to all hope of co-operating in any way with the bureaucracy in the interests of the people!” I can conceive of no graver indictment of British rule than that such a state of things should be possible after a hundred years of that rule!

Gentlemen, I have carefully gone through all the papers which have been published by the Government on this subject of Partition. Three things have struck me forcibly—a determination to dismember Bengal at all costs, an anxiety to promote the interests of

Assam at the expense of Bengal, and a desire to suit everything to the interests and convenience of the Civil Service. It is not merely that a number of new prizes have been thrown into the lap of that Service—one Lieutenant-Governorship, two Memberships of the Board of Revenue, one Commissionership of a Division, several Secretaryships and Under-Secretaryships—but alternative schemes of readjustment have been rejected on the express ground that their adoption would be unpopular with members of the Service. Thus, even if a reduction of the charge of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal had really become inevitable—a contention, which the greatest living authority on the subject, Sir Henry Cotton, who was Secretary to the Bengal Government under seven Lieutenant-Governors, does not admit—one would have thought that the most natural course to take was to separate Behar, Orissa and Chota Nagpur from Bengal and form them into a separate Province. This would have made the Western Province one of 30 millions in place of the Eastern. But this, says the Government of India, "would take from Bengal all its best districts and would make the Province universally unpopular." This was of course a fatal objection, for, compared with the displeasure of the Civil Service, the trampling under foot of public opinion and the outraging of the deepest feelings of a whole people was a small matter! But one can see that administrative considerations were really only secondary in the determination of this question. The dismemberment of Bengal had become necessary, because, in the view of the Government of India, "it cannot be for the lasting good of any country or any people that public opinion or what passes for it should be manufactured by a comparatively small number of people at a single centre and should be disseminated thence for universal adoption, all other views being discouraged or suppressed." "From every point of view," the Government further states, "it appears to us desirable to encourage the growth of centres of independent opinion, local aspirations, local ideals and to preserve the growing intelligence and enterprise of Bengal from being cramped and stunted by the process of forcing it prematurely into a mould of rigid and sterile uniformity." You will see that this is only a paraphrase, in Lord Curzon's most approved style, of the complaint of the people of Bengal that their fair Province has been dismembered to destroy their growing solidarity, check their national aspirations and weaken their power of co-operating for national ends, lessen the influence of their educated classes with their countrymen, and reduce the political importance of Calcutta. After this, let no apologist of the late Viceroy pretend that the object of the partition was administrative convenience and not political repression!

Gentlemen, it is difficult to speak in terms of due restraint of Lord Curzon's conduct throughout this affair. Having published his earlier and smaller scheme for public criticism, it was his clear duty to publish similarly the later and larger scheme, which he afterwards substituted for it. But in consequence of the opposition which the first scheme encountered, he abandoned the idea of taking the public any more into his confidence and proceeded to work in the matter in the dark. For more than a year, nothing further was heard of his intentions, and while he was silently elaborating the details of his measure, he allowed the impression to prevail that the Government had abandoned the Partition project. And in the end, when he had succeeded in securing the Secretary of State's sanction to the scheme, it was from Simla, where he and his official colleagues were beyond the reach of public opinion, that he sprang the final orders of Government upon an unprepared people. Then suddenly came his resignation. And the people permitted themselves

for a while to hope that it would bring them at least a brief respite, especially as Mr. Brodrick had promised shortly before to present further papers on the subject to Parliament, and that was understood to mean that the scheme would not be brought into operation till Parliament reassembled at the beginning of next year. Of course, after Lord Curzon's resignation, the only proper, the only dignified course for him was to take no step, which it was difficult to revoke and the consequences of which would have to be faced, not by him, but by his successor; he owed it to Lord Minto to give him an opportunity to examine the question for himself; he owed it to the Royal visitors not to plunge the largest Province of India into violent agitation and grief on the eve of their visit to it. But Lord Curzon was determined to partition Bengal before he left India and so he rushed the necessary legislation through the Legislative Council at Simla, which only the official members could attend, and enforced his orders on 16th October last—a day observed as one of universal mourning by all classes of people in Bengal. And now, while he himself has gone from India, what a sea of troubles he has bequeathed to his successor! Fortunately there are grounds to believe that Lord Minto will deal with the situation with tact, firmness, and sympathy, and it seems he has already pulled up to some extent Lord Curzon's favourite Lieutenant, the first ruler of the new Eastern Province. Mr. Fuller has evidently cast to the winds all prudence, all restraint, all sense of responsibility. Even if a fraction of what the papers have been reporting be true, his extraordinary doings must receive the attention of the new Secretary of State for India and the House of Commons. There is no surer method of goading a docile people into a state of dangerous despair than the kind of hectoring and repression he has been attempting.

But, gentlemen, as has been well said, even in things evil there is a soul of goodness, and the dark times, through which Bengal has passed and is passing, have not been without a message of bright hope for the future. The tremendous upheaval of popular feeling, which has taken place in Bengal in consequence of the Partition, will constitute a landmark in the history of our national progress. For the first time since British rule began, all sections of the Indian Community, without distinction of caste or creed, have been moved by a common impulse and without the stimulus of external pressure to act together in offering resistance to a common wrong. A wave of true national consciousness has swept over the Province, and at its touch old barriers have, for the time at any rate, been thrown down, personal jealousies have vanished, other controversies have been hushed! Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India, and her sufferings have not been endured in vain, when they have helped to draw closer all parts of the country in sympathy and in aspiration. A great rush and uprising of the waters, such as has been recently witnessed in Bengal, cannot take place without a little inundation over the banks here and there. These little excesses are inevitable, when large masses of men move, spontaneously—especially when the movement is from darkness unto light, from bondage towards freedom,—and they must not be allowed to disconcert us too much. The most outstanding fact of the situation is that the public life of this country has received an accession of strength of great importance, and for this all India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bengal. Of course the difficulties which confront the leaders of Bengal are enormous and perhaps they have only just begun. But I know there is no disposition to shrink from any responsibilities and I have no doubt that whatever

sacrifices are necessary will be cheerfully made. All India is at their back and they will receive in the work that lies before them the cordial sympathy and assistance of the other Provinces. Any discredit, that is allowed to fall on them, affects us all. They on their side must not forget that the honour of all India is at present in their keeping.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

Gentlemen, I will now say a few words on a movement, which has spread so rapidly and has been hailed with so much enthusiasm all over the country during the last few months—the *Swadeshi* movement. It is necessary at the outset to distinguish it from another movement, started in Bengal, which has really given it such immense impetus—the boycott of British goods. We all know that when our Bengali brethren found that nothing would turn the late Viceroy from his purpose of partitioning Bengal, that all their protests in the Press and on the platform, all their memorials to him, to the Secretary of State and to Parliament were unavailing, that the Government exercised its despotic strength to trample on their most cherished feelings and injure their dearest interests and that no protection against this of any kind was forthcoming from any quarter, they, in their extremity resolved to have recourse to this boycott movement. This they did with a twofold object—first, as a demonstration of their deep resentment at the treatment they were receiving, and secondly, to attract the attention of the people in England to their grievances, so that those, who were in a position to call the Government of India to account, might understand what was taking place in India. It was thus as a political weapon, used for a definite political purpose, that they had recourse to the boycott; and in the circumstances of their position they had every justification for the step they took. And I can tell you from personal experience that their action has proved immensely effective in drawing the attention of English people to the state of things in our country. But a weapon like this must be reserved only for extreme occasions. There are obvious risks involved in its failure, and it cannot be used with sufficient effectiveness, unless there is an extraordinary upheaval of popular feeling behind it. It is bound to rouse angry passions on the other side, and no true well-wisher of his country will be responsible for provoking such passions, except under an overpowering sense of necessity. On an extreme occasion, of course, a boycotting demonstration is perfectly legitimate, but that occasion must be one to drive all classes, as in Bengal, to act with one impulse, and make all leaders sink their personal differences in the presence of a common danger. It is well to remember that the term ‘boycott,’ owing to its origin, has got unsavoury associations, and it conveys to the mind before everything else a vindictive desire to injure another. Such a desire on our part, as a normal feature of our relations with England, is of course out of the question. Moreover, if the boycott is confined to British goods only, it leaves us free to purchase the goods of other foreign countries, and this does not help the *Swadeshi* movement in any way.

Gentlemen, the true *Swadeshi* movement is both a patriotic and an economic movement. The idea of *Swadesh* or ‘one’s own country’ is one of the noblest conceptions that have ever stirred the heart of humanity. As the poet asks,

‘Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,—
This is my own, my native land?’

The devotion to motherland, which is enshrined in the highest *Swadeshi*, is an influence so profound and so passionate that its very thought thrills and its actual touch lifts one out of oneself. India needs to-day above everything else that the gospel of this devotion should be preached to high and low, to Prince and to peasant, in town and in hamlet, till the service of motherland becomes with us as overmastering a passion as it is in Japan. The *Swadeshi* movement, as it is ordinarily understood, presents one part of this gospel to the mass of our people in a form, which brings it within their comprehension. It turns their thoughts to their country, accustoms them to the idea of voluntarily making some sacrifice for her sake, enables them to take an intelligent interest in her economic development and teaches them the important lesson of co-operating with one another for a national end. All this is most valuable work, and those who undertake it are entitled to feel that they are engaged in a highly patriotic mission. But the movement on its material side is an economic one; and though self-denying ordinances, extensively entered into, must serve a valuable economic purpose, namely, to ensure a ready consumption of such articles as are produced in the country and to furnish a perpetual stimulus to production by keeping the demand for indigenous things largely in excess of the supply, the difficulties that surround the question economically are so great that they require the co-operation of every available agency to surmount them. The problem is indeed one of the first magnitude. Twelve years ago, the late Mr. Ranade remarked at an Industrial Conference held at Poona :—"The political domination of one country by another attracts far more attention than the more formidable, though unfelt domination, which the capital, enterprise and skill of one country exercise over the trade and manufactures of another. This latter domination has an insidious influence, which paralyzes the springs of all the varied activities, which together make up the life of a nation." The question of production is a question of capital, enterprise and skill, and in all these factors, our deficiency at present is very great. Whoever can help in any one of these fields is, therefore, a worker in the *Swadeshi* cause and should be welcomed as such. Not by methods of exclusion but by those of comprehension, not by insisting on every one working in the same part of the field but by leaving each one free to select his own corner, by attracting to the cause all who are likely to help and not alienating any who are already with us, are the difficulties of the problem likely to be overcome. Above all, let us see to it that there are no fresh divisions in the country in the name of *Swadeshim*. No greater perversion of its true spirit could be imagined than that.

Take the question of cotton piece-goods, of which we import at present over 22 millions sterling worth a year. This is by far the heaviest item among our imports and our present *Swadeshi* agitation is directed mainly towards producing as much of these goods in our own country as possible. I have consulted three of the best experts available in India on this subject—Mr. Bezanji of Nagpur, the right hand man of the late Mr. Tata in mill matters, the Hon. Mr. Vithaldas Damodardas, who has written an admirable paper on the Cotton Industry for the Industrial Conference and has kindly placed a copy of it at my disposal, and our friend Mr. Wacha. They are all agreed about the requirements and the difficulties of the situation. So far as cotton fabrics are concerned, even strict Free Traders should have nothing to say against the encouragement, which the *Swadeshi* movement seeks to give to their manufacture in India. In the first place, many of the usual objections that may be urged

against a system of State protection do not apply to helpful voluntary action on the part of consumers, such as the *Swadeshi* movement endeavours to promote. Moreover, the essence of Free Trade is that a commodity should be produced where the comparative cost of its production is the least and that it should be consumed where its relative value is the highest; and if accidental circumstances have thwarted such an adjustment in a given case, any agency, which seeks to overcome the impediment, works in the end in the interests of true Free Trade. Now everyone will admit that with cheap labour and cotton at her own door, India enjoys exceptional advantages for the manufacture of cotton goods; and if the *Swadeshi* movement helps her to regain her natural position in this respect—a position which she once occupied but out of which she has been driven by an extraordinary combination of circumstances,—the movement works not against but in furtherance of true Free Trade. Even at present the Cotton Industry in India is an important one. It is the largest industry after agriculture in the country; it is also the only one—agriculture excepted—in which the Indians themselves have a substantial share. It is represented by a paid up capital of about 17 crores of rupees or a little over 11 millions sterling, the number of mills being about 200, with five million spindles and fifty thousand power-looms. In addition to this, there are, according to the Census of 1901, about a quarter of a crore persons engaged in handloom weaving in the country. Our mills consume nearly 60 per cent of the cotton produce of India and produce 58 crore lbs of yarn. Of this quantity, Mr. Vithaldas tells us, about $23\frac{1}{2}$ crore lbs is exported to China and other foreign countries, about $13\frac{1}{2}$ crores is used in our weaving mills, and about 19 crores is woven by hand-loom weavers, the remaining 2 crores going to the manufacture of rope and twine. In addition to this, 3 crore lbs of yarn is imported from the United Kingdom, and is consumed by the hand looms. The hand-loom industry of the country thus absorbs, in spite of its hard struggles, about 22 crore lbs of yarn, or nearly double the quantity woven by power-looms, and this is a most interesting and significant fact. The yarn used by the weaving mills produces about 55 crores of yards of cloth, of which about 14 crore yards is exported to foreign countries and about 41 crores is left for consumption in the country. If we put down the production of the hand-looms at about 90 crore yards, we have about 130 crore yards as the quantity of *Swadeshi* cloth consumed at present in India.

The quantity of piece-goods imported from the United Kingdom and retained for use in the country is about 205 crore yards a year. Of the total cloth consumed, therefore, over one-third is at present *Swadeshi*. This is an encouraging feature of the situation. But the imported cloth is almost all superior in quality. "While our mills," Mr. Vithaldas says, "produce the coarser cloth, say from yarn up to 30s count and in a few cases up to 40s, the bulk of the imported cloth is of the finer quality, using yarn over 30s count. The Indian weaving mills are obliged to restrict themselves for the most part to weaving coarser cloth owing to the inferior quality of cotton now grown in the country." It may be noted that even from existing cotton, hand-looms can, owing to their greater delicacy of handling the yarn, produce finer cloth than the power-looms. Fortunately owing to the exertions of the Agricultural Department of the Bombay Government—exertions for which it is entitled to the best thanks of the whole country—Egyptian cotton has just been successfully introduced into Sind, and this year a thousand bales of a quality equal to very good Egyptian have been produced. A much heavier crop is expected next year and there is no doubt that its culti-

vation will rapidly extend. The main difficulty in the way of our manufacturing the quality of cloth that is at present imported is one of capital. Mr. Wacha estimates that if the whole quantity of 205 crore yards is to be produced by mills, the Industry requires an additional capital of about 30 crores of rupees. Even if we proposed to spread this over ten years, we should require an addition of 3 crores of rupees every year. Now if we turn to the Statistical Abstract of British India, we shall find that the total increase in the capital invested in cotton mills during the last ten years has been only about 3 crores,—an amount that Mr. Wacha wants every year for ten years. The normal development of the mill industry is thus plainly unequal to the requirements of the situation. Moreover it is well to remember what Mr. Bezanji says—that the present mill-owners must not be expected to be very keen about the production of finer cloth, because its manufacture is much less paying than that of the coarser cloth. This is due to various causes, the principal one among them being that English capital, similarly invested, is satisfied with a smaller range of profits. Capital from other quarters must, therefore, be induced to come forward and undertake this business. If we again turn to the Statistical Abstract, we shall find that our people hold about 50 crores of rupees in Government Securities and about 11 crores in Postal Savings Banks. In the Presidency and other Banks, the private deposits stand at about 33 crores of rupees, but there are no means of ascertaining how much of the amount is held by Indians. Considering the extent of the country and the numbers of the population, these resources are, of course, extremely meagre. Still they might furnish some part of the capital needed. In this connection, may I say that a special responsibility now rests in the matter on the Aristocracy of Bengal! And this is not merely because the *Swadeshi* movement is being so vigorously advocated in their Province, but also because, owing to the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, they are enabled to enjoy resources, which, in other parts of India, are swept into the coffers of the State. If sufficient capital is forthcoming, Mr. Bezanji's patriotism may, I am sure, be relied on to secure for the undertaking whatever assistance his great capacity and unrivalled knowledge can give. It must, however, be admitted that capital will come forward only cautiously for this branch of the business. But the hand-loom is likely to prove of greater immediate service. Mr. Vithaldas looks forward to a great revival of the hand-loom industry in the country, and I cannot do better than quote what he says on this point in his paper. "This village industry," he says, "gives means of livelihood not only to an immense number of the weaver class but affords means of supplementing their income to agriculturists—the backbone of India—who usually employ themselves on hand-loom, when field-work is unnecessary, and also when, owing to famine, drought or excessive rains, agricultural operations are not possible. Now the apparatus with which they work is nearly two centuries behind the times. Mr. Havell, Principal of Calcutta School of Art, Mr. Chatterton of the Madras School of Art, and Mr. Churchill of Ahmednagar, along with many others, are doing yeoman's service by taking keen interest in the question of supplying economical and improved apparatus to the hand-loom weavers. Mr. Havell has pointed out that in preparing the warp, our hand-loom weavers are incapable of winding more than two threads at a time, though the simplest mechanical device would enable them to treat 50 or 100 threads simultaneously. The latest European hand-loom, which successfully competes with the power-loom in Cairo and in many places in Europe, can turn out a maximum of 48 yards of common cloth in a day. Mr. Havell is satisfied that the greater portion

of the imported cotton cloth can be made in the Indian hand-loom with great profit to the whole community. The question of the immediate revival of the hand-loom weaving industry on a commercial basis demands the most earnest attention of every well-wisher of India and evidence gives promise of a successful issue to efforts put forward in this direction." The outlook here is, thus hopeful and cheering; only we must not fail to realize that the co-operation of all who can help—including the Government—is needed to overcome the difficulties that lie in the path.

OUR AIMS AND ASPIRATIONS

Gentlemen, this is the twenty-first session of the Indian National Congress. Year after year, since 1885, we have been assembling in these gatherings to give voice to our aspirations and to formulate our wants. When the movement was first inaugurated, we were under the influence of that remarkable outburst of enthusiasm for British Rule, which had been evoked in the country by the great Viceroyalty of the Marquis of Ripon. That best beloved of India's Viceroys was not content to offer mere lip-homage to the principle that righteousness alone exalteth a nation. He had dared to act on it in practice and he had braved persecution at the hands of his own countrymen in India for its sake. Lord Ripon's noblest service to this country was that he greatly quickened the processes, by which the consciousness of a national purpose comes to establish itself in the minds of a people. The Congress movement was the direct and immediate outcome of this realization. It was started to focus and organize the patriotic forces that were working independently of one another in different parts of the country so as to invest their work with a national character and to increase their general effectiveness. Hope at that time was warm and faith shone bright, largely as a result of Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, and those who started the Congress believed that by offering their criticism and urging their demands from a national platform, where they could speak in the name of all India, they would be able to secure a continuous improvement of the administration and a steady advance in the direction of the political emancipation of the people. Twenty years have since elapsed, and during the time much has happened to chill that hope and dim that faith, but there can be no doubt that work of great value in our national life has already been accomplished. The minds of the people have been familiarized with the idea of a united India working for her salvation; a national public opinion has been created; close bonds of sympathy now knit together the different Provinces; caste and creed separations hamper less and less the pursuit of common aims; the dignity of a consciousness of national existence has spread over the whole land. Our record of political concessions won is, no doubt, very meagre, but those that have been secured are of considerable value; some retrogression has been prevented; and if latterly we have been unable to stem the tide of reaction, the resistance we have offered, though it has failed of its avowed purpose, has substantially strengthened our public life. Our deliberations have extended over a very wide range of problems; public opinion in the country is, in consequence, better informed, and the Press is steadily growing in authority and usefulness. Above all, there is a general perception now of the goal towards which we have to strive and a wide recognition of the arduous character of the struggle and the immense sacrifices it requires.

The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire. For better, for worse, our destinies are now linked with those of England, and the Congress freely recognises that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover, can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship, before we are enabled to go to the next one ; for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the free political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only. To admit this is not to express any agreement with those who usually oppose all attempts at reform on the plea that the people are not ready for it. "It is liberty alone," says Mr. Gladstone in words of profound wisdom, "which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds ; but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit." While, therefore, we are prepared to allow that an advance towards our goal may be only by reasonably cautious steps, what we emphatically insist on is that the resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying the people, by means of education and in other ways, for such advance. Even the most bigoted champion of the existing system of administration will not pretend that this is in any degree the case at present. Our net revenue is about 44 millions sterling. Of this very nearly one-half is now eaten up by the Army. The Home Charges, exclusive of their military portion, absorb nearly one-third. These two, between them, account for about 34 millions out of 44. Then over 3 millions are paid to European officials in civil employ. This leaves only about 7 millions at the disposal of the Government to be applied to other purposes. Can any one, who realises what this means, wonder that the Government spends only a miserable three-quarters of a million out of State funds on the education of the people—primary, secondary and higher, all put together ! Japan came under the influence of Western ideas only forty years ago, and yet already she is in a line with the most advanced nations of the West in matters of mass education, the State finding funds for the education of every child of school-going age. We have now been a hundred years under England's rule, and yet to-day four villages out of every five are without a school house and seven children out of eight are allowed to grow up in ignorance and in darkness ! Militarism, Service interests and the interests of English capitalists,—all take precedence to-day of the true interests of the Indian people in the administration of the country. Things cannot be otherwise, for it is the Government of the people of one country by the people of another, and this, as Mill points out, is bound to produce great evils. Now the Congress wants that all this should change and that India should be governed, first and foremost, in the interests of the Indians themselves. This result will be achieved only in proportion as we obtain more and more voice in the government of our country. We are prepared to bear—and bear cheerfully—our fair share of the burdens of the Empire, of which we are now a part, but we want to participate in the privileges also, and we object most strongly to being sacrificed, as at present, in order that others may prosper. Then the Congress asks for a redemption of those promises for the equal treatment of Indians and Englishmen in the Government of this country, which

have been so solemnly given us by the Sovereign and the Parliament of England. It is now three-quarters of a century since the Parliament passed an Act, which, the Court of Directors pointed out, meant that there was to be no governing caste in India. The governing caste, however, is still as vigorous, as exclusive as ever. Twenty-five years later, the late Queen-Empress addressed a most memorable Proclamation to the Princes and people of India. The circumstances, connected with the issue of that Proclamation, and its noble contents will always bear witness to the true greatness of that great sovereign and will never cease to shed lustre on the English name. The Proclamation repeats the pledges contained in the Charter Act of 1833, and though an astounding attempt was made less than two years ago by the late Viceroy to explain away its solemn import, the plain meaning of the royal message cannot be altered without attributing what is nothing less than an unworthy subterfuge to a Sovereign, the deep reverence for whose memory is an asset of the Empire. That the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 have created in the eyes of reactionary rulers a most inconvenient situation is clear from a blunt declaration, which another Viceroy of India, the late Lord Lytton, made in a confidential document, which has since seen the light of day. Speaking of our claims and expectations based on the pledges of the Sovereign and the Parliament of England, he wrote:— "We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them (the Natives of India) and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straight-forward course. . . . Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear." We accept Lord Lytton as an unimpeachable authority on the conduct of the Government in evading the fulfilment of the pledges. We deny his claim to lay down that our "claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled."

Our whole future, it is needless to say, is bound up with this question of the relative positions of the two races in this country. The domination of one race over another—especially when there is no great disparity between their intellectual endowments or their general civilization—inflicts great injury on the subject race in a thousand insidious ways. On the moral side, the present situation is steadily destroying our capacity for initiative and dwarfing us as men of action. On the material side, it has resulted in a fearful impoverishment of the people. For a hundred years and more now, India has been, for members of the dominant race, a country where fortunes were to be made to be taken out and spent elsewhere. As in Ireland the evil of absentee landlordism has in the past aggravated the racial domination of the English over the Irish, so in India what may be called absentee capitalism has been added to the racial ascendancy of Englishmen. A great and ruinous drain of wealth from the country has gone on for many years, the net excess of exports over imports (including treasure) during the last forty years amounting to no less than a thousand millions sterling. The steady rise in the death rate of the country—from 24 per thousand, the average for 1882—84, to 30 per thousand, the average for 1892—94, and 34 per thousand, the present average,—is a terrible and conclusive proof of this continuous impoverishment of the mass of our people. India's best interests—material and moral—no less than the honour of England, demand that the policy of equality for the two races,

promised by the Sovereign and by Parliament, should be faithfully and courageously carried out.

THE BUREAUCRACY

Gentlemen, as I have already observed, the manner in which the Partition of Bengal has been carried out furnishes a striking illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule. Happily these features are not always so conspicuously in evidence. No one also denies that a large proportion of the members of the bureaucracy bring to their work a high level of ability, a keen sense of duty and a conscientious desire, within the limits of the restricted opportunities permitted by the predominance of other interests, to do what good they can to the people. It is the system that is really at fault—a system, which relegates the interests of the people to a very subordinate place, and which, by putting too much power into the hands of these men, impairs their sense of responsibility and develops in them a spirit of intolerance of criticism. I know many of these men are, on their side, constantly smarting under a sense of unfair condemnation by our countrymen. They fail to realize that if the criticism that is passed on their actions is sometimes illinformed and even unjust, this is largely due to the veil of secrecy, which carefully hides official proceedings from the view of the people in India. Moreover theirs are at present all the privileges of the position and they must bear without impatience or bitterness its few disadvantages. I have already said that our advance towards our goal can only be gradual. Meanwhile there is a great deal of work to be done for the country, in which officials and non-officials could join hands. A considerable part of the way we could both go together, but it can only be on terms consistent with the self-respect of either side. In old times, when British rule was new and its higher standards and its more vigorous purposes excited general admiration, the Englishman's claim to a privileged position, even outside the sphere of official duties, was allowed to pass unchallenged. That is now no longer possible, and those officials, who expect the Indians to approach them with bated breath and whispering humbleness—and the type is not confined to the new Eastern Province exclusively—not only make useful relations between the two sides impossible but do more harm to their own class than they imagine. In one respect, the gulf between the official and the educated classes of the country is bound to widen more and more every day. The latter now clearly see that the bureaucracy is growing frankly selfish and openly hostile to their national aspirations. It was not so in the past. In a most remarkable letter, which I had the honour to receive, while in England, two months ago, from Mr. Hodgson Pratt—a great and venerated name among all lovers of peace—he tells us with what object Western education was introduced into this country. “Fifty years ago, writes Mr. Pratt, who in those days was a member of the Bengal Civil Service, “while India was still under the government of the East India Company, it was considered both just and wise to introduce measures for national education on a liberal scale, with adequate provision of schools, colleges, and universities. This event was hailed with lively satisfaction by the native population, as heralding a new era of social progress, and as satisfying the active intelligence of the Hindus. Now it must be observed that the character of the teaching thus inaugurated by Englishmen would necessarily reflect the ideals, which have for centuries prevailed among them. In other words, Indian youths would be brought

up to admire our doctrines of political liberty, popular rights, and national independence ; nor could it ever have been supposed that these lessons would fall upon deaf ears and cold hearts. On the contrary, the inevitable result of such teaching was clearly perceived by the Government of those days, and was regarded in a generous spirit. In support of this assertion, I may mention that at the time of the inauguration of these measures I accompanied the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (Sir Frederick Halliday) on one of his winter tours through the province. Naturally he called the attention of those, who attended the public meetings held by him, to the new education policy, and he always took occasion to declare that the schools would promote one of the leading purposes of British rule, *which was to prepare the people for self-government*. It certainly was not supposed that at any subsequent time a policy would be adopted, which would disappoint the legitimate hopes thus created." Now, however, that the time has come for the bureaucracy to part with some of its power in favour of the educated classes, all kinds of excuses are brought forward to postpone what is no doubt regarded as the evil day. One favourite argument is that the educated classes are as yet only a very small fraction of the community. The hollowness of this plea was well exposed by the late Mr. George Yule in his address as President of our National Congress in 1888. Quoting Prof. Thorold Rogers, he pointed out that a hundred years ago, not one man in ten or one woman in twenty knew how to read and write in England. Going another century or two back, he added, the people of England, man and boy, high and low, with the exception of a mere handful, were steeped in the grossest ignorance, and yet there was a House of Commons ! We have now in this country about 15 million people, who can read and write, and about a million of these have come under the influence of some kind of English education. Moreover, what we ask for at present is a voice in the Government of the country, not for the whole population, but for such portion of it as has been qualified by education to discharge properly the responsibilities of such association. Another argument, brought forward in favour of maintaining the present bureaucratic monopoly of power, is that though the educated classes make a grievance of it, the mass of the people are quite indifferent in the matter. Now, in the first place, this is not true. However it may suit the interests of the officials to deny the fact, the educated classes are, in the present circumstances of India, the natural leaders of the people. Theirs is the Vernacular Press, the contents of which do not fail to reach the mass of our population ; in a hundred ways they have access to the minds of the latter ; and what the educated Indians think to-day, the rest of India thinks to-morrow. Moreover do the officials realise how their contention condemns their rule out of their own mouth ? For it means that it is only so long as the people of India are kept in ignorance and their faculties are forced to lie dormant, that they do not raise any objection to the present system of administration. The moment education quickens those faculties and clears their vision, they range themselves against a continuance of the system !

OUR IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

Gentlemen, a number of important questions will come up before you for discussion during the next two days, and following the practice of previous Congresses, you will, no doubt, record, after due deliberation, your views on them in the form of resolutions. This is, of course, necessary ; but may I suggest that for purposes of effective agitation in the

immediate future, we should now concentrate our main energies on certain selected portions of our programme? Speaking broadly, most of the reforms that we have been advocating may be grouped under four heads:—(1) those which aim at securing for our people a larger and larger share in the administration and control of our affairs; these include a reform of our Legislative Councils, the appointment of Indians to the Secretary of State's Council and the Executive Councils in India, and a steady substitution of the Indian for the European agency in the public service of the country; (2) those which seek to improve the methods of administration, such as the separation of Judicial from Executive functions, Police Reform, and similar proposals; (3) those which propose a readjustment of financial arrangements with the object of securing a reduction of the burdens of the taxpayers and a more efficient application of our resources; under this head come a reduction of military charges, the moderating of land assessments and so forth; and (4) those which urge the adoption of measures, calculated to improve the condition of the mass of the people; these include a vigorous extension of primary education, facilities for industrial and technical instruction, grants for improved sanitation, and a real attempt to deal with the alarming indebtedness of the peasantry. Now what I would most earnestly and respectfully suggest is that we should select from each group such reforms as may be immediately urged with the greatest effect and press them forward in this country and in England with all the energy we can command. In my humble opinion, our immediate demands should be—

(1) A reform of our Legislative Councils, raising the proportion of elected members to one-half, requiring the budgets to be formally passed by the Councils, and empowering the members to bring forward amendments, with safeguards for bringing the debates to a close in a reasonable time. The Presidents of the Councils should have the power of veto. The Viceroy's Legislative Council consists at present of 25 members, of whom only 5 are elected, one by the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta—a body of Europeans—and the other four by four provinces. We must ask for the proportion of elected members to be now raised to 12. Of this number, two seats might be given one to commerce and one to certain industries, and the remaining ten should be assigned to different provinces, two to each of the three older provinces, and one each to the remaining. And, to begin with, the right of members to move amendments may be confined to one amendment each. The two members for commerce and industries will generally be Europeans, and they will ordinarily vote with Government. Thus even if all the ten provincial members voted together, they would be only 10 out of 25. Ordinarily they will not be able to carry a motion against the Government, but on exceptional occasions they may obtain the support of two or three men from the other side, and then the moral effect of the situation will be considerable. In the provincial Legislative Councils, we must have an increase in the number of members, each district of a province being empowered to send a member. The objection that these bodies will in that case be somewhat unwieldy is not entitled to much weight.

(2) The appointment of at least three Indians to the Secretary of State's Council, to be returned, one each, by the three older provinces.

(3) The creation of Advisory Boards in all Districts throughout India, whom the heads of districts should be bound to consult in important matters of administration concerning the public before taking action. For the present, their functions should be only advisory, the Collectors or District Magistrates being at liberty to set aside their advice in their discre-

tion. Half the members of a Board should be elected representatives of the different Talukas or subdivisions of the district and the other half should consist of the principal District Officers and such non-official gentlemen as the head of the district may appoint. These Boards must not be confounded with what are known as District Local Boards. There is at present too much of what may be called Secretariat rule, with an excessive multiplication of central departments. District administration must be largely freed from this and reasonable opportunities afforded to the people concerned to influence its course, before final decisions are arrived at. If such Boards are created, we may in course of time expect them to be entrusted with some real measure of control over the district administration. The late Mr. Ranade used to urge the importance of such Boards very strongly. If ever we are to have real local government in matters of general administration, the creation of these Boards will pave the way for it. One great evil of the present system of administration is its secrecy. This will be materially reduced, so far as district administration is concerned, by the step proposed.

(4) The recruitment of the Judicial Branch of the Indian Civil Service from the legal profession in India.

(5) The separation of Judicial and Executive functions.

(6) A reduction of military expenditure.

(7) A large extension of primary education.

(8) Facilities for industrial and technical education.

(9) An experimental measure to deal with the indebtedness of the peasantry over a selected area.

I think, gentlemen, if we now concentrate all our energies on some such programme, we may, within a reasonable time, see results, which will not be altogether disappointing. One thing is clear. The present is a specially favourable juncture for such an effort. In our own country, there is sure to be a great rebound of public opinion after the repression to which it has been subjected during the last three years. And in England for the first time since the Congress movement began, the Liberal and Radical party will come into real power. My recent visit to England, during which I enjoyed somewhat exceptional opportunities to judge of the situation, has satisfied me that a strong current has already set in there against that narrow and aggressive Imperialism, which only the other day seemed to be carrying everything before it. The new Prime Minister is a tried and trusted friend of freedom. And as regards the new Secretary of State for India, what shall I say? Large numbers of educated men in this country feel towards Mr. Morley as towards a Master, and the heart hopes and yet it trembles, as it had never hoped or trembled before. He, the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone,—will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the government of this country, or will he too succumb to the influence of the India Office around him, and thus cast a cruel blight on hopes, which his own writings have done so much to foster? We shall see; but in any case his appointment, as Secretary of State for India, indicates how strongly favourable to our cause the attitude of the new Ministry of Mr. Ellis; the new Under-Secretary of State for India, is openly known to be a friend of our aspirations. A more gratifying combination of circumstances could not be conceived, and it now rests with us to turn it to the best advantage we can for our Motherland.

CONCLUSION

Gentlemen, one word more and I have done. I have no wish to underrate the difficulties that lie in our path, but I am convinced more than ever that they are not insuperable. Moreover, the real moral interest of a struggle, such as we are engaged in, lies not so much in the particular readjustments of present institutions, which we may succeed in securing, as in the strength that the conflict brings us to be a permanent part of ourselves. The whole life of a people, which is broader and deeper than what is touched by purely political institutions, is enriched even by failures, provided the effort has been all that it should be. For such enrichment, the present struggle is invaluable. "The true end of our work," said Mr. Ranade nine years ago, "is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man, by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and developing to the full all his powers. Till so renovated, purified, and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were—a chosen people, to whom great tasks were allotted and by whom great deeds were performed. Where this feeling animates the worker, it is a matter of comparative indifference in what particular direction it asserts itself and by what particular method it proceeds to work. With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly by all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and, lastly, with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world, and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached—this is the promised land. Happy are they, who see it in distant vision; happier those, who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it; happiest they, who live to see it with their eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more. Famine and pestilence, oppression and sorrow, will then be myths of the past, and the gods will once again descend to the earth and associate with men, as they did in times which we now call mythical." Gentlemen, I can add nothing that may be worthy of being placed by the side of these beautiful words. I will only call to your minds the words of another great teacher of humanity who asks us to keep our faith in spite of trying circumstances and warns us against the presumption of despairing, because we do not see the whole future clearly before our eyes:—

"Our times are in His hand

Who saith, A whole I planned,

'Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid.'

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THE TWENTY-FIRST
Indian National Congress

(held at Benares on 27th, 28th, 29th & 30th Dec., 1905)

Presidential Address

BY

THE HON'BLE Mr. G. K. GOKHALE, C.I.E.

THE CHERRY PRESS,
121, DHURRUMTOLLAH STREET, CALCUTTA.

THE TWENTY-FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

FELLOW-DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great, the signal honour, which you have conferred upon me by electing me to preside over your deliberations this year. As has been said by more than one of my predecessors, the Presidentship of the Congress is the highest distinction, which it is in the power of our countrymen to bestow upon any one; and proud indeed is that moment in an Indian's life, when he receives at your hands this most conspicuous mark of your confidence and your favour. As I, however, stand before you to-day, it is not so much the honour of the position, great as that is, as the responsibility, which it imposes upon me, that occupies my thoughts. When I was first invited, nearly four months ago, to accept this office, we were able to see on the horizon only the small cloud—no bigger than a man's hand. Since then the sky has been overcast and for some time a storm has been raging; and it is with rocks ahead and angry waves beating around that I am called upon to take charge of the vessel of the Congress. Even the stoutest heart among us may well own to a feeling of anxiety in such a situation. Let us, however, humbly trust that in this holy city of Benares, the Divine guidance, on which we may securely throw ourselves, will not fail us, and that the united wisdom and patriotism of the delegates assembled will enable the Congress to emerge from the present crisis with unimpaired and even enhanced prestige and usefulness.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES

Gentlemen, our first duty to-day is to offer our most loyal and dutiful welcome to Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales on the occasion of this their first visit to India. The Throne in England is above all parties—beyond all controversies. It is the permanent seat of the majesty, the honour and the beneficence of the British Empire. And in offering our homage to its illustrious occupants and their heirs and representatives, we not only perform a loyal duty, but also express the gratitude of our hearts for all that is noble and high-minded in England's connection with India. The late Queen-Empress, again, was known, within the limits of her constitutional position, to exercise during her reign her vast influence in favour of a policy of justice and sympathy towards the Indian people. We can never forget that the great Proclamation of 1858, on which we take our stand so largely in our constitutional struggle, was, not only in spirit but also in substance, her own declaration of the principles, on which India was to be governed. The present King-Emperor has announced his resolve to walk in the footsteps of his mother, and we have no doubt that the Prince of Wales is animated by the same desire to see a policy of righteousness pursued towards India. We rejoice that His Royal Highness and his noble consort have come out amongst us to acquaint themselves personally with the ancient civilization of this country and its present condition. The Congress earnestly and respectfully wishes Their Royal Highnesses a most successful tour through India, and it humbly trusts

quire and the recollections they will carry back with them will constitute a fresh bond of sympathy and attachment between the Royal Family in England and the Princes and people of this country.

THE NEW VICEROY

The Congress also offers a most cordial and respectful welcome to Their Excellencies Lord and Lady Minto. The new Viceroy assumes the responsibilities of his office at a critical juncture. The temper of the people, so sorely tried during the last three years, calls for the exercise of wise and statesmanlike conciliation on the part of those who are in authority, if further estrangement between the rulers and the ruled is to be prevented. I earnestly trust that such conciliation will be forthcoming. Meanwhile a special responsibility rests upon all to see to it that the immediate task that confronts His Excellency is not made more difficult than it already is. The difficulties of the situation are not of Lord Minto's creating, and he has a right to expect the co-operation of both the officials and the public in his endeavours to terminate a state of tension, which has already produced deplorable results and which cannot be prolonged without serious detriment to the best interests of the country.

LORD CURZON'S ADMINISTRATION

Gentlemen, how true it is that to everything there is an end! Thus even the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon has come to a close! For seven long years, all eyes had constantly to turn to one masterful figure in the land,—now in admiration, now in astonishment, more often in anger and in pain, till at last it has become difficult to realize that a change has really come. For a parallel to such an administration, we must, I think, go back to the times of Aurangzeb in the history of our own country. There we find the same attempt at a rule excessively centralized and intensely personal, the same strenuous purpose, the same overpowering consciousness of duty, the same marvellous capacity for work, the same sense of loneliness, the same persistence in a policy of distrust and repression, resulting in bitter exasperation all round. I think even the most devoted admirer of Lord Curzon cannot claim that he has strengthened the foundations of British rule in India. In some respects, his Lordship will always be recognized as one of the greatest Englishmen that ever came out to this country. His wonderful intellectual gifts, his brilliant powers of expression, his phenomenal energy, his boundless enthusiasm for work,—these will ever be a theme of just and unstinted praise. But the gods are jealous, and amidst such lavish endowments, they withheld from him a sympathetic imagination, without which no man can ever understand an alien people; and it is a sad truth that to the end of his administration Lord Curzon did not really understand the people of India. This was at the root of his many inconsistencies and made him a perpetual puzzle to most men. And thus the man, who professed in all sincerity, before he assumed the reins of office, his great anxiety to show the utmost deference to the feelings and even the prejudices of those over whom he was set to rule, ended by denouncing in unmeasured terms not only the present generation of Indians but also their remote ancestors and even the ideals of their race, which they cherish above everything else; he, who, in the early part of his administration, publicly warned the official classes that "official wisdom is not so transcendent as to be superior to the stimulus and guidance" of public opinion and who declared that in the present state of

India "the opinion of the educated classes is one which it is not statesmanship to ignore or to despise," ended by trampling more systematically upon that opinion than any of his predecessors, and claiming for his own judgment and that of his official colleagues a virtual character of infallibility. The fact is that Lord Curzon came to India with certain fixed ideas. To him India was a country, where the Englishman was to monopolize for all time all power and talk all the while of duty. The Indian's only business was to be governed and it was a sacrilege on his part to have any other aspiration. In his scheme of things there was no room for the educated classes of the country; and having failed to amuse them for any length of time by an empty show of taking them into his confidence, he proceeded in the end to repress them. Even in his last farewell speech at the Byculla Club in Bombay, India exists only as a scene of the Englishman's labours, with the toiling millions of the country—eighty per cent of the population—in the back-ground. The remaining twenty per cent, for aught they are worth, might as well be gently swept into the sea! Had Lord Curzon been less self-centred, had he had more humility in his nature, he might perhaps have discovered his mistake before it was too late. This would probably have enabled him to avoid giving so much offence and causing so much pain as he unhappily did during the last two years, but I doubt if the main current of his administration would even then have flowed in another channel. Lord Curzon's highest ideal of statesmanship is efficiency of administration. He does not believe in what Mr. Gladstone used to call the principle of liberty as a factor of human progress. He has no sympathy with popular aspirations, and when he finds them among a subject people, he thinks he is rendering their country a service by trying to put them down. Thus in his Byculla Club speech he actually stated that he had not offered political concessions to the people of India, because he "did not regard it as wisdom or statesmanship in the interests of India itself to do so"! Taking Lord Curzon at his highest, we find him engaged in a herculean attempt to strengthen the Englishman's monopoly of power in India and stem the tide of popular agitation and discontent by rousing the members of the bureaucracy to a sense of duty similar to his own and raising the standard of administrative efficiency all round. The attempt has failed, as it was bound to fail. Never was discontent in India more acute and widespread than when the late Viceroy laid down the reins of office; and as regards the bureaucratic monopoly of power, I think we are sensibly nearer the time when it will be successfully assailed.

* One claim Lord Curzon advanced in his farewell speech at Bombay, which it is necessary to examine a little. He told his hearers, as he had done once before—on the occasion of the last Budget debate—that even if he had incurred the hostility of educated Indians, the masses would be grateful to him for what he had done for them. This attempt to distinguish between the interests of the educated classes and those of the bulk of their countrymen is a favourite device with those who seek to repress the legitimate aspirations of our people. It is significant that Lord Curzon had never resorted to it till he had finally broken with the educated classes. We know of course that the distinction is unreal and ridiculous and we know also that most of those who use it as a convenient means to disparage the educated classes cannot themselves really believe in it. Lord Curzon mentions the reduction of the salt-duty, the writing off of famine arrears, the increased grants to primary education and to irrigation, the attempt at Police Reform as measures on which he bases

his claim. The suggestion here is that he adopted these measures for the good of the masses in spite of the opposition—at any rate, the indifference—of the educated classes, when the plain fact is that it was the Congress that had been urging these measures year after year on the attention of Government and that it was only after years of persistent agitation that it was able to move the Government in the desired direction. Four years ago, when, with a surplus of seven crores or nearly five millions sterling in hand, the Government of India did not remit any taxation, and I ventured to complain of this in Council and to urge an immediate reduction of the salt-duty, I well remember how Lord Curzon sneered at those who “talked glibly” of the burdens of the masses and of the necessity of lowering the salt-tax as a measure of relief! Lord Curzon was fortunate in coming to India when the currency legislation of Lord Lansdowne and Sir David Barbour had succeeded in artificially raising the rupee to its present level, thereby enabling the Government of India to save about four millions sterling a year on its Home remittances. This, with the recovery of the opium revenue, placed huge surpluses at Lord Curzon’s disposal throughout his administration, and he never knew a moment of that financial stress and anxiety, which his predecessors had to face for a series of years. Considering how large these surpluses have been, I do not think the relief given by Lord Curzon to the taxpayers of the country has by any means been liberal. He himself estimated last March the total amount of this relief at 7 millions sterling. He did not mention that during the same time he had taken from the taxpayers 33 millions sterling over and above the requirements of the Government. Again, how paltry is the relief, given by the reduction of the salt-duty and the writing off of famine arrears, compared with the enormous injury done to the mass of our people by the artificial raising of the value of the rupee, which led to a heavy immediate depreciation of their small savings in silver, and which makes a grievous addition to their permanent burdens by indirectly enhancing their assessments and increasing their debts to the money-lender, as prices adjust themselves to the new Rupee! Much has been made of Lord Curzon’s increased grants to primary education. Considering how little the State does in India for the education of the masses, it would have been astonishing, if with such surpluses Lord Curzon had not made any addition to the educational expenditure of the country. But if he has given a quarter of a million more to education, he has given five millions a year more to the Army; and with reckless profusion he has increased the salaries of European officials in many departments and has created several new posts for them. “A spirit of expenditure,” to use an expression of Mr. Gladstone’s, has been abroad in all directions during his time, and he has never practised the old-fashioned virtue of economy, with which the real interests of the people are bound up. Of course a ruler cannot labour as devotedly as Lord Curzon has done for seven years for increased efficiency without removing or mitigating important administrative evils; but that is quite different from a claim to champion the special interests of the masses, as against their natural leaders and spokesmen, the educated classes of the community.

PARTITION OF BENGAL

Gentlemen, the question that is uppermost in the minds of us all at this moment is the Partition of Bengal. A cruel wrong has been inflicted on our Bengalee brethren and the whole country has been stirred to its deepest depths in sorrow and resentment, as had

never been the case before. The scheme of partition, concocted in the dark and carried out in the face of the fiercest opposition that any Government measure has encountered during the last half century, will always stand as a complete illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule—its utter contempt for public opinion, its arrogant pretensions to superior wisdom, its reckless disregard of the most cherished feelings of the people, the mockery of an appeal to its sense of justice, its cool preference of Service interests to those of the governed. Lord Curzon and his advisers—if he ever had any advisers—could never allege that they had no means of judging of the depth of public feeling in the matter. All that could possibly have been done by way of a respectful representation of the views of the people had been done. As soon as it was known that a partition of some sort was contemplated, meeting after meeting of protest was held, till over five hundred public meetings in all parts of the Province had proclaimed in no uncertain voice that the attempt to dismember a compact and homogeneous province, to which the people were passionately attached and of which they were justly proud, was deeply resented and would be resisted to the uttermost. Memorials to the same effect poured in upon the Viceroy. The Secretary of State for India was implored to withhold his sanction to the proposed measure. The intervention of the British House of Commons was sought, first, by a monster petition, signed by sixty-thousand people, and later, by means of a debate on the subject, raised in the House by our ever watchful friend, Mr. Herbert Roberts. All proved unavailing. The Viceroy had made up his mind. The officials under him had expressed approval. What business had the people to have an opinion of their own and to stand in the way? To add insult to injury, Lord Curzon described the opposition to his measure as 'manufactured'—an opposition in which all classes of Indians, high and low, uneducated and educated, Hindus and Mahomedans had joined, an opposition than which nothing more intense, nothing more wide-spread, nothing more spontaneous had been seen in this country in the whole course of our political agitation! Let it be remembered that when the late Viceroy cast this stigma on those who were ranged against his proposals, not a single public pronouncement in favour of those proposals had been made by any section of the community; and that among the foremost opponents of the measure were men like Sir Jotindra Mohan Tagore and Sir Gurudas Banerji, Raja Peary Mohan Mukerji and Dr. Rash Behary Ghose, the Maharajas of Mymensing and Kassimbazar,—men who keep themselves aloof from ordinary political agitation and never say a word, calculated in any way to embarrass the authorities, and who came forward to oppose publicly the Partition project only from an overpowering sense of the necessity of their doing what they could to avert a dreaded calamity. If the opinions of even such men are to be brushed aside with contempt, if all Indians are to be treated as no better than dumb, driven cattle, if men, whom any other country would delight to honour, are to be thus made to realize the utter humiliation and helplessness of their position in their own, then all I can say is "Goodbye to all hope of co-operating in any way with the bureaucracy in the interests of the people!" I can conceive of no graver indictment of British rule than that such a state of things should be possible after a hundred years of that rule!

Gentlemen, I have carefully gone through all the papers which have been published by the Government on this subject of Partition. Three things have struck me forcibly—a determination to dismember Bengal at all costs, an anxiety to promote the interests of

Assam at the expense of Bengal, and a desire to suit everything to the interests and convenience of the Civil Service. It is not merely that a number of new prizes have been thrown into the lap of that Service—one Lieutenant-Governorship, two Memberships of the Board of Revenue, one Commissionership of a Division, several Secretaryships and Under-Secretaryships—but alternative schemes of readjustment have been rejected on the express ground that their adoption would be unpopular with members of the Service. Thus, even if a reduction of the charge of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal had really become inevitable—a contention, which the greatest living authority on the subject, Sir Henry Cotton, who was Secretary to the Bengal Government under seven Lieutenant-Governors, does not admit—one would have thought that the most natural course to take was to separate Behar, Orissa and Chota Nagpur from Bengal and form them into a separate Province. This would have made the Western Province one of 30 millions in place of the Eastern. But this, says the Government of India, “would take from Bengal all its best districts and would make the Province universally unpopular.” This was of course a fatal objection, for, compared with the displeasure of the Civil Service, the trampling under foot of public opinion and the outraging of the deepest feelings of a whole people was a small matter ! But one can see that administrative considerations were really only secondary in the determination of this question. The dismemberment of Bengal had become necessary, because, in the view of the Government of India, “it cannot be for the lasting good of any country or any people that public opinion or what passes for it should be manufactured by a comparatively small number of people at a single centre and should be disseminated thence for universal adoption, all other views being discouraged or suppressed.” “From every point of view,” the Government further states, “it appears to us desirable to encourage the growth of centres of independent opinion, local aspirations, local ideals and to preserve the growing intelligence and enterprise of Bengal from being cramped and stunted by the process of forcing it prematurely into a mould of rigid and sterile uniformity.” You will see that this is only a paraphrase, in Lord Curzon’s most approved style, of the complaint of the people of Bengal that their fair Province has been dismembered to destroy their growing solidarity, check their national aspirations and weaken their power of co-operating for national ends, lessen the influence of their educated classes with their countrymen, and reduce the political importance of Calcutta. After this, let no apologist of the late Viceroy pretend that the object of the partition was administrative convenience and not political repression !

Gentlemen, it is difficult to speak in terms of due restraint of Lord Curzon’s conduct throughout this affair. Having published his earlier and smaller scheme for public criticism, it was his clear duty to publish similarly the later and larger scheme, which he afterwards substituted for it. But in consequence of the opposition which the first scheme encountered, he abandoned the idea of taking the public any more into his confidence and proceeded to work in the matter in the dark. For more than a year, nothing further was heard of his intentions, and while he was silently elaborating the details of his measure, he allowed the impression to prevail that the Government had abandoned the Partition project. And in the end, when he had succeeded in securing the Secretary of State’s sanction to the scheme, it was from Simla, where he and his official colleagues were beyond the reach of public opinion, that he sprang the final orders of Government upon an unprepared people. Then suddenly came his resignation. And the people permitted themselves

for a while to hope that it would bring them at least a brief respite, especially as Mr. Brodrick had promised shortly before to present further papers on the subject to Parliament, and that was understood to mean that the scheme would not be brought into operation till Parliament reassembled at the beginning of next year. Of course, after Lord Curzon's resignation, the only proper, the only dignified course for him was to take no step, which it was difficult to revoke and the consequences of which would have to be faced, not by him, but by his successor; he owed it to Lord Minto to give him an opportunity to examine the question for himself; he owed it to the Royal visitors not to plunge the largest Province of India into violent agitation and grief on the eve of their visit to it. But Lord Curzon was determined to partition Bengal before he left India and so he rushed the necessary legislation through the Legislative Council at Simla, which only the official members could attend, and enforced his orders on 16th October last—a day observed as one of universal mourning by all classes of people in Bengal. And now, while he himself has gone from India, what a sea of troubles he has bequeathed to his successor! Fortunately there are grounds to believe that Lord Minto will deal with the situation with tact, firmness, and sympathy, and it seems he has already pulled up to some extent Lord Curzon's favourite Lieutenant, the first ruler of the new Eastern Province. Mr. Fuller has evidently cast to the winds all prudence, all restraint, all sense of responsibility. Even if a fraction of what the papers have been reporting be true, his extraordinary doings must receive the attention of the new Secretary of State for India and the House of Commons. There is no surer method of goading a docile people into a state of dangerous despair than the kind of hectoring and repression he has been attempting.

But, gentlemen, as has been well said, even in things evil there is a soul of goodness, and the dark times, through which Bengal has passed and is passing, have not been without a message of bright hope for the future. The tremendous upheaval of popular feeling, which has taken place in Bengal in consequence of the Partition, will constitute a landmark in the history of our national progress. For the first time since British rule began, all sections of the Indian Community, without distinction of caste or creed, have been moved by a common impulse and without the stimulus of external pressure to act together in offering resistance to a common wrong. A wave of true national consciousness has swept over the Province, and at its touch old barriers have, for the time at any rate, been thrown down, personal jealousies have vanished, other controversies have been hushed! Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy has astonished and gratified all India, and her sufferings have not been endured in vain, when they have helped to draw closer all parts of the country in sympathy and in aspiration. A great rush and uprising of the waters, such as has been recently witnessed in Bengal, cannot take place without a little inundation over the banks here and there. These little excesses are inevitable, when large masses of men move spontaneously—especially when the movement is from darkness unto light, from bondage towards freedom,—and they must not be allowed to disconcert us too much. The most outstanding fact of the situation is that the public life of this country has received an accession of strength of great importance, and for this all India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Bengal. Of course the difficulties which confront the leaders of Bengal are enormous and perhaps they have only just begun. But I know there is no disposition to shrink from any responsibilities and I have no doubt that whatever

sacrifices are necessary will be cheerfully made. All India is at their back and they will receive in the work that lies before them the cordial sympathy and assistance of the other Provinces. Any discredit, that is allowed to fall on them, affects us all. They on their side must not forget that the honour of all India is at present in their keeping.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT

Gentlemen, I will now say a few words on a movement, which has spread so rapidly and has been hailed with so much enthusiasm all over the country during the last few months—the *Swadeshi* movement. It is necessary at the outset to distinguish it from another movement, started in Bengal, which has really given it such immense impetus—the boycott of British goods. We all know that when our Bengali brethren found that nothing would turn the late Viceroy from his purpose of partitioning Bengal, that all their protests in the Press and on the platform, all their memorials to him, to the Secretary of State and to Parliament were unavailing, that the Government exercised its despotic strength to trample on their most cherished feelings and injure their dearest interests and that no protection against this of any kind was forthcoming from any quarter, they, in their extremity resolved to have recourse to this boycott movement. This they did with a twofold object—first, as a demonstration of their deep resentment at the treatment they were receiving, and secondly, to attract the attention of the people in England to their grievances, so that those, who were in a position to call the Government of India to account, might understand what was taking place in India. It was thus as a political weapon, used for a definite political purpose, that they had recourse to the boycott; and in the circumstances of their position they had every justification for the step they took. And I can tell you from personal experience that their action has proved immensely effective in drawing the attention of English people to the state of things in our country. But a weapon like this must be reserved only for extreme occasions. There are obvious risks involved in its failure, and it cannot be used with sufficient effectiveness, unless there is an extraordinary upheaval of popular feeling behind it. It is bound to rouse angry passions on the other side, and no true well-wisher of his country will be responsible for provoking such passions, except under an overpowering sense of necessity. On an extreme occasion, of course, a boycotting demonstration is perfectly legitimate, but that occasion must be one to drive all classes, as in Bengal, to act with one impulse, and make all leaders sink their personal differences in the presence of a common danger. It is well to remember that the term ‘boycott,’ owing to its origin, has got unsavoury associations, and it conveys to the mind before everything else a vindictive desire to injure another. Such a desire on our part, as a normal feature of our relations with England, is of course out of the question. Moreover, if the boycott is confined to British goods only, it leaves us free to purchase the goods of other foreign countries, and this does not help the *Swadeshi* movement in any way.

Gentlemen, the true *Swadeshi* movement is both a patriotic and an economic movement. The idea of *Swadesh* or ‘one’s own country’ is one of the noblest conceptions that have ever stirred the heart of humanity. As the poet asks,

‘Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,—
This is my own, my native land!’

The devotion to motherland, which is enshrined in the highest *Swadeshi*, is an influence so profound and so passionate that its very thought thrills and its actual touch lifts one out of oneself. India needs to-day above everything else that the gospel of this devotion should be preached to high and low, to Prince and to peasant, in town and in hamlet, till the service of motherland becomes with us as overmastering a passion as it is in Japan. The *Swadeshi* movement, as it is ordinarily understood, presents one part of this gospel to the mass of our people in a form, which brings it within their comprehension. It turns their thoughts to their country, accustoms them to the idea of voluntarily making some sacrifice for her sake, enables them to take an intelligent interest in her economic development and teaches them the important lesson of co-operating with one another for a national end. All this is most valuable work, and those who undertake it are entitled to feel that they are engaged in a highly patriotic mission. But the movement on its material side is an economic one; and though self-denying ordinances, extensively entered into, must serve a valuable economic purpose, namely, to ensure a ready consumption of such articles as are produced in the country and to furnish a perpetual stimulus to production by keeping the demand for indigenous things largely in excess of the supply, the difficulties that surround the question economically are so great that they require the co-operation of every available agency to surmount them. The problem is indeed one of the first magnitude. Twelve years ago, the late Mr. Ranade remarked at an Industrial Conference held at Poona:—"The political domination of one country by another attracts far more attention than the more formidable, though unfelt domination, which the capital, enterprise and skill of one country exercise over the trade and manufactures of another. This latter domination has an insidious influence, which paralyzes the springs of all the varied activities, which together make up the life of a nation." The question of production is a question of capital, enterprise and skill, and in all these factors, our deficiency at present is very great. Whoever can help in any one of these fields is, therefore, a worker in the *Swadeshi* cause and should be welcomed as such. Not by methods of exclusion but by those of comprehension, not by insisting on every one working in the same part of the field but by leaving each one free to select his own corner, by attracting to the cause all who are likely to help and not alienating any who are already with us, are the difficulties of the problem likely to be overcome. Above all, let us see to it that there are no fresh divisions in the country in the name of *Swadeshim*. No greater perversion of its true spirit could be imagined than that.

Take the question of cotton piece-goods, of which we import at present over 22 millions sterling worth a year. This is by far the heaviest item among our imports and our present *Swadeshi* agitation is directed mainly towards producing as much of these goods in our own country as possible. I have consulted three of the best experts available in India on this subject—Mr. Bezanji of Nagpur, the right hand man of the late Mr. Tata in mill matters, the Hon. Mr. Vithaldas Damodardas, who has written an admirable paper on the Cotton Industry for the Industrial Conference and has kindly placed a copy of it at my disposal, and our friend Mr. Wacha. They are all agreed about the requirements and the difficulties of the situation. So far as cotton fabrics are concerned, even strict Free Traders should have nothing to say against the encouragement, which the *Swadeshi* movement seeks to give to their manufacture in India. In the first place, many of the usual objections that may be urged

against a system of State protection do not apply to helpful voluntary action on the part of consumers, such as the *Swadeshi* movement endeavours to promote. Moreover, the essence of Free Trade is that a commodity should be produced where the comparative cost of its production is the least and that it should be consumed where its relative value is the highest ; and if accidental circumstances have thwarted such an adjustment in a given case, any agency, which seeks to overcome the impediment, works in the end in the interests of true Free Trade. Now everyone will admit that with cheap labour and cotton at her own door, India enjoys exceptional advantages for the manufacture of cotton goods ; and if the *Swadeshi* movement helps her to regain her natural position in this respect—a position which she once occupied but out of which she has been driven by an extraordinary combination of circumstances,—the movement works not against but in furtherance of true Free Trade. Even at present the Cotton Industry in India is an important one. It is the largest industry after agriculture in the country ; it is also the only one—agriculture excepted—in which the Indians themselves have a substantial share. It is represented by a paid up capital of about 17 crores of rupees or a little over 11 millions sterling, the number of mills being about 200, with five million spindles and fifty thousand power-looms. In addition to this, there are, according to the Census of 1901, about a quarter of a crore persons engaged in handloom weaving in the country. Our mills consume nearly 60 per cent of the cotton produce of India and produce 58 crore lbs of yarn. Of this quantity, Mr. Vithaldas tells us, about 23½ crore lbs is exported to China and other foreign countries, about 13½ crores is used in our weaving mills, and about 19 crores is woven by hand-loom weavers, the remaining 2 crores going to the manufacture of rope and twine. In addition to this, 3 crore lbs of yarn is imported from the United Kingdom, and is consumed by the hand looms. The hand-loom industry of the country thus absorbs, in spite of its hard struggles, about 22 crore lbs of yarn, or nearly double the quantity woven by power-looms, and this is a most interesting and significant fact. The yarn used by the weaving mills produces about 55 crores of yards of cloth, of which about 14 crore yards is exported to foreign countries and about 41 crores is left for consumption in the country. If we put down the production of the hand-looms at about 90 crore yards, we have about 130 crore yards as the quantity of *Swadeshi* cloth consumed at present in India.

The quantity of piece-goods imported from the United Kingdom and retained for use in the country is about 205 crore yards a year. Of the total cloth consumed, therefore, over one-third is at present *Swadeshi*. This is an encouraging feature of the situation. But the imported cloth is almost all superior in quality. "While our mills," Mr. Vithaldas says, "produce the coarser cloth, say from yarn up to 30s count and in a few cases up to 40s, the bulk of the imported cloth is of the finer quality, using yarn over 30s count. The Indian weaving mills are obliged to restrict themselves for the most part to weaving coarser cloth owing to the inferior quality of cotton now grown in the country." It may be noted that even from existing cotton, hand-looms can, owing to their greater delicacy of handling the yarn, produce finer cloth than the power-looms. Fortunately owing to the exertions of the Agricultural Department of the Bombay Government—exertions for which it is entitled to the best thanks of the whole country—Egyptian cotton has just been successfully introduced into Sind, and this year a thousand bales of a quality equal to very good Egyptian have been produced. A much heavier crop is expected next year and there is no doubt that its culti-

vation will rapidly extend. The main difficulty in the way of our manufacturing the quality of cloth that is at present imported is one of capital. Mr. Wacha estimates that if the whole quantity of 205 crore yards is to be produced by mills, the Industry requires an additional capital of about 30 crores of rupees. Even if we proposed to spread this over ten years, we should require an addition of 3 crores of rupees every year. Now if we turn to the Statistical Abstract of British India, we shall find that the total increase in the capital invested in cotton mills during the last ten years has been only about 3 crores,—an amount that Mr. Wacha wants every year for ten years. The normal development of the mill industry is thus plainly unequal to the requirements of the situation. Moreover it is well to remember what Mr. Bezanji says—that the present mill-owners must not be expected to be very keen about the production of finer cloth, because its manufacture is much less paying than that of the coarser cloth. This is due to various causes, the principal one among them being that English capital, similarly invested, is satisfied with a smaller range of profits. Capital from other quarters must, therefore, be induced to come forward and undertake this business. If we again turn to the Statistical Abstract, we shall find that our people hold about 50 crores of rupees in Government Securities and about 11 crores in Postal Savings Banks. In the Presidency and other Banks, the private deposits stand at about 33 crores of rupees, but there are no means of ascertaining how much of the amount is held by Indians. Considering the extent of the country and the numbers of the population, these resources are, of course, extremely meagre. Still they might furnish some part of the capital needed. In this connection, may I say that a special responsibility now rests in the matter on the Aristocracy of Bengal! And this is not merely because the *Swadeshi* movement is being so vigorously advocated in their Province, but also because, owing to the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, they are enabled to enjoy resources, which, in other parts of India, are swept into the coffers of the State. If sufficient capital is forthcoming, Mr. Bezanji's patriotism may, I am sure, be relied on to secure for the undertaking whatever assistance his great capacity and unrivalled knowledge can give. It must, however, be admitted that capital will come forward only cautiously for this branch of the business. But the hand-loom is likely to prove of greater immediate service. Mr. Vithaldas looks forward to a great revival of the hand-loom industry in the country, and I cannot do better than quote what he says on this point in his paper. "This village industry," he says, "gives means of livelihood not only to an immense number of the weaver class but affords means of supplementing their income to agriculturists—the backbone of India—who usually employ themselves on hand-loom, when field-work is unnecessary, and also when, owing to famine, drought or excessive rains, agricultural operations are not possible. Now the apparatus with which they work is nearly two centuries behind the times. Mr. Havell, Principal of Calcutta School of Art, Mr. Chatterton of the Madras School of Art, and Mr. Churchill of Ahmednagar, along with many others, are doing yeoman's service by taking keen interest in the question of supplying economical and improved apparatus to the hand-loom weavers. Mr. Havell has pointed out that in preparing the warp, our hand-loom weavers are incapable of winding more than two threads at a time, though the simplest mechanical device would enable them to treat 50 or 100 threads simultaneously. The latest European hand-loom, which successfully competes with the power-loom in Cairo and in many places in Europe, can turn out a maximum of 48 yards of common cloth in a day. Mr. Havell is satisfied that the greater portion

of the imported cotton cloth can be made in the Indian hand-loom with great profit to the whole community. The question of the immediate revival of the hand-loom weaving industry on a commercial basis demands the most earnest attention of every well-wisher of India and evidence gives promise of a successful issue to efforts put forward in this direction." The outlook here is thus hopeful and cheering; only we must not fail to realize that the co-operation of all who can help—including the Government—is needed to overcome the difficulties that lie in the path.

OUR AIMS AND ASPIRATIONS

Gentlemen, this is the twenty-first session of the Indian National Congress. Year after year, since 1885, we have been assembling in these gatherings to give voice to our aspirations and to formulate our wants. When the movement was first inaugurated, we were under the influence of that remarkable outburst of enthusiasm for British Rule, which had been evoked in the country by the great Viceroyalty of the Marquis of Ripon. That best beloved of India's Viceroys was not content to offer mere lip-homage to the principle that righteousness alone exalteth a nation. He had dared to act on it in practice and he had braved persecution at the hands of his own countrymen in India for its sake. Lord Ripon's noblest service to this country was that he greatly quickened the processes, by which the consciousness of a national purpose comes to establish itself in the minds of a people. The Congress movement was the direct and immediate outcome of this realization. It was started to focus and organize the patriotic forces that were working independently of one another in different parts of the country so as to invest their work with a national character and to increase their general effectiveness. Hope at that time was warm and faith shone bright, largely as a result of Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, and those who started the Congress believed that by offering their criticism and urging their demands from a national platform, where they could speak in the name of all India, they would be able to secure a continuous improvement of the administration and a steady advance in the direction of the political emancipation of the people. Twenty years have since elapsed, and during the time much has happened to chill that hope and dim that faith, but there can be no doubt that work of great value in our national life has already been accomplished. The minds of the people have been familiarized with the idea of a united India working for her salvation; a national public opinion has been created; close bonds of sympathy now knit together the different Provinces; caste and creed separations hamper less and less the pursuit of common aims; the dignity of a consciousness of national existence has spread over the whole land. Our record of political concessions won is, no doubt, very meagre, but those that have been secured are of considerable value; some retrogression has been prevented; and if latterly we have been unable to stem the tide of reaction, the resistance we have offered, though it has failed of its avowed purpose, has substantially strengthened our public life. Our deliberations have extended over a very wide range of problems; public opinion in the country is, in consequence, better informed, and the Press is steadily growing in authority and usefulness. Above all, there is a general perception now of the goal towards which we have to strive and a wide recognition of the arduous character of the struggle and the immense sacrifices it requires.

The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire. For better, for worse, our destinies are now linked with those of England, and the Congress freely recognises that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover, can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship, before we are enabled to go to the next one ; for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the free political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only. To admit this is not to express any agreement with those who usually oppose all attempts at reform on the plea that the people are not ready for it. "It is liberty alone," says Mr. Gladstone in words of profound wisdom, "which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds ; but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit." While, therefore, we are prepared to allow that an advance towards our goal may be only by reasonably cautious steps, what we emphatically insist on is that the resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying the people, by means of education and in other ways, for such advance. Even the most bigoted champion of the existing system of administration will not pretend that this is in any degree the case at present. Our net revenue is about 44 millions sterling. Of this very nearly one-half is now eaten up by the Army. The Home Charges, exclusive of their military portion, absorb nearly onethird. These two, between them, account for about 34 millions out of 44. Then over 3 millions are paid to European officials in civil employ. This leaves only about 7 millions at the disposal of the Government to be applied to other purposes. Can any one, who realises what this means, wonder that the Government spends only a miserable three-quarters of a million out of State funds on the education of the people—primary, secondary and higher, all put together ! Japan came under the influence of Western ideas only forty years ago, and yet already she is in a line with the most advanced nations of the West in matters of mass education, the State finding funds for the education of every child of school-going age. We have now been a hundred years under England's rule, and yet to-day four villages out of every five are without a school house and seven children out of eight are allowed to grow up in ignorance and in darkness ! Militarism, Service interests and the interests of English capitalists,—all take precedence to-day of the true interests of the Indian people in the administration of the country. Things cannot be otherwise, for it is the Government of the people of one country by the people of another, and this, as Mill points out, is bound to produce great evils. Now the Congress wants that all this should change and that India should be governed, first and foremost, in the interests of the Indians themselves. This result will be achieved only in proportion as we obtain more and more voice in the government of our country. We are prepared to bear—and bear cheerfully—our fair share of the burdens of the Empire, of which we are now a part, but we want to participate in the privileges also, and we object most strongly to being sacrificed, as at present, in order that others may prosper. Then the Congress asks for a redemption of those promises for the equal treatment of Indians and Englishmen in the Government of this country, which

have been so solemnly given us by the Sovereign and the Parliament of England. It is now three-quarters of a century since the Parliament passed an Act, which, the Court of Directors pointed out, meant that there was to be no governing caste in India. The governing caste, however, is still as vigorous, as exclusive as ever. Twenty-five years later, the late Queen-Empress addressed a most memorable Proclamation to the Princes and people of India. The circumstances, connected with the issue of that Proclamation, and its noble contents will always bear witness to the true greatness of that great sovereign and will never cease to shed lustre on the English name. The Proclamation repeats the pledges contained in the Charter Act of 1833, and though an astounding attempt was made less than two years ago by the late Viceroy to explain away its solemn import, the plain meaning of the royal message cannot be altered without attributing what is nothing less than an unworthy subterfuge to a Sovereign, the deep reverence for whose memory is an asset of the Empire. That the Charter Act of 1833 and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 have created in the eyes of reactionary rulers a most inconvenient situation is clear from a blunt declaration, which another Viceroy of India, the late Lord Lytton, made in a confidential document, which has since seen the light of day. Speaking of our claims and expectations based on the pledges of the Sovereign and the Parliament of England, he wrote:—

“We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them (the Natives of India) and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straight-forward course. . . . Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear.” We accept Lord Lytton as an unimpeachable authority on the conduct of the Government in evading the fulfilment of the pledges. We deny his claim to lay down that our “claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled.”

Our whole future, it is needless to say, is bound up with this question of the relative positions of the two races in this country. The domination of one race over another—especially when there is no great disparity between their intellectual endowments or their general civilization—inflicts great injury on the subject race in a thousand insidious ways. On the moral side, the present situation is steadily destroying our capacity for initiative and dwarfing us as men of action. On the material side, it has resulted in a fearful impoverishment of the people. For a hundred years and more now, India has been, for members of the dominant race, a country where fortunes were to be made to be taken out and spent elsewhere. As in Ireland the evil of absentee landlordism has in the past aggravated the racial domination of the English over the Irish, so in India what may be called absentee capitalism has been added to the racial ascendancy of Englishmen. A great and ruinous drain of wealth from the country has gone on for many years, the net excess of exports over imports (including treasure) during the last forty years amounting to no less than a thousand millions sterling. The steady rise in the death rate of the country—from 24 per thousand, the average for 1882—84, to 30 per thousand, the average for 1892—94, and 34 per thousand, the present average,—is a terrible and conclusive proof of this continuous impoverishment of the mass of our people. India's best interests—material and moral—no less than the honour of England, demand that the policy of equality for the two races,

promised by the Sovereign and by Parliament, should be faithfully and courageously carried out.

THE BUREAUCRACY

Gentlemen, as I have already observed, the manner in which the Partition of Bengal has been carried out furnishes a striking illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule. Happily these features are not always so conspicuously in evidence. No one also denies that a large proportion of the members of the bureaucracy bring to their work a high level of ability, a keen sense of duty and a conscientious desire, within the limits of the restricted opportunities permitted by the predominance of other interests, to do what good they can to the people. It is the system that is really at fault—a system, which relegates the interests of the people to a very subordinate place, and which, by putting too much power into the hands of these men, impairs their sense of responsibility and develops in them a spirit of intolerance of criticism. I know many of these men are, on their side, constantly smarting under a sense of unfair condemnation by our countrymen. They fail to realize that if the criticism that is passed on their actions is sometimes illinformed and even unjust, this is largely due to the veil of secrecy, which carefully hides official proceedings from the view of the people in India. Moreover theirs are at present all the privileges of the position and they must bear without impatience or bitterness its few disadvantages. I have already said that our advance towards our goal can only be gradual. Meanwhile there is a great deal of work to be done for the country, in which officials and non-officials could join hands. A considerable part of the way we could both go together, but it can only be on terms consistent with the self-respect of either side. In old times, when British rule was new and its higher standards and its more vigorous purposes excited general admiration, the Englishman's claim to a privileged position, even outside the sphere of official duties, was allowed to pass unchallenged. That is now no longer possible, and those officials, who expect the Indians to approach them with bated breath and whispering humbleness—and the type is not confined to the new Eastern Province exclusively—not only make useful relations between the two sides impossible but do more harm to their own class than they imagine. In one respect, the gulf between the official and the educated classes of the country is bound to widen more and more every day. The latter now clearly see that the bureaucracy is growing frankly selfish and openly hostile to their national aspirations. It was not so in the past. In a most remarkable letter, which I had the honour to receive, while in England, two months ago, from Mr. Hodgson Pratt—a great and venerated name among all lovers of peace—he tells us with what object Western education was introduced into this country. “Fifty years ago, writes Mr. Pratt, who in those days was a member of the Bengal Civil Service, “while India was still under the government of the East India Company, it was considered both just and wise to introduce measures for national education on a liberal scale, with adequate provision of schools, colleges, and universities. This event was hailed with lively satisfaction by the native population, as heralding a new era of social progress, and as satisfying the active intelligence of the Hindus. Now it must be observed that the character of the teaching thus inaugurated by Englishmen would necessarily reflect the ideals, which have for centuries prevailed among them. In other words, Indian youths would be brought

up to admire our doctrines of political liberty, popular rights, and national independence ; nor could it ever have been supposed that these lessons would fall upon deaf ears and cold hearts. On the contrary, the inevitable result of such teaching was clearly perceived by the Government of those days, and was regarded in a generous spirit. In support of this assertion, I may mention that at the time of the inauguration of these measures I accompanied the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal (Sir Frederick Halliday) on one of his winter tours through the province. Naturally he called the attention of those, who attended the public meetings held by him, to the new education policy, and he always took occasion to declare that the schools would promote one of the leading purposes of British rule, *which was to prepare the people for self-government*. It certainly was not supposed that at any subsequent time a policy would be adopted, which would disappoint the legitimate hopes thus created." Now, however, that the time has come for the bureaucracy to part with some of its power in favour of the educated classes, all kinds of excuses are brought forward to postpone what is no doubt regarded as the evil day. One favourite argument is that the educated classes are as yet only a very small fraction of the community. The hollowness of this plea was well exposed by the late Mr. George Yule in his address as President of our National Congress in 1888. Quoting Prof. Thorold Rogers, he pointed out that a hundred years ago, not one man in ten or one woman in twenty knew how to read and write in England. Going another century or two back, he added, the people of England, man and boy, high and low, with the exception of a mere handful, were steeped in the grossest ignorance, and yet there was a House of Commons ! We have now in this country about 15 million people, who can read and write, and about a million of these have come under the influence of some kind of English education. Moreover, what we ask for at present is a voice in the Government of the country, not for the whole population, but for such portion of it as has been qualified by education to discharge properly the responsibilities of such association. Another argument, brought forward in favour of maintaining the present bureaucratic monopoly of power, is that though the educated classes make a grievance of it, the mass of the people are quite indifferent in the matter. Now, in the first place, this is not true. However it may suit the interests of the officials to deny the fact, the educated classes are, in the present circumstances of India, the natural leaders of the people. Theirs is the Vernacular Press, the contents of which do not fail to reach the mass of our population ; in a hundred ways they have access to the minds of the latter ; and what the educated Indians think to-day, the rest of India thinks to-morrow. Moreover do the officials realise how their contention condemns their rule out of their own mouth ? For it means that it is only so long as the people of India are kept in ignorance and their faculties are forced to lie dormant, that they do not raise any objection to the present system of administration. The moment education quickens those faculties and clears their vision, they range themselves against a continuance of the system !

OUR IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

Gentlemen, a number of important questions will come up before you for discussion during the next two days, and following the practice of previous Congresses, you will, no doubt, record, after due deliberation, your views on them in the form of resolutions. This is, of course, necessary ; but may I suggest that for purposes of effective agitation in the

immediate future, we should now concentrate our main energies on certain selected portions of our programme? Speaking broadly, most of the reforms that we have been advocating may be grouped under four heads:—(1) those which aim at securing for our people a larger and larger share in the administration and control of our affairs; these include a reform of our Legislative Councils, the appointment of Indians to the Secretary of State's Council and the Executive Councils in India, and a steady substitution of the Indian for the European agency in the public service of the country; (2) those which seek to improve the methods of administration, such as the separation of Judicial from Executive functions, Police Reform, and similar proposals; (3) those which propose a readjustment of financial arrangements with the object of securing a reduction of the burdens of the taxpayers and a more efficient application of our resources; under this head come a reduction of military charges, the moderating of land assessments and so forth; and (4) those which urge the adoption of measures, calculated to improve the condition of the mass of the people; these include a vigorous extension of primary education, facilities for industrial and technical instruction, grants for improved sanitation, and a real attempt to deal with the alarming indebtedness of the peasantry. Now what I would most earnestly and respectfully suggest is that we should select from each group such reforms as may be immediately urged with the greatest effect and press them forward in this country and in England with all the energy we can command. In my humble opinion, our immediate demands should be:—

(1) A reform of our Legislative Councils, raising the proportion of elected members to one-half, requiring the budgets to be formally passed by the Councils, and empowering the members to bring forward amendments, with safeguards for bringing the debates to a close in a reasonable time. The Presidents of the Councils should have the power of veto. The Viceroy's Legislative Council consists at present of 25 members, of whom only 5 are elected, one by the Chamber of Commerce of Calcutta—a body of Europeans—and the other four by four provinces. We must ask for the proportion of elected members to be now raised to 12. Of this number, two seats might be given one to commerce and one to certain industries, and the remaining ten should be assigned to different provinces, two to each of the three older provinces, and one each to the remaining. And, to begin with, the right of members to move amendments may be confined to one amendment each. The two members for commerce and industries will generally be Europeans, and they will ordinarily vote with Government. Thus even if all the ten provincial members voted together, they would be only 10 out of 25. Ordinarily they will not be able to carry a motion against the Government, but on exceptional occasions they may obtain the support of two or three men from the other side, and then the moral effect of the situation will be considerable. In the provincial Legislative Councils, we must have an increase in the number of members, each district of a province being empowered to send a member. The objection that these bodies will in that case be somewhat unwieldy is not entitled to much weight.

(2) The appointment of at least three Indians to the Secretary of State's Council, to be returned, one each, by the three older provinces.

(3) The creation of Advisory Boards in all Districts throughout India, whom the heads of districts should be bound to consult in important matters of administration concerning the public before taking action. For the present, their functions should be only advisory, the Collectors or District Magistrates being at liberty to set aside their advice in their discre-

tion. Half the members of a Board should be elected representatives of the different Talukas or subdivisions of the district and the other half should consist of the principal District Officers and such non-official gentlemen as the head of the district may appoint. These Boards must not be confounded with what are known as District Local Boards. There is at present too much of what may be called Secretariat rule, with an excessive multiplication of central departments. District administration must be largely freed from this, and reasonable opportunities afforded to the people concerned to influence its course, before final decisions are arrived at. If such Boards are created, we may in course of time expect them to be entrusted with some real measure of control over the district administration. The late Mr. Ranade used to urge the importance of such Boards very strongly. If ever we are to have real local government in matters of general administration, the creation of these Boards will pave the way for it. One great evil of the present system of administration is its secrecy. This will be materially reduced, so far as district administration is concerned, by the step proposed.

(4) The recruitment of the Judicial Branch of the Indian Civil Service from the legal profession in India.

(5) The separation of Judicial and Executive functions.

(6) A reduction of military expenditure.

(7) A large extension of primary education.

(8) Facilities for industrial and technical education.

(9) An experimental measure to deal with the indebtedness of the peasantry over a selected area.

I think, gentlemen, if we now concentrate all our energies on some such programme, we may, within a reasonable time, see results, which will not be altogether disappointing. One thing is clear. The present is a specially favourable juncture for such an effort. In our own country, there is sure to be a great rebound of public opinion after the repression to which it has been subjected during the last three years. And in England, for the first time since the Congress movement began, the Liberal and Radical party will come into real power. My recent visit to England, during which I enjoyed somewhat exceptional opportunities to judge of the situation, has satisfied me that a strong current has already set in there against that narrow and aggressive Imperialism, which only the other day seemed to be carrying everything before it. The new Prime Minister is a tried and trusted friend of freedom. And as regards the new Secretary of State for India, what shall I say? Large numbers of educated men in this country feel towards Mr. Morley as towards a Master, and the heart hopes and yet it trembles, as it had never hoped or trembled before. He, the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone,—will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the government of this country, or will he too succumb to the influences of the India Office around him, and thus cast a cruel blight on hopes, which his own writings have done so much to foster? We shall see; but in any case his appointment, as Secretary of State for India, indicates how strongly favourable to our cause the attitude of the new Ministry is. Mr. Ellis, the new Under-Secretary of State for India, is openly known to be a friend of our aspirations. A more gratifying combination of circumstances could not be conceived, and it now rests with us to turn it to the best advantage we can for our Motherland.

CONCLUSION

Gentlemen, one word more and I have done. I have no wish to underrate the difficulties that lie in our path, but I am convinced more than ever that they are not insuperable. Moreover, the real moral interest of a struggle, such as we are engaged in, lies not so much in the particular readjustments of present institutions, which we may succeed in securing, as in the strength that the conflict brings us to be a permanent part of ourselves. The whole life of a people, which is broader and deeper than what is touched by purely political institutions, is enriched even by failures, provided the effort has been all that it should be. For such enrichment, the present struggle is invaluable. "The true end of our work," said Mr. Ranade nine years ago, "is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and developing to the full all his powers. Till so renovated, purified, and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were—a chosen people, to whom great tasks were allotted and by whom great deeds were performed. Where this feeling animates the worker, it is a matter of comparative indifference in what particular direction it asserts itself and by what particular method it proceeds to work. With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly by all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and, lastly, with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world, and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached—this is the promised land. Happy are they, who see it in distant vision; happier those, who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it; happiest they, who live to see it with their eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more. Famine and pestilence, oppression and sorrow, will then be myths of the past, and the gods will once again descend to the earth and associate with men, as they did in times which we now call mythical." Gentlemen, I can add nothing that may be worthy of being placed by the side of these beautiful words. I will only call to your minds the words of another great teacher of humanity who asks us to keep our faith in spite of trying circumstances and warns us against the presumption of despairing, because we do not see the whole future clearly before our eyes:—

"Our times are in His hand

Who saith 'A whole I planned,

'Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid.'"

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THE SEVENTH U. P. (POLITICAL) CONFERENCE

Fyzabad, Sunday, October 5th 1913.

* DRAFT RESOLUTIONS.

I. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL FOR THE UNITED PROVINCES.

Concurring with previous Conferences that council government, which is a more constitutional and advanced form of Government than single-man rule, makes for more efficient and better administration than the latter; and holding strongly that the United Provinces are in every way as fitted for that superior form of Government as is Bengal, Bombay, Madras, or Behar and Orissa, this Provincial Conference consisting of elected delegates from various districts of the Provinces of Agra and Oudh, respectfully and earnestly prays the United Provinces Government, the Government of India and his Majesty's Government to take the necessary steps with the least avoidable delay for the establishment in these provinces of an Executive Council with an Indian member in it.

To be proposed by *Rai Debi Prasada of Cawnpore.*

„ seconded by *Maulvi Mohammad Faig, B.A., L.L.B., of Fyzabad.*

„ supported by *Babu Narayan Prasad Nigam of Cawnpore*

II. Legislative Councils Regulations.

(a) This Conference would record an expression of its deep regret and disappointment that, although it was authoritatively declared when the Regulations to govern elections to Legislative Councils were first published and introduced that they would be suitably modified in the light of experience and although it was manifest that they produced wide spread dissatisfaction to which emphatic utterance was repeatedly given advantage was not taken of their revision last year to remove even some of their many anomalies and inequalities.

(b) This Conference would respectfully point out that the Regulations in their present form seriously fail to carry out the avowed intention of the Indian Councils Act of 1909, as they were stated by the then Secretary of State. They constitute a grave injustice to educated middle-class Hindus in particular. This Conference is strongly of opinion that substantial alterations should be made in the Regulations before the next triennial elections are held, and would urge the Government to appoint a committee with an adequate number of non-official Indians thereon, to consider and report on the subject.

(c) This Conference itself would press a reform of the Regulations on the lines indicated below:—

1. All communities should be placed on an equal footing in regard to the qualifications which would render a person eligible to vote.

2. If there are to be and as long as there are separate electorates no one should be allowed to vote in more electorates than one, and he should be allowed to choose the electorate in which he chooses to vote.
3. The constitvencies of members who under existing arrangements are elected by the delegates of municipal and district boards should be enlarged by the inclusion among voters of all persons who are eligible to be members of municipal and district boards and of graduates of five years' standing and further the election should be made less indirect by the system of voting delegates being done away with; these two measures having the effect of making the elected members of the council more truly representative of and more directly responsible to the people on whose behalf they hold seats in the council.
4. The election of two representatives to the Imperial Legislative Council now held by the non-official members of the Provincial Council, should be held instead by delegates of the general body of voters at the elections to the Provincial Council, one member being allowed for five revenue divisions and the number of voting delegates being fixed at not less than twenty for each division, the number of delegates of Municipal Boards being at least equal to the number of delegates of District Boards.
5. No restriction should be placed on the freedom of voters to elect as their representatives persons in whom they may have confidence, exception being made only against such as have been convicted of criminal offence that involve moral turpitude and also against those who may be ignorant of English.
6. The Kumaun division should be allowed to return one member to the Provincial Council; and the member for the Indian commercial community should be an elected member, those who are engaged in trade and industry and pay income-tax on not less than Rs. 2,000 a year being given the right to vote at his election, and the member now elected by the British Indian Association of Oudh should be elected instead by all Zemindars of Oudh who pay land revenue of Rs. 1,000 or more.
7. The title of hon'ble be no longer affixed to the names of members of Legislative Councils.

To be proposed by *Hafiz Abdul Rahim of Aligarh.*

„ seconded by *Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra, M.A., L.L.B., of Lucknow.*

„ supported by *Hon'ble Khwaja Gulamussaqain, B. A., L.L.B., of Meerut.*

„ supported by *Thakur Lal Bihari Singh, B.A., L.L.B. of Fyzabad.*

III. Local Self-Government.

(a) This Conference thanks the the Government for having appointed non-official chairmen in a number of municipalities, and for having placed local bodies in possession of larger funds to extend educational facilities and to carry out sanitary improvements.

(b) This Conference urges that early effect be given to the recommendations of the Royal Decentralisation Commission so as to increase the powers and the resources of local bodies and make local self-government a greater reality than it is at present.

(c) This Conference prays that as a rule municipal boards be permitted to elect their own chairmen, Bombay system modified to suit particular circumstances being introduced in the larger municipalities and that the right to vote at the election of members district boards be given to persons possessing certain prescribed qualifications instead of the voters' lists being left to be made by district officers in such manner as they may choose.

(d) This Conference concurring with previous Conferences, expresses its strong disapproval of separate communal representation in the case of local bodies as at once unnecessary and harmful to the smooth progress of local self-government, and prays that the same be not introduced.

To be proposed by *Mr. Narayan Prasad Asthma M.A. LL. B., of Agra*

seconded by *Mr. Devi Prasad Sukul of Cawnpore.*

supported by *Sirdar Thakur Singh of Fyzabad.*

IV.—Provincial Finance.

This Conference concurs with previous Conferences in holding that the present financial settlement has failed to secure to these provinces an adequate share of the revenues raised here. In view of the imperative need of a much larger outlay on education, sanitation, medical relief and other beneficial branches of the administration—in respect of all of which these large, important and populous provinces have made less progress than other provinces owing to inadequate expenditure thereon during all these years—this Conference earnestly reiterates the appeal made by previous Conferences to the local Government to press for and to the supreme Government to grant a larger share of the revenue for expenditure within and on the urgent needs of these provinces.

To be proposed by *Hon'ble Babu Balak Ram of Fyzabad.*

seconded by *Pandit Krishna Ram Mehta, B. A., LL. B., of Benares.*

supported by *Pandit Ram Nath Sapra of Lucknow.*

V. The Public Services.

(a) This Conference has noticed with deep regret that the evidence of British witnesses before the Royal Commission on Public Service in India has, as a whole, been characterised by a pronounced unwillingness to recognise the just claim of Indians to be appointed to high offices in their own country on terms of equality with Britons after all these years of western education notwithstanding the definite pledges of sovereign and Parliament. This Conference repels as utterly unfounded the charges of general incompetency, lack of character, etc., which the said witnesses have freely levelled at Indians as a people.

(b) This Conference begs to express the earnest hope that the Mayo Commissioners will, alike on grounds of national progress, justice economy, efficiency and expediency, see fit to make recommendations which will have the certain effect of increasing the present very inadequate share of Indians in the high appointments in the public services of their own country, thus redeeming the solemn pledge contained in the Charter Act of 1833 and in the Royal Proclamation of 1858.

(c) In particular this Conference places on record its deep conviction.

1. that full justice can never be done to the claim of the people of this country unless the examinations for the recruitment of the superior offices of the various public services be held in India as well as England under identical conditions as far as possible ;
2. that the age limit in the case of candidates for the Indian Civil Service should not be lowered as such a step will operate to the disadvantage of Indian candidates as well as prove detrimental to efficiency;
3. that judicial and executive service and functions should be completely separated, and the judicial service recruited from the legal profession and placed in subordination to the high courts instead of to the executive Government.
4. that no memberships of executive councils or judgeships of high courts should be reserved for the Indian Civil Service ;
5. that any rule or order which in terms or in effect operates as a bar against the appointment of an Indian as such to any office under the Crown for which he may otherwise be eligible, should be rescinded as opposed to the Act and the Proclamation hereinbefore mentioned ;
6. that the recruitment of the executive branch of the Provincial Service should be made by means of an open competitive examination instead of by nomination ;
7. that the Indian Educational Service should be recruited in India as well as England and Indians of the requisite attainments be appointed to it, both directly and by promotion from the Provincial Educational Service, as freely as are Britons ;
8. that Civil Medical posts should not be filled by the appointment of members of the military I. M. S. or I. S. M. D. and a district and separate Indian Civil Medical Service should be constituted therefor and recruited by means of a competitive examination held in India as well as England;
9. that, in view of the poverty of the people, the limited resources of the Government, the impossibility of raising more revenue from internal taxation without inflicting material hardship on the people, the great need of increased expenditure on several beneficial branches of the administration and the already excessive costliness of the administration, salaries which are sufficiently high at their present figure, should not be raised except in cases of absolutely proved necessity, and further that exchange compensation allowance should be abolished as it has been a costly anomaly since exchange was fixed by statute, and

10. that the people of those dominions of the Crown from which Indians are virtually shut out or in which they are not accorded the treatment that is their rightful due as equal British subjects, should be declared ineligible for appointment in India.

To be proposed by, *Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru M. A., LL., D. of Allahad.*

seconded by *Mr. J. Banerjee of Allahabad.*

supported by *Pt. Govind Sahai Sharma of Agra.*

Dr. Khadim Husain, Mr. V. N. Tewari.

VI. Education.

(i) ELEMENTARY.

(a) This Conference while expressing its grateful satisfaction that the Government have announced a policy of steady expansion of elementary education and increased the the outlay upon it regrets that the proposal made by the Government of India in 1906 that fee should be abolished in elementary schools was abandoned and that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's bill to make attendance at school compulsory with certain reservations was not allowed to be proceeded with.

(b) This Conference thanks the local Government for having appointed the Primary Education Committee and announced the intention of making an appreciable yearly increase in the expenditure on elementary education. And it prays that in passing orders on the recommendations of the said Committee his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor may be pleased to give his sympathetic consideration to the following suggestions:—

1. the principal aim should be the wider diffusion of education and the extension of facilities for the same, and it should not be subordinated to considerations of efficiency, desirable and important as this is so far as it is compatible with the main object;
- (2) the area that has to be covered being larger than the funds that are at present or will in the near future be available, it is essential as the Government has itself admitted that every rupee should be made to go as far as possible, and in this view, the agency of aided private schools should be preferred to the more costly board schools.
- (3) while the value of trained teachers is recognised, the establishment of new schools should not be deferred nor their number kept down until an adequate number of such teachers is available, but the programme of expansion should be carried out, the number of training schools being concurrently increased.
- (4) the indirect expenditure on education, such as that on buildings and inspection, should be kept within reasonable proportions so that more money might be available for the direct expenditure, and
- (5) apart from special grants made by the generosity of the Government of India, the local Government should accept the

aiding or the opening every year of a minimum number of new elementary schools as a definite charge on the provincial revenue in good seasons and in bad.

(c) This Conference welcomes the formation of the United Provinces Elementary Education League and would express the hope that it might be enabled by the liberal support of zemindars and other classes of the community to supplement the facilities afforded by the Government and local bodies.

(d) This Conference, concurring with previous Conferences, is strongly of opinion that in the present state of secondary education in these provinces, the rules which limit admissions into secondary schools ought not to be enforced with rigidity until an adequate number of schools can be opened. It has due regard for considerations of efficiency but submits that youths compelled to go without education would necessarily be less useful members of society than those whose education is not perfect.

(e) This Conference has learnt with thankfulness that the question of increased accommodation is engaging the attention of the Government. It begs to press on the Government the wisdom of the policy enunciated in the Education Dispatch of 1854 and re-affirmed by the Education Commission in 1882, of encouraging private effort by granting liberal aid, and not insisting at once on too high a standard as more extended facilities can be provided by that means than by favouring state-managed schools.

(f) This Conference disapproves of the levy of double fee from failed candidates re-admitted into schools, as the cost of education to parents, a large majority of whom are men of very moderate incomes, is sufficiently high without that additional charge.

(g) This Conference appeals to the Syndicate and the Senate of the University of Allahabad to relax the rule which lays down a maximum of admissions into classes until an adequate number of colleges comes into existence.

(h) This Conference is of opinion that there should be at least one first-grade college in every revenue division, and exhorts the people and appeals to the Government to establish such an institution at Fyzabad.

To be proposed by *Mr. Choubay Radhay Lal of Meerut.*

„ seconded „ *Mr. Ajodhya Das of Gorakhpur.*

„ „ „ *Mr. Pershotam Das Tandan of Allahabad.*

Mr. Ramdas Krishna of Allahabad.

VII.—INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

(a) This Conference feels bound to record its indignant protest against the passing of the Immigration Regulation Act by the Union Parliament of South Africa without embodying in it the provisions of the agreement between General Smuts and Mr. Gandhi and contrary to the pledges given by the Union Government to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, perpetuating the racial bar and certain other disabilities of the Indian community, retaining the obnoxious £3 tax in Natal; and actually taking away some existing rights.

The Conference records its sense of keen and profound regret and disappointment that the Governor-General of South Africa should have failed to do anything to safeguard the legitimate interests of his Majesty's Indian subjects during the passage of the said measure through the Union Parliament, and that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should have actually promised his support of it before he even had the text of the measure before him and knew aught of the opinion of the Indian community or of the Government of India regarding it.

This Conference has learnt with indignation, resentment, and grave concern that, while negotiations for a suitable amendment of the Act were still in progress, the authorities in South Africa have already been enforcing its provisions rigorously, and that the Indian community have been driven to renew passive resistance.

This Conference feels grateful to his Excellency the Viceroy for his sympathy with the struggling Indians and his affirmation of their rights as equal British subjects in every part of the empire and to his Excellency's Government for their efforts to secure proper treatment for Indians in the self-governing colonies.

The Conference begs to urge upon his Excellency's Government that the acute situation in the South Africa Union can only be adequately met by effective retaliation by the Government of India and prays that this may no longer be delayed.

This Conference tenders its grateful thanks to Lord Amptill and other friends for their noble efforts on behalf of Indians in South Africa.

Lastly, this Conference desires to convey to the Indians settled in South Africa through their heroic leader Mr. Gandhi an assurance of its whole-hearted sympathy with them in their misfortune, of its great admiration of their rare patriotism, and of its readiness to render such humble support as it may find possible in the manful struggle in which they are engaged, not for the first time, for the honour of the mother-land and the self-respect of the nation.

(b) This Conference thanks the Government of India for securing the redress of one grievance of the Indians settled in Canada and urges the necessity of a speedy removal of the impracticable requirement of the continuous journey clause.

(c) This Conference earnestly prays that the system of indentured emigration should be abolished at the earliest date alike on grounds of humanity, national self-respect and economic necessity.

To be proposed by Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru B. A., B. Sc., of Allahabad.

„ seconded „ Munshi Ishwar Saren B.A., LL.B., of Allahabad

„ supported „ Pandit Ramakant Malavya B. A., LL. B. of Allahabad.

Pandit Bansgopal Bajpai.

VIII.—Administration of Justice.

This Conference strongly urges—

- (1) that magisterial and police duties should in no case be combined in one and the same officer ;
- (2) that the judiciary should be recruited from among members of the legal profession ;
- (3) that judicial officers, civil and criminal, should be placed in subordination to the High Court ;
- (4) that for administrative purposes the High Court should be made subordinate to the Government of India and not to the local Government ;
- (5) that at least in cases in which the capital sentence can be awarded the trial ought to be by jury ;
- (6) that the right of a local Government to appeal on facts from an acquittal ought to be taken away ;
- (7) that the appellate court might order a new trial but should not have the right of converting a finding of an acquittal into that of a conviction ;
- (8) that in cases in which a local Government in the exercise of its powers passes at present has appealed from an acquittal or applied for an enhancement of sentence, it ought not to have the right to withhold petitions for mercy, to the Government of India.

To be proposed by *Mr. Prio Nath Banerjee of Bareilly.*

„ seconded „ *Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra M. A., LL. B., of Lucknow.*

„ supported „ *Mr. Chowdhri Niam-ul-lah B.A., LL.B., of Fyzabad*

IX.—AJODHIA PILGRIM TAX.

This Conference, concurring with previous Conferences, urges the repeal of the pilgrim tax at Ajodhia, a tax on visitors to be collected through the railway company being substituted therefor if the Municipal Board cannot afford to forego the income.

To be proposed by *Babu Manohar Lal of Fyzabad.*

„ seconded „ *Babu Gouri Shanker Prasad, B. A., LL. B., of Benares.*

X.—UNITED PROVINCES HUME MEMORIAL.

This Conference places on record its sense of the invaluable services rendered to India and these provinces in particular by the late Mr. Allan Octavian Hume, the revered father of the Indian National Congress ; accords its cordial support to the proposal of a United Provinces Hume Memorial, and appeals to the people to contribute generously to the fund so that a memorial worthy of Mr. Hume and of these provinces may be erected at Allahabad.

To be proposed by *Hon'ble Babu Bishambhar Nath of Cawnpore.*

„ seconded „ *Munshi Ishwar Saran B.A., LL.B. of Allahabad.*

XI.—SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY.

This Conference welcomes the establishment in these provinces of a branch of the Servants of India Society founded by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, feels confident that the public life of the provinces will receive a stimulus from its activities, and exhorts the public to take full advantage of its existence.

To be proposed by Hon'ble Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru M.A., LL. D.
 „ seconded „ Moulvi Mohamamad Faiq B.A., LL.B.

XII. Usury.

This Conference is of opinion that in view of the hardships that the present state of law inflicts upon the landowners, agriculturists, artisans and petty Government servants in the matter of allowing unlimited interest practically unrestricted accumulation in view of the fact that the law allows the courts no discretion in the matter of regulating interest. the Government should be pleased to adopt legislation to reform the present state of the law.

To be proposed by *Hon'ble Md. Khwaja Gulamussaqilaim o Meerut*
 „ seconded by *Mr. Gobind Sahai Sharma of Agra.*
 „ supported by *Molvi Md. Faiq B.A., LL. B., of Fyzabad.*

XIII. Submission of Resolutions

This Conference authorises and requests its President to submit Resolutions I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII, IX, X to the Governor General in Council; the aforesaid resolutions and Resolution IX, XII and XV to his honour the Lieutenant-Governor; Resolutions I, II, V and VII to the Hon'ble the Secretary of State; Resolution V to the President of the Royal Commission on Public Services and Resolution VII to the right hon'ble the Secretary of State for the colonies and it requests the secretaries of the Reception Committee to send a copy of Resolution VII to Mr. M. K. Gandhi.

To be proposed by
 „ seconded „

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SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

Hon. Meherban Narayanrao Babasaheb Chorpade
Chief of Ichalkaranji

AT THE

Bombay Legislative Council held to discuss
the budget of the year 1909-1910

ON

19th June 1909.

SPEECH

OF

Hon. Meherban Narayanrao Babasaheb Chorpade
the Chief of Ichalkaranji

AT THE

Bombay Legislative Council held to discuss
 the budget of the year 1909-1910

ON

19th June 1909.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I would offer hearty congratulations to the Honourable Sir John Muir Mackenzie on being able to place before the Council a budget which shows record expenditure and a sound financial position and handsome balance. I sincerely hope that the season will be normal as has been anticipated by him in the preparation of the budget. An earnest endeavour at reform is seen in all branches of the administration and I would with your Excellency's permission allude to some of them.

Government have lately been devoting greater attention* to the improvement of agriculture in the different parts of the Presidency. Provision has been made in the budget for increased expenditure under several heads such as demonstration on farms, contribution to agricultural shows and for sending students to England to study agriculture. In connection with this last item I am of opinion that it would be advisable to send scholars after their course in England is finished to study the methods of practical agriculture to countries where the economical condition of land, labour and capital are as nearly akin* to this country as is possible under the circumstances. I do not know in what country this is the case. But it is a fact that there is no similarity in this respect between India and England. Perhaps it would be advantageous to study the methods in France, Italy and Holland. These would perhaps come more near to some of the provinces of India.

Another satisfactory progress during the year is the commencement of the industrial survey. This ought to have been done long ago but then it is never too late to begin and if a competent officer is selected or the work he will be able to accomplish a good deal. The chief industry in this country is agriculture. But as this depends to a large extent on rainfall which is very uncertain a large portion of the people who depend upon it find themselves without means to support themselves and they fall on the hands of Government in times of famine. The opening up of other industries would relieve the present congestion on land and would go a great way in improving the condi-

tion of the labouring classes and mitigate the suffering caused by famine and it would also add materially to the wealth of the country.

It is also gratifying to note that a large grant for expenditure on irrigation works has again been made in the current year. It has been a long standing complaint that Government spend more on Railways instead of upon large irrigation works. Large irrigation works are a sure protection against famine. This cannot be said to the same extent of Railways. It is satisfactory that Government have already commenced two large irrigation works which are calculated to irrigate a considerable area in the famine districts.

It is a pity Government have been forced to omit the reorganisation of the subordinate forest establishment from this year's budget. These people have in many cases got to do very hard duty away from their homes and in very unhealthy climate and in inclement weather and they ought to get increased salaries. I hope the Government of India will favourably consider the application of this Government for an increased grant.

There is a very great scope for the exploitation of forests in this presidency. It is the only head of revenue which can be increased without putting any extra burden on the people and it is hoped Government will spare no efforts in improving the forests and making them more valuable. If the resources of the forests are properly developed by new and improved plantation of trees useful in several industries it will result in considerably adding to the public exchequer.

The reduction of copying fees from $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas to 2 annas per hundred words in the registration of documents will give great relief to the poor people who find the present scale of fees and court fee stamps very heavy.

The Talaties will feel very grateful for their inclusion in superior service and they will now enjoy in their old age their well-earned pension and thus be free from anxiety about supporting themselves when they are not able to earn their maintenance. I wish Government had shown the same liberality to the Patils in the Ratnagiri District some of whom are now required to serve Government on the very insignificant yearly payment of Rs. 3 or so.

The policy of abolishing toll-bars begun last year has been followed this year and fifty more toll-bars have been selected for abolition. The Local Boards which would suffer from the abolition of these bars, are I am glad to find to get compensation, for otherwise they will not be able to bear the loss their resources being limited.

In this connection I would point out one fact viz that these toll-bars were very useful as so many halting places for cartmen where they could rest their bullocks and where they were sure to receive help and protection from highway robbers &c. In fact practically these bars were so many posts. The abolition of these would prove a loss in this respect. Even if Government establish police stations on roads they cannot be as useful as the toll-bars because the police are generally found to lord over the poor passers by who naturally try to avoid coming in contact with them.

The welcome change in the budget procedure that was announced last year by the Hon'ble the Finance Member has come in force and a meeting of the Council was arranged this year to discuss the statement before it was sent up to the Government of India. I sincerely congratulate your Excellency's Government upon the opportunity thus given to the no-official members to make suggestions in the matter of reappropriation between the various departments. The necessity of such a step seems to have been recognised all round as similar procedures have been adopted in other presidencies also. I would like in this connection to suggest a further advance by allowing the statement to be discussed by the press and the public before it is presented to the Council. At present even when the budget has received the sanction of the Government of India and copies of it are supplied to members of the council the statement is considered confidential before its regular introduction in the council meeting. The practice has its own drawbacks. The elected members have no opportunity of knowing the opinions of their electors on the various proposals in the budget before it comes for discussion in the council. The public also cannot discuss it before it is introduced in the council and this naturally deprives Government and the council of the valuable material that would help them to discuss the proposals in the light of the varied public and individual opinion expressed on them. A discussion of the statement after it is presented to the council is stale and uninteresting. I have therefore to suggest that copies of the statement be issued to the press when they are usually sent to the members of the council. The benefit of such a change would be invaluable when under the reform scheme a fuller discussion of the statement will be allowed. As your Excellency is already taking a keen interest in the reform scheme I hope the suggestion will be favourably considered and increased facilities given for a full discussion of the statement before it is presented to the council or the practice followed in the Vice Regal Council may be adopted. I understand in that Council the budget is discussed one week after its presentation to the Legislative Council.

It is satisfactory that Government proposed to present the financial statement in the first week of April that is to say at the beginning of the financial year. Government however generally moves to Mahableshvar before April and a meeting of the council on the bills would be rather inconvenient to the members. Hence it was suggested in the Committee meeting of February last to hold the meeting early in the monsoon as usual. If government however hold the budget meeting in Bombay or Poona in the first week of April it would be very convenient to the non-official members. They have been urging upon Government to present the statement as early as possible and they would be the first to welcome the change.

I would draw the attention of Government to another matter connected with the council meetings. At present the non-official members get the actual expenses incurred by them whenever they attend the council meetings and they are required to submit their bills to Government. It is true some of the members receive payment in this way. But I submit that the practice followed in the imperial Legislative Council of giving a fixed allowance to the members for

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every month of the Council session they attend, is more dignified and convenient both to members of council and Government. It is expected that under the new enlarged council scheme there will be more meetings and members coming from mofusal will have to stay continuously for some days at the seat of Government. There would be also more work and the number of representatives coming from mofusal would be increased. It would, I think be desirable under these circumstances either to follow the procedure in the Vice-regal Council or as is the case with the standing committee of the Corporation of Bombay and other business bodies to make a fixed payment to the member for every meeting that is attended by him. That would do away with the necessity of submitting bills for the expenses incurred and it would be a help to members coming from mofusal who would devote their time and energy to the Council work.

I was glad the Honourable Mr. Setalwad last year drew your
Appeals from the Native States. Excellency's attention to the system of deciding appeals from the decisions of the Agency courts. I would join him in what he said. At present the appeals are decided by His Excellency the Governor-in-Council and the parties do not get a hearing. This system might have suited old times when there were neither laws nor Regulations and Acts and Procedures introduced in the Native States; and where a kind of ready and rough justice was administered by the Indian rulers and political officers. Now in almost all states the judicial system is constituted on the model of British methods and the subjects of the Native states expect to have the same facilities and the same safeguards for the proper administration of justice as their neighbours in the British territory. The principal thing is that the parties must feel that they are getting justice and this cannot be said to be the case when the appeals are not decided in open court but decided on the written applications of the parties and reports submitted by the Agency. I would therefore suggest that a judicial Commissioner of the status of a High Court Judge should be appointed who after hearing the parties in open court should advise your Excellency as is done by the Privy council in England.

Among other minor objects Government have made provision
Calendering the Peshwa's diary. for calendering the Peshwa's diary in the current year. The work, I believe is carried under the supervision of responsible and capable persons and permission would be given to publish important and useful extracts. It would be a valuable addition to the Maratha history.

With regard to the question of free primary education the sub-
Free primary education. ject has been much discussed in and out side this council from all points of view. The Government of India laid down in their circular letter the principle that primary education is one of the necessities that the State is bound to provide for the general well-being of the community. But this Government I am sorry to find does not think that they can act up to that principle. There are no two opinions about the desirability of free and compulsory primary education. The question only is whether the time has arrived for its introduction in this Presidency. This Government have practically accepted the principle by maintaining free schools for girls and depressed classes as an encouragement to education among them. I would now urge upon Government at least to extend the

principle to all the primary schools under their direct control. The main objection advanced against its general application is the loss of income from fees which cannot be dispensed with while funds are required for starting new schools. The total amount of fee receipts in schools of all kinds was Rs. 3,85,286 in the year 1907-08. Government have stated in reply to one of my questions that there are only seventeen primary schools strictly Government and the income derived from fees in these schools is 1970. While the fees of Local Boards and municipal schools amounted to Rs. 2,27,553. It follows therefore that if Government contemplate introducing free education in strictly Government schools as an experiment and as an example to be followed by others the loss of money to Government would be Rs. 1970 only.

I would draw your Excellency's attention to the value of of such an experiment however small it may seem to be. It is not a question of money but one of practical proof of recognition of the principle by Government of free primary education. It would set an example to the rich and enterprising Local Boards and municipal corporations which maintain almost all the primary schools in the presidency. I would request Government to take a lead in the matter by first remitting fees in their schools and leaving the Local Boards and municipalities to follow according to their own convenience and means. Such a step is bound to act morally on all educational bodies. It must have been noticed that when Government of India first moved in the matter the idea was readily taken up by some Native states on our side and they remitted fees in their schools. The enthusiasm is bound to subside when an impression gets abroad that Government themselves are sceptic in the matter. Government have already submitted their views on the subject to the Government of India and the final decision will be anxiously awaited. The idea mooted by the Government of India has given great satisfaction to the educated classes and the reform is certain to benefit the masses. Hence every effort of Government in this direction will be highly appreciated. Government should therefore be prepared to bear the loss of fee receipts if not for anything else at least for the sake of popularity the measure would bring to Government.

As regards the provision for the extension of primary education made in this year's budget it is to be regretted that Government cannot carry out their original proposal owing to necessity of observing economy at the instance of the Government of India and the grant on this head is to be reduced to Rs. 60,000 only. Your Excellency's Government also think that this is a very small instalment. It is however gratifying to learn that this Government intend to provide the full sum of 1,14,000 as originally proposed by reappropriation from the grants under other heads.

The Director of Public Instruction is to be congratulated upon having been able to submit proposals for opening 1650 new schools involving an expenditure of Rs. 3.29 recurring and 88 non-recurring I would be glad to know in how many years this result would be achieved. I however trust that Government will be able to carry out the proposals in a year or two.

It often happens that Government are not able in the first place to make sufficient provision on this head and again they are

sometimes required to curtail the sum originally sanctioned for the purpose. It would be therefore desirable to first ascertain the utmost number of schools that could be opened in the Presidency and prepare a scheme by which the number could be reached in a definite and reasonable period of years. Government should then provide funds year after year for opening a fixed number every year. In this way Government will be able to show definite results as regards extension of primary education. Government have followed such a plan in irrigation and schemes of reforms in other departments. I would therefore request Government to consider the question.

Last year I had referred in detail to the question of religious instruction in schools. I had pointed out that there was no valid objection to enforcing religious instruction for boys until a certain age in the faith of their parents. The question of text books though a complicated one could be solved with a little effort. The then Director of Public Instruction Dr. Selby said in his reply that the religious instruction was not possible in the composite schools that we have got. This difficulty is not unsurmountable as it has been solved by the Mysore State and some other private institutions who have found out a workable plan to give religious instruction in their schools. I would urgently request Government to reconsider the question.

Two years ago I made an appeal in this council for a larger provision for medical instruction. I had observed that there was an enormous increase of students in the Grant Medical College and that the teaching accommodation was inadequate and that time has now come for the opening of one more college. The number of existing medical schools was very small and that admission in them was difficult. I am sorry these conditions still prevail with the result that the outturn of qualified graduates and Hospital Assistants is quite inadequate to the actual needs of the Presidency. It is only the big cities and towns where qualified men are available. In the mofusal the conditions are far from satisfactory. We have got a school at least in one out of four villages but we have only one Hospital Assistant at every Taluka town to administer to the medical wants of the people which are far greater than those of education. The increasing number of students going in for medical course in spite of the small number of posts open to them in Government service also shows that there is a still fair field for these men in the mofusal. That there is want of trained medical men will have to be admitted. This year Government have sanctioned Rs. 3,09 under the head of medical education but they are intended for strengthening the staff of the College and schools. No provision is made for the admission and teaching of large number of students in the medical college and schools. Unless this is done the want of trained medical assistance now felt will not be removed. Your Excellency is already doing much to alleviate human suffering by encouraging diffusion of right methods to protect against plague &c. such as inoculation. It was your Excellency's happy idea to organise the successful session of the last medical congress. Government have recently appointed an officer to investigate into the extent and causes of malaria in the city of Bombay. With such solicitude for the suffering humanity I hope your Excellency will consider the

whole subject and take steps to remove the want of trained medical men by increasing the provision for medical instruction.

I will once more urge the attention of this council to the subject of uniformity of weights and measures that are in use in different places. It is the interests of poor rayats and not that of the middle men to have uniformity in this matter. Those who have vested interests in the existence of a variety of weights and measures for example a merchant, or a sowker will naturally oppose any step, that robs them of any undue advantage they get from the present system. As far as I can see there is no practical difficulty in solving the question by an executive order or by undertaking legislation in the matter. It will not be opposed by the general public neither will it be considered in any other light except as an honest attempt to secure uniformity and remove a longstanding grievance. Government have done this in many other respects and often interfered with vested interests of sowkars, landholders and other middle men for the protection of rayats. Government need not be deterred by the notions and prejudices of western people in matters of this sort. Changes in existing weights and measures have been brought about by old Governments and even by Collectors and no body has ever thought it strange. Considering the acute and wide spread inconvenience and material loss caused by diversity in this matter to the rayat, I trust Government will take the subject in hand at an early date and endeavour to introduce some practicable reform in this matter.

It is really very strange that the Inamdar should be forced to apply for assistance if the revenue from his tenants is not collected by the village officers. This may be very well in the case of superior holders who are at liberty to collect their own dues. But it is an anomaly in the case of Dumaldars who are not at liberty to collect their own dues. At the most the village officers may apply for assistance if they are not able to collect the revenue without it. The village officers are now practically the servants of Government and consequently it is the duty of Government to see that they do their work properly and in case they fail to do it Government ought to issue the necessary process without waiting for an application from the Inamdar and have the work completed just as they do in the Khalsa villages. To say the least it is very unjust first to deprive the Inamdar of the power of collecting his own dues and to lay down that the collection shall be made by the village officers alone and then to give the Inamdar no protection whatever in case the village officers make default in their work and to throw the burden of proceeding against the tenant on the Inamdar.

In connection with the collection of Inamdars' dues I would point out one more fact. Para 3 of section 85 of the Land Revenue code lays down that in case the village officers fail to recover the dues of the Inamdar he may with the consent of the Collector recover his dues direct from the inferior holders. Although the village officers have been shown to have neglected the work revenue collection year after year and although large arrears accumulate year after year the collector does not give his consent to the collection by the Inamdar of his dues direct from the inferior holders. There is not a single case of the Collector having consented to the Inamdar collecting

his own dues from the inferior holders. I am really not able to understand why Government should not give the benefit of the provision of section 85 to the Inamdars when it has been shown that he suffers from the negligence of the village officers. There are several Inamdars who are invested with magisterial and civil powers by Government. There are again some who are jurisdictional Chiefs but even these are not allowed to collect their dues direct from the inferior holders. If they can be trusted with more important powers I don't see why Government should be so distrustful as regards the powers of revenue collection. The refusal of Government to allow the Inamdar under section 85 to make direct collection is construed by them to mean that Government are altogether indifferent to their interest.

When the village officers find that the Inamdar is allowed to collect his dues direct from the inferior holders if they make default in their work they would also be more diligent. When they find that there is a risk of losing their right of revenue collection they would be more careful and it would not be necessary to give the permission in many cases.

The only remedy which the holder of an alienated village has in respect of unauthorised cultivation of the land in the village by strangers is suit in a civil court. The trespassers cannot be proceeded against criminally as the act of unauthorised cultivation does not constitute criminal trespass. A civil suit is a costly and dilatory remedy which in the end often proves ineffectual as the individuals against whom it has to be instituted are often men of straw. Thus no remedy whatever is left to the Inamdar. Government have invested the Collector in similar cases with power to recover the full assessments as well as a fine from persons unauthorisedly occupying Government lands. If Government with their large resources think it necessary to have these powers for the protection of their land much more is the helpless Inamdar in need of such protection. I hope the representation which I have lately sent in on this point will receive your Excellency's sympathetic consideration.

I have on several occasions raised my voice in this Council against the tendency of Government to restrict the possession of arms in the case of Inamdars and old aristocratic families which possessed them for a number of years, or even generations. Almost all of them are of old pattern. These arms are necessary to certain Maratha and other families on religious and ceremonial occasions such as marriage, Barsa or infant naming ceremony and so on; and the holders of these arms men with stakes in the country. There is no likelihood of their being mis-used. Hence there is no necessity of depriving these people of their cherished rights of carrying them. Apart from the loss of means of self protection the members of these old families think it an insult to their dignity and to their caste if they are disallowed to keep the arms. I would urge upon Government to be liberal in dealing with the matter and not to unnecessarily offend the feelings of this important class.

I am glad to find that the question of advancing loans to old aristocratic and encumbered families on easy terms in order to free them from the clutches of the sowkars has at last engaged the attention of the Government. I had suggested several times that a sum should be set apart for this purpose. The Honourable member has observed on page 13 of the financial statement that provision for such loans can be made without difficulty. In order that deserving families should get the benefit of this it is necessary that the public should know of the readiness of Government to come to their assistance. If it is not possible to depute a special officer, as I suggested some time back, to select families whom it would be possible to free from debt within a certain number of years, at least wide publicity should be given to the fact of the readiness of Government to advance loans on easy terms to deserving families; I shall also try to make the liberal intentions of Government known to my constituents.

I would like to say a few words regarding the present mode of preparing and publishing the Sardars' list. In the beginning no distinction was made in the list and all names were entered in black ink. Government afterwards resolved to put the names of some of the Sardars in black ink and of the remaining in red ink. This was probably done to make a distinction between Sardars having jurisdiction with whom Government have entered into treaties or who come from old aristocratic families and hold large estates and those for rank and precedence only. I am however sorry to observe that for some years past on the death of a Sardar whose name was entered in black ink his successor's name was put in red ink or in other words he was to be a Sardar for rank and precedence only. With few exceptions this has been done in almost all the cases. No distinction was formerly made between Sardars having jurisdiction and treaty rights and those coming from equally old aristocratic families but holding large estates only. There is no necessity of making such a distinction and if Government at all wish to have it I would request them that instead of putting the names of old aristocratic families in red ink which were before entered in black ink and bringing them to the level of Sardars for rank and precedence only they should prepare a separate list of Sardars having jurisdiction and treaty rights and leave the general list as it was in the beginning, or the names of Sardars having jurisdiction should be omitted from the list altogether as their status does not wholly depend on their names appearing in the list. The matter is causing much uneasiness and resentment in the aristocratic families concerned and I earnestly hope Government will give their early consideration to it.

I am sorry to find that the idea of an advisory council seems to have been given up at least for the present by the Government of India. However I do not see why such a council should not be informally established for the Bombay Presidency. The advantages of a council constituted in the right way would be many and Government would have a means of having a mature and independent opinion on important subjects. It naturally happens that influential and capable men do not like to canvass for votes in a contested election. Government at present cannot make use of such men. It is hinted in some quarters that the nominated members are not candid in giving their opinion for fear of displeasing Government officials. On the other hand the same perhaps may

be said to some extent of the elected members who are afraid of saying things against the general trend of opinion of their electors. The advisory council would be a sort of upper chamber above all such petty considerations whose independent and experienced opinion would be entitled to respect and consideration and which would help Government to correctly estimate an impartial view of every matter.

I propose with your Excellency's premission to refer to the question of Inamdars in a general way, as I do not know whether under the new business rules I would have an opportunity next year to refer to it in such a manner. I have been ventilating the grievances of this class in this council for the last twelve years. It appeared in the beginning that Government were not aware of the existing hardships as they were not brought to their notice. Later on when Government were convinced of them they passed several executive orders which it was hoped would remedy the long standing grievances. I am however sorry to say that the action taken by Government has only touched the fringe of the subjects and it has only helped a little to improve the condition of the Inamdars. I firmly believe that the Inamdars' grievances would not end unless they were allowed to recover their revenue.

The class of Inamdars has undoubtedly fallen upon evil times. This is no doubt due partly to their own fault. They have not been watchful of their rights from the beginning. Want of education, absence of co-operation and organisation and a false sense of dignity and above all the fact of their being many divisions in the Inam villages have incapacitated them of zealously guarding their interests. They are very loth to write to the Press to ventilate their grievances. Many of them have received education and have worked on Local Boards, in Municipalities and in Government service but rarely a voice has been raised outside this council against the disabilities under which they have to live. Really speaking I am not the only representative who sits in this council on behalf of the Inamdars. One or two other members represent more or less this class who have a voice in their election. If the Inamdars had been more watchful of their interests they should certainly have found in them advocates of their interests in this council.

The Inamdars cannot hope to get redress unless they constantly urge upon the attention of Government their claims in a respectful but systematic way.

It is often said that there is no middle class in this country. This does not seem to be true. The Inamdars have long enjoyed the respect of both the Government and the people. They have for some reasons lagged behind in the present times of activity and the leaders have failed to notice this class as intermediaries between the people and Government.

It is rather curious that the Press and the public should think the grievances of the Khots and Malgujars and some times those of Sowkars worth ventilating in the papers and on the platform while they are appathetic to the hardships of the large class of Inamdars. It is true that the Inamdars themselves do not avail of every means of bringing them forward before the public. Another reason seems to be that the Inamdar is still supposed by the people to some extent to be a representative of the authority of Government in the village and so they think that he is not entitled to public support.

Permanent settlement is one of the strong planks in the platform of the Indian National Congress. But I wonder whether it has occurred to any body that the large class of Inamdars and vatandars are practically holders of tracts of lands on some what fixed permanent tenure.

It is a pity that no serious effort should have been made during so many years to radically remove the complaints of the Inamdars. The Inamdars are the natural and the hereditary leaders of the people. They are proper men who can speak on their behalf. Although they have been reduced to a miserable plight still it is a force of immense value to Government in their endeavours to govern the people properly. By tradition and instinct they are a loyal class of people. They are very proud of their inheritance and they are very much attached to their vatan. Those who know the Maratha nature properly, understand what power and hold the word Vatan has upon its people and this fact has been repeatedly borne out by Grand Duff, the famous Maratha historian. Government have given them promises to continue their Inams and Vatan and it is the interests of the Government to see that this class is prosperous and not discontented. It is a valuable asset which Government can turn to best account and over which Government exercise such a control. It is true that there is some discontent among the members of this class but it is due more to their not being treated with the consideration and courtesy due to them and to their grievances not being redressed for so many years than to anything else. It would be quite unjust to mistake this discontent for disloyalty. I would urge upon your Excellency to consider whether it would be a wise policy to allow this discontent to grow, in the present political state of the country when all the powerful and law abiding forces ought to be rallied round the guardians of law and order. If Government cannot even now see their way of bettering the lot of the Inamdars it will still further straighten them but I submit it is not possible to completely wipe this class out of existence or to entirely deprive them of their natural influence and field of activity among the people. I would therefore repeat the appeal that this valuable and loyal force should be kept in tact and properly directed.

This would be the last meeting under the existing system. It is now nearly seventeen years since the councils were enlarged and elected members were allowed to sit on them. My connection with this council extends practically from its beginning. For the first four years I was a candidate aspiring to get in and was a student of the work and progress of the council. While for about the last 13 years I have practically represented the Sardars in this council. When I look back upon this period it is interesting to note the gradual change in the attitude of officials towards the non-official members. In the beginning they seemed impatient of criticism, and the non-official members who offered criticisms on the policy of Government and suggested plans for reforms were at one time considered as hobby horse riders. A similar attitude was noticed in the beginning with regard to the interpellations put by the Honourable members in Council and this was considered more as an embarrassment to Government than an honest attempt to elicit information or to draw the attention of Government to a particular matter. There was a tendency to shirk the real issue of the matter and give vague replies. I am glad to observe however that a change for the better gradually came round.

Up to a recent time Government had been sending only the financial statement and the annual administration report to Honourable members of the Council. But I am glad to say that now-a-days the reports of the working of the various departments and other useful matters are being sent to the members. They contain such a large and valuable material that it would be difficult for a holiday politician to study them and master the details. They would be of greater use to the members when under the enlarged councils they will have to devote more time and labour to the council work.

It naturally happens that Government pay more attention to the questions that are much discussed by the public and at times overlook real and urgent grievances brought forward by the elected members that have not that support. But this I am afraid cannot be helped. I may however say from my personal experience that every opportunity of exchange of views was availed of and we have all along tried to put our point of view of the subject before the the council and although I am aware that Government have not been able to do all we wanted them to do or all that was possible for them to do they have been at least fully acquainted with our grievances and wants by this time and I must say that Government have at least sympathised with us when they were convinced of a wrong. I am glad to observe that although Government and the elected members have differed on several occasions we were almost always treated with uniform courtesy. I have no doubt the same will be continued hereafter and let us hope that the new councils will open an era of good and substantial work and of mutual trust and confidence among the official and non-official members of the council and lead to prosperity and advancement of the Presidency.

I hope your Excellency will permit me to take this opportunity of giving expression to the gratitude of my constituents to Government for allowing them to elect a representative to this Council. If this right were not granted to them they would not have been able to bring their grievances regarding the collection of their revenue to your Excellency's notice.

I cannot conclude my remarks without expressing on behalf of myself and the Sardars whom I have the honour to represent our heart-felt grief and sympathy for your Excellency's sad bereavements during the last few months. It is very seldom that we get at the head of the administration a man of affairs ripe in experience and possessing broad sympathies like your Excellency. We are therefore grateful to your Excellency for having continued in the midst of overwhelming misfortunes in your high and onerous office to the great satisfaction of the people and benefit to the Presidency.



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SUPPLEMENT TO THE MAHRATTA.

POONA, SUNDAY, 9TH MAY 1915.

17th Bombay Provincial Conference.

THE SEVENTEENTH BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE.

The Address of the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

(By Doctor V. R. Patvardhan, B. A. LL. B.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

On behalf of the Reception Committee I feel great pleasure in giving you a hearty welcome to Poona the ancient capital of the Deccan. Poona as you all well know has been the birth-place both of the Indian National Congress and of the Bombay Provincial Conference. The first Indian National Congress was to meet in Poona in 1885. But it was only on account of a sudden outbreak of cholera that year in Poona that the first session of the Congress came to be held in Bombay. Three years later, that is in 1888, the Bombay Provincial Conference was first organised and held in this City; and thereafter four successive sessions of the Bombay Provincial Conference were held here. The names of the distinguished gentlemen who graced the Presidential chairs on those occasions are Rao Bahadur V. M. Bhide (1888), Rao Bahadur Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh (1889), Dewan Bahadur Kaji Shahabudin (1890), Rao Saheb Govindrao Limaye (1891) and Mr. (now Sir) Pheroze Shah Mehta (1892). The first session of the Provincial Conference held outside Poona was at Ahmedabad in 1893 under the presidency of the late Mr. R. M. Sayani; and this was followed by three more annual sessions viz., at Bombay in 1894, Belgaum in 1895, and Karachi in 1896. Between 1896 and 1900 there was a break of three years in the sessions of the Bombay Provincial Conference; so that the tenth session of the Conference was held at Satara in 1900, the eleventh in Bombay in 1901, the twelfth at Sholapur in 1902, the thirteenth at Dharwar in 1903. After this there was another break of four years. And the fourteenth Provincial Conference was held at Surat in 1907 and the fifteenth at Dhulia in 1908 under the presidency of the late Hon. Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi. This last was after the unfortunate split in the Congress at Surat, where the Conventionists appointed a Committee of their own to frame a new constitution for their Congress. But the Dhulia Conference took no notice of it, and it was held on the lines of the previous Conferences; and the same course was followed at the Conference held by our energetic Satara brethren last year under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. Belvi. The present Conference, as the legitimate successor of the previous Conferences, is also held on the old lines. It may be mentioned that no attempt has as yet been made to hold a Provincial Conference in the Bombay Presidency under the Conventionist rules although seven years have passed since the birth of the new constitution; and in Bengal, at any rate, the Provincial Conference is still held under the old rules to secure the concerted voice of all in the deliberations.

According to the rules and practice followed in holding the sessions of the Provincial Conference in this province, the duty of arranging for a session of the

Conference rests with the President of the last preceding Conference and the Secretaries appointed therein; and generally speaking the place of the next session is notified in a resolution of the Conference. This was done at Satara, and according to it this year's Conference was to be held at Ahmednagar. But the lamented and untimely death of Mr. Bala Saheb Deshpande, who was a leading citizen and at the same time a most sympathetic and energetic worker in the public cause, was, amongst other things, one of the causes which led to the Conference not being held this year at Ahmednagar. It was then proposed to hold it at Belgaum, but the prevalence of plague at that place made it necessary to hold the Conference at some other place. Poona was, therefore, next approached, and though there was very little time for making the necessary arrangements for the purpose, steps were taken for holding the Conference here at a public meeting of the residents of Poona held under the auspices of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. We have endeavoured to do our best in the limited time at our disposal and we depend upon your kind indulgence if there are shortcomings or defects in our arrangements. Having regard to the ardour and enthusiasm with which you have all taken the trouble to assemble here to work in the cause of the people of this province, we fervently hope that under the blessings of the Almighty you will not spare any effort to help us to make this session of the Conference a complete success.

Before however requesting you to proceed to the proper work of the Provincial Conference I have no doubt that my brother delegates will permit me to say a few words regarding the necessity and importance of observing the sound and reasonable principle of election which we have hitherto followed in convening our Conferences. All our public work consists, in my humble opinion, in the first place in considering the various needs and requirements of the people of the Province or Provinces, and secondly suggesting the adoption of adequate means to meet such needs and requirements,—having divided such needs and requirements into two classes namely those which can be satisfied mainly by self-help and cooperation of the people themselves and those which require the submission in proper form and manner to the proper authorities having power to grant adequate relief in the matter. This being the case, it follows that the representatives who gather in any public assembly should be elected on as broad a basis as possible and not one fenced by limitations. The principle of election is not exotic in India. Although owing to several causes the form of government in India was monarchical, yet the people enjoyed, under the ancient law, large liberty in administering their own affairs and sometimes they elected even their King. Thus an interesting passage in the Aitareya Brahman informs us—

“The Devas said, it is on account of our having no king that Asuras defeat us. Let us elect a king. All consented. They elected Soma their king. Headed by the king they were victorious in all directions.”

There are passages in Manu, to the same or similar effect, but it would be pedantic to quote them in this place. Suffice it to say, that our old village communities,—which the Government of India now intend partially to revive,—were organized on sound elective prin-

ciples, no section of the community of the village being excluded from the franchise. The same principle is followed in the Municipal and Local-board elections at present; and the oldest political association here, I mean the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, was organized on the same general principle by that indefatigable popular leader, the late Mr. Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi, generally known as Sarvajanik Kaka, under the advice of the late Rao Bahadur M. G. Ranade. If the Government themselves are pleased to allow the people to use the medium of duly elected representatives for the higher purposes of administration, how can, I fail to see, any one with justice and reason urge that the people should not have the use of the same medium for the much humbler purpose of placing their needs and requirements before Government.

Much has recently been made regarding the aims and objects of popular organizations like the Conference and the Congress. But allow me to observe, gentlemen, that the stress laid on this point seems to me rather out of place. The position of the people in this behalf may be thus defined. They approach the Government through their elected delegates by representing in proper form their needs and requirements and solicit relief in that respect. This creates the relation of donor and donee between our popular associations and Government; and this being once admitted and realised, every one who joins any organization like ours is by his very presence estopped from pleading any other view with respect to the same. I don't think that there is any delegate here who will question this broad fact, the very basis on which such organizations are founded; and I have therefore no hesitation in saying that we are all thoroughly constitutional and loyal representatives of the people.

But I don't wish to take up your time by such discussions any longer. I have already referred to the loss we have sustained by the death of Balasaheb Deshpande of Nagur. But this is not the only loss we have sustained during the year. In Poona we have had to mourn the loss of Sardar Balwant Ramchandra Natu, and last but not the least that of Hon. G. K. Gokhale. The last is a national loss; and as it forms the subject of a resolution to be placed before you, I refrain from dwelling on this unfortunate and sad incident in this place. I have told you the history of this Conference and how it came to be held this year on old lines in continuation of the Conferences held at Satara last year; and I have also stated some of the reasons for which I regard it necessary to maintain in integrity the principles of elections hitherto followed. The ideal of Education, Unity and Hope has received the high sanction of His Most Gracious Imperial Majesty King George V. Let us all, therefore, loyally cherish and further the same by all means in our power.

I now call upon you, brother delegates, to proceed as usual with the election of the President.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

(By Mr. Joseph Baptista, B. A., Bar-at-Law.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Permit me to offer you my most cordial and grateful thanks for the high honour you have done me in asking me to preside over the deliberations of this Conference. I must candidly confess that it is with feelings of deep diffidence that I venture to occupy the chair which has been dignified in the past by a long line of able men, the most illustrious of whom is that courageous and sagacious Tribune of the People, Sir Pherozshah Mehta. I wonder why your choice has fallen upon me. I have taken no part in politics except as a student and a spectator. I have never been present at any Provin-

cial Conference. Only once have I attended the Indian National Congress as a delegate. I am not a member of any political society and have joined no political party. I am not a moderate, nor an extremist, nor even that false fury from Inferno—the anarchist. I have done no political work in this country. The only thing I have ever done is, that, in the Corporation of Bombay, I have occasionally indulged in words of learned length and thundering sound to the amazement of the gazing aediles ranged around. But from prating in the Corporation to presiding in this famous capital of the Peshwas amongst the warlike Marathas, the task is different and difficult. But my friends flatter me that I will promote the cause of conciliation by presiding. Blessed is the Peace-maker. You know very well the adage, "United we stand; Divided we fall." I shall be only too glad to render any service I can. This is my only qualification. For the rest I must crave your indulgence and rely on your forbearance and cooperation in attempting to discharge the duties devolving upon me as President.

G. K. GOKHALE.

My first duty is to that departed patriot who has been cut off in the prime of life with such shocking suddenness. His external physical frame and youthful appearance evidently concealed a constitution that had been shattered to pieces in the service of this country. It can be truly said of him that he so loved his Motherland that he gave his very life for her Bande Mataram! His death caused a profound sensation throughout the length and breadth of India. It cast us all into the fierce furnace of affliction. King, Prince and people sorrowfully approached his funeral pyre to place a wreath thereon in token of their esteem. Never before in the annals of our country-men has such a moving scene been witnessed in British India. What is the cause of this universal feeling? Simply this, that he was true as steel and clear as crystal in his country's cause. With Ranade he believed that the people of India were the chosen people of God. In promoting the political progress of his people he was animated by the highest ideals and purest patriotism. He entertained no illusions about the mighty forces arrayed against him. Nevertheless in all his battles with the British Bureaucracy he brandished only the most honourable weapons and never hit below the belt. Hence it came to pass that all esteemed him. But it is sad to think that all his talents, his restless energy, his exquisite eloquence and his burning patriotism were able to achieve but little. That is not his fault. It is his misfortune. But so far as we are concerned, his greatest glory consists in this that he has set a noble example to his compatriots by his self-sacrificing devotion to his country, by his Servants of India Society, and by his skilful use of peaceful methods after the manner of that great Liberator of Ireland,—Daniel O'Connell. May he receive in Heaven the reward of his faithful stewardship on Earth.

B. G. TILAK.

The name of the great Irish Patriot calls to my mind the name of a living Indian patriot. I mean Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak. I am sure I am only voicing your sentiments when I extend to him a warm welcome to his "Home, Sweet Home."

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead

Who never to himself hath said —

"This is my own, my native land."

We can imagine with the poet what must have been Mr. Tilak's joy when he began that return journey to his own native land, after six long years of expiation and exile, and here he is hale and hearty and full of vitality. I am not sure his exile was not a blessing in disguise.

In ancient Greece, exile was the normal fate of the idol of the people. The Greeks were so jealous of their liberties that they looked with alarm upon popular applause. They feared that the hero of the people might become

a Dictator and trample under foot their rights and liberties. To avoid this catastrophe they sent the best and bravest of the Greeks into exile for a time. But when danger threatened their commonwealth the exiles were recalled and placed at the head of the Grecian warriors to defend their fatherland. I am sure we have the same confidence in Mr. Tilak that the ancient Greeks had in their exiles. I am sure he can render useful service to his people in this hour of trial. For whom should Mr. Tilak work if not for his people? "Born of the people, trusted by the people" he must work and die for the people! That is his destiny. I trust God will give him strength and wisdom to serve the people and the Government for many a year. But it is said that Mr. Tilak is the apostle of violence. If there were a particle of truth in it I should feel bound in duty to keep him at arm's length. But such allegations are not surprising against one who has preached the gospel of Home Rule for India with all the fervour of a Parnell. But I will tell you what one of the conspirators whom I defended thought of Mr. Tilak in this respect. I asked him if Mr. Tilak had ever suggested force or the use of pistols. "What! Tilak! What does that old Brahmin know of pistols and clubs?" But now that Mr. Tilak is free he will be able to vindicate his character as successfully as he has fought the Tai Maharaj Case.

I must here congratulate Mr. Tilak and Mr. Khaparde upon their complete victory in that case. I allude to it because these two men who had played a prominent part in the political movements of this country were found guilty of "conspiracy and of perjury" and were thereby disgraced and disqualified for such work in future. Mr. Justice Chandavarkar observed:—"We are driven to believe that a considerable number of men of good position have conspired together to give false evidence." Ladies and gentlemen, mark the expression "driven to believe." Yet not "one word of it is justified by the evidence in the case. ... The conclusion come to by the learned judges is entirely unwarranted on the facts." Such is the opinion of their Lordships of the Privy Council. We have all heard of the triumphs of peace being more enduring than the glories of war. I believe such a judgment is one of those triumphs. It restores confidence in British Justice and makes for the stability of British Rule in India.

WAR.

Speaking of the Stability of British Rule in India, our minds naturally wander to that distant theatre of war where 2,00,000 gallant Sons of India are fighting and dying for the Empire. It is the most gigantic war the world has ever seen; and a horrible scourge. All the instruments of death and desolation which the art of man can devise are handled with scientific precision. In this war the number of the killed and wounded will exceed the largest number of soldiers ever engaged in any previous war. What a dreadful drain on the manhood of Europe! In the old days the pagans of Rome used to say:—"See, how these Christians love one another." Today they would say:—"See how these Christians kill one another." It is saddening to an Indian Christian that this carnage is possible in Christendom in the 20th century. Fortunately for us, the cause of England is a just cause, and a righteous cause. She is fighting for liberty and her very existence. She is fighting against the Prussian Hydra lusting for world-power. Let us pray, that, before the year is ended, the Allies will emerge triumphant from this Titanic Struggle for liberty and humanity against Militarism. The inconstancy of arms is no doubt proverbial, but victory is practically assured. It is a question of munitions and in this respect the Allies have an enormous advantage. With the German Fleet bottled up, the Allies can draw upon the arsenals of the whole world for the munitions of war. But though success is certain, there is one insidious enemy which requires watching—Dame Rumour. The

wildest tales of German successes find their way into the Bazaars and spread like wild fire. It may do mischief. I do not know if this is the work of evil-minded men. I am inclined to think that fear is the mother of invention. I will give you one illustration. Last October His Excellency the Governor happened to go to Matheran for the week end. A few additional policemen also went there in consequence. But this set the malees of Matheran a-thinking. One old malee in trembling voice asked me—"Is it true, Sahab, that the Germans are coming to Matheran?" "Certainly not" said I. "Why then has the Governor come here and so many policemen?" Imagine the Governor at the head of the Kolaba Police lying in wait for the Germans on the Matheran. With credulous masses anything is possible. Hence the necessity to be in touch with them to dispel false rumours and false fears. I have said this war is a scourge; but methinks it is a blessing in disguise for India. It has enabled the Viceroy to send that magnificent message of loyalty to England from the Princes and People of India, which captivated the English imagination and captured their hearts. This is a blessing indeed. All the nation could not have secured such a blessing. Lord Ripon assured the English people that they could safely trust us even in the hour of danger. Our Grand Old Man preached, in season and out of season, "Trust and fear not." But they would not listen. They took us for potential rebels crying for the moon and ready to set the prairie on fire. But the war has put us to test and it is found we are as good as gold. We now hear Englishman exclaim:—"Oh the shame of it, that we should have distrusted the people who are actually shedding their blood for us." This war has changed the "angle of vision." Henceforth the British Policy will be, and must be:—"Trust and fear not." It heralds the dawn of a new day. No one will now say that the Magna Charta of India is more or less a mere scrap of paper. No more will Lord Morley's rebuke be required. Just as the Sepoy Mutiny removed the government of India from the hands of the East India Company, so this war will remove it from the hands of the Anglo-Indian Company. In a word it has sounded the knell of the Bureaucratic System of Government and brought us within sight of the Promised Land. But believe me, without Lord Hardinge we shall not be able to enter it without trouble and tribulation.

VICEROYALTY.

And this brings me to the question of the prolongation of the Vicerealty of Lord Hardinge. Upon this point the feeling is unanimous and spontaneous. We all sanguinely hope and sincerely pray that his term of office may be extended as long as possible. The feeling is natural, born of love and gratitude. We cannot part from Lord Hardinge because he has loved us, suffered for us, and actually shed his blood for us on that black day when the hand of the assassin was on him. And now another bereavement has befallen him in the death of his son. How can we part with one who nearly lost his life for us? The thing is unthinkable. We cannot part with him because we can part our trust in him; we have full faith in him. In this crisis a trusted Viceroy is indispensable. Besides in Lord Hardinge we have a sagacious statesman who believes that righteousness exalteth a nation. He never shrinks from doing the right thing despite the fulminations of his own countrymen. "Deeds and not words" is his motto. By his deeds he has proved himself a staunch champion of our rights. Before his clarion call the citadels of colour, of pride and prejudice, crumbled to pieces like the walls of Jericho. Like Gladstone he is a true Christian statesman. His name will go down to posterity as a synonym for courage, righteousness and justice. It is strange that his name should be enshrined in our hearts as the Benefactor of the people of India—what a tower of strength is such a man in such a crisis both for the rulers and the ruled. I am confident that our King-Emperor will listen to the humble prayer of his people and spare Lord Hardinge

or a few years to lead us on to our destiny after the War is over.

HOME RULE.

What are the reforms we advocate? First and foremost Home Rule with Provincial Autonomy. The present Bureaucratic system is doomed. Since the Queen's Proclamation the public mind of India has so expanded that it has completely outgrown that system. Indeed the proudest day in English history of which Lord Macaulay spoke has arrived. Home Rule with Provincial autonomy is the solution suggested by Reason and the laws of Political growth. Let us reflect for a moment. When two Nations are brought under one Rule there must be either Fusion, Federation or eternal Subjugation. Now no sane mind will contend that India with its teeming millions should be kept under perpetual pupillage. Therefore I will not discuss it. There remain Fusion and Federation. Fusion takes place when each Nation desires to merge itself into a larger entity. This is exemplified in the case of England, Scotland and Wales becoming Great Britain. But when the forces of Union and Separation are more or less evenly balanced, Federation is the result like that of the United States of America. Fusion is the highest form of union with perfect equality for every citizen. Now if a referendum were tried I am certain that every intelligent Indian would vote for Fusion whereas every Englishman would vote against it. The reason is plain. India would become the predominant partner and overwhelm England by its size, its population and perhaps the quality of its brains. "The Saxon is slow-witted" said Cardinal Vaughan. In other words England would be conquered by India. Now that is a consummation devoutly to be wished for. But it would not be very reasonable to ask Englishman to appreciate its excellence. The only alternative is Federation. The trend of events in England is towards Federation. Home Rule all round is loudly whispered. When that comes there will be Federation and a Federal Council, which would deal with all matters affecting the whole Empire. India will be one of the Federated States with representatives on the Federal Council. But the vastness of India renders it too unwieldy for one central Government. It must be sub-divided into Provinces of good size as suggested by Bright. People speaking the same language should as far as possible be brought within the same Province. Each Province should have a Governor and Council. The Native States might as well be brought in a line with the Provinces. The States may have a king and Council. In the Provinces the supremacy of the Executive should be abolished and a beginning be made in the direction of Representative Government and the cabinet system. The Provinces should be controlled by the Viceroy in Council. Subjects of Imperial importance affecting the whole of India should be reserved for the Imperial Council and the rest entrusted to the Provinces as in the United States of America. This scheme is more conservative than the congress creed and makes for union whereas the colonial model without the tie of blood makes for separation. I put this forward as a tentative suggestion. There is no finality in it. Many minds are required to forge a workable scheme. I would therefore suggest that a Home Rule League be formed to formulate a reasoned Home Rule scheme suitable to India. Meanwhile as a step towards Provincial autonomy the existing Legislative Councils should be enlarged. The franchise should be extended. Electorates less amenable to Government influences should be created. The right to initiate bills and move Resolutions should not be fettered. In this way alone is true Political progress possible. So much for constitutional reform. I shall now turn to a grievance which has become intensified since the War. I mean commissions in the army for qualified Indians.

COMMISSION IN THE ARMY.

The present disability is unjust and repugnant to one's self-respect. Its injustice arrested the attention

of Lord Lawrence, then Sir Henry Lawrence, so long ago as 1844. In 1885 Lord Napier said that "a great injustice was being perpetrated in withholding commissions." The Duke of Connaught submitted proposals which culminated into Lord Curzon's Cadet Corps. Lord Minto actually submitted a scheme for the formation of an Indian Regiment to be officered by Indians. But it was pigeon-holed in the archives of the India Office. It transpires that the Asses Bridge was racial prejudice. But he would be a bold man who would talk about racial prejudices now. Indian soldiers are fighting and dying for the Empire. By their prowess and resourcefulness they have covered themselves with glory. Three of them have already won the Victoria Cross. Their valour excited the admiration of England and France. Their heroic deeds make our heart throb with pride. Who will now venture to entertain racial prejudice? There should be no apprehensions in this respect. I have advocated commissions in the army as a measure of justice; but I fear it is a necessity for the safety of the Empire. The next great War will probably be waged in Central Asia. We must be ready to put forth millions of soldiers. The present alliances may not endure. England and Russia fought against France; England and France are fighting against Prussia. England and Turkey fought against Prussia; England and Russia are now at war with Turkey. A liberal policy will intensify Indian loyalty. What boundless enthusiasm would it not have evoked if at this moment there were an Indian general on the battle field. I trust that in the future we shall have not only Indian Generals, but Indian Field-Marshal and Indian Rear-Admirals as one of the blessings of this War.

PRESS AND PRISONERS.

The repeal of the repressive legislation of the last few years ought to be another blessing of this war. Those who have to manage the press and publish journals justly feel that the sword of Damocles is constantly hanging over their heads. The release of the political prisoners will be an act of grace that will yield good fruit. I should like to bring to the notice of His Excellency the Governor one case where a man was convicted of attempting to wage war. The only weapons he used were a few doggerels without rhyme or reason. The Courts had no option but to transport him for life. But a sentence of transportation for publishing doggerels is not in keeping with the Majesty of the Law and the Might of the Empire.

LORD WILLINGDON.

Coming now to our own Province we must congratulate ourselves that we have in Lord Willingdon a Governor who is a thorough English gentleman, full of sympathy for our legitimate aspirations. "The English notoin of a gentleman," said a Don at Cambridge, "is that he is the very embodiment of culture, chivalry and all that is noble and virtuous." Such a gentleman is Lord Willingdon. Sorrow has overtaken him. I am sure I am expressing your sentiments when I say that we all share their Excellencies' sorrow at the unknown fate of their son. A mother's grief is great and deep, and yet wherever Lady Willingdon goes she carries cheerfulness and happiness with her. This is true self-sacrifice and service. The Presidency of Bombay is deeply grateful to Lady Willingdon for her noble work in connection with the Women's Branch of the War Relief Fund and for giving to women of this Presidency an opportunity of doing something. It is a mere common-place to say that both of them have greatly endeared themselves to the people of this Province. As for Lord Willingdon he is not only a sympathetic but a courageous Governor. It required no little courage for example, to appoint Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay. I wonder what Lord Sydenham has to say. He also removed the colour bar when he appointed Mr. Bahadurji to act as Advocate-General. I am sure you will find him ready to deal sternly with Bacchus and

his votaries in the Abkari Department. Mr. Lloyd George denounced drink as the most formidable of the three enemies England had to fight in this War. The example of His Majesty, the King Emperor, promises success to a sustained crusade against Drink. They say His Majesty has become a Brahmin by his example, forbidding the use of alcohol as the Hindu Shastras do. I wish success to Temperance and Total Abstinence Societies.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

There is a number of subjects that will occupy your attention. They will be placed before you by capable men. I will not take the wind out of their sail by anticipating their exposition. There is, however, one subject on which I feel tempted to make a few observations,—I mean the Resolution of the Government of India on local self-government. It is a very disappointing document—the proverbial mouse. I cannot help lamenting that the spirit and statesmanship of Lord Ripon are absent. There is not a single recommendation of the Decentralisation Commission which is not eminently reasonable. They are all accepted in theory but withheld in practice. This looks like breaking to the heart the words of promise uttered to the ear. And that too on the ground of unfitness. This is an ex parte judgment pronounced without actual trial. All we can say is “Try and See.”

The Resolution does not propose to abandon the nominations made by Government on the various Boards and Corporations. Now these nominations practically give the government control of the corporations without direct responsibility. The nominees take their cue from the officials. The Commissioner is the keeper of their conscience. Now in a body where decisions are arrived at by discussion and division a small number voting solidly can turn the scale which way they please. This means control without responsibility. Government may reserve whatever power they please to enforce obligatory duties by their Bludgeon Clauses, but this indirect and irresponsible control is vicious in principle.

The Resolution sanctions the extension of the Bombay system to other Corporations and Municipalities. The executive authority is to be vested in an official Commissioner subject to the general control of the Corporation. The system is excellent in theory, but execrable in practice, unless the officer is truly the servant of the Corporation. But in practice he becomes the master. He can usually command the votes of the nominees of Government, and of candidates for Rao Bahadurships, and of others who are enchanted by his smile. With this majority he makes himself the master of the situation. This has happened in Bombay and is more probable in the mofussil. But it renders Municipal Self-Government an intolerable farce. You should be on the guard against the provision.

PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE.

Some people imagine that we are masquerading under false colours and are at pains to proclaim that this Conference is not held under the constitution framed by the Convention-Congress after the Surat schism. On the other hand the organizers of this Conference are equally anxious to proclaim that this Conference is not the creature of the Conventionists whose constitution is not binding upon them. The admiration is mutual. I do not know if there be any delegate present here, who is labouring under the impression that this Conference is held under the auspices of the Conventionists. If there be, I must frankly disabuse his mind of it. But I do not suppose that any one claims that the Conventionists are vested with the exclusive right for convening Provincial Conferences. There is therefore nothing unconstitutional in holding this Conference. It will, however, serve one useful purpose. It will enable us to appoint a Committee to meet the Compromise Committee to be appointed in pursuance of the resolution of the Congress held at Madras to bring

about a reconciliation between Conventionists and Non-Conventionists. I am told that the Conventionists have boycotted this Conference because it is not convened by or with the sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee. Considering that the creed of this Conference is the same as the creed of the Congress, this attitude is deplorable. But then there are some husbands who will not take their meals unless the dishes are served by their wives. I suppose there are such peculiar people even in the enlightened Congress Camp.

MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS.

We constantly hear that Indians are divided into two camps—Moderates and Extremists. I have never come across any definition of these terms. Some say that the extremists and anarchists are indetical. This is a wicked lie due to black malice or gross ignorance. So far as I can perceive both Moderates and Extremists are Nationalists. Their ideal is Home Rule within the Empire. Both are Unionists. Both recognize the benefit and the necessity of the British Connection. Both are constitutionalists i. e. both seek to attain their object by constitutional agitation. In essentials, therefore the difference between them is the same as the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. A sound Moderate says that since the exodus of the extremists, the soul-stirring element in the Congress is absent. Paraphrased this means that the Moderates are the body and the extremists the soul. What is the good of the body without the soul? But I do not think that he has done the Moderates full justice. They are not insipid, milk-and-water politicians; nor are the extremists fire-brands. The truth is that there are Moderates and Extremists of all shades—Some are fighting in the first line, others in the last line and others in the intermediate lines. But they are all fighting the same fight and for the same sacred cause. If the rear-guard abandon the van-guard there will be disaster. The best results are obtained when all the lines move in unison under one general. The moderates should not belittle the extremists. Let them study the tentative suggestions for the expansion of the Legislative Councils made by the Congress in 1886. From 1886 to 1908 they cried in the wilderness. Even in 1908 they did not get all they asked in 1886. Is it strange that Morley-Minto reforms should be attributed to the growth and enthusiasm of the extremists? But be this as it may. Let us all remember that Union is strength. The points of difference are negligible. The Conventionists insist that delegates must be elected by affiliated bodies at a public meeting or otherwise, whereas the Non-Conventionists contend that they may be elected by non-affiliated bodies. Now I presume the object of affiliation is to enforce the Congress creed. But if Non-affiliated bodies accept the creed the object is gained. Considering moreover that every delegate must profess the creed, the Constitution of the Conventionists loses all substance. Is it on such pebbles that the ship of reunion is to be wrecked? I say without hesitation that the leaders on both sides are bad Captains indeed if they cannot lead the bark to the Heaven of Peace. Shall such trifles divide us?

The spirit of Union and Service and Self-sacrifice is abroad. Shall we cultivate a spirit of disunion and disservice in this hour of good hope? No, No.

Let bygones be bygones. Be united. And as sure as the day follows night we shall enter the beautiful Land of Promise which is our birthright—Home Rule for Ind

17th Bombay Provincial Conference.

SATURDAY 8TH MAY 1915.

END SITTING—4 P. M.

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolution No. 1.

The War.

That this Conference firmly believes that Great Britain and her Allies have been engaged in the present war out of a motive of righteousness and a sincere desire to uphold the natural right and title to independence vested in even small and defenceless nations and nationalities; and therefore prays to the Almighty that their brave efforts to fight with Germany, the high priest of autocracy and militarism, and her allies in arms be blessed and crowned with success.

Proposed by Hon. Mr. D. V. BELVI of Belgaum in English.

Seconded by Mr. K. V. LELE (Shastri) of Bombay in Marathi.

Supported by Mr. N. K. AGASHE of Satara in Marathi.

Mr. E. G. TILAK of Poona in Marathi.

Resolution No. 2.

Condolence to Mr. Gokhale's Family.

That this Conference mournfully records the sad and untimely death of the Hon'ble Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, B. A., C. I. E. In Mr. Gokhale not only the Bombay Presidency but the whole of India loses a great leader of political thought, a statesman of rare sagacity, and a patriot who had set a high and noble example of untiring energy and selfless devotion to the country's cause. The Conference offers its heart-felt condolence to Mr. Gokhale's relations and to the members of the Servants of India Society in their bereavement and resolves that the President be

authorised to convey to them this expression of their grief and sympathy.

Proposed by Mr. B. G. TILAK of Poona in Marathi.
Seconded by Mr. R. G. PRADHAN of Nasik in English.

Supported by Mr. V. B. LELE of Sholapur in Marathi.

" " Mr. V. V. TALUR of Dharwar in Kanarese.

" " Mr. V. I. PANDIT of Surat in Gujrathi.

" " Mr. LAXMIDAS RAVJI in Gujarathi.

Resolution No 3.

Lord Hardinge.

That this Conference cordially joins in the prayer sent up by the public from various places in the country to His Majesty the King Emperor to extend the period of the viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge whose generous statesmanship and heart-felt sympathy have endeared him to the people of this country, and to whom the country is hopefully looking forward for help in the substantial realisation of the country's political aspirations and expectations.

Proposed by Mr. R. P. KARANDIKAR of Satara in English.

Seconded by Mr. G. B. VAIDYA of Bombay in Marathi.

Resolution No. 4.

The King Emperor and Temperance.

That this Conference respectfully begs to express its heart-felt gratification at the most noble and inspiring example which His Majesty the King Emperor has been graciously pleased to set to his officers and subjects by excluding the use of spirituous liquors from the royal household.

Proposed by Hon. S. B. UPASNI of Khandesh in English.

Seconded by Mr. V. B. CHOWKAR of Ahmednagar in Marathi.

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Bombay Provincial Conference

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SEVENTEENTH SESSION



President-*Joseph Baptista*, B. A. LL. B.

(Cantab) L. C. E. (Bomb) *Bar-at-law*

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Bombay Provincial Conference

SEVENTEENTH SESSION

President-Joseph Baptista, B. A. LL. B. (Cantab) L. C. E. (Bomb)

Bar-at-law

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Permit me to offer you my most cordial and grateful thanks for the high honour you have done me in asking me to preside over the deliberations of this Conference. I must candidly confess that it is with feelings of deep diffidence that I venture to occupy the chair which has been dignified in the past by a long line of able men, the most illustrious of whom is that courageous and sagacious Tribune of the People, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. I wonder why your choice has fallen upon me. I have taken no part in politics except as a student and spectator. I have never been present at any Provincial Conference. Only once have I attended the Indian National Congress as a delegate. I am not a member of any political society and have joined no political party. I am not a moderate, nor an extremist, nor even that false fury from Inferno—the anarchist. I have done no political work in this country. The only thing I have ever done is, that, in the Corporation of Bombay, I have occasionally indulged in words of learned length and thundering sound to the amazement of the gazing ædiles ranged around. But from prating in the Corporation to presiding in this famous capital of the Peshwas amongst the warlike Mahrattas, the task is different and difficult. But my friends flatter me that I will promote the cause of conciliation by presiding. Blessed is the Peacemaker. You know very well the adage, "United we stand; Divided we fall". I shall be only too glad to render any service I can. This is my only qualification. For the rest, I must crave your indulgence and rely on your forbearance and cooperation in attempting to discharge the duties devolving upon me as President.

G. K. GOKHALE

My first duty is to that departed patriot who has been cut off in the prime of life with such shocking suddenness. His external physical frame and youthful appearance evidently concealed a constitution that had been shattered to pieces in the service of his country. It can be truly said of him that he so loved his Motherland that he gave his very life for her. *Bande Mataram!* His death caused a profound sensation throughout the length and breadth of India. It cast us all into the fierce furnace of affliction. King.

Prince, and people sorrowfully approached his funeral pyre to place a wreath thereon in token of their esteem. Never before in the annals of our countrymen has such a moving scene been witnessed in British India. What is the cause of this universal feeling? Simply this, that he was true as steel and clear as crystal in his country's cause. With Ranade he believed that the people of India were the chosen people of God. In promoting the political progress of his people he was animated by the highest ideals and purest patriotism. He entertained no illusions about the mighty forces arrayed against him. Nevertheless, in all his battles with the British Bureaucracy, he brandished only the most honourable weapons and never hit below the belt. Hence it came to pass that all esteemed him. But it is sad to think that all his talents, his restless energy, his exquisite eloquence and his burning patriotism were able to achieve but little. That is not his fault. It is his misfortune. But so far as we are concerned, his greatest glory consists in this that he has set a noble example to his compatriots by his self-sacrificing devotion to his country, by his Servants of India Society, and by his skilful use of peaceful methods after the manner of that great Liberator of Ireland, Daniel O'Connell. May he receive in Heaven the reward of his faithful stewardship on Earth.

B. G. TILAK

The name of the great Irish Patriot calls to my mind the name of a living Indian patriot, I mean Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak. I am sure I am only voicing your sentiments when I extend to him a warm welcome to his "Home, Sweet Home."

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said:—
This is my own, my native land."

We can imagine with the poet what must have been Mr. Tilak's joy when he began that return journey to his own native land, after six long years of expiation and exile, and here he is hale and hearty and full of vitality. I am not sure his exile was not a blessing in disguise.

In ancient Greece, exile was the normal fate of the idol of the people. The Greeks were so jealous of their liberties that they looked with alarm upon popular applause. They feared that the hero of the people might become a Dictator and trample under foot their rights and liberties. To avoid this catastrophe they sent the best and bravest of the Greeks into exile for a time. But when danger threatened their commonwealth the exiles were recalled and placed at the head of the Grecian warriors to defend their fatherland. I am sure we have the same confidence in Mr. Tilak that the ancient Greeks had in their exiles. I am sure he can render useful service to his people in this hour of trial. For whom should Mr. Tilak work if not for his people? "Born of the people, trusted by the people" he must work and die for the people. That is his destiny. I trust God will give him strength and wisdom to serve the people and the Government for many a year. But it is said that Mr. Tilak is the apostle of violence. If there were a particle of truth in it I should feel

bound in duty to keep him at arm's length. But such allegations are not surprising against one who has preached the gospel of Home Rule for India with all the fervour of a Parnell. But I will tell you what one of the conspirators whom I defended thought of Mr. Tilak in this respect. I asked him if Mr. Tilak had ever suggested force or the use of pistols. "What! Tilak! What does that old Brahmin know of pistols and clubs?" But now that Mr. Tilak is free he will be able to vindicate his character as successfully as he has fought the Tai Maharaj Case.

I must here congratulate Mr. Tilak and Mr. Khaparde upon their complete victory in that case. I allude to it because these two men who had played a prominent part in the political movements of this country were found guilty of "conspiracy and of perjury" and were thereby disgraced and disqualified for such work in future. Mr. Justice Chandavarkar observed:—"We are driven to believe that a considerable number of men of good position have conspired together to give false evidence." Ladies and gentlemen, mark the expression "driven to believe." Yet not "one word of it is justified by the evidence in the case. ... The conclusion come to by the learned judges is entirely unwarranted on the facts." Such is the opinion of their Lordships of the Privy Council. We have all heard of the triumphs of peace being more enduring than the glories of war. I believe such a judgement is one of those triumphs. It restores confidence in British Justice and makes for the stability of British Rule in India.

WAR

Speaking of the stability of British Rule in India, our minds naturally wander to that distant theatre of war where 2,00,000 gallant sons of India are fighting and dying for the Empire. It is the most gigantic war the world has ever seen; and a horrible scourge. All the instruments of death and desolation which the wit of man can devise are handled with scientific precision. In this war the number of the killed and wounded will exceed the largest number of soldiers ever engaged in any previous war. What a dreadful drain on the manhood of Europe! In the old days the pagans of Rome used to say:—"See, how these Christians love one another." Today they would say:—"See, how these Christians kill one another." It is saddening to an Indian Christian that this carnage is possible in Christendom in the 20th century. Fortunately for us, the cause of England is a just cause, and a righteous cause. She is fighting for liberty and her very existence. She is fighting against the Prussian Hydra lusting for world-power. Let us pray, that, before the year is ended, the Allies will emerge triumphant from this Titanic Struggle for liberty and humanity against Militarism. The inconstancy of arms is no doubt proverbial, but victory is practically assured. It is a question of munitions and in this respect the Allies have an enormous advantage. With the German Fleet bottled up, the Allies can draw upon the arsenals of the whole world for the munitions of war. But though success is certain, there is one insidious enemy which requires watching—Dame Rumour. The wildest tales of German successes find their way into the Bazars and spread like wild

fire. It may do mischief. I do not know if this is the work of evil-minded men. I am inclined to think that fear is the mother of invention. I will give you one illustration. Last October His Excellency the Governor happened to go to Matheran for the week-end. A few additional policemen also went there in consequence. But this set the malees of Matheran a-thinking. One old malee in trembling voice asked me—"Is it true, Saheb, that the Germans are coming to Matheran?" "Certainly not" said I. "Why then has the Governor come here and so many policemen?" Imagine the Governor at the head of the Kolaba Police lying in wait for the Germans on heights of the Matheran! With credulous masses anything is possible. Hence the necessity to be in touch with them to dispel false rumour and false fears. I have said this war is a scourge; but methinks it is a blessing in disguise for India. It has enabled the Viceroy to send that magnificent message of loyalty to England from the Princes and People of India, which captivated the English imagination and captured their hearts. This is a blessing indeed. All the orations could not have secured such a blessing. Lord Ripon assured the English people that they could safely trust us even in the hour of danger. Our Grand Old Man preached, in season and out of season, "Trust and fear not." But they would not listen. They took us for potential rebels crying for the moon and ready to set the prairie on fire. But the war has put us to test and it is found that we are as good as gold. We now hear Englishmen exclaim:—"Oh, the shame of it, that we should have distrusted the people who are actually shedding their blood for us." This war has changed the "angle of vision." Henceforth the British Policy will be, and must be:—"Trust and fear not." It heralds the dawn of a new day. No one will now say that the Magna Charta of India is more or less a mere scrap of paper. No more will Lord Morley's rebuke be required. Just as the Sepoy Mutiny removed the government of India from the hands of the East India Company so this war will remove it from the hands of the Anglo-Indian company. In a word it has sounded the knell of the Bureaucratic System of Government and brought us within sight of the Promised Land. But believe me, without Lord Hardinge, we shall not be able to enter it without trouble and tribulation.

VICEROYALTY.

And this brings me to the question of the prolongation of the Viceroyalty of Lord Hardinge. Upon this point the feeling is unanimous and spontaneous. We all sanguinely hope and sincerely pray that his term of office may be extended as long as possible. The feeling is natural, born of love and gratitude. We cannot part from Lord Hardinge because he has loved us, suffered for us, and actually shed his blood for us on that black day when the hand of the assassin was on him. And now another bereavement has befallen him in the death of his son. How can we part with one who nearly lost his life for us! The thing is unthinkable. We cannot part with him because we can put our trust in him; we have full faith in him. In this crisis a trusted Viceroy is indispensable. Besides in Lord Hardinge we have a sagacious statesman who believes that righteousness exalteth a nation. He never shrinks from doing the right thing despite the fulminations of his own countrymen. "Deeds, not words" is his motto. By his deeds he has proved himself a staunch champion of our rights. Before his clarion call the citadels of colour, of pride and prejudice,

crumbled to pieces like the walls of Jericho. Like Gladstone he is a true Christian statesman. His name will go down to posterity as a synonym for courage, righteousness and justice. Is it strange that his name should be enshrined in our hearts as the Benefactor of the People of India. What a tower of strength is such a man in such a crisis both for the rulers and the ruled! I am confident that our King-Emperor will listen to the humble prayer of his people and spare Lord Hardinge for a few years to lead us on to our destiny after the War is over.

HOME RULE

What are the reforms we advocate? First and foremost—Home Rule with Provincial Autonomy. The present Bureaucratic system is doomed. Since the Queen's Proclamation the public mind of India has so expanded that it has completely outgrown that system. Indeed the proudest day in English history of which Lord Macaulay spoke has arrived. Home Rule with Provincial autonomy is the solution suggested by Reason and the laws of Political growth. Let us reflect for a moment. When two Nations are brought under one Rule there must be either Fusion, Federation or eternal Subjugation. Now no sane mind will contend that India with its teeming millions should be kept under perpetual pupilage. Therefore I will not discuss it. There remain Fusion and Federation. Fusion takes place when each Nation desires to merge itself into a larger entity. This is exemplified in the case of England, Scotland and Wales becoming Great Britain. But when the forces of Union and Separation are more or less evenly balanced, Federation is the result like that of the United States of America. Fusion is the highest form of union with perfect equality for every citizen. Now if a referendum were tried I am certain that every intelligent Indian would vote for Fusion whereas every Englishman would vote against it. The reason is plain. India would become the predominant partner and overwhelm England by its size, its population and perhaps the quality of its brains. "The Saxon is slow-witted" said Cardinal Vaughan. In other words England would be conquered by India. Now that is a consummation devoutly to be wished for. But it would not be very reasonable to ask Englishmen to appreciate its excellence. The only alternative is Federation. The trend of events in England is towards Federation. Home Rule all round is loudly whispered. When that comes there will be Federation and a Federal Council, which would deal with all matters affecting the whole Empire. India will be one of the Federated States with representatives on the Federal Council. But the vastness of India renders it too unwieldy for one central Government. It must be sub-divided into Provinces of good size as suggested by Bright. People speaking the same language should as far as possible be brought within the same Province. Each Province should have a Governor and Council. The Native States might as well be brought in a line with the Provinces. The States may have a King and Council. In the Provinces the supremacy of the Executive should be abolished and a beginning be made in the direction of Representative Government and the cabinet system. The Provinces should be controlled by the Viceroy in Council. Subjects of Imperial importance affecting the whole of India should be reserved for the Imperial Council and the rest entrusted to the Provinces as in the United States of America. This scheme is more conservative than the Congress creed

and makes for union whereas the colonial model without the tie of blood makes for separation. I put this forward as a tentative suggestion. There is no finality in it. Many minds are required to forge a workable scheme. I would therefore suggest that a Home Rule League be formed to formulate a reasoned Home Rule scheme suitable to India. Meanwhile as a step towards Provincial autonomy the existing Legislative Councils should be enlarged. The franchise should be extended. Electorates less amenable to Government influences should be created. The right to initiate bills and move Resolutions should not be fettered. In this way alone is true Political progress possible. So much for constitutional reform. I shall now turn to a grievance which has become intensified since the War. I mean commissions in the army for qualified Indians.

COMMISSIONS IN THE ARMY

The present disability is unjust and repugnant to one's self-respect. Its injustice arrested the attention of Lord Lawrence, then Sir Henry Lawrence, so long ago as 1844. In 1885 Lord Napier said that "a great injustice was being perpetrated in withholding such commissions." The Duke of Connaught submitted proposals which culminated into Lord Curzon's Cadet Corps. Lord Minto actually submitted a scheme for the formation of an Indian Regiment to be officered by Indians. But it was pigeon-holed in the archives of the India office. It transpires that the Asses' Bridge was racial prejudice. But he would be a bold man who would talk about racial prejudices now. Indian soldiers are fighting and dying for the Empire. By their prowess and resourcefulness they have covered themselves with glory. Three of them have already won the Victoria Cross. Their valour has excited the admiration of England and France. Their heroic deeds make our heart throb with pride. Who will now venture to entertain racial prejudice? There should be no apprehensions in this respect. I have advocated commissions in the army as a measure of justice; but I fear it is a necessity for the safety of the Empire. The next great War will probably be waged in Central Asia. We must be ready to put forth millions of soldiers. The present alliances may not endure. England and Prussia fought against France; England and France is fighting Prussia. England and Turkey fought against Russia; England and Russia are now at war with Turkey. A liberal policy will intensify Indian loyalty. What boundless enthusiasm would it not have evoked if at this moment there were an Indian general on the battle-field. I trust that in the future we shall have not only Indian Generals but Indian Field-Marsals and Indian Rear-Admirals as one of the blessings of this War.

PRESS AND PRISONERS

The repeal of the repressive legislation of the last few years ought to be another blessing of this war. Those who have to manage the press and publish journals justly feel that the sword of Damocles is constantly hanging over their heads. The release of the political prisoners will be an act of grace that will yield good fruit. I should like to bring to the notice of His Excellency the Governor one case where a man was convicted of attempting to wage war. The only weapons he used were a few doggerels without rhyme or reason. The Courts had no option but to transport him for life. But

a sentence of transportation for publishing doggerels is not in keeping with the Majesty of the Law and the Might of the Empire.

LORD WILLINGDON

Coming now to our own Province we must congratulate ourselves that we have in Lord Willingdon a Governor who is a thorough English gentleman, full of sympathy for our legitimate aspirations. "The English notion of a gentleman," said a Don at Cambridge, "is that he is the very embodiment of culture, chivalry and all that is noble and virtuous." Such a gentleman is Lord Willingdon. Sorrow has overtaken him. I am sure I am expressing your sentiments when I say that we all share their Excellency's sorrow at the unknown fate of their son. A mother's grief is great and deep, and yet wherever Lady Willingdon goes she carries cheerfulness and happiness with her. This is true self-sacrifice and service. The Presidency of Bombay is deeply grateful to Lady Willingdon for her noble work in connection with the Women's Branch of the War Relief Fund, and for giving to women of this Presidency an opportunity of doing something. It is a mere common-places to say that both of them have greatly endeared themselves to the people of this Province. As for Lord Willingdon he is not only a sympathetic but a courageous Governor. It required no little courage for example, to appoint Sir Pheroza Shah Mehta as Vice Chancellor of the University of Bombay. I wonder what Lord Sydenham has to say. He also removed the colour bar when he appointed Mr. Bahadurji to act as Advocate-General. I am sure you will find him ready to deal sternly with Bacchus and his votaries in the Abkari Department. Mr. Lloyd George denounced drink as the most formidable of the three enemies England had to fight in this War. The example of His Majesty, the King Emperor, promises success to a sustained crusade against Drink. They say His Majesty has become a Brahmin by his example, forbidding the use of alcohol as the Hindu Shastras do. I wish success to Temperance and Total Abstinence Societies.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

There is a number of subjects that will occupy your attention. They will be placed before you by capable men. I will not take the wind out of their sail by anticipating their exposition. There is, however, one subject on which I feel tempted to make a few observations,—I mean the Resolution of the Government of India on local self-government. It is a very disappointing document—the proverbial mouse. I cannot help lamenting that the spirit and statesmanship of Lord Ripon are absent. There is not a single recommendation of the Decentralisation Commission which is not eminently reasonable. They are all accepted in theory, but withheld in practice. This looks like breaking to the heart the words of promise uttered to the ear. And that too on the ground of unfitness. This is an *exparte* judgment pronounced without actual trial. All we can say is "Try and See."

The Resolution does not propose to abandon the nominations made by Government on the various Boards and Corporations. Now these nominations practically give the government control of the corporations without direct responsibility. The nominees take their cue from the officials. The Com-

missioner is the keeper of their conscience. Now in a body where decisions are arrived at by discussion and division a small number voting solidly can turn the scale which way they please. This means control without responsibility. Government may reserve whatever power they please to enforce obligatory duties by their Bludgeon Clauses, but this indirect and irresponsible control is vicious in principle.

The Resolution sanctions the extension of the Bombay system to other Corporations and Municipalities. The executive authority is to be vested in an official Commissioner subject to the general control of the Corporation. The system is excellent in theory, but execrable in practice, unless the officer is truly the servant of the Corporation. But in practice he becomes the master. He can usually command the votes of the nominees of Government, and of candidates for Rao Bahadurships, and of others who are enchanted by his smile. With this majority he makes himself the master of the situation. This has happened in Bombay and is more probable in the mofussil. But it renders Municipal Self-Government an intolerable farce. You should be on the guard against the provision.

PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

Some people imagine that we are masquerading under false colours and are at pains to proclaim that this Conference is not held under the constitution framed by the Convention-Congress after the Surat schism. On the other hand the organizers of this Conference are equally anxious to proclaim that this Conference is not the creature of the Conventionists whose constitution is not binding upon them. The admiration is mutual. I do not know if there be any delegate present here, who is labouring under the impression that this conference is held under the auspices of the Conventionists. If there be, I must frankly disabuse his mind of it. But I do not suppose that any one claims that the Conventionists are vested with the exclusive right for convening Provincial Conferences. There is therefore nothing unconstitutional in holding this Conference. It will however, serve one useful purpose. It will enable us to appoint a Committee to meet the Compromise Committee to be appointed in pursuance of the resolution of the Congress held at Madras to bring about a reconciliation between Conventionists and Non-Conventionists. I am told that the Conventionists have boycotted this Conference because it is not convened by or with the sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee. Considering that the creed of this Conference is the same as the creed of the Congress this attitude is deplorable. But then there are some husbands who will not take their meals unless the dishes are served by their wives. I suppose there are such peculiar people even in the enlightened Congress Camp.

MODERATES AND EXTREMISTS

We constantly hear that Indians are divided into two camps—Moderates and Extremists. I have never come across any definition of these terms. Some say that the extremists and anarchists are identical. This is a wicked lie due to black malice or gross ignorance. So far as I can perceive both Moderates and Extremists are Nationalists. Their ideal is Home Rule within

the Empire. Both are Unionists. Both recognize the benefit and the necessity of the British Connection. Both are constitutionalists i. e. both seek to attain their object by constitutional agitation. In essentials, therefore, the difference between them is the same as the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. A sound Moderate says that since the exodus of the extremists, the soul-stirring element in the Congress is absent. Paraphrased this means that the Moderates are the body and the extremists the soul. What is the good of the body without the soul? But I do not think that he has done the Moderates full justice. They are not insipid, milk-and-water politicians; nor are the extremists fire-brands. The truth is that there are Moderates and Extremists of all shades—Some are fighting in the first line, others in the last line and others in the intermediate lines. But they are all fighting the same fight and for the same sacred cause. If the rear-guard abandon the van-guard there will be disaster. The best results are obtained when all the lines move in unison under one general. The moderates should not belittle the extremists. Let them study the tentative suggestions for the expansion of the Legislative Councils made by the Congress in 1886. From 1886 to 1908 they cried in the wilderness. Even in 1908 they did not get all they asked in 1886. Is it strange that Morley-Minto reforms should be attributed to the growth and enthusiasm of the extremists? But be this as it may. Let us all remember that Union is strength. The points of difference are negligible. The Conventionists insist that delegates must be elected by affiliated bodies at a public meeting or otherwise, whereas the Non-Conventionists contend that they may be elected by non-affiliated bodies. Now I presume the object of affiliation is to enforce the Congress creed. But if Non-affiliated bodies accept the creed the object is gained. Considering moreover that every delegate must profess the creed, the Constitution of the Conventionists loses all substance. Is it on such pebbles that the ship of re-union is to be wrecked? I say without hesitation that the leaders on both sides are bad Captains indeed if they cannot lead the bark to the Haven of Peace. Shall such trifles divide us?

The spirit of Union and Service and Self-sacrifice is abroad. Shall we cultivate a spirit of disunion and disservice in this hour of good hope. No, No.

Let bygones be bygones. Be united. And as sure as the day follows night we shall enter the beautiful Land of Promise which is our birthright—Home Rule for India.

The Fifteenth Bombay Provincial Conference, 1915.

POONA.

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THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

OF

Mr. Hormusji A. Wadia,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

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LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you with every sincerity for the honour you have done me in asking me to preside at the fifteenth Provincial Conference of our Presidency. When I was asked by some kind friends if I would be able to preside, my first feeling was of great diffidence; but when I knew that it was the unanimous wish of those, whose services have been so much greater and more valuable to our cause than anything I could boast of, I bowed to their wishes in spite of all my diffidence and have gratefully agreed to place my services, whatever they might be worth, at their disposal and yours. I can only repeat, I thank you all for your generous confidence, and I trust to your kindness to overlook many defects, of which I am very painfully conscious, in undertaking my task.

The long interval that has elapsed since the meeting of the fourteenth Provincial Conference has been full of many pregnant events and has not been free, alas! from grievous losses in the ranks of our workers; but it will be too long and difficult a task on this occasion even to attempt to deal with them adequately; and I must confine myself to two principal events to-day, one of great hope and encouragement, and the other of a great and grievous loss from the effects of which we have scarcely yet emerged.

OUR GOVERNOR.

This is the first time the Conference meets during Lord Willingdon's Governorship, and I am sure I am voicing the thoughts and feelings of you all, when I say how deeply and truly grateful we feel to our august Sovereign and his Ministers for sending to our Presidency a Governor of His Excellency's stamp, so deeply imbued with a sense of genuine and equal sympathy for all classes and all communities and all interests; so firmly resolved to view all questions impartially and justly; and so painstaking and persistent in his endeavour to be accessible to all, to be patient with all; and above everything to be friendly to us all. His Excellency came to us in happier times than these, and the manner in which he grappled with his great, difficult and laborious task—aided as His Excellency was by the happy and valued share which Lady Willingdon brought to that task—captivated the hearts and minds of our people in a remarkable degree. Whether Their Excellencies were in Bombay, or Poona, or in Mahabeshwar or touring in the Districts, there was the same devotion to duty, the same sympathy with all, the same

encouragement to all, which have distinguished their stay in our midst, and which have gathered to them our profound gratitude and our deep attachment. And at the great crisis in the history of the British Kingdom and Empire, which so suddenly and swiftly overtook us in August last, the relations they had established with all classes, all communities and all creeds were an asset of which the value could not be exaggerated, whether we look at them from the narrower point of provincial need or the broader aspect of Imperial exigency. Fortunate was the King-Emperor in having such a representative of the Crown; and fortunate indeed was this Presidency in having such a ruler at such a time. It is not possible for me to go into any detail in the limited time at my disposal, but I am sure it is not necessary to do so either; for Lord and Lady Willingdon's work since the War is a chapter of service and sacrifice, which will be a memorable page in the history of this Presidency. And when we think of how that work was done at one time in spite of intense and agonizing suspense, and later, alas! with the weight of a most crushing blow, we know not how adequately to express all we feel. We have been witnesses hitherto to it all in speechless but most sincere sympathy, in silent and sorrowful regard, and in distant but deep admiration. But we cannot let this occasion pass by without tendering to Their Excellencies, on behalf of the Presidency of Bombay, the expression of our grief for their great loss, our sympathetic share in their great sorrow, and our respectful homage for their noble fortitude and devotion to duty, subordinating all to the service of their Sovereign and his subjects with singular self-sacrifice. It is our fervent and heart-felt prayer that they may find comfort and solace in the fact that their son died a noble death in the service of his Sovereign and his country, and that Providence may vouchsafe to them health and strength and courage to bear the blow which is the hardest for a father and a mother to bear.

GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE.

The death of Gopal Krishna Gokhale has deprived our Presidency of one of its truest, noblest and most useful and valued sons and all India of the first and greatest servant of his day. That death has been felt in every Taluka and District, in every Province and Presidency as an irreparable national loss. I cannot trust myself to speak of my own personal feelings at the premature loss of one, who, for the last twenty years, secured, by his personal virtues and worth, my constant affection, and by his public career of undaunted independence and of unswerving fidelity to our country's cause, my life-long attachment. Knowing as I knew him, I can truly say that he died too early, because he loved and served his country too well. Death stared him in the face; but he served as regardless of death as the many heroes, who have died on the battlefield in their country's service in this eventful year. In his presence I forgot that he was a Hindu and I was a Parsee and remembered only that we were Indians both and that he was one of the truest Indians that ever lived. His career was brief as we measure time ordinarily; but his career was one of the longest, if we measure his life by the many services he rendered and by the many benefits he conferred or secured. The City of Poona will have the great

glory always that it was Gokhale's home, where he began his memorable career, where he attained his highest fame and where he laid down his life in our people's service. All India is proud of him; but Poona should be the proudest, for nowhere else will you see so many monuments of his work, his struggles, his aspirations and his undying faith. It is the fashion with many of our critics to speak of us as a heterogeneous mass of warring creeds and irreconcilable elements, which cannot be moulded into one nation. And yet what did we witness when Gokhale died? It seemed as if all India stood by his funeral pyre united in one common grief—men and women—old and young—of every creed, of every class, of every community—to pay their last sad tribute to the man, who united all India in his death, as he had sought to love and serve India—one and indivisible—all his life. Of all his great services to our country this was his greatest service, and of all the many lessons which his life teaches us, there is none which deserves our recognition and acceptance and adoption more than this—that our country's greatest claim upon us is that in her service we should be to each other as he was to us all.

THE SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale needs no monument in marble or bronze. He was of those, of whom posterity will say that they—

—though the general doom

Hath swept the column from their tomb,

A mightier monument command.

That mightier monument should be the perpetuation of the great work he founded and left incomplete, because he did not live long enough to complete it. Such was his own dying wish, and, to my mind, that wish should be carried out by all who knew him and all whom he served as a sacred obligation and a pious duty. The future fate of 'the Servants of India Society' was his last and greatest concern. He must have felt, when he knew he was approaching his end, as a father feels when he leaves his offspring, who has not reached manhood and who must struggle in life without a father's protection and guidance. And we, who were his friends, we, whom he served so well and so selflessly and in whose service he died so early, shall we not act towards that offspring as in duty bound, when it was left to our care and friendship with his latest breath? And what is the duty he has left to us? Really and truly the permanent continuance of a great work for all India. I will quote briefly what was said recently on the point by Mrs. Besant at the Provincial Conference of the United Provinces, in words which will appeal to you more than anything I can say:—

"Gokhale felt that India needed a body of political and social workers, who would labour with the enthusiasm of religionists and the wisdom of statesmen. A burning patriotism is to be their religion, an unwearying sacrifice to be their guru dakshina, a steadfast perseverance to be their Bhakti, a whole hearted service, their Dharma. Let us then at least secure the physical existence of the Society, that it may train up the workers of the future and maintain the workers of the present, that it may carry on his plans, and in that best of all forms be his living monument."

We all rejoice, ladies and gentlemen, that there is to be an All-India monument to Gokhale's memory and that monument shall be in accordance with his last message to his countrymen. I do not disguise from myself and I do not wish to disguise from you the misgivings which are entertained and the warnings that have been uttered. But is there real cause for them? No doubt, his guiding voice and his controlling hand will no longer be there. But is every good work or cause to die with the founder or leader's death? Is this great Motherland of ours to be perpetually barren of great sons like Gokhale? Should we not have a larger faith and a higher trust? The youths, that will come to the Society in future, will come inspired by the same highest motives, will be bound by the same gravest vows, will dedicate their future to the same great cause in the same great spirit, and will do their work in the light of day before the public eye and under the public scrutiny. If we cannot give to such as these our trust, then what cause is there that we can trust at all?

INDIA AND THE WAR.

Ladies and gentlemen, this day twelve months ago, on 10th July 1914, which of us could have prophesied or even dreamed that in less than a month, the British Empire would be involved in the most stupendous struggle ever recorded in the history of the world? Yet, in three weeks, Europe stood confronted with a catastrophe, which, though dreaded long, had been withstood so long, that it was fondly imagined that it could be withstood for ever. And when the war broke out, the first thought that overwhelmed us was, how in our day it could be possible for one man or two to deluge the world with blood and spread devastation and desolation, which extended in six short months over three continents?

We may say to-day in Virgil's famous words more truly, more appropriately and more intensely:—

“*SAEVIT TOTO MARS IMPIUS ORBE.*”

It is the most impious war in all history, which the tyrants from Germany and Austria-Hungary have forced upon the whole civilised world. It extends from the west coast of Europe to the east coast of Asia, and in Africa from Egypt in the North to the Transvaal in the South. It has been levying its terrible toll from both the hemispheres and the Messenger of Death has been hovering over far-off homes in Canada and Australasia, not less than in the United Kingdom and France and Belgium; in Germany and Austria-Hungary; in Russia and the Balkan States; in Italy and Turkey, in Egypt and Asia Minor and in India and Japan. It involves the fate and future of every nation, not excluding the neutral nations themselves. The issue is between Freedom and Tyranny, between justice and injustice; and between righteousness and wrong-doing. Our Sovereign King-Emperor and his august Allies are fighting for freedom, for justice and for righteousness.

At such a time it was our duty to stand firmly, faithfully and unflinchingly by our Sovereign and his Government. The world has witnessed India's attitude and India's response. We never hesitated and never wavered. We never calculated or concerted.

or bargained. We acted, East and West and South and North, from one common irresistible impulse. Our Princes and people, who spontaneously placed their all at their Sovereign's disposal, thought only of one great and paramount duty. It was the Sovereign's call. It was the Empire's defence. And every Province and Presidency and every town and city—every class and community and creed—remembered what they owed to the personal virtues—the friendship, the regard and the sympathy—of three successive Sovereigns, since India was placed under the Crown; and remembered only the benefits and blessings of British Rule. There was not a moment, not a pause for selfish reflection. It was all uncalculating fervour and undeniable loyalty. And it is because of that, as we are now glad and thankful to know, that we have brought it home to the mind and conscience of the great British people, how we were grossly misrepresented and how they were grossly misled by those, who, in season and out of season, never wearied to poison the wells from which they imbibed their knowledge of our country and our people.

OUR SOVEREIGN'S CONFIDENCE.

The King-Emperor and His Viceroy have met India's response with a signal mark of their generous, wise and unquestioning confidence. For the first time in our history Indian soldiers have been called to fight in the battlefields of Europe. They were sent straight into the field from our shores to fight shoulder to shoulder with their British comrades in arms in Flanders and in France. They were asked to share with the British army the post of danger and the post of honour in the foremost fight. We did not know till the Viceroy declared that he was able to spare in defence of the Empire two hundred thousand soldiers—Hindus and Mahomedans, Rajputs and Sikhs, Pathans and Punjabees, Gurkhas and Garhwalis and Jats to fight wherever they were required and wherever they were ordered. We did not know till the Prime Minister proudly proclaimed in the Guild Hall in May last that India had put into the field 23 Regiments of Cavalry and 124 Regiments of Infantry, spontaneously despatched and magnificently equipped.

OUR SOLDIERS.

It has not been fully realised, and it is necessary therefore to realise, how our soldiers have borne themselves. They were never told their exact destination when they left our shores. And if they had been told, how many of them could have known what was Belgium or France, and Egypt or Mesopotamia, or East Africa and the Cameroons and Nyasaland? And what did they know of the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf, of the Nile or the Tigris, of the Suez Canal and the Dardanelles, and of the Mediterranean or the British Channel? They were as ignorant of the German Emperor and his frightfulness or of the Austrian Emperor and his helpless dotage as we are of the inhabitants of Saturn or Mars. They had no notion of Germany's pledge of Belgium's neutrality or its perfidious breach. They could not have understood how Great Britain stood as of old the champion of the weak and the oppressed, of International good

faith and of Universal Freedom. And yet they went in the spirit of true soldiers:—

‘Theirs not to reason why,

‘Theirs not to make reply,

‘Theirs but to do and die.’

They went because the Sirkar called. They knew only that their Sovereign needed their services. They wished only to be true to their salt, faithful to their troth, and worthy of their ancient and honourable traditions. And they went hundreds and thousands of miles away from their land, their homes and their kith and kin, to serve and lay down their lives, if needed, in a strange land and among a foreign people, midst bewildering surroundings beyond all thought or anticipation. They have gone leaving their nearest and dearest behind them—aged parents, helpless wives, unprotected children—leaving them to the Sirkar’s care, leaving them too in the faith that their people—you and I and every one of us—will not let them want or let them suffer. Many, alas! too many, have gone never to return. The snows of Belgium are their winding sheet, and the turf of France or Flanders is their sepulchre. And not the turf of France or Flanders alone, but also the banks of the Suez Canal, the swamps of Mesopotamia, and the wilds of East Africa. The Sirkar will not forget their services or neglect those they have left to its care and protection. And we, their people, shall we not resolve that as their deeds of daring and death are their country’s pride, so those, whom those deeds have bereaved, shall be their country’s care, now and always?

OUR PRINCES.

Some of our princes too are at the front. And why? Not because they are in search of emoluments or personal gain. They have vast territories to which there could be no increase. They have wealth enough and perhaps too many titles. No selfish purpose and no compelling fear has moved them. They too have offered spontaneously and from noble and generous impulse all their wealth and all their resources and their personal services through our Viceroy to the King-Emperor and his Government. What could be nobler, more generous, more considerate or more thoughtful than all that the Maharaja Scindia has offered and thought and planned and contributed for the comfort and care of the soldiers on the field and in the trenches or of the wounded in the hospital on sea and shore? Of the spirit of those who have gone to the front I will give but one example. You have all heard of Maharaja Pratapsinghji of Jodhpur. He is seventy years old. He has lived a life of strenuous endeavour as ruler and as soldier. He served on the Mahmoond Expedition and in the Tirah Campaign in 1897-98 and on the China Expedition in 1900-01. In 1902, when the *gadec* of Idar fell vacant, Maharaja Pratapsinghji, who had been Prime Minister and Regent of Jodhpur, was installed on the *gadec* of his ancestors, and when he was installed he said how thankful he was for the many privileges and honours he had enjoyed; but there was one honour more which he coveted, and that was a *bullet in his head on the battle-field* in the service of the King-Emperor and in the defence of his Empire! There you have an

example of the spirit of a Rajput soldier and an Indian Prince. We have reason to be proud of them all.

GERMANY'S COMPLAINT.

You will perhaps remember, ladies and gentlemen, that when Indian soldiers were called to the battlefield in Europe, Germany made it a grievance that Great Britain had *brought Asiatic savages and degraded European warfare*. Asiatic savages indeed! They are a hundred times superior to the German super-men, those monsters born of the union of Satan and Science. Let India tell Germany that it is not the black skin that matters, but the black soul. It is not the dark skin of the Indian soldiers that degrades but the dark deeds of the soldiers of Germany and her ally, in Belgium and France and in Poland and and Servia and Italy. Did we ever see in Asiatic warfare such inhumanity as the Germans have shown throughout this war? Not in China or Burmah, not in Persia or Afghanistan or Thibet, not during the Russo-Japanese War did Asiatic soldiers manifest such calculated barbarity, such unmitigated black-guardism, such unbridled licentiousness and such cold-blooded criminality towards old men and women and children as the German soldiers have been guilty of month after month, week after week and day after day, in this one unhappy year.

THE YELLOW PERIL.

The German Emperor, ladies and gentlemen, has many claims to notoriety. He is not only a Ruler and War-Lord, but fancies himself an artist and a Poet and Prophet. Some years ago he sought to frighten Europe by visions of the Yellow Peril; but Europe has been devastated by, and Asia and Africa and America and Australasia are witnesses to-day to, a greater peril, a worse and more hideous peril, and that is

THE PRUSSIAN PERIL.

The yellow peril, ladies and gentlemen, was a creation of Imperial imagination. The Prussian Peril is the prepared product and tool of Imperial ambitions, Imperial teaching and Imperial exhortation. And see the result. Crime heaped upon crime, infamy piled on infamy. The invasion of unoffending, peaceful, peace-loving, industrious and prosperous Belgium was an act, which, however faithless and shameless, did not prepare us for the unheard of atrocities and barbarities, which are authentically reported by Lord Bryce and his companion. They will ever remain for Germany and her soldiers an indelible record of eternal infamy. They have culminated since in piracy on the ocean highway, the poisoning of wells in Africa, the use of asphyxiating gases and the cold-blooded murder of over a thousand innocent and unoffending men, women and children on the Liner Lusitania.

BERNHARDI'S DOCTRINE.

You have all heard, of course, of General Bernhardi, one of the gifted producers of the Prussian Peril. He has propounded the doctrine that *War is calculated to raise the moral tone of nations, that do not avoid it*. This doctrine has been falsified by

his countrymen and verified by their opponents and enemies. Contrast the moral tone to-day of the German nation with that of the British nation, or the Belgain, or the French, or the Russian, or the Italian, or the Serbian. See Belgium, for instance, so undaunted amidst her disasters, so sublime in her sacrifices, so morally supreme, though bleeding and prostrate, and devastated and desolate. See, on the other hand, Germany, so unscrupulous in her aggression, so immoral in her atrocities, so diabolical in her methods and demoniac in her deeds, so degraded in her mendacities, and so contemptible in her apologies for inexcusable crimes. It is necessary to bear all this in mind, so that we may realise in full the necessity, always great but never greater than now, of fighting to a finish the stupendous struggle in which the Empire is engaged. If our Princes and people were so proud and ready and willing at first to volunteer their all in aid of our Sovereign and in defence of the Empire, how much more proud should we not be to-day that it is the privilege and happy destiny of India and her soldiers to take part with all His Majesty's subjects and soldiers in a war of which the righteousness and justice are proved more and more from day to day, as the struggle proceeds? How much more ready and willing and anxious too should we not be to put at our Sovereign's disposal all we possess and all we are capable of to help His Majesty and his Allies to exterminate an enemy who has given so many proofs of what hideous fate there would be in store for us all from Prussian predominance and German expansion?

THE STRUGGLE.

Our soldiers have done well, and we have every hope and confidence they will do as they have done till the end. The Prime Minister has voiced the public thought and feeling that the "battlefields of France and Flanders bear an undying tribute to their bravery." And our soldiers have fought not in France and Flanders alone. They have fought among the forces of the Crown in no fewer than seven other areas of war and in regard to these secondary scenes of action those fighting there and laying down their lives were engaged in a public service not less important and patriotic and not less essential to the Empire, as Lord Curzon has recently shown.

The struggle must continue and we all must be prepared for a long struggle, a hard struggle; but, please God, in the end a struggle crowned with ever-lasting victory. What is taking place in the United Kingdom to-day must inspire us all to go and do likewise, each according to his capacity and every one according to his opportunity. The people there are realizing the immensity of the struggle. Mr. Lloyd George, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer and now the Minister for Munitions, put the position thus to a Manchester audience in the last week:—

"Now I come as an emissary of the State to carry the most urgent errand ever told to the ears of a Manchester audience. Our country is fighting for its very life; our country is fighting for the liberties of Europe; and upon what it does, upon what it is prepared to sacrifice will depend the issue..... Whether Britain will emerge from this

colossal struggle, beaten, humiliated, stripped of power, honour, influence, and the mere bond—slave of a cruel military tyranny, or whether it will come out triumphant, free and more powerful than ever for good in the affairs of men.”

The Prime Minister in his speech before the House of Commons on the 15th June last—a speech which has been rightly described as his message to the country and the Empire—has told us :—

“ A supreme cause is at stake. We have each and all of us to respond with whatever we have, with whatever we can give, and, what is harder still, with whatever we can sacrifice, to the dominating and inexorable call.”

INDIA'S SHARE.

I have said above how our Sovereign and his Viceroy have given our country a signal proof of their confidence and trust by placing our soldiers in the forefront of the struggle. All that we should concern ourselves with, while this war lasts, is to prove ourselves worthy of that trust. From the first we have shown, and to the last we will show, that India knows her duty; recognises her obligations; and is prepared with all the subjects of His Majesty in all his Empire to devote herself, body and mind and soul, to the successful prosecution of the cause which is her own, because it is the cause of her Sovereign and of the Empire of which she forms an integral and inseparable part.

India can give the best she has to that cause. She has a people of 31½ crores or 315 millions composed of many warlike races who have fought the fight of the Empire whenever called upon with courage, with tenacity, with singular fidelity and with irresistible dash and heedlessness of danger and death. Great Britain with a population of 45 millions has provided 2 millions or 20 lakhs of soldiers and is providing a million or 10 lakhs more. Men from every rank, from every walk and career of life have come forward of their own will and are coming forward of their own will, tearing themselves away from home and family and all the ties that bind and sweeten life, to place their young, hopeful and valuable lives at their country's, and their King's, disposal.

France with a population of 40 millions has two millions and a quarter of soldiers serving at the front. She has just called out the class of 1916—boys of 18—the first flower of her youth to arms. These youths are the sons and brothers of men who are fighting or who have laid down their lives. They are the sons of mothers who are widows, perhaps the last remnants of a home that is already on the verge of desolation. And yet they have rushed to the call of *la patrie en danger*. It is a heavy toll on posterity.

What cannot India do similarly from her immense population? She can give ten times, twenty times, aye, forty times, if required, the two lacs that have gone. The King-Emperor and his Ministers have only to ask and our warriors and the descendants of warriors will flock in thousands and hundreds of thousands in response to the call. India may not give enough of financial aid because of her poverty. She may not give enough of

munitions because of her backwardness in industry. But she can give her men, more than all the Empire can supply. She only awaits the call.

It is not as soldiers alone that we can serve. Our natural products are vast and varied. Thanks to Great Britain's supremacy over the seas—they can reach wherever wanted—to sustain life or prepare munitions. Our labourers are innumerable and from their ranks can be supplied strong men and daring to enlist themselves for making shells and explosives in as many factories as can be improvised. The *Englishman's* suggestion seems well worthy of consideration that instead of carrying labourers from India to the United Kingdom, the better course would be to import into India the requisite machinery, which could be adapted to the supply of whatever the forces might require at the front in the way of munitions.

Russia too has set us an example, which we should follow in the best way possible to us. There the Zemstvos have organised themselves into a Union, which in the present war voluntarily placed all its services at the disposal of Government for supplying the soldiers with provisions, clothing and foot-wear; for helping the sick and wounded; and for organising sanitary measures at the front. For this purpose they have spent $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions of pounds or more than $7\frac{3}{4}$ crores of rupees. Professor Vinodagroff, the Russian Professor at Oxford, well remarks that the Zemstvos thus provided the spectacle of "a grand mobilisation of society in the service of the Commonwealth—a mobilisation not ordered but spontaneous and organic" in which all municipalities, schools, district boards and private individuals and charitable institutions all joined hands, thus affording to the world an unexpected revelation of the capacity of the Russian people to manage their own affairs independently of bureaucratic help. May not we too act in this spirit and organise ourselves in each Province and Presidency to place voluntarily our contributions and our services, however and whenever required, at the disposal of Government? In this connection we should always bear in mind what the Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, said from the very first that "there could be no nobler opportunity than that of serving one's country, when its very existence is at stake and when its cause is just and right; and that there never was a time in our history when the crisis was so great and imperative as it is now or a cause more just and right."

THE WOMEN'S PART.

Ladies and gentlemen, what our women have done in this Presidency, under the energetic and intelligent lead of Lady Willingdon is to us a matter for very great satisfaction. Under Her Excellency's whole-hearted and enthusiastic inspiration, women of all classes, creeds and communities have worked with remarkable success for the comfort of those that are in the fight for the alleviation of the sick and the wounded. Great and valuable as has been their work; there is need for more, and there shall be need for much more of it as the war proceeds. It is idle to think of its early termination. It is simply pusillanimous to prattle of peace under the present circumstances. We must fix our distant gaze on the day when the allied forces enter Berlin

and the sword of the German Emperor—the Enemy of Peace and Freedom and Humanity—is at the feet of His Majesty and his august Allies. Peace, till that day comes, will not be the peace for which the Empire is putting all at stake. It is for that peace the struggle has been maintained and will be endured, and the noble part our women have played hitherto must be played, and I have no doubt it shall be played, with the devotion and silent sacrifice which are their characteristics.

THE CALL FOR CHARITY.

To help them to do their part, men must come to their aid—not the rich and the well-to-do alone but men even of moderate means. There are calls for charity in other directions also, as you all well know. Sorrow and loss and suffering are rampant on all sides. The war seems almost to devour the coming generation. Day after day we read the Roll of Honour, but we hardly realise all that the columns convey. If we look at the illustrated papers and see the youths, the beardless boys, who have gone to their final rest, a pang reaches the heart, as the thought comes over us, that it is the fathers to be, of a coming generation, that are being immolated on the altars. And the lines of Tennyson come back to our minds:—

O father, wheresoe'er thou be,
Who pledgest now thy gallant son
A shot, ere half thy draught be done,
Hath stilled the heart that beat from thee.

O Mother, praying God may save
Thy sailor, whilst thy head is bowed,
His heavy shotted hammock shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave.

We have known these lines for fifty years. Yet we never realised their terrible truth, as we have realised it in less than fifty weeks of this all-devouring war. Those fathers and mothers are everywhere and many of them are in our own midst, and among them the highest in the land. We can only convey to these our deep sympathy and our unstinted admiration for laying on the altars of patriotism their dearest and their best with surprising fortitude and undeterred devotion to duty. But there are many, many, many more unknown to us, whom the loss means not the extinction of hope and joy alone, but desolate destitution also. There the call comes in for true charity, and because the destitution must be vast and is vast, our charity should be organised as it has been organised in every part of the Kingdom and Empire. To that organised charity we should all devote what we can spare and we, ladies and gentlemen, should make it our duty not only to give ourselves what we can but to get from all around us what they can give. In this way we too can do our part—small, very small indeed, but of no mean account in the aggregate.

INDIAN PRISONERS IN GERMANY.

We must be reluctant, and we are all most reluctant, to increase the difficulties of Government by any unreasonable or inappropriate demand. But our people's anxiety for our unfortunate countrymen in Germany's custody is neither unreasonable nor inappropriate. It is necessarily great and wide-spread, and all

the more when we are told how the British prisoners are treated. It was inevitable, of course, that their sufferings should be unusual and their position difficult in a hostile land, among people who cannot know their language, and whose language they cannot understand, and with customs and religious observances foreign to German knowledge and German sympathy. But when we add to these inevitable risks of war the cruel fate that may be meted out to them, and which we have good reason to apprehend, because Germany has placed herself beyond all bounds of humanity, the hearts of many and many must be sore with fear and anxiety, and we cannot forget the claims of sympathy and concern for those of our countrymen and countrywomen, whose sons or husbands or brothers or fathers are cut off from all aid and all means of making their needs known or their fate remedied. I have no doubt that we can all trust the authorities to do their best; but it will be a matter for great and universal satisfaction if the facts regarding Indian prisoners in Germany and their treatment there are ascertained and published or conveyed to those concerned, without reticence and without delay; and if every measure open to Government is taken for the amelioration of their fate, through those who have knowledge and experience adequate for the purpose and who are also supplied with the necessary funds.

THE DISSEMINATION OF FALSE NEWS.

There is one direction in which the educated classes may give particular aid and relief—aid to our authorities and relief to our fellow-countrymen. One of our greatest duties is to prevent the dissemination of false, disturbing and misleading rumours. Our bazars are full of idle tales of battles lost which, as we know, were never fought, of warships surrendered to a Navy which, as we know, has always been in hiding, of the defection of Allies which Germany wishes and invents but which, as we know, is baseless and impossible, and of German triumphs, which, as we know, are pure and deliberate inventions. Germany, ladies and gentlemen, has failed in her dreams about the Indian rebellion and disaffection and disloyalty. But like a desperate gambler Germany seeks to create discredit and distrust and disaffection. Her agents are busy everywhere, not openly, but stealthily and insidiously, with the dirty work of inventing and disseminating false tales with the double object of embarrassing our Rulers and disturbing the peace of the ignorant and illiterate. It should be our task to meet these efforts and withstand them in every nook and corner, where our efforts can possibly reach. May I appeal here publicly to my friends of the Servants of India Society and of the Social Service League, as I have appealed to them in private, that in this direction they can do more than most of us. They move among the people and know them well. They are trusted by the people as friends, for they have obtained and secured their trust by their beneficent activities among them, and they can speak to them and tell them the truth to greater purpose and better effect. I trust they will make it their task, as we shall make it our task, in all our Presidency, in every Division and District, and in every Taluka and Mahal, to thwart the vile attempts of Germany's secret emissaries, by putting the public

in possession of the facts as to Great Britain's power and resources and her position and preparations by impressing on them the righteousness of her cause ; and by imbuing the ignorant and suspicious and scared with our knowledge, our hopes and our conviction that, be it soon or be it late, victory shall crown the efforts of His Majesty and his Allies and the enemy shall be defeated and beaten and peace shall return—a long peace with prosperity and happiness in its train.

NO PESSIMISM.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is no doubt that the crisis is grave, and to-day we realise more than before the truth of the words that have been so often uttered that this is a life and death struggle. Many mistakes have been made and many foolish anticipations have not been realised. But there is no cause for pessimism. The resources of the United Kingdom are immense and they shall be applied, as they never were applied till now, to exorcise the evil that during the last five and twenty years has gathered and grown, year after year and month after month, moulding a great people into a huge, inhuman and ruthless machinery for the aggrandisement of one tyrant power and the destruction of all that comes in its way. And let us look at Great Britain's Allies in Europe, France and Russia and Italy. France to-day is not the France of 1870-71. I remember well the Franco-Prussian War, for I was a student then in England. From 1865 to 1869 my home had been under the roof of a French gentleman—the Professor of French in the University College, London—an exile from France since the *coup d'etat* of 1852. There I met many other French exiles and learned from them and knew the evils of the regime, which Napoleon III had established, demoralising, disuniting, distracting and weakening France at the core. I remember well with what light hearts Louis Napoleon's Ministers rushed into the snare that Prussia had prepared. I remember the battle of Woerth and the Emperor's despairing cry in his message to the Empress—*Fout pent se rétatir*. And I remember how the Prussian wave swept all before it and in six months France was prostrate at the conqueror's feet. Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, the France which Prussia crushed in 1870 is not the France that now stands by Great Britain's side. And Russia too. What a blessing it is that all the old rivalry and suspicion and animosities have faded into oblivion. If the souls of the dead could see what is passing here below, the soul of our late King Emperor Edward must rejoice that the bonds he riveted between Great Britain and France and Russia, with supreme sagacity and statesmanship are the bonds on which the Empire and all its friends rely to-day for ultimate and inevitable success. Russia stands to-day, after inflicting the most crushing blows on the enemy, in one solid, unbroken and undismayed mass from the Baltic to the Black Sea, in spite of recent losses and retreat. Italy has come forward tardily, it is true ; but the country of Garibaldi and Mazzini and Cavour can be trusted ne-

ver to recoil and never to recede till Austria's power is shattered and the Dual Monarchy is dismembered and divided among nascent nations which will constitute and maintain a mighty bulwark always against the Hohenzollern's ambitions and the Hapsburg's mediaeval ways. The war will be decided not by individual episodes with varying fortune across the Rhine or the Vistula, and such episodes should neither unduly elate nor unduly depress us. Let us above all things remember that the British Navy remains intact and unscathed. The boasted and boastful German Navy has been skulking and hiding like the coward after playing the bully so long. And, as Mr. Churchill said recently, "on the whole surface of the seas of the world no hostile flag is flown." It is the Navy that protects Indian shores and ensures to us an immunity which we perhaps do not fully recognise and realise because it is so secure. Nothing has done so much as the British Navy's impregnable position to sustain the spirits and confidence of the whole Empire and all its friends throughout the world. These are the broad and determining facts to which we should look and not to the stars and constellations on the skies for our future horoscope.

INDIA'S DUTY.

Loyalty and confidence are India's sole duty at this supreme hour in the firm faith and belief that India's destinies are indissolubly bound with the British Empire's fortunes. India cannot die if the Empire lives. Our every thought, our every word, our every act must be devoted to the single question, how best we may discharge that duty, each in his own sphere, each according to his capacity and his opportunity. All else must wait and all else can wait, till the war is over and victory and peace are in sight.

OUR VICEROY.

In connection with that duty, our thoughts turn naturally to the noble Ruler, who has now for nearly five years been the King Emperor's trusted Viceroy and our most trusted Governor General. All India longed and prayed that Lord Hardinge should continue at the helm, till India's position and rights and interests were duly considered and safeguarded at the conclusion of the war. Our Sovereign and his Government have asked the Viceroy to continue in his high and onerous post till March next and Lord Hardinge has consented to bear the heavy burden for the extended period. I know, ladies and gentlemen, there is some disappointment that we have not got all we asked. We do not, of course, know all the considerations that influenced those concerned, but there are some considerations which ought to weigh with us too. First and foremost is the consideration about the Viceroy's health and the extraordinary and extreme strain which he has undergone, as we ought all to know and to remember. It was no light task to set aside the Partition of Bengal, to remove the Capital from Calcutta, to make the arrangements for His Majesty's Coronation at Delhi and to incur all

the responsibilities and anxieties connected with Their Majesties' memorable visit to India. Then comes the dastardly outrage that nearly killed him, but even then the ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms, did not vanquish him and he stayed with a courage, a fortitude, and a sacrifice which must have been borne at no small cost personally. It was no light task to effect the conciliation of Cawnpore or to raise his potent voice on India's behalf when the treatment of our countrymen in South Africa convulsed our country. It must have been no small strain to stand undaunted amid the uproar which assailed him at the time. Who again could not understand, though his exalted isolation made it impossible to have any personal knowledge, all that he must have borne and suffered when he lost first a devoted wife and then a heroic son in quick and cruel succession? And lastly, let us try and think of the strain of service throughout the greatest crisis in the history of the British Kingdom and Empire when he took upon himself the heavy and unlooked for responsibility of sending our soldiers to the front, holding himself answerable for India with a trust and confidence that leave us his everlasting debtors. I am sure you will all support unanimously and with acclamation the Resolution that will be moved for your acceptance, expressing our deep gratitude and joyful thanks for the boon granted to India in response to our countrymen's universal wish and prayer. There is this further consideration. If Lord Hardinge's services cannot be spared to India after March 1916, it may be because he is required for greater services to his Sovereign and the Empire in other parts. But the most important consideration is that, wherever he may be, Lord Hardinge's powerful influence will always be felt in all issues relating to India's future and his proper place in the Councils of the Empire.

THE QUESTION OF REUNION.

I will now deal with the question that has of late exercised so many minds with regard to our own differences about the Congress and Conference Constitution. I approach the question not without reluctance and diffidence, because I am conscious that in 1907 I publicly advocated the severance of the Extremists from the Moderates, and I may not altogether be free from what may be regarded as prejudice. But no one can more sincerely desire than I do—and I have given some proof of it—that if it is honestly possible, we should all work on one common platform in our country's service. The question is if it is honestly possible. I entirely agree that co-operation and organised efforts are necessary for achieving progress. I absolutely disapprove of personal feelings and personal motives interfering with the success of the proposed "*reunion*." I do not wish that "the ship of reunion should be wrecked on mere pebbles." But, ladies and gentlemen, with all our desire for reunion, we cannot shut our eyes to the facts which confront us. Who are they who ask us for reunion? If they are those

who separated from us in 1907, because they would not subscribe to principles, which we had placed in the forefront of our programme, based on our deep-rooted conviction that we could not otherwise serve faithfully our country's true interests—if they are those who publicly denounced our programme, reviled our leaders and assailed our methods—if they are those whose pronouncements at times bordered on disloyalty, should we be wise or honest if we allowed ourselves to be carried away by mere sonorous appeals to union, unity, concord and co-operation? Are we wrong if we feel that we cannot be true to our principles and the faith that is in us, and that we cannot serve our country's true interests, as we ought, without insisting that some safeguards must be placed against a repetition of all that culminated in the split at Surat? I will tell you this for myself. I attended three consecutive sessions of the Congress at Bombay in 1904, when Sir Henry Cotton presided and when Sir William Wedderburn was among us, at Benares in 1905 when the late Mr. Gokhale presided, and at Calcutta in 1906, when Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was president. I honestly sought to know the true state of things, and the conviction grew upon me that the Congress movement was in great danger, because I observed that we had irreconcilables in our midst who would wreck the fabric that had been built with so much devotion and so many fond hopes if we did not yield to their intolerance and violent methods. I saw no possibility of concord and co-operation with them. That is why it became necessary to frame the rules and adopt a Constitution. We turned nobody away. We forced no one to separate from us. Eight long years have passed since then. Views might and must have altered. Mistakes might have been recognised, and possibly now there may be a chance of reunion. But ought there not to be an honest avowal of the change? In politics men see no cause for shame in an honest change of views and in an honest avowal of the change.

We have been told that those who separated from us in 1907 and their friends are willing to come back and that they at heart adopt our creed; but that they should not be asked to subscribe to it by signing the declaration. I confess I see no reason for such exemption. Why should they not do what all of us have been doing, are doing, and will do? We have been told similarly that they should be permitted to be elected at public meetings called by bodies not affiliated to the Provincial Congress Committee. This again is a claim to superiority and exemption should we cannot admit. We ourselves undergo the ordeal. Why should they not? There is no humiliation in their being asked to do or accept what we ourselves do and accept. But this is not all. The above demands have been accompanied with the clear intimation that these gentlemen mean to return within the Congress fold with the intention to make us conform to their methods and their ways.

It comes to this after all. They want to enter the house we live in, not by the usual door, but by a special entrance, in order

that they may be able to turn us out of it at a later day. I confess, ladies and gentlemen, that if I were living in a house and an outsider made such demand, I should shut the door and feel very much inclined to use some very unparliamentary language.

All this shows that there is no real unity of views and therefore no likelihood of union, concord and co-operation. When I was in Kathiawar, there was a general complaint that the Rulers and Chiefs did not act unitedly and thus weakened their position and injured their common interests. And a shrewd and able Rajput lady, the mother of a Ruling Chief remarked to me, "It is not possible. You can put together in one united load a number of sugarcane pieces, but can you put together those straight pieces with round pumpkins?" There was truth and wisdom in that remark, and I would respectfully request that we should follow the Rajput lady's wise advice. Let us leave the round pumpkins alone and keep the straight pieces together, and add as many more of them as we can get, with open eyes and honest purpose.

OUR CLAIMS.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is not the time for discussing claims which Government either in India or the United Kingdom cannot attend to. And this is not the time when we could think of doing anything or urging anything that could in the remotest degree embarrass Government. As I have already said before while the war lasts, all other thoughts should be laid aside and we should devote ourselves, and not only let our rulers devote themselves, but help them to devote themselves, to the supreme task, which demands their every thought and every effort. Our claims are not unknown. Our claims are not unjust. Our claims have the sympathy and support of the best minds here and in Great Britain. And we must be content to wait till the victory of our soldiers ensures the safety and security of the State and Empire. Our claims will then be considered and adjudged by the light of all that has occurred and by the light of all that we have offered and endured and done and deserved. We see what is passing in the United Kingdom itself. All claims and controversies are suspended. Liberals and Conservatives, Home Rulers and Labourites have all agreed to set aside for the time all differences and to coalesce and co-operate with one single aim and to one single purpose. And in this regard, I would venture to claim your particular attention to what the Prime Minister told the House of Commons in vindication of his unprecedented course in changing the Liberal Ministry into a National Government :—

"There is not a man more faithful than I to the great principles of public policy which during the best part of thirty years have been to me the aim, the inspiration, the moulding and governing power of such services as I have been able to render to the State. I recede from nothing. I abandon nothing. I sacrifice nothing. What I have held in the past, I hold to day as strongly as I have ever done; what in the future, if I have any future, I shall work for and fight for with whatever remains to me of conviction, of hope, of energy, and of vital force....."

“A unique national exigency demanded from us actual and visible co-operation, unreserved and whole-hearted concentration upon a single purpose shared and pursued by men of every section, of every party, of every political creed.”

It would be presumptuous, of course, to argue from this more than this that the example set by the loftiest in power and position is worthy to be followed by the humblest of us at this ‘unique national exigency.’ You all know what sacrifices were called forth and must have been borne when Lord Haldane quietly gave up the Woolsack, when Mr. Churchill parted from the Navy, when Sir Edward Carson was made Attorney-General, and when men like Mr. Balfour and the Marquis of Lansdowne agreed to serve under Mr. Asquith. And, among the people themselves, think of what the working men have done. All the restrictions laid down by the Trade Unions, all the hard-fought rights they had secured have been suspended and subordinated at the call the Government made for the preservation and the safety of the State and the Empire.

There are questions, of course, which we can and should discuss with propriety and with advantage to all and embarrassment to none. And to these I would respectfully suggest that you should confine yourselves at this Conference.

INDUSTRIAL ADVANCEMENT.

Our industrial advancement is one of those questions; and what Sir M. Visvesvaraya, whom Poona well remembers, said the other day, as Dewan of Mysore, is well worthy of our deepest attention. He showed to us that the output of India is regularly between $1/20$ and $1/10$ of the corresponding production per head in the countries of Europe. Taking Mysore for his test naturally, he showed that the value annually of the produce of agriculture, manufactures and other occupations reached the total of 18 crores. The population of the Mysore State numbered 59 lacs. The result was Rs. 31 per head. In Europe the corresponding rate of production was between Rs. 300 and Rs. 600—that is, about 10 to 20 times. Making allowances due to climate and physical strength, this comparison must make us all *think furiously*. Is there no scope for us here to be of some use to mitigate the grave misfortune and disability the above comparison demonstrates? The days of dependency solely on our *Maharaj* Government are past and gone, and we must put our own shoulders to the wheel, if this heavy handicap is to be removed not at once, not rapidly, but appreciably from year to year by strenuous and patient and persevering endeavour. No doubt Government help and co-operation will be necessary and we will be able to demand that and secure that, if we succeed in deserving it.

You must have noticed that Mr. Alfred Chatterton said at Mysore that Mysore was the only part of India, where the educated section of the people interested itself in furtherance of industrial development and had helped to lay the foundations of an industrial system, which would be an enduring one. I

am not competent enough to sit in judgment on this sweeping remark. But I think the educated in our Presidency have not been so far behind Mysore as Mr. Chatterton with obvious partiality declared. His Excellency the Governor's recent remarks, when he opened the vernacular school building of the Nutan Marathi Vidyalaya, have, I am sure, not escaped your attention. His Excellency dwelt on the importance of promoting various enterprises, which would develop our industrial, commercial and agricultural possibilities, and added that it was no good turning out a large number of trained young men, unless by development of our country we are able to give them opportunities of doing good work and showing enterprise in many professions. Government was willing, said His Excellency, so far as it was able, to assist such enterprises, but the initiative must come from the people themselves. We are bound to acknowledge with gratitude what the Bombay Government did under the late Governor, Lord Sydenham, in this direction. Here in Poona and in Ahmedabad, Lord Sydenham has left lasting memorials of his indefatigable and laudable endeavours to promote the industrial and commercial advancement of this Presidency.

AGRICULTURE.

Our largest and most important industry is agriculture and the Poona Agricultural College is another monument of Lord Sydenham's beneficent endeavours. Under such a Principal as our friend Dr. Mann, it is doing splendid work and I would earnestly request those of you who are attending this Conference from distant parts to see for yourselves the good work this College is doing. I have the good fortune to live in its neighbourhood and I am in a position to say that I know of no institution which is helping so largely our Presidency, because it is helping to promote the interests and the welfare of the largest part of our poor population. To make two blades grow instead of one is undoubtedly of the greatest benefit and that is the work the Poona Agricultural College is devoting itself to, and if it receives all the support it deserves it will be able to extend the sphere of its usefulness more and more from year to year. You can learn there the two essential requisites in which our people are so deficient, viz., the value of labour-saving appliances and machinery and the more scientific methods of agriculture. In this connection too, I would request your consideration of the Diwan of Mysore's valuable remarks. He has told us that there is plenty of labour in our own country, but there is no organisation to develop and exploit it. He has told us also that our agriculturists are not fully employed from four to six months in the year and with due organisation they would learn to employ their idle hours more usefully in the development of rural industries of which the oldest, viz., weaving is the most important, because it maintains the largest industrial population in this country. Yet it is languishing for lack of organisation. Here, gentlemen, you have a vast field for beneficent work and that activity, which blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

THE PROTECTION OF CATTLE.

And in this connection I would draw your particular attention to the protection and preservation of cattle. During the last famine nothing taxed the energies of the authorities and the charitable men more than the saving of cattle from fodder famine. Every year when rain is plentiful a vast amount of fodder goes to waste which, if properly preserved, would in bad seasons prevent one of the most awful and painful of calamities. the starvation and the death of the poor dumb animals on which the ryot's fortune and the country's agricultural welfare so largely depend. The last Administration Report shows that in 1913-14, there was an increase in the number of fires compared to the previous year (1912-13), and the explanation given is that in the latter year in all the Circles except the Central Circle, because of a pressing demand for grass and grazing, the forests were cleared of much inflammable material. The significance of this fact ought not to escape notice. If the forests are cleared of much inflammable material, there will be few forest fires, and if this clearing is systematically resorted to, then much inflammable material will be preserved. As advocated with remarkable zeal and perseverance by Mr. Purshotamdas Thakordas, one of the Secretaries of the Bombay Presidency's Famine Committee, during the last famine, there will thus be a great saving of the ryot's cattle when fodder famine prevails, as is not unfrequently the case. Only this very year, when the rains were late, the price of fodder rose so rapidly and became so excessive that a gentleman, who was in close touch with the conditions that prevailed, told me that if rains were delayed for a fortnight more cattle would be sold for a half or a fourth of their usual price, as the poor ryot could not afford to feed them at that rate and would rather part with them than see them starve and die.

CHEAPER JUSTICE.

That justice should be cheap, easily accessible, and within the reach of the poorest is a necessity which no one will deny. To leave their fields or their daily work and trudge miles away from home and field to the court-house or camp is a hardship which entails in many cases a denial of justice to the poorest and most deserving. May we not direct our thought and energies to the provision of something like the Cantonal Courts in Egypt which Lord Kitchener introduced recently in 1912 and where justice can be administered without great cost in the manner most conformable to local custom and local knowledge by the elders selected from among the ryots of the district?

THE THIRD CLASS PASSENGERS AND RAILWAYS.

Repeated attention has been called to the hardships endured by the third class passengers. It seems strange that a hardship so real and so manifestly iniquitous should remain unredressed so long. The third class passengers contribute more than 90 per cent. of the earnings of the Railways from passenger traffic. Why is it that the greatest hardship is inflicted on those who

contribute the most ? Only because they are poor and voiceless. If anywhere the poor people are treated like dumb driven cattle, it is on our Railways in the sight of us all, by those who earn their livelihood from their contributions more than from the contributions of others. The Local Government has no power. It can only *recommend* to the Railway Board, and the latter seems to be all powerful without commensurate responsibility. Complaints to the Companies are useless. Complaints to the Railway Board are met by the stereotyped reply that there is not sufficient rolling stock. But why is there not sufficient rolling stock ? The Companies take the money from the poor passengers and fail to fulfil their contract. Is there no tribunal that can compel the fulfilment ? Ought there not to be such a tribunal ? The Railway Board should be that tribunal, and its plea of helplessness is discreditable and deplorable. We must request one of our members on the Viceroy's Legislative Council to ask for a return of the money spent by the Railways in supplying goods waggons compared to the money spent in supplying rolling stock for passengers, since the constitution of the Railway Board in 1904. It is incumbent on us to raise our voice on behalf of those who suffer thus almost daily in our sight till those responsible for the evil are brought to a perception of their clear duty for providing the necessary remedy. The law is clear as was shown recently. The Railway regulations provide penalties against passengers who enter a compartment holding the full number marked for carriage and refuse to get out when asked by the Railway officials. But the latter give no aid. The interests of the Companies are their care and the interests of the Companies seem opposed to the public interest. Would the Companies like the people to take the law in their own hands ? Are they waiting for that ultimate result ? What will it come to when that remedy is resorted to ? We do not wish it. We would like to avoid it. We only feel that the time has come for giving the warning.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

Ladies and gentlemen, one of the memorable pronouncements of our King-Emperor during his visit to our country was the following :—

“ If the system of co-operation can be introduced and utilized to the full, I foresee a great and glorious future for the agricultural interests of this country.”

For that great and glorious future we can never do enough. But it is a matter of great satisfaction that the co-operative movement is gathering force and growing and extending with remarkable results year after year. As the Government of India's recent Resolution shows, nothing beyond a few scattered experiments indicated the starting of the movement in India in 1904. In 1914 there were over 12,000 societies with nearly six lakhs of members and a working capital of

over five crores of rupees. The movement has gone beyond a doubting and the experimental stage. It has now taken root in our soil and its benefits, economic, educational, social and moral, are obvious to all, and I am glad to say that they are becoming increasingly obvious to those for whom the movement is intended and on whose help its success must so largely depend. In this direction the work done by Mr. Devadhar of the Servants of India Society deserves our grateful recognition. The co-operative movement has no more sincere advocate, no more prudent friend, and no more energetic worker, as is now generally known and acknowledged. The Resolution of the Government of India shows very forcibly that the six lakhs of members mean that the numbers directly affected, including their families, can scarcely be less than 30 lakhs; and that if account is taken of the benefits to outsiders, which have followed the spread of this movement, particularly the reduction of the general rate of interest, it can fairly be claimed that the movement has brought genuine relief to sixty lakhs of people. The Resolution declares that this is a very gratifying and indeed phenomenal outcome, of the year's work. Of course, this means also that with our 30 crores of population, the movement needs all the efforts of many hundred workers like Mr. Devadhar, and there is no work more deserving of the constant attention and energies and devotion of our District and Provincial Conferences year after year.

CONCLUSION.

There is work enough in these and other such directions for those who care and those who will. Our great Motherland has constant need of all our care, all our devotion and all our service. The object of gatherings such as these is that we may draw strength and support from each other and carry with us to our daily task greater knowledge, clearer perception, higher resolve, and unfaltering faith, to enable us to work in those paths which greater minds that speak to us from the dead past and the living present have laid down, so that we may do our duty and leave to those that come after us a greater heritage in our country's peaceful progress, in her increasing prosperity and contentment, and in her greater freedom and happiness.

P. N. D.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED

BY

Mr. Duni Chand, Bar.-at-Law and Municipal
Commissioner, Lahore,

AT THE

Special Punjab Provincial Conference,

HELD AT

AMRITSAR,

On the 27th & 28th July, 1918.

SPECIAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE, BROTHER DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

Words fail me to express my sense of thankfulness to you for the signal honor you have done me in electing me President of the Special Punjab Provincial Conference. Feeling my own unworthiness and the huge responsibility of the position you call me to, at a moment when my country is, as it were, face to face with its destiny of centuries, I persistently drew back, but the repeated commands of the Reception Committee left me no choice and I appear to-day before you with all my unworthiness and humility, believing in the words of the President of the Fourth Punjab Provincial Conference, my late lamented friend and leader Lala Hans Raj Sawhny that "no man when called upon has a right to refuse to come forward to help and serve his country and fellow-countrymen except under very special and extraordinary circumstances." It is in this belief and in this spirit that I obey your behest, confident that your large-hearted indulgence and true patriotism will pass over my many shortcomings and that you, Brother Delegates, will cooperate with me at this supreme moment in the history of India's battle for freedom, and help to win for the Motherland and for this historic province of the Land of the Five Rivers that boon of free and self-governing institutions so long promised by far-seeing and sympathetic British statesmanship but unfortunately always kept back despite the overwhelming desire of her people.

WHY WE MEET ?

Gentlemen, we meet here to-day for a special purpose, namely, to formulate the authentic and genuine expression of opinion of the people of the Punjab on the scheme of Indian Reforms drawn up by His Excellency Lord Chelmsford in conjunction with Mr. Montagu, Secretary of State for India, in pursuance of the latter's famous Declaration of Policy made on 20th August 1917. Before I plunge into my main theme, it seems necessary to take stock of certain new forces and factors which are greatly changing the complexion of Indian affairs. Owing to the broadening influence of English education and the impact of world forces, accentuated by the present war, the minds of our people generally have opened up and interest in the politics of the country has more than re-doubled. And rightly so, for is not the present moment one of those periods in the history of mankind when in the oft-quoted words of Mr. Lloyd George the world rushes along at a giddy pace covering the track of centuries in a year. It was inevitable that under the stress of a situation like this the proverbially slow and sluggish East should move with a speed beyond the dream of even the wildest dreamers of a decade ago. Everywhere you hear, whether on the road side in large cities and even by the side of the village well in the most secluded part of the country, the tread of new forces and the voice of new generations. The old complacency with the ways and methods of the Government is gone. Even the most unlettered villager is tempted to open his mouth in frank and fearless criticism of the acts of the irresponsible bureaucracy. Have the august personages who toured through the length and breadth of our country a few months back to collect representative Indian opinion, have they in their joint recommendations extending over 175 pages of close print rightly gauged the effect of these changing conditions in India, of this general and widespread desire on the part of the people, literate and illiterate, to take charge of their households and be supreme in

the internal management of their affairs. Even a cursory glance at the report will indicate that while knowledge has been obtained of a certain change that has crept over the surface of the country in India, full measure has not been taken of the depth, the intensity, and breadth of this change. The fetish of an efficient bureaucracy pluming itself on the achievement of good government, connoting really in the words of a most brilliant Empire-builder, the late Earl of Cromer, "the continuance of their own supremacy" is continuously and uniformly worshipped throughout the report. And whenever the question of self-government is taken up, obstacles are put in the way of an effective transfer of power into the hands of the people and their representatives. False issues are raised and wholly erroneous theories propounded about the incapacity in the art of Government of a people whose ancestors were the founders of great empires, the spiritual teachers of mankind and the authors of systems of ethics and religion exciting to this day the admiration of the world, at a time when Europe was sunk in barbarism, when even Rome had not been built, and Babylon and Ninevah had not emerged into the light of history. The descendants of such people, the most law-abiding, truth telling, and most charitably disposed and unselfish, are, it is proclaimed, unable to keep order, unable to furnish electorates and unable to understand and watch their interests and must therefore be ruled and trained by bureaucrats, governing in an atmosphere where all criticism is impiety and all constitutional aspirations are sedition, where they are called to no account by those over whom they are set, where they have not to persuade, to compromise, to give and take, to prove and win their case in the course of free personal debate in face of rival ideas and antagonistic interests. One would have thought that to-day when such phrases as self-determination, self-development, self-realisation, the free-affirmation of the will of the people, their right to dispose of their own destiny and carve out their future as they think best but not under dictation from any bureaucracy, however well intentioned or efficient, are becoming the stock in trade of even such pro-consuls as Lord Curzon and Lord Milner, propositions like those enunciated by Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu about the incapacity of the people, would not find place in a State document, pledged to grant self-determination, however modified, to 300 million members of the human race. The situation is indeed ironic. Do His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu offer to the people of India a mite even of unrestricted opportunity to carve out their own future and live their life as they desire? I emphatically say no. What they propose to give is just what a *Zabardast* Manager of Court of Wards in this country does sometimes propose for his ward on his attaining the age of majority, namely, that he should be placed in charge of the stables. I repeat, we Indians want either the entire estate or a substantial portion thereof but surely not the stables. We cannot continue standing outside the portal but must be admitted into the interior, into the innermost parts of the household. And our *bona fides* and attachment to the empire are brought out by the fact that we allow the British rulers of this country to keep in their own hands the power of foreign relations and of naval and land defences. It is insinuated that educated Indians are craving for power and wealth. A more atrocious libel was never uttered. Can the educated countrymen of Dadabhai Naroojee, Syad Ahmad Khan, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Gandhi, Subramania Iyer, Raja Muhamadabad, Tilak, Malaviya, Dyal Singh Majithia and last but not least Lajpat Rai covet wealth and power? Men who have despised riches and given with their own hands to the people almost all they had, men who in the interest of their country have even imposed on themselves all the inconveniences of voluntary exile, men who could pile lakhs upon lakhs if they so wished, surely these are not the men to yearn for personal power and I must frankly tell the authorities, that think what they will, the majority of educated Indians

are actuated and inspired by those very ideals of honorary service and patriotic devotion to the cause of the people which consumed a Gokhale, Narojee, or Sayad Ahmad Khan. If the educated Indians want a greater share in the public services of their land, it is that they may serve their brethren better, promote their well being and lessen the harassments to which they are subject in the regime of the Indian Civil Service. While British rule continues to be treated as a dispensation of Providence, the belief, it must be noted, is spreading fast among the people of this country that it is the selfishness and greed of power of the Indian Civil Service which constitutes the greatest obstacle in the path of India's self-development. In fact, educated Indians have begun to give points to the civil servants in their adherence to the spirit of British constitution and the principles of British liberty in marked contrast to many among the civil servants who in the name of public safety, social order and other fair names for a Reign of Terror are trampling underfoot the elementary rights of British citizenship and thus giving rude shock to the Indian's rooted belief in British fairness, and are trying to obliterate the finest traditions of British administration in this country. Gentlemen, I had expected that taking a lesson from the present crisis in world's history, England would turn a new page in the history of her relations with this country but it is very painful to note that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford should have missed, in the words of the poet. "That moment to decide," that "once to everyman and nation comes, in the strife of truth and falsehood for the good or evil side." It is my opinion that the historian of the future would heave a sheaf full of sighs at the failure of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu to rise to the full height of that great opportunity which British statesmanship had placed in their hands. India asked for a new polity; the British democracy under the stress of the world "situation" in which freedom and truth stand face to face with naked Prussianism and domination endorsed the claim but what they have proposed is just the old despotism, with the bureaucrat made stronger, more irresponsible and more fortified, or as the nationalist Bengali Leader, Mr. B. C. Pal very characteristically and truly says, for every *inch* of influence given to the people, an *ell* of power has been given to the bureaucracy.

THE CURTIS MISCHIEF.

Before I proceed to a close examination of the Reform proposals, a word is, I think, necessary with regard to the two principal schemes before the country whose influence in varying degrees, for and against, on the Viceroy and Secretary of State's proposals has been powerful. The first is the Congress-League scheme passed after what have been rightly called in this report "memorable meetings" of the two foremost organisations of the people of India, the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League, held at Lucknow in December 1916. The second is the joint scheme drafted by Mr. Lionel Curtis, whom a few high placed civilian officials had invited to this country to help in tidying over the difficult situation forced by persistent Indian agitation. Mr. Curtis already enjoyed sufficient notoriety on account of his activities as one of a group of Imperialistic politicians desiring a federation of those parts of the Empire where the white men live, but relegating dependencies like India to the position of political and economic subjection for exploitation in the interest of Great Britain as well as the self-governing dominions. It was natural for certain members of the Civil Service to invite such a man to India, and to feed and entertain him and even print his books with the help of money belonging to the people of this country in order to get over a situation where India claimed equality and refused to accept the claims of the Civil Service to nurse and guide her. Unfortunately for India, another political adventurer, possessed of greater experience and therefore larger powers of mischief, appeared simultaneously on the scene to collaborate in the secretly hatched conspiracy against India. I mean that "stormy petrel of Indian Politics," Sir Valentines Chirok. Gentlemen, it is nothing short of a national scandal

and a national grievance of the worst order that arch-enemies of India like Sir Valentine Chirol should be the right royal guests of Viceroy after Viceroy, not even excepting a Viceroy of the popularity and sympathetic imagination of Lord Hardinge. I am sure it would immensely gratify Indian sentiment if in agreement with the official whim of the hour, His Excellency Lord Chelmsford were to draw down the sledge-hammer of the Defence of India Act upon Sir Valentine Chirol and other troubadours of his stamp and direct them not to enter India.

Well, gentlemen, Mr. Curtis then principally and Sir Valentine Chirol in subordinate role, coupled with a Civilian of the United Provinces in charge if I mistake not of the Police Administration in that Province, are the intellectual forbears of the Reform scheme passing under the name of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montague. Obviously, it is not a flattering compliment to the political acumen of the civil service of to-day, claiming to have produced in the past scholars like Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir Charles Aitchison and Sir William Hunter, that it should have found itself compelled to seek the aid and assistance of colonial adventurers like Mr. Curtis.

THE EDUCATED CLASSES.

Gentlemen, time and again the Bureaucracy and its henchmen in the Anglo-Indian Press have proclaimed lustily that the educated classes in India stand as a people apart from their illiterate countrymen, possessing in fact conflicting and clashing interests. The utter hollowness and complete baselessness of this reckless accusation have been demonstrated *ad nauseum* and its refutation to-day particularly after the masterly crusher which my distinguished countryman, the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Abdul Rahim gave it in the course of his great minute of dissent on the report of the Public Service Commission, seems really superfluous. But in view of the fact that this atrocious heresy has been resurrected in the report of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu, I consider it necessary to deal a passing blow of a lethal character to it? Gentlemen, in considering whether the educated classes represent in a real sense the true interests of the masses of this country, one at the very first has to take up the essential question, whence does the educated class spring? Now is it not a fact that everyone coming within the category of educated classes starts as one of the uneducated millions and that even after he has completed his course of education, his relationships of a most intimate and lasting character with his ever expanding host of uneducated brethren do not snap. On the contrary the integral unity of his connections strengthens and matures by virtue of the new consciousness and the new light which the educated man receives. Flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone as always, the educated man from his vantage ground of knowledge, becomes better qualified not only to understand the real needs and aspirations of his uneducated fellow-countrymen but also to effectively watch and protect against the encroachments of irresponsible executive their rights and liberties first as human beings and next as citizens of the Empire. And then, gentlemen, if education is such a ban that it makes the Indian who receives it an enemy of the community out of which he springs and in which all that he holds dear remains co-centred, why not make short work of this education and end it. To my mind, this corollary follows from the premises instituted by our Anglo-Indian friends, and yet they never draw it, a fact which shows the insincerity of the professions of those who harp on this untenable theme. Addressing honest Englishmen acquainted with the constitutional history of their country, I will simply put to them the question whether the handful of Barons, who met King John at Runnymede on 15th June 1215 and wrung out of him the essential bases of English Liberty, were in the sense of our Anglo-Indian friends the representatives of the millions on the other side in the country who knew nothing of what they were transacting. And again coming further down the stream of British History, I will ask whether the six Lor

and the seventh Bishop of London, who issued written invitations to William, Prince of Orange, to come and protect English Liberties, held authoritative mandate from the country or whether again the Convention which William summoned after his landing and which in the following year passed the Bill of Rights placing individual liberty in England beyond the reach of arbitrary will or authority, were on the parity of reasoning adopted by our Anglo-Indian friends, the chosen representatives of England? Gentlemen, I could multiply instances like these from recorded history but I feel that I would merely be wasting the time of an audience to whom the true interests of their poor illiterate countrymen resting at the very mercy of officials are dear above all. As for the Anglo-Indian world, I hold that a little cool reflection on the part of the honest among them will bring them to our side of the case and as for the rest what amount of reasoning will give eyes to those who will not see and ears to those who will not hear?

THE REFORMS.

Gentlemen, I will now deal with the Reforms. I will consider them under four headings :—

1. Parliament and India Office.
2. Executive Government—Indian and Provincial.
3. Legislature—Indian and Provincial.
4. Local Self-Government.

PARLIAMENT AND INDIA OFFICE.

The Congress-League Scheme as well as the memorandum of the famous Nineteen urged the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State and also demanded that the salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates. They further claimed that the Secretary of State should as far as possible occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India as the Secretary of State for the colonies does in relation to the Governments of the self-governing dominions and should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries—one of whom shall always be an Indian. I am glad to notice, that Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu concede one part of our demand. They recommend the transfer of the salary of the Secretary of State for India to the Home estimates. For this we are thankful to them. But the reform itself is not of very great moment. A few thousands to India do not matter much, particularly to an exchequer never noted for its economical dispositions. It was Lord Morley who paid his tribute to the asphyxiating character of the Indian atmosphere to the Economist. The relief to Indian funds afforded by the placing of the salary of the Secretary of State for India is indeed infinitesimal. But we are a grateful people and even for small mercies we raise our hands in thankfulness. The main Reform asked for in this field has not been granted. The abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State, that refuge and resting place of retired bureaucrats carrying their reactionary counsels into the deliberations of the Secretary of State, has not been recommended. On the contrary, emphasis is laid on the fact that the Secretary of State should continue to receive advice from "those whose knowledge of India is greater than that of himself." And to this end it is also suggested that some interchange of personnel between the staff of the India Office and the Public Services of India be introduced in the system of Government. Expedition in the transaction of business by the Council is all that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford care for, and a modified constitution of the Council is urged solely on this ground. It is forgotten that the real and abiding mischief lies not in its delays or its circuitous ways of discharging its functions but in the fact that the sun-dried bureaucrats after they have closed their careers in India are thereby given an opportunity of influencing the opinions and views of the Secretary of State for India to the great detriment of the vital need

and interests of India. We must, therefore, gentlemen, insist on the immediate ending of this instrument of circumlocution and reaction.

Gentlemen, the report urges the appointment by the House of Commons of a Select Committee on Indian affairs at the beginning of each Session. This is a step in the right direction and we welcome it, though adding at the same time that the reform it incorporates is after all not of a very substantial character, particularly nowhere in comparison to the abolition of the India Council that India has been asking for. While on this subject, I must also refer in a demurring spirit to the proposition enunciated by the authors of the Reform scheme, that the future control of Parliament and the Secretary of State for India should be so modified as to leave the Government of India free and to enable the latter to leave the provincial Governments free. Now this is rather an alarming recommendation. If the modification of the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State had been *pari passu* with the transfer of authority into the hands of people and their representatives, one would have no justification to cavil at a recommendation of this kind. What we notice is that as a matter of fact very little of responsibility has been entrusted to representative bodies in India, while under the plea of developing responsible institutions in India, much larger powers have been given to the bureaucracy. India must protest against this. Either responsibility must be passed into the hands of the chosen representatives of the people and to that extent the control of the Secretary of State modified or the latter must continue to enjoy the powers of superintendence, control and intervention which he now possesses. Hitherto the Indians have looked to Parliament and the Secretary of State and even the Government of India as against Provincial Governments, for relief and redress. Indians welcome the development of responsible institutions in India and the consequent relaxation of the powers and control which the Home authorities possess. But they contend that when the transfer of authority is not really into their hands but that of the bureaucracy, which is treated in the report as the guardian and protector of 95 per cent of the people, no argument derived from devolution of authority and local responsibility shall be used to deprive them of the opportunities of relief and redress they at present possess.

EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT.

Gentlemen, I now come to the Executive Government of India and of the Provinces. The Congress-League scheme had suggested that the Government of India should consist of the Governor-General and an Executive Council, half of whose members shall be Indians elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council, the rest to be nominated from the ranks of men trained and educated in the public life of England, the permanent officials of the Departments being ordinarily debarred from offices carrying with them the determination of the questions of broad policy and powers of immense patronage and authority. In the provinces it was similarly proposed that the Executive Government should consist of Governor, not ordinarily belonging to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services, and an Executive Council, half of whose members shall be Indians elected by the elected members, the rest to be nominated from the ranks of Englishmen trained and educated in the public life of England. Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu have practically rejected all the elements of the Congress-League Scheme in respect of the constitution of executive authority in India. About the Government of India, they merely suggest an increase of the Indian element in the Governor-General's Executive Council by one and they also couple with it a recommendation for the abolition of the present statutory maximum and the statutory qualification for seats. Now an addition of one more Indian member is hardly in consonance with the spirit of the memorable declaration of 20th August, 1917. The authors of the report take up the position that responsible Government cannot be installed in a single day by a mere stroke of the pen but must be progressively realised in stages and that in the

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first stage, the Government of India must be kept in a state of more or less irresponsibility. One could accept the position that in the first stage the Government of India should not be completely upset and overhauled. But to argue that the Government of India should remain absolutely irresponsible subject only to Parliament and the Secretary of State, is really preposterous. It is, I believe, Professor Lowell who remarks:—"In the modern world there are only two great autocrats, the Czar of Russia and the Viceroy of India" and adds that "Even the Kaiser takes a back seat." Fortunately for mankind, Russia has been freed from the oppressions which covered her like a shroud for so long. And if the Government of India is to be saved from Professor Lowell's just condemnation and it is really intended that responsible government should be established in India as an integral part of the Empire at an early date and not remain a mere pious hope and empty aspiration, it is essential that the spirit of responsibility must enter the constitution of the Government of India in the transitional stage also. Confining myself only to its constitution and leaving for the present the question of its powers and authority, I maintain that the position taken up in the Congress-League scheme is incontrovertible and has not been met by the authors of the report. The Congress-League scheme takes its stand on the fundamental principle obtaining in all civilised countries, that the members of the supreme executive, in the present case the members of the Governor-General's Executive Council, shall not be permanent officials imbued with the spirit of the great centralised departments over which they have been accustomed to preside. What do Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu say in answer to this demand of the Congress and the League? They merely repeat the official theory that administrative experience is essential for the colleagues of the Governor-General and the Provincial Governors, that men with the necessary high qualifications would not be willing to interrupt their careers in England for a membership of a Provincial Executive Council and that the effect of excluding officials from such positions would be very deleterious. I will take up each of these statements separately. If administrative experience is essential for the members of the Supreme Cabinet, why is it that in England itself it is a settled fact that a member of the permanent Civil Service must be content to close his official career as the trusted and authoritative head of his department without aspiring to political governance. Mr. Balfour once spoke of the curious inability of the permanent officials to understand Parliament. This observation crystallises a great and abiding truth. Permanent officials from their habits of dealing with minor details lose touch with great principles and they become incapacitated for the broad and statesmanlike outlook, which is essential to those who guide the destinies of people. As for the observation that men with the necessary high qualifications would not be willing to exchange their opportunities in England for the membership of a Provincial Executive Council, the admission is implied that such men would be available for seats on the Governor-General's Council. If this is so and when as a matter of fact Englishmen like Lord Macaulay, Mr. James Wilson, Sir Charles Trevelyan, Sir Sumner Maine, Lord Hobhouse, Sir Courtney Ilbert and Sir Guy Wilson trained and educated in the public life of England and possessing no knowledge of the details of Indian administration, have demonstrated their unrivalled superiority over permanent officials, howsoever brilliant, what has prevented Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu from incorporating in their report the sound principle that the permanent officials of a country shall not be the arbiters of its policy. The consideration that the services might suffer in consequence is wholly imaginary and even if real should not have weighed a farthing in the balance as against the great accession of strength which the administration of the country would receive from fresh and wide outlook on the part of those charged with the ultimate direction of affairs. Have the services in England suffered because of the permanent officials not being admitted to seats in the Cabinet? The authors of the report content themselves with the recommendation that the statutory qualification for a seat on the Governor-General's Executive Council be abolished. The

may help a planter to enter the Viceroy's Council but this cannot prevent officials from entering or even dominating that Council. Gentlemen, if Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu had only accepted in their report the universally recognised principle of permanent officials being kept away from offices of political governance, this would not have in any way diminished the present irresponsibility of the Government of India; only it would have relaxed the crushing grip of the bureaucracy, replacing it by wide outlook and freshness of mind on the part of those Englishmen recruited from the public life of England, who would henceforth form the Executive Council of the Governor-General. But even this diminution in the prestige and patronage of the bureaucracy has not been sanctioned. Now as to the Indian element in the Executive Council. The Congress-League scheme urged that the representation of the sons of India in the cabinet of their country should at least be extended to half, the other half being still composed of Europeans, though recruited in different form. This increase to one half of the Indian element cannot on the surface of it transform the Government of India into a full fledged responsible Government. It would have only been a step in aid of the attainment of final destination. But Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu reject this proportion without rhyme or reason, adding only one more Indian member to the Viceroy's Executive Council and yet at the same time taking powers to abolish the present statutory maximum, with the result that Indian representation might under certain circumstances stand at a lower figure than the one now existing. The presence of two Indians in a Council in which the overwhelming majority is of non-Indians cannot be any great improvement on the present position. And the disappointment becomes keener when it is remembered that the appointment of these Indian representatives would still continue to be in the hands of the Executive. Finding how generally the nominating power has been abused in the past by the executive appointing just those Indians, who stand divorced from Indian thought and aspirations and even notorious for their reactionarism, the Congress and the League incorporated in their scheme the check that the Indian members shall be elected by the elected members of the Executive Council. Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu admit that in the past nominations to the executives have not always given satisfaction but while rejecting the check suggested by the Congress and the League as being without precedent in the constitution of any country of importance, make no constructive proposals of their own to remove this besetting defect inherent in the existing conditions of Indian Administration. In the first place it is really difficult to accept that the principle of election for the selection of members of the Executive does not exist in the constitution of any country of importance. In America, the importance of which as a power cannot be minimised, the head of the State himself is chosen by election, and the Senate, with the advice and consent of which he appoints State Ministers, is itself the outcome of election. The Swiss constitution is another instance of a polity in which the executive is made of persons wholly elected by the legislature. It must be admitted that the English practice of appointment by the crown is an advance upon the American and Swiss principle of election but this, only postulating that the executive is fully amenable to and answerable for its actions to an elected legislature. But in a country whose executive is and is intended to be kept for sometime as not responsible to the people of the country, the English practice is no answer to the objection noted by the Congress and the League that executive appointments, when the gift of an irresponsible bureaucracy, are invariably conferred on persons who do not enjoy the confidence of the people. Two Indian members in place of one in the Viceroy's Council and one half in the Governors' Council can afford no solace or satisfaction to Indians when it is remembered that these members will generally be the persons who have proved too ready and pliant tools of the bureaucracy and for the purposes of mischief will prove better and more effective agents than the Europeans. An engineer is better hoisted with his own petard, and if Indians do not view with any great enthusiasm the increase of the Indian element in the Viceroy's and Provincial Executive Councils, it is

because of the legitimate apprehension that the increase will be more than nullified and neutralised in practice by the appointment of just those very persons who are acceptable to the bureaucracy because of their unacceptability to their people. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have shirked prescribing any remedy for this state of affairs and in their default I contend, the Congress League scheme stands and holds the field. In this connection I must also take exception to an observation made in the report that as a proportion of the Executive Government will consist of Indian gentlemen who will ordinarily have no administrative experience, it is essential, especially if the Governor lacks knowledge of India, that the European members of Council should be versed in Indian administration. In this the implication is involved that the admission of a large number of Indians into the Executive Councils will really be a source of weakness and constitute loss of efficiency. The implication is unfounded and past history belies it. It was Lord Morley who initiated the experiment of Indian members in the Secretary of State's and Viceroy's Council. Sir Krishna Gupta was one of the two Indian members on the India Council and Mr. (now Sir) S. P. Sinha was the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. I will quote to you the tribute paid to their work by those in a position to judge. Lord Morley referring to the appointment of two Indian gentlemen on his Council said in 1908 :—

“ Many apprehensions reached me as to what might happen. So far, at all events, those apprehensions have been utterly dissipated. The concord between the two Indian members of the Council and their colleagues has been unbroken, their work has been excellent and you would readily believe me when I say that the advantage to me of being able to ask one of these gentlemen to come and tell me something about Indian question from an Indian point is enormous. I find in it a chance of getting the Indian angle of vision and I feel sometimes as if I was actually in the streets of Calcutta.”

Mr. Charles Roberts, at a banquet given in honor of Sir K. G. Gupta, said :

“ When Sir Krishna first took his seat at Council table, Lord Morley's innovation of appointing Indian gentlemen as members of the Council was still an experiment. It was not an experiment to-day. It was now an undoubted success, accepted as matter of course. That Indians should be on the Council was not merely desirable. It was, he believed, indispensable for the right Government of India.”

Speaking at the United Service Club at Simla in 1910, Lord Minto paid the following tribute to Sir S. P. Sinha :—

“ Mr. Sinha is the first Indian colleague of the Viceroy. It is quite unnecessary for me to remind you of the great position his distinguished and exceptional abilities had obtained at the Calcutta Bar. And, gentlemen, I cannot let this opportunity pass without bearing testimony to the able assistance he had rendered to the Government of India and thanking him for the absolute fairness and broad-minded patriotism, which has always characterised the advice which I have so often sought from him.”

Even Sir Valentine Chirol, that implacable enemy of Indian aspirations, was constrained to regret in the public interest Sir S. P. Sinha's resignation when it came, adding that “ His discharge of the duties attaching to his post has gone far to reconcile those who like myself, had misgivings as to the wisdom of calling an Indian into the Viceroy's Executive Council, and chiefly on the very grounds which have been erroneously suggested an explanation of Mr. Sinha's resignation.”

Lord Hardinge's tribute to the second Indian Member, Sir Sayad Ali Imam, was warmer still. He said :

“ As for Sir Sayad Ali Imam, I can only speak of him as a colleague imbued with the highest sense of duty, patriotism and loyalty. Not only by his actual service as head of the Legislative Department, but also by his constant helpfulness and loyal but straightforward advice, he has been of the utmost advantage and assistance to me and my Government. Now that he will be retiring into private life, I wish him all success

and happiness. To me personally he has constantly given the most helpful advice, and I think our colleagues will all bear witness to the great assistance he has rendered to the Council over many difficult and knotty problems. And remember that we have been through no ordinary times. The stress of war has brought anxieties in its turn, to which our predecessors were strangers and through them all it has been to us of the utmost benefit to know from a distinguished Indian at first hand, how the varying aspects of our different problems would strike the mind of various sections of educated Indians. As a member of my Council, I repeat, the presence of Sir Ali Imam has been an asset of the utmost value, and it was a source of unmitigated satisfaction to me the other day to pay him the greatest compliment at my disposal by appointing him vice-president of my council. His tenure of office has coincided, too, with a great deal of difficult and important work in his own particular department and our war legislation has attained to a volume of quite respectable dimensions. Many questions of great technique and difficulty have had to be solved. And it is not only the actual legislation that has been upon the statute book, but a tremendous variety of problems, in which the other departments of the Government have found themselves involved, that have required the help and guidance of the Legislative Department under the auspices of Sir Ali Imam for their solution.

And as for Sir Sankaran Nair who will deny that his towering personality and masterful independence are not an asset of immeasurable value to the deliberations of the Viceroy's Executive Council? In the face of such evidence, to construct an argument of loss of efficiency out of the admission of a greater number of Indians into the Executive Councils of the land, to be compensated for by the appointment of officials versed in Indian administration, I need hardly say, is not only most unfair but is the wellknown bureaucratic way of looking at things Indian.

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE.

Gentleman, as for the provincial executive, much of what I have stated above in connection with the Imperial Executive will apply *mutatis mutandis*. I will only draw special attention to the fact that Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu while conceding that the Provinces should be ruled by a Governor in Council, contemplate that not only the members of the Executive Council but the Governor himself in some provinces might hail from the ranks of the Civil Service. Stripped of all conventionalities, this means that instead of Lieutenant-Governor you might have Sir Michael O'Dwyer as your Governor. This is too horrid to think of, particularly as a substantial part of the reforms coming in redemption of the pledge of 20th August. And I am really surprised that Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu should have deliberately committed themselves to a position of this kind. I have no doubt, gentlemen, that you will insist on a Governor and his European colleagues being not permanent officials as the irreducible minimum of your demand in the field of Provincial Government.

As for the machinery of ministers and the division of Governmental powers into reserved and transferred subjects, I must confess that I have given most anxious thought to this part of the scheme and I unhesitatingly ask you for its total rejection. This dyarchical scheme that owes its parentage to the ingenuity of that constitution-monger, Mr. Curtis, is indeed quite unworkable. Government is a living organism and any distribution of its powers into water-tight compartments worked by different agencies is an impossibility. When speaking of the Government of India, I conceded that we should wait before full responsibility is introduced into its constitution. But I fail to see why in the area of Provincial administration, the stage by stage theory should be insisted on and Responsible Government with all its incidents should not become an accomplished fact. I trust, gentlemen, that here more than in the Government of India, you will emphasize that the Indian members of the executive shall be just those whom their people want and not those whom the bureaucracy installs. Any mummy representation must be resisted with all our strength and vigour, as it has already in the past accomplished sufficient of mischief.

THE LEGISLATION.

Gentlemen,—I now deal with the legislature, Indian and Provincial. When the Legislative Councils of India were reformed under the Minto-Morley Scheme, it was expected that they would give a real living representation to the people of this country. But bitter experience of their working has shown that under the blasting influence of the all-supreme bureaucracy, they proved only glorified debating societies and passed virtually no powers in the hands of the representatives of the people. In the Imperial Legislative Council, the standing official block acted as a dead weight and even in the Provincial Councils where a statutory non-official majority had been prescribed, the powers of nomination reserved to local Governments, and the large arbitrary powers of disallowance vested in the Provincial ruler practically rendered the task of the elected representatives of the people impossible. Resolution after resolution was moved but produced not a ripple of effect on the official sea. The interpellatory powers were exercised, but in all vital matters, the right of disallowance would come in the way and defeat the object of interpellation. Some Provincial Governors so used their powers that they would not let the members pass their disallowed questions or resolutions into the press for the information of the public. Thus balked of the substance of reforms promised in the Minto-Morley Reforms Scheme, the Congress and League joined heads together and urged that the Legislative Councils shall no more remain glorified debating societies, and that the voice of the representatives of the people shall in the words of the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya possess "greater weight than the voice of those who are the permanent officials in administration." They, therefore, while asking for enlarged councils elected directly by people on as broad a franchise as possible, proposed that the Imperial Legislative Council shall contain a majority of 4—5th elected members, that its president shall be elected by the Council itself, that it shall frame its own rules for the transaction of Legislative business, that the budget shall be submitted to it for vote, that all matters except the direction of military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties, shall be under its exclusive control and that its resolutions shall be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council, provided however, that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it shall be given effect to. The same provisions were repeated in the case of the Provincial Councils. How do Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu deal with this aspect of reforms. They admit the vicious character of the standing official block in the Imperial Legislative Council but they undo the effect of this admission by the setting up of another constitutional body known as Council of State, in which the Government will be able to command a clear majority. To this Council of State they do not give the character of an ordinary second chamber but make it virtually the supreme legislative authority. Measures required by the executive need not even go to the Lower House. The Council of State will pass them into law, on the certificate of Governor-General in Council, that they are essential in the interest of peace, order and good Government. We know, gentlemen, how easy it is for any authority in this country to append certificates of this kind, and so it comes to this, that do whatever the Lower House may, the Council of State will always be at hand under the certificate of the executive, to undo the work of the lower House and nullify any recommendations it makes. The novel expedient of certification is repeated in the case of the Provincial Legislative Councils where though a second chamber is not instituted, use is made of a Grand Committee to be largely nominated by the Governor. The ultimate result is that so far as powers to the Legislative Councils are concerned, they really get none, preserving their old character of glorified debating societies. In other matters too the authors of the report show an attitude of complete *non-possumus* to the demands of the Congress and League. The Legislative Councils are not to elect their own presidents; they are not

to frame their own rules of business ; the Governors are to enjoy their present unfettered power of disallowance and in fact they have been given further powers of dissolving their Councils. In responsible politics where the legislature as the elected mouth-piece of the people is supreme, the power of dissolution at the bidding of the executive acts as a useful and effective check to insure that the sentiment of the electorate and the sentiment of the Peoples' House run concurrent and coincide. In other words, dissolution is a kind of appeal to the electors to find out whether the will of the elected Legislature coincides with the will of the nation. But in irresponsible politics such as that of India, the grant of the power of dissolution is to make the executive more irresponsible and in fact the despotic master of the Legislature. I therefore expect that you, gentlemen, will oppose this fresh power of dissolution with all your might, unless either the Government of India or Provincial Governments are converted into full responsible Governments. While on this subject I think I must state that I approve of the proposals in the scheme to associate joint Standing Committees of the Legislature with the departments of the Government and the appointment of a limited number of the members of the Legislative to a position analogous to that of Parliamentary Under Secretaries in Great Britain, adding, however, that in the latter case the members to be appointed should either be elected or non-official members of the Legislature. I also express my concurrence with the recommendations made under the head of Finance, except that the budget in its entirety shall not only be laid before but be also voted upon by the Legislature except in respect of the Military charges.

Gentlemen, a great deal of the value and efficacy of our future Legislature Councils will depend upon their composition. The questions of franchise and electorates have not been considered by Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu. They have left them to a Committee ; much therefore will depend upon the *personnel* of this committee. We should make it clear to the Government that the conclusions of this committee will command approbation only when the Indian representatives that sit on it are virtually of the people and not pliant tools of the bureaucracy. And we should also insist that the conclusions of this committee before being accepted should be published for general criticism. Further, I would ask you to affirm in its entirety for the guidance of that committee the provision in the Congress-League scheme preserving separate electorates for my Mahommadan countrymen and laying down the proportion of their representation in the various Provincial Councils. I must here make it clear that though personally I am not in favour of communal representation, yet I would not oppose it as my Mohammadan brethren are wedded to it, and I should not like the enemies within to exploit the situation in order to prevent the further constitutional progress of the Indian people.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Gentlemen, we have been told that Local Self-Government is going to be one of the roads a long which we shall travel to the promised destination of responsible Government. The foundations of Local Self-Government were laid as early as in May 1882, but it is a sad commentary on the methods of bureaucracy, that Local Self-Government should have remained at the stage where Lord Ripon left it.

I must state that the resolution of Lord Chelmsford's Government dated 16th May 1918 does not go a long way in satisfying popular aspirations on the subject and is wanting in three principal respects. It does not render officials ineligible for election to the chairmanships. It does not decrease the powers of Collectors and Commissioners. And finally it accentuates official control by rendering Government sanction essential to the appointment of superior officials in municipal and other bodies. In my opinion the time has come for the establishment of complete popular control in local bodies and Government should immediately proceed to free local bodies from the leading strings of official control.

PUBLIC SERVICES.

Gentlemen,—The question of public services did not rightly fall within the purview of the constitutional inquiry undertaken by Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu. But it is foolish, nay pedantic, to look a gift horse into the mouth and I must on your behalf express India's gratefulness to Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu for putting in a frank plea for the abolition of all social bars that exist in regulations for appointments to the public services and for recommending that 33 per cent. of the superior posts in the Indian Civil Service shall be recruited for in India, and that this percentage should be *increased* by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. annually until re-examination by a periodic Commission. A number of recommendations about increased pay, better pensions and more elastic leave concessions are also made. I will, however, venture to remind them that India is a poor country and that already its services are paid for at a scale without precedent in respect of richness in any country of the world. And any further increase in this direction should not be made until the new Legislative Councils shall have expressed their opinions in the matter.

JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS.

Gentlemen, I feel that I must draw prominent attention to a rather lamentable omission in the report of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu. The Congress-League scheme had demanded an immediate separation of the judicial and executive functions. Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu have quietly passed over this recommendation, possibly feeling that the question was outside the range of their constitutional enquiry. But they have considered non-constitutional matters and it would have been in the fitness of things if they had laid the time-old controversy of the separation of judicial and executive functions to rest by definitely recommending in the words of the Congress-League scheme that the executive officers in India shall have no judicial powers and that the judiciary in every province shall be placed under the highest court of that province.

OTHER TOPICS.

Gentlemen, I have done with the reform scheme. I have only been able to deal with its outstanding features and I trust that the points, on which I have concentrated attention, will receive your careful and thoughtful consideration. India really stands to-day at the parting of ways and if that great tide in the affairs of the world, which has been let loose by the present War, is not taken at the flood, whether by those who hold in their hands the direction of the nation's fate or by that great general mass of India "doomed" in Burke's imposing phrase, "by Providence to live on trust," a great opportunity will have been thrown away. I regret to observe that so far as the official world of India is concerned, they have embarked on a policy of unwarranted repression, just at the very moment when India is called upon to consider in cool reflection the Reform Proposals of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu. When Mr. Montagu was coming out to India, it was His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, as head of the Indian Government, who made a touching appeal for a calm atmosphere, and did not India even in the face of provocation obey? To-day when India wants to consider calmly and coolly a Reform Scheme that is going to affect her destiny vitally, the tables are turned upon her, and the unbridled bureaucracy resumes its un-English methods of gagging the mouths and muzzling the tongues of constitutional workers. The quackery of hurried violence dissembling as law and order again comes to the front and a brazen-faced attempt is made to dragoon into servile silence educated men armoured with modern ideas, supplied from the noblest arsenals and proudest trophies of English literature and English oratory. Under the pretence of safeguarding public safety, the vital liberties of the people are being attacked freely with the violence of a hurricane and it is forgotten that spiritual India, which has thrown itself into this war with all the vigour, enthusiasm and sacrificing devotion of earnest conviction, will interpret these attacks on individual liberty in the

terms of naked Prussianism. Give me the liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely according to conscience,—above all other liberties, so wrote John Milton, when English liberty was in the throes of the sternest struggle, it had ~~never~~ engaged in. The Indian Tichinoviks say that law and order are of the very essence and must over-ride. Yes, but so too are conscience, principle, the thinker, the teacher and the writer. To treat these elements of the social structure as strictly secondary and subordinate is the contradiction of the very freedom which is England's battle cry to-day. Napoleon, says Lord Morley, was the master type of this school of law and order. If thinkers thought wrong or gave an inconvenient ply to conscience or carried a principle to lengths that were troublesome, he would treat them like the mutineers in a regiment. If the spiritual power gave airs before the temporal, he would lock it up at Savona or elsewhere unless it came to its senses. For all this, to-day's name in the words of Lord Morley, is militarism, the point-blank opposite of Liberalism in its fullest and profoundest sense, whatever the scale and whatever the disguise. These law and order reformers, to whom all talk of freedom is anti-christ, do not exist in India alone. They swarmed in Russia in the time of the Czars and the most prominent among them was one Pobedonostzeff, the acting head of the holy synod in the orthodox church of Eastern Europe, the tutor, counsellor and colleague of two successive Czars of Russia. To him a free church in a free state was an abstract illusion, elected parliaments mixed comedy and hypocrisy, jury trial a fraud upon Justice, the press with its doctored news, its misleading headlines and its headlong peremptory criticism on men and events, the underminer and sapper of all individual development of thought, of will and character, and popular education the worst malady of the age, for it hands the young to rationalising demagogues and destroys the sanctity of home and faith! The world knows that the Russia of Pobedonostzeff has ended in no time and the Russia of Tolstoy has sprung into existence, who proclaimed in reply to the law and order school, "if society and social order continue to exist, no thanks to the Magistrate with his severities but on the contrary in spite of the Magistrate and because by his side men continued to have pity for one another and to love one another." I would appeal to His Excellency Lord Chelmsford to follow Tolstoy and to take immediate order with those of his subordinate Proconsuls, who are abusing the Defence of India Act under the guise of law and order. Repression, as the standardised medicine for crushing thought and freedom, has been tried many times in history and has it not always left the malady where it was unless it made it worse? The recent outburst, therefore, of coercion on the part of some provincial rulers, notably the Governor of my Province, deserves to be put down with a strong hand. The locking up of Home Rule politicians by *lettres de cachet*, the application of an emergency war measure like the Defence of India Act to constitutional workers like Mr. Asaf Ali and their subsequent prosecution with directions from District Magistrates to give severe sentences, and finally the placing of censoring restrictions on peaceful editors like my esteemed friend Malik Barkat Ali, late Editor of the *Observer*, or banning newspapers like the *New India* or exterminating journals under threat of prosecution like "the Punjab,"—these proceedings have an un-English in fact Prussian hue about them. I trust, Gentlemen, that you will enter a most emphatic protest against unchecked autocracy of this kind and will make clear to His Excellency Lord Chelmsford that our cup of disappointment, discontent and misery in the Punjab at any rate is full to overflowing. And as if this was not all, there comes on the top of it the report of the Rowlatt Committee recommending a wholesale subversion of those principles of English liberty and the right of the subject which have made England's name high and great in the world. Gentlemen, it is really impossible to speak in terms of restraint of this Prussian document, that has been issued under the authority of an English Judge of the King's Bench Division of His Majesty's High Court in England, and I will simply appeal with folded hands to the King's

representative in this country to see that this report is buried in no time and is concealed from the light of day. While thus appealing to the rulers of India not to give away from their hands in India those principles of truth, righteousness and freedom that are sustaining England in the present moment of her dire trial, I feel that I must address a word of warning and humble advice to my countrymen. I notice with great dismay that the voice of dissension is rising in the deliberations of the elders of the land and the cloven hoof is showing itself with a vengeance. Let Indians of all schools of thought not forget the old and sententious saw, "United we stand, divided we fall." With the bureaucracy thus armed to the teeth, the need for union and the closing of ranks was never so great as it is to-day. And to those who covet the mild title of the moderate, I will only hold up the model of Mazzini who when similarly confronted and asked to accept compromise in the matters of his country's life, and "Compromise is immoral and often dangerous; general intuitions of the future are better guides and place you on surer ground than what are called tactics and practicalities; No path save the straight line, no false doctrine of expediency, no petty Machiavellis of the anti-chamber; political prudence is another name for mediocrity of intellect." Never forget, Gentlemen, that it makes all the difference in the world whether you put Truth in the first place or in the second place, and with this laid to heart, I will only commend to you the exhortation Moses gave to Joshua when bidding him lead the people into the Promised Land after 40 years of sojourning in the wilderness, "ONLY BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS."

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SUPPLEMENT TO THE "LEADER" OF TO-DAY'S DATE.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

OF



THE HONOURABLE PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVI

At the Twenty-fourth

Indian National Congress

Held at Lahore

On the 27th, 28th and 29th December 1909.

ALLAHABAD:
THE LEADER OFFICE.

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BROTHER-DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

When I received intimation in a rather out-of-the-way place in the mofussil where I was engaged in professional work, that some Congress Committees had very kindly nominated me for election as President of the Congress, I wired, as there was no time to be lost in the matter, to my honoured friend Mr. Wacha, the General Secretary of the Congress, to inform him that I was too weak from the effects of a recent illness, as I am sorry to say I still am, to be able to undertake the duties and responsibilities of the high office of President of the Congress. I need hardly say, ladies and gentlemen, that it was not that I did not fully appreciate the high honour which it was proposed to confer upon me. The Presidentship of the Congress, as has often been said, is the highest honour that can come to any Indian. But, I am sorry to confess, I was not cheered up by the prospect of receiving it, because I really believed that I did not deserve it. I knew how unworthy I was to occupy the chair which had been filled in the past by a succession of eminently able and distinguished men who had established their title to the esteem and confidence of their countrymen long before they were called on to preside over this great national assembly of India. Besides this general consideration, I had present to my mind the special fact that I would be required to fill the chair which Congressmen all over the country and the public at large had been expecting would be graced by that distinguished countryman of ours who towers above others by his commanding ability and influence, I need hardly name Sir Pherozeshah Mehta; and I felt that the election of a humble soldier from the ranks as I am, to step into the breach created by the retirement of such a veteran leader, could but deepen the already deep disappointment and regret which has been felt all over the country by his resignation of this office. In addition to all this, I could not forget that with the exception of a single short speech, I had never in my life been able to write out a speech, and I could not expect, especially when there were hardly six days left before me to do it, to be able to write out anything like an address which is expected from the Presidential chair of the Congress. But, ladies and gentlemen, all my objections expressed and implied, were over-ruled, and such as I am, I am here, in obedience to the mandate issued under your authority, to serve you and our motherland as best I may, relying on the grace of God and the support of all my brother-Congressmen. This fact cannot however diminish, it rather deepens, the gratitude which I feel to you for the signal honour you have conferred upon me in electing me your President at this juncture. Words fail me to express what I feel. I thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. You will agree with me when I say that no predecessor of mine ever stood in need of greater indulgence and more unstinted support from the Congress than I do. I trust you will extend it to me with the same generosity and kindly feeling with which you have voted me to this exalted office.

MESSRS. LALMOHAN GHOSE AND R. C. DUTT.

Before I proceed to deal with other matters, it is my painful but sacred duty to offer a tribute of respect to the memory of two of the past Presidents of the Congress and of one distinguished benefactor of the country whom the hand of death has removed from our midst. In the death of Mr. Lalmohan Ghose we mourn the loss of one of the greatest orators that India has produced. Of his matchless eloquence it is not necessary for me to speak. He combined with it a wonderful grasp of great political questions, and long before the Congress was born, he employed his great gifts in pleading the cause of his country before the tribunal of English public opinion. The effect which his eloquent advocacy produced on the minds of our fellow-subjects in England was testified to by no less eminent a man than John Bright, the great tribune of the English people. To Mr. Lalmohan Ghose will always belong the credit of having been the first Indian who made a strenuous endeavour to get admission into the great Parliament of England. It is sad to think that his voice will not be heard any more either in asserting the rights of his countrymen to equality of treatment with their European fellow-subjects or in chastening those who insult them, after the manner of his memorable Dacca speech.

Even more poignant and profound has been the regret with which the news of the death of Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt has been received throughout the country. Mr. Dutt has had the glory of dying in harness in the service of his motherland. It is not for me to dwell here on the varied and high attainments and of the various activities of a life which was so richly distinguished by both. Time would not permit of my referring to Mr. Dutt's work on the Decentralisation Commission or in Baroda, or to his numerous contributions to literature, history and economics. But I cannot omit to mention his contributions to the vernacular literature of Bengal. Mr. Dutt recognised with the true insight of a statesman that to build up a nation it was necessary to create a national literature, and he made rich and copious contributions to the vernacular of his province. An able administrator, a sagacious statesman, a distinguished scholar, a gifted poet, a charming novelist, a deep student of Indian history and economics, and, above all, a passionate lover of his country who united to a noble pride and deep reverence for its glorious past, a boundless faith in the possibilities of its future, and laboured incessantly for its realisation up to the last moments of his life, Mr. Dutt was a man of whom any country might be proud. (Cheers.) It was no small tribute to his work and worth that that patriot-prince the Gaekwar, chose him for his adviser, and found in him a man after his heart. Grievous would have been the loss of such a man at any time; it is a national calamity that he should have been taken away from us at a time when his country stood so much in need of his sober counsel and wise guidance.

DEATH OF LORD RIPON.

Last but not the least do we mourn the loss of the greatest and most beloved Viceroy whom India has known,—I need hardly name the noble Marquis of Ripon. Lord Ripon was loved and respected by educated Indians as I believe no Englishman who has ever been connected with India, excepting the father of the Indian National Congress, Mr. Allan Octavius Hume, and Sir William Wedderburn, has been loved and respected. Lord Ripon was loved because he inaugurated that noble scheme of Local Self-Government which, though it has never yet had a fair trial, was intended by his Lordship to train Indians for the very best form of government, namely, a government of the people by the people, which it has been the proudest privilege of Englishmen to establish in their own land and to teach all other civilised nations to adopt. He was loved because he made the most courageous attempt to act up to the spirit of the noble Proclamation of 1858, to obliterate race distinctions and to treat his Indian fellow-subjects as standing on a footing of equality with their European fellow-subjects. He was respected because he was a

Statesman, yet friend to truth, of soul sincere,
In action faithful, and in honour clear."

He was respected because he was a God-fearing man, and showed by his conduct in the exalted office he filled as Viceroy of India, that he believed in the truth of the teaching that righteousness exalteth a nation. He was loved because he was a type of the noblest of Englishmen who have an innate love of justice, and who wish to see the blessings of liberty which they themselves enjoy extended to all their fellow-men. Educated Indians were deeply touched by the last instance of his Lordship's desire to befriend the people of India, when he went down to the House of Lords from his bed of illness in the closing days of his life, to support Lord Morley's noble scheme of Reform and to bid the noble Lords who were opposing some of its beneficent provisions to be just to the people of India. It is a matter of profound grief that such a noble Englishman is no more. And yet the Marquis of Ripon lives, and will ever live in the grateful memory of generations of Indians yet to come. (Cheers.)

Truly has the poet said :—

" But strew his ashes to the wind
Whose voice or sword has served mankind,
And is he dead whose noble mind
Lifts thine on high ?
To live in minds we leave behind
Is not to die." (Cheers.)

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THE REFORMS.

Ladies and gentlemen, among the many subjects of importance which have occupied attention during the year, the foremost place must be given to the Regulations which have been promulgated under the scheme of Constitutional Reform for which the country is indebted to Lord Morley and to Lord Minto. That scheme was published a few days before the Congress met last year in Madras. It was hailed throughout the country with deep gratitude and delight. And nowhere did this feeling find warmer expression than at the Congress. The Regulations, on the other hand, which were published nearly five weeks ago, have, I am sorry to say, created widespread disappointment and dissatisfaction, except in the limited circle of a section of our Moslem friends. The fact is of course deplorable. But no good will be gained and much evil is likely to result from ignoring or belittling it, or by trying to throw the blame for it on wrong shoulders. The interests of the country and of good government will be best served by trying to understand and to explain the reason for this great change which twelve months have brought about in the attitude of the educated Indians. The question is, are they to blame for not hailing the Regulations with the same feelings of thankfulness and satisfaction with which they welcomed the main outlines of the scheme, or have the Regulations so far deviated from the liberal spirit of Lord Morley's despatch as to give the educated classes just cause for dissatisfaction? To obtain a full and satisfactory answer, to this question it is necessary to recall to mind the history of these reforms. And this I propose to do as briefly as I can.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was the educated class in India who first felt the desire for the introduction of Self-Government—the government of the people through the elected representatives of the people—in India. This desire was the direct outcome of the study of that noble literature of England which is instinct with the love of freedom and eloquent of the truth that Self-Government is the best form of government. To my honoured friend Babu Surendrahath Banerjee, whom we are so pleased to find here today, growing older and older in years but yet full of the enthusiasm of youth for the service of the motherland,—to Babu Surendranath will ever belong the credit of having been among the very first of Indians who gave audible expression to that desire (Cheers.) It was he and our dear departed brother Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose who established the Indian Association of Calcutta in 1876, with the object, among others, of agitating for the introduction of a system of representative government in India. This desire was greatly strengthened by the deplorable acts of omission and commission of Lord Lytton's administration, to which, by the way, the administration of Lord Curzon bore in many respects a striking family resemblance. The discontent that prevailed in India towards the end of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty was but slightly exceeded by that which prevailed at the close of Lord Curzon's regime. The overthrow of the Conservative ministry and the great Liberal victory of 1880 was consequently hailed with joy by educated Indians, as they read in it an assurance of relief from the effects of Lord Lytton's maladministration and a promise of the introduction of liberal measures in India. Public expression was given to this feeling at a great meeting held in Calcutta at which in the course of an eloquent speech our friend Babu Surendranath uttered the following pregnant words:—

“The question of representative government looms not in the far-off distance. Educated India is beginning to feel that the time has come when some measure of Self-Government might be conceded to the people. Canada governs itself. Australia governs itself. And surely it is anomalous that the grandest dependency of England should continue to be governed upon wholly different principles. The great question of representative government will probably have to be settled by the Liberal party, and I am sure it will be settled by them in a way which will add to the credit and honour of that illustrious party and will be worthy of their noble traditions.”

This feeling was not confined to Bengal. About the same time a remarkable paper was published in my own province, the then N.-W. Provinces, by the late Pandit Lakshmi

Narayan Dar in which he strongly advocated the introduction of representative government in India. The Liberal party did not disappoint India, and it could not, as it was then under the noble guidance of that greatest Englishman of his age, William Ewart Gladstone, who was one of the greatest apostles of liberty that the world has known. Mr. Gladstone never rendered a greater service to this country than when he sent out Lord Ripon as Viceroy and Governor-General of India (Cheers). His Lordship's advent at the end of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty proved like the return of a bright day after a dark and chilly night. His benign influence was soon felt. Discontent died out, and a new hope, a new joy soon pervaded the land. India rejoiced to find that her destinies were entrusted to the care of a Viceroy who regarded her children as his equal fellow-subjects and was righteously determined to deal with them in the spirit of Queen Victoria's gracious Proclamation of 1858. Lord Ripon studied the wants and requirements of India. It is not unreasonable to suppose that his Lordship had taken note of the desire of educated Indians for the introduction of the principle of Self-Government in India, holding evidently with Macaulay and a whole race of liberal-minded Englishmen that "no nation can be perfectly well-governed till it is competent to govern itself." Lord Ripon inaugurated his noble scheme of Local Self-Government, not primarily as he was careful to point out in his Resolution, with a view to any immediate improvement in administration, but chiefly "as an instrument of political and popular education" which was to lead in course of time to Self-Government in the administration of the provinces and eventually of the whole of the Indian Empire. Lord Ripon also tried to disregard distinctions of race, colour and creed and appointed Indians to some of the highest posts in the country. His measures were intensely disliked by a large body of Europeans and Anglo-Indians, official and non-official. And when he endeavoured subsequently, by means of what is known as the Ilbert Bill, to place Indians and Europeans on a footing of equality in the eye of the law, the storm of opposition which had long been brewing in Anglo-India burst against him in full force. It was not an opposition to the Ilbert Bill alone, but, as his Lordship himself told Mr. Stead not long ago, to the scheme of Local Self-Government and to his whole policy of treating Indians and Europeans as equal fellow-subjects. Barring of course honourable exceptions, our European and Anglo-Indian fellow-subjects arrayed themselves in a body not against Hindus alone, nor yet against the educated classes alone, but against Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, Parsis, and all Indians alike, making no exception in favour of either the Mahomedans or the landed aristocracy. It was the educated class then, who organised the Indian National Congress with a view to protect and promote, not the interests of any class or creed, but the common interests of all Indians irrespective of any considerations of race, creed or colour. Not the worst enemy of the Congress can point to even a single Resolution passed by it which is opposed to this basic principle of its existence, to this guiding motive of its action. (Hear, hear). Indeed no such Resolution could be passed by it as the eradication of all possible race, creed or provincial prejudices and the development and consolidation of a sentiment of national unity among all sections of the Indian people was one of the essential features of the programme of the Congress. This Congress of educated Indians put forward a Reform of the Legislative Councils in the forefront of its programme, because it was not only good in itself but it has the additional virtue, as the late Mr. Yule happily put it, of being the best of all instruments for obtaining other Reforms that further experience and our growing wants might lead us to desire. It respectfully drew the attention of the Government to the poverty of vast numbers of the population and urged that the introduction of representative institutions would prove one of the most important practical steps towards the amelioration of their condition. The Congress also pressed for many other Reforms, among them being the employment of Indians in the higher branches of the public services and the holding of simultaneous examinations in India and England to facilitate the admission of Indians into the Indian Civil Service. Instead of welcoming the Congress as a most useful and loyal helpmate to Government, the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy unfortunately regarded it as hostile to Government. The Anglo-Indian Press, with some honourable exceptions, railed at it as if its object was to overthrow the British Government. Owing to this hostility of the Anglo-Indian

bureaucracy and of the Anglo-Indian Press, which is generally regarded as the mouthpiece of that bureaucracy, the bulk of our Mahomedan fellow-subjects held themselves aloof from the Congress ;—I say the bulk, because we have always had the benefit of the co-operation of a number of patriotic men from amongst them. And for fear of offending the same body of Anglo-Indian officials, the landed aristocracy also as a body kept itself at a safe distance from the Congress.

It is sad to recall that as the Congress continued to grow in strength and influence, some of our Mahomedan fellow-subjects of the Aligarh school and some members of the landed aristocracy came forward openly to oppose it. Notwithstanding however, all the opposition of the Anglo-Indian Press and of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, notwithstanding also the opposition of our Mahomedan fellow-subjects and the indifference of the landed aristocracy, the educated middle class continued to carry on the good work they had begun. They soon found a powerful champion in the late Mr. Bradlaugh, and achieved the first victory of the Congress when, as the direct result of its agitation, the Indian Councils Act was passed in 1892 and the Legislative Councils were reformed and expanded (Cheers). The attitude of the bureaucracy towards the educated class did not, however, show any change for the better. In fact their dislike of them seemed to grow as they continued to agitate for further Reforms. And lest they might displease the officials, our Mahomedan fellow-subjects, as a body, continued to hold themselves aloof from the Congress and never asked for any Reform in the constitution of the Government. So also the landed classes. The educated middle class, the men of intellect, character and public spirit, who devoted their time to the study of public questions and their energies to the promotion of public good, felt however that the Reforms which had been effected under the Act of 1892 still left them without any real voice in the administration of their country. They found that that administration was not being conducted in the best interests of the people of the country ; they found that it continued to be conducted on extravagantly costly lines ; they found that the level of taxation was maintained much higher than was necessary for the purposes of good administration ; they found that the Military expenditure of the Government was far beyond the capacity of the country to bear, and they were alarmed that there was a heavy and continuous increase going on year after year in that expenditure ; they found that an excessively large portion of the revenues raised from the people was being spent on what we may call Imperial purposes and a very inadequate portion on purposes which directly benefit the people, such as the promotion of general, scientific, agricultural, industrial and technical education, the provision of medical relief and sanitation ; they found that the most earnest and well-reasoned representations of the Congress fell flat upon the ears of the bureaucracy which was in power ; and the conviction grew in them that their country could never be well or justly governed until the scheme of constitutional Reform which the Congress had suggested at its very first session was carried out in its entirety. (Hear, hear.)

At this stage came Lord Curzon to India. On almost every question of importance he adopted a policy the very reverse of that for which educated Indians had for years been praying. He showed unmistakable hostility to the educated class in India, and he is responsible for having greatly fostered it among some of his countrymen whom he has left behind in power. His attempt to lightly explain away the pledges solemnly given by the Sovereign and Parliament in the Proclamation of 1858 and in the Act of 1833, his officialising Universities Act, his overt attack upon Local Self-Government, and last, but not the least, his high-handed Partition of Bengal in the teeth of the opposition of the people of that province, filled the cup of discontent to the brim, and deepened the conviction in the minds of educated men that India could never be well or justly governed, nor could her people be prosperous or contented until they obtained through their representatives a real and potential voice in the administration of their affairs.

This conviction found the clearest and most emphatic expression in the Congress which met in Calcutta in 1906. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the revered patriarch of the educated community (Cheers), speaking with the knowledge and experience born of a

life-long study of the defects and shortcomings of the existing system of administration and oppressed with the thought of the political and economic evils from which India has been suffering, declared in words of burning conviction that "Self-Government is the only and chief remedy. In Self-Government lies our hope, strength and greatness." Mr. Dadabhai did not urge that full-fledged representative institutions should at once be introduced into India. But he did urge, and the whole of educated India urged through him, that it was high time that a good beginning were made—"such a systematic beginning as that it may naturally in no long time develop itself into full legislatures of Self-Government like those of the self-governing colonies." (Hear, hear.)

Happily for India, just as had happened at the end of Lord Lytton's administration, there was a change at the close of Lord Curzon's reign, of the ministry in England and the Liberal Government came into power. The faith of a large body of educated Indians in the efficacy of constitutional agitation had been undermined by the failure of all the efforts of the people of Bengal, made by prayer and petition, to avert the evil of the partition. But Mr. John Morley, who had long been admired and adored by educated Indians as a great lover of liberty and justice, happily became Secretary of State for India, and the hearts of educated Indians began to beat with the hope that their agitation for a real measure of Self-Government might succeed during the period of his office. Our esteemed brother Mr. Gokhale was appointed its trusted delegate to England by the Congress which met at Benares and over which he so worthily presided, to urge the more pressing proposals of Reform on the attention of the authorities there. What excellent work our friend did in England, how he pressed the urgent necessity and the entire reasonableness of the Reforms suggested by the Congress and prepared the minds of the men in power there to give a favourable consideration to our proposals, it is not for me here to tell. In the meantime, gentlemen, our liberal-minded Viceroy, Lord Minto, who found himself face to face with the legacy of a deep and widespread discontent which his brilliant but unwise predecessor had left to him, had taken a statesmanlike note of the signs of the times and the needs of the country, and had appointed a Committee of his Council to consider and report what changes should be introduced in the existing system of administration to make it suitable to altered conditions.

Ladies and gentlemen, up to this time, up to the beginning of October 1906, our Mahomedan fellow-subjects did not trouble themselves with any questions of Reforms in the system of administration. But there were some members of the Indian bureaucracy who were troubled with the thought that the liberal-minded Viceroy seriously contemplated important constitutional changes in that system, and they knew that the statesman who was at the helm of Indian affairs in England was the high priest of liberalism. They saw that there was every danger, from their point of view, that the prayer of the educated class for the Reform and expansion of the Legislative Councils on a liberal basis, might be granted. They frankly did not like it. And it was at this time that our Mahomedan fellow-subjects of the Aligarh school were roused from their apathy and indifference. They suddenly developed an interest—and an excessive interest too—in politics. A Mahomedan deputation was soon got up and waited on Lord Minto! It claimed that Mahomedans were politically a more important community than other communities in India, and that they were therefore entitled to special consideration and even preferential treatment. I regret to say it, gentlemen, but it is my duty to say it, that the concession which His Excellency the Viceroy was persuaded to make to this utterly unjustifiable claim in his reply to that deputation, has been the root of much of the trouble which has arisen in connection with these Reforms. The bureaucracy had however gained a point. The proposals for Reform which were formulated in the letter of Sir Harold Stuart, dated 24th August, 1907, gave abundant evidence of the bias of that body against those who had agitated for Reform. The proposals for the special representation of Mahomedans contained in it, tended clearly to set one religion against another and to counterpoise the influence of the educated middle class. The proposals for the special representation of landholders, who had never asked to be treated as a separate class, also had their origin evidently in the same kind of feeling. So also the proposals

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for creating Imperial and Provincial Advisory Councils. Those proposals met with a general condemnation from thoughtful men all over the country, excepting, of course, some among the landholders and the Mohamedans. They could not meet with a welcome because they did not deserve it. (Hear, hear.)

Later on the Government of India revised their provisional scheme in the light of the criticisms passed upon it, and with some important modifications submitted it to the Secretary of State for India. Lord Morley did not share the bias of the bureaucracy against the educated class,—it would have been as strange as sad if he did. He recognised that they were an important factor, if not the most important factor, who deserved consideration. In his speech on the Indian Budget in 1907, his Lordship observed: "You often hear men talk of the educated section of India as a mere handful, an infinitesimal fraction. So they are in numbers. But it is idle—totally idle—to say that this infinitesimal fraction does not count. This educated section makes all the difference, is making and will make all the difference." His Lordship appointed a Committee of his own Council to consider the scheme which the Government of India had submitted to him, and after receiving its report framed his own proposals which were published in the now famous Despatch of the 27th November, 1908. His Lordship had indeed accepted the substantial part of his Excellency the Viceroy's scheme, but he had liberalised it by the important changes he had made in it into a practically new scheme. The proposals for the Imperial and Advisory Councils which had been condemned by educated India were brushed ceremoniously aside. The Provincial Legislative Councils were to have a majority of non-official members, who were to be, with very few exceptions, elected and not nominated members. His Lordship had already appointed two distinguished Indians as members of his own Council. Indians were now to be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General of India and of the Governors of Madras and Bombay. Similar Executive Councils were to be established, with one or more Indian members in them, in the other larger provinces, which were still ruled by Lieutenant-Governors. Under a scheme of Decentralisation, Municipal and District Boards were to be vested with increased powers and responsibilities and to be freed from official control. The cause of Local Self-Government was to receive an effectual advance. Its roots were to be extended deep down into the villages. Taking full note of the various interests for which representation had to be provided in the enlarged Councils, Lord Morley suggested a scheme of electoral colleges which, as was rightly claimed, was as simple as any scheme for the representation of minorities can be. It was built up on a system of a single vote, and fully avoided the evils of double and plural voting. It was equally free from the other objection to which the original proposals were open, *viz.*, that they would set one class against another. It gave the power to each section of the population to return a member in the proportion corresponding to its own proportion to the total population. This scheme, as we all know, was received throughout the country with feelings of great gratitude and gratification. An influential deputation composed of the representatives of all classes of the people waited upon his Excellency the Viceroy to personally tender their thanks for it to him, and through him, to Lord Morley. Did the educated class lag behind any other classes in welcoming the scheme? Did the feelings of grateful satisfaction find a warmer expression anywhere than in the speech of my honoured predecessor in office, who speaking in reference to it exclaimed that "the time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land"? The Congress unanimously passed a resolution giving expression to the deep and general satisfaction with which the Reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's despatch had been received throughout the country, and it tendered its most sincere and grateful thanks to his Lordship and to Lord Minto for those proposals. It expressed the confident hope at the same time that the details of the proposed scheme would be worked out in the same liberal spirit in which its main outlines had been conceived. This unfortunately has not been done, and a very important part of the scheme has been so modified as to give just grounds of complaint in a large portion of the country.

INDIANS IN EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

Now, gentlemen, the feature of the Reforms which most appealed to the minds of educated Indians was the proposal to appoint Indians to the Executive Councils of the Governor-General of India and of the Governors of Madras and Bombay, and the proposal to create similar Councils in the other large provinces of India, which were placed under Lieutenant-Governors. The most unmistakable proof of this fact was found in the thrill of grateful satisfaction which passed all over the country when the announcement was made of the appointment of Mr. Satyendra Prasanna Sinha as a member of the Viceroy's Council. And I take this opportunity of tendering our most cordial thanks for that appointment both to Lord Minto and to Lord Morley (Cheers). That appointment has afforded the best proof of the desire of both their Lordships to obliterate distinctions of race, creed and colour, and to admit Indians to the highest offices under the Crown for which they may be qualified, and it has been most sincerely and warmly appreciated as such by thoughtful Indians throughout the country. Our friends in Bombay and Madras will soon have the satisfaction of finding an Indian appointed to the Executive Councils of the Governors of their respective provinces. And thanks to the large-hearted and liberal support given to the proposal by Sir Edward Baker, our brethren in Bengal too, will shortly have the satisfaction of seeing an Executive Council established in their province with an Indian as one of its members. But, gentlemen, the people of my own provinces—the United Provinces, and of the Punjab, of Eastern Bengal and Assam, and of Burma have been kept out of the benefit of the undoubted advantages which would result by the judgment of the Lieutenant-Governor being “fortified and enlarged” in the weighty words of Lord Morley's despatch, “by two or more competent advisers, with an official and responsible share in his deliberations.” We in the United Provinces had looked eagerly forward to having an Executive Council created there at the same time that one would be established in Bengal. Hindus and Mahomedans, the landed aristocracy and the educated classes, were unanimous in their desire to see such Councils established. Bombay with a population of only 19 millions, Madras with a population of only 38 millions, have each long enjoyed the advantage of being governed by a Governor in Council. The United Provinces which have a population of 48 millions, have been ruled all these many years and must yet continue to be ruled by a Lieutenant-Governor! Bengal, the population of which exceeds the population of the United Provinces by barely 3 millions, will have the benefit of an Executive Council. Not so the United Provinces; nor yet Eastern Bengal and Assam which have a population of 31 millions, nor the Punjab which has a population somewhat larger than that of the Presidency of Bombay! This is clearly unjust, and the injustice of it has nowhere been more keenly felt than in my own Provinces.

PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE COUNCILS.

The people of the United Provinces have special reasons to feel aggrieved at this decision. So far back as 1833, section 56 of the Charter Act of that year enacted that the Presidencies of Fort William in Bengal, Fort St. George, Bombay and Agra shall be administered by a Governor and three Councillors. But this provision was suspended by an Act passed two years later mainly on the ground that “the same would be attended with a large increase of charge.” The Act provided that during such time as the execution of the Act of 1833 should remain suspended, it would be lawful for the Governor-General of India in Council to appoint any servant of the East India Company of ten years' standing to the office of the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. When the Charter Act of 1853 was passed it still contemplated the creation of the Presidency of Agra under the Act of 1833. Those enactments have never been repealed. In the long period that has elapsed since 1833, the provinces have largely grown in size and population by the annexation of Oudh and the normal growth of population. The revenues of the Provinces have also largely increased. If the objection that the creation of an Executive Council would be attended with a large increase of charge was at any time a valid one, it has long ceased to be so. The Provinces are not so poor

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that they cannot afford to bear the small increase in expenditure which the new arrangement will involve. They have for years been making larger contributions to the Imperial exchequer than the sister Provinces of Bombay, Madras and Bengal. On the other hand, the arguments for the creation of such a Council have been growing stronger and stronger every year. The question was taken up by the Government of India in 1867-68 but unfortunately, the discussion did not lead to any change in the system. The eminent author of *Indian Polity*, whose views on questions of Indian administration are entitled to great respect, strongly urged the introduction of the change fifteen years ago. Wrote General Chesney :—" In regard to administration, the charge (the North-Western Provinces) is as important as Bengal. It comprises 49 districts as against 47 in the latter, nearly twice as many as in Bombay, and more than thrice the number of districts in Madras, and every consideration which makes for styling the head of the Bengal Government a Governor, applies equally to this great province. (This was said when Bengal had not been partitioned.) Here also, as in Bengal, the Governor should be aided by a Council." Sir George Chesney went on to say : " The amount of business to be transacted here is beyond the capacity of a single administrator to deal with properly, while the province has arrived at a condition when the vigour and impulse to progress which the rule of one man can impart, may be fitly replaced by the greater continuity of policy which would be secured under the administration of a Governor aided by a Council. So far from the head of the administration losing by the change—not to mention the relief from the pressure of work now imposed on a single man, and that a great deal of business which has now to be disposed of in his name by irresponsible Secretaries would then fall to be dealt with by members of the Government with recognised authority—it would be of great advantage to the Governor if all appointments and promotions in the public service of this province, a much larger body than that in Madras and Bombay, were made in consultation with and on the joint responsibility of colleagues, instead of at his sole pleasure." The work of administration has very much increased since this was written. And we have it now on the unimpeachable testimony of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation, who submitted their report early this year, that " with the development of the administration in all its branches, the growth of important industrial interests, the spread of education and political aspirations, and the growing tendency of the public to criticise the administration and to appeal to the highest Executive tribunals, the Lieutenant-Governors of the larger provinces are clearly over-burdened." Sir Antony MacDonnell who ruled over the United Provinces not many years ago, could not bear the strain of the work continuously for more than four years, and had to take six months' leave during the period of his Lieutenant Governorship. The present Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces also has, I regret to learn, found it necessary to take six months' leave at the end of only three years of his administration. And we have been surprised and grieved to learn that both Lord MacDonnell and Sir John Hewett have opposed the creation of an Executive Council for the United Provinces. The Decentralisation Commission did not however rest the case for a change in the existing system on the sole ground that the head of the province was over-burdened with work. They rested it on a much higher ground. They rightly urged that " even if a Lieutenant-Governor could dispose of all the work demanding consideration at the hands of a Provincial Government, we think that such powers are too wide to be expediently entrusted to one man, however able or zealous." And they unanimously recommended the establishment in the larger Provinces of India, of a regular Council Government such as obtains in Bombay and Madras, improved with the addition of an Indian member to them. Lord Morley was pleased to accept this recommendation with the important modification that the head of the Provinces should continue to be a member of the Indian Civil Service ; and though we did not approve of this modification, we were content and thankful that a Council Government should be introduced even in this modified form. But even that has been withheld from us, and the high hopes that had been raised have naturally given place to a correspondingly deep disappointment. There is a widespread belief in my Provinces that if our Lieutenant-Governor had not been opposed to the proposal in question, the

Provinces would have had an Executive Council just as Bengal will soon have. And the fact has furnished a striking instance of the disadvantages of leaving vital questions which affect the well-being of 48 millions of people to be decided by the judgment of a single individual, however able and well-meaning he may be. (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, this is not a mere sentimental grievance with us. We find that the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay which have had the benefit of being governed by a Governor-in-Council have made far greater progress in every matter which affects the happiness of the people than my own Provinces. And a conviction has gained ground in the minds of all thoughtful men that the Provinces will have no chance of coming abreast even of Bombay and Madras until they have a Government similar to that of those Provinces, so that there may be a reasonable continuity of policy in the administration and the proposals of the Provincial Government may receive greater consideration than they do at present from the Government of India and the Secretary of State. Gentlemen, the noble Lords and the members of the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy—both those who have retired and those who are still in service, who opposed the creation of an Executive Council for the United Provinces,—have, I regret to say, done a great disservice to the cause of good Government by opposing this important portion of the scheme of Reform. That opposition has caused deep dissatisfaction among the educated classes and has greatly chilled the enthusiasm which was aroused among them when the proposals of Lord Morley were first published. I would strongly urge upon the Government the wisdom of taking steps to give an Executive Council at as early a date as may be practicable, not only to the United Provinces but also to the Punjab, to Eastern Bengal and Assam, and to Burma. The creation of such Councils with one or two Indian members in them will be a distinct gain to the cause of good administration. It will afford an effectual safeguard against serious administrative blunders being committed, particularly in these days of repressive measures and deportations without trial. England is just now on the eve of a general election. But the elections will soon be over. Let us hope for the good of this country that it will result in bringing the Liberal Government again into power. Let us hope that in the result the House of Lords will become somewhat liberal. Let us hope that soon after Parliament has been constituted again the Secretary of State for India, who let us also hope will be Lord Morley again, and the Governor-General of India in Council will be pleased to take the earliest opportunity to create Executive Councils in the United Provinces, the Punjab, and Eastern Bengal and Assam, by either getting the Indian Councils Act modified, or by obtaining the assent of both the Houses of Parliament to the creation of such Councils under the provisions of the existing Act. (Cheers.)

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish to make it clear here that we have no complaint whatsoever in this connection either against Lord Morley or Lord Minto. We know—and we acknowledge it with sincere gratitude—that both the noble Lords did all that they could to get the original clause (3) of the Bill passed as it had been framed. We know that we owe our discomfiture to the action of Lord Curzon, who seems unfortunately for us to be afflicted with the desire of swelling the record of his ill services to India, and to the opposition of Lord MacDonnell, from whom we of the United Provinces had hoped for support to our cause, and lastly, to the regrettable attitude adopted towards the proposal contained in that clause by the present Lieutenant-Governor of our Provinces. I still venture to hope, however, that Sir John Hewett will be pleased to reconsider his position, particularly in view of the important fact that our sister province of Bengal also is shortly going to have an Executive Council, and that his Honour will earn the lasting gratitude of the people over whom Providence has placed him, and whose destinies it is in his power to mar or make, by moving the Government of India to take early steps to secure to them the benefit of Government by a Council before he retires from his exalted office. (Cheers.)

THE REGULATIONS.

Gentlemen, the question of the creation of Executive Councils affects, however, only particular provinces of India; but the Regulations that have been promulgated under the

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scheme of Reform have given rise to even more widespread and general dissatisfaction. I will therefore now ask you to turn your attention to these Regulations. We all remember that Lord Morley had put forward a most carefully considered scheme of proportional representation on the basis of population. We therefore regretted to find that in the debate which took place on the Bill, his Lordship accepted the view that the Mahomedan community was entitled on the ground of the political importance which it claimed, to a larger representation than would be justified by its proportion to the total population. His Lordship was pleased, however, to indicate the extent of the larger representation which he was prepared to ensure to the Mahomedans after taking into account even their alleged political importance; and, though the educated non-Moslem public generally, and many far-seeing men among our Mahomedan fellow-subjects also, were, and still are opposed to any representation in the Legislatures of the country on the basis of religion, yet there were several amongst us who recognised the difficulty that had been created by Lord Minto's reply to the Mahomedan deputation at Simla, and were prepared not to demur to the larger representation of Mahomedans to the extent suggested by Lord Morley. We were prepared to agree that a certain amount of representation should be guaranteed to them; that they should try to secure it through the general electorates, and that if they failed to obtain the number of representatives fixed for them, they should be allowed to make up the number by election by special Mahomedan electorates formed for the purpose. The Regulations which have been published, however, not only provide that they shall elect the number of representatives which has been fixed for them on a consideration not only of their proportion to the total population but also of their alleged political importance, by special electorates created for the purpose, but they also permit them to take part in elections by mixed electorates, and thereby enable them to secure an excessive and undue representation of their particular community to the exclusion to a corresponding extent of the representatives of other communities. The system of single votes which was an essential feature of Lord Morley's scheme has been cast to the winds; the injustice of double and plural voting which Lord Morley tried to avoid has been given the fullest play. In my Provinces, and I believe in other provinces also, some of my Mahomedan fellow-subjects have voted in three places. So long as there was still a chance of getting the Government to increase the number of seats which were to be specially reserved to them, our astute friends of the Moslem League swore that none of them would seek an election to the Councils by the votes of non-Moslems. When the Regulations were passed, they lost no time in cancelling the Resolution of their League, and put forward candidates to contest almost every seat for which elections were to be made by mixed electorates. Members of Municipal and District Boards to whom the general franchise has been confined were elected or appointed at a time when the Moslem League had not preached the gospel of separation. The electors did not then accept or reject a candidate on the ground of his religion. Mahomedans therefore filled a far larger number of seats on Municipal and District Boards than their proportion to the total population or their stake in the country would entitle them to hold. The result has been that in addition to the four seats specially reserved to the Mahomedans, they have won two more seats in the United Provinces in the general elections, and these with the nominations made by the Government have given them eight seats out of a total of 26 non-official seats in the legislature of the Province, where they form but one-sixth of the population! This is protecting the interests of a minority with a vengeance. It looks more like a case of allowing the majority to be driven to a corner by a minority. What makes the matter worse, however, is that this advantage has been reserved only to the favoured minority of our Mahomedan fellow-subjects. No such protection has been extended to the Hindu minorities in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal and Assam. The Hindu minorities in the said two provinces have been left out severely in the cold. And yet they are found fault with for not waxing warm with enthusiasm over the Reforms! (Hear, hear.)

Gentlemen, let us now turn to the question of the franchise. Direct representation has been given to Mahomedans. It has been refused to non-Mahomedans. All

Mahomedans who pay an income-tax on an income of three thousand rupees or land revenue in the same sum, and all Mahomedan graduates of five years' standing, have been given the power to vote. Now I am not only not sorry but am sincerely glad that direct representation has been given to our Mahomedan fellow-subjects and that the franchise extended to them is fairly liberal. Indeed, no taxation without representation being the cardinal article of faith in the political creed of Englishmen, it would have been a matter for greater satisfaction if the franchise had been extended to all payers of income-tax. The point of our complaint is that the franchise has not similarly been extended to the non-Mahomedan subjects of his Majesty. A Parsee, Hindu or Christian who may be paying an income-tax on three lacs or land revenue in the sum of three times three lakhs a year, is not entitled to a vote, to which his Mahomedan fellow-subject, who pays an income-tax on only three thousand a year or land revenue in the same sum, is entitled! Hindu, Parsee and Christian graduates of thirty years' standing, men like Sir Gurudas Banerji, Dr. Bhandarkar, Sir Subramania Iyer and Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh, have not been given a vote, which has been given to every Mahomedan graduate of five years' standing! People whose sensitiveness has been too much sobered down by age may not resent this. But can it be doubted for a moment that tens of thousands of non-Mahomedan graduates in the country deeply resent being kept out of a privilege which has been extended to Mahomedan graduates? It is to my mind exceedingly deplorable that when the Government decided to give direct representation and a fairly liberal franchise to Mahomedans, it did not also decide to extend them to non-Mahomedans as well.

Let us next consider the restrictions that have been placed on the choice of electors in choosing candidates. In the Regulations for Bombay and Madras, and in those for Bengal also, eligibility to a membership of a Provincial Council has been confined to members of Municipal and District Boards only. This is a novel departure from the practice which obtained for the last seventeen years under the Indian Councils Act of 1892, and I regret to think that it is a departure taken without a full consideration of its result. That result is most unfortunate. It is acknowledged that the scheme of Local Self-Government which Lord Ripon introduced into the country, has not yet had a fair trial. Lord Morley in his Despatch of last year took note of the fact that the expectations formed of it had not been realised, and in explanation thereof his Lordship was pleased to say, adopting the language of the Resolution of 1882, that "there appears to be great force in the argument that so long as the chief Executive officers are, as a matter of course, Chairmen of Municipal and District Committees, there is little chance of these Committees affording any effective training to their members in the management of local affairs or of the non-official members taking any real interest in local business." Further on, his Lordship truly observed that "non-official members have not been induced to such an extent as was hoped to take real interest in local business, because their powers and their responsibilities were not real." Owing to this fact Municipal and District Boards have with a few exceptions here and there not attracted many able and independent members. The result of confining eligibility as a member of Council to members of Municipal and District Boards has therefore necessarily been to exclude a number of men of light and leading in every province,—excepting in my own where, I am thankful to say, no such restriction has been made—from being eligible for election. Under the operation of this short-visioned rule, in Bengal a number of the public men of the province were found to be ineligible for election; and Sir Edward Baker had to modify the Regulations within barely three weeks of their having been published, to make it possible for some at least of the public men of his province to enter the Provincial Council. In Madras Sir Arthur Lawley had to resort to the expedient of nominating some of the ex-members of the Legislative Council, as members of Municipal and District or Taluq Boards in order to make them eligible as members of the Provincial Council under the new Regulations. In Bombay two ex-members of the Council had to enter Municipal Boards, which they were only enabled to do by the courtesy of obliging friends who resigned their seats to make room for them, in order to qualify themselves for election to the Council.

This does not, I regret to say, exhaust the grounds of our objections to the Regulations. A property qualification has for the first time been laid down in the case of candidates for membership of the Provincial Councils. No such qualification is required of Members of Parliament in England. None such was required in India under the Regulations which were in force for nearly seventeen years under the Indian Councils Act of 1892. No complaint was ever made that the absence of any such restriction on the choice of the electors, had led to the admission of any undesirable person into any of the Councils. The possession of property or an income does not necessarily predicate ability, much less character, and does not, by itself, secure to any man the esteem or confidence of his fellowmen. No more does the absence of property necessarily indicate want of capability to acquire it. It certainly does not indicate want of respectability. The ancient law-giver Manu mentions five qualifications which earn for a man the respect of others. Says he :—

वित्तं बन्धुर्वयः कर्म विद्या भवति पञ्चमी ।
एतानि मान्यस्थानानि गरीयो यद्यदुत्तरम् ॥

[Wealth, relations, age, good deeds and learning are the five titles to respect ; of these each succeeding qualification is of greater weight than each preceding one.]

According to this time-honoured teaching, education is the highest qualification and the possession of wealth the lowest. The Regulations have not merely reversed the order but have excluded education from the category of qualifications required to make a man eligible as a member of the Legislative Councils ! The framers of the Regulations have taken no note of the fact that in this ancient land thousands of men of bright intelligence and pure character have voluntarily wedded themselves to poverty and consecrated their lives to the pursuit or promotion of learning or religion or other philanthropic objects. The result is that so far as the Provincial Councils are concerned, in several provinces selfless patriots like Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji or Mr. Gokhale would not be eligible as members of those Councils. Regulations which lead to such results stand self-condemned. (Cheers.)

Again, the clause relating to disqualifications for membership has been made unnecessarily stringent and exclusive. A person who has been dismissed from Government service is to be disqualified for ever for a membership of the Councils. Whether he was dismissed for anything which indicated any hostility to Government or any moral turpitude, or whether he was dismissed merely for disobeying or not carrying out any trumpery order, or merely for failing to attend at a place and time when or at which he might have been required, he must never be permitted to serve the Government and the people again even in an honorary capacity ! It does not matter whether his case was rightly or wrongly decided, his having been dismissed constitutes an offence of such gravity that it cannot be condoned. So also does a sentence of imprisonment, however short it may be, for any offence which is punishable with imprisonment for more than six months. Here again, no account is taken of the fact whether the offence for which the punishment was inflicted, implied any moral defect in the man. No such disqualification exists in the case of a membership of Parliament. Mr. John Burns was once sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment ; he is now a Cabinet Minister. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Lynch actually fought against the British Government in the Boer war ; he was sentenced to death, but the sentence was mitigated later on, and eventually entirely commuted, and he has since been elected a Member of Parliament. What then can be the reason or justification for laying down such a severe and sweeping disqualification in a country where the judicial and executive functions are still combined in one officer, and where the administration of justice is not as impartial and pure as it is in England ?

More objectionable still is clause (i) of the disqualifying section which lays down that a man shall not be eligible as a member of the Council if he has been declared by the Local Government to be of such reputation and antecedents that his election would in the opinion of the head of the Local Government be contrary to the public interest. Now, gentlemen, you will remember that in the debates in Parliament the question

was raised whether the deportation of a man under Regulation III of 1818 and similar Regulations would by itself disqualify him for sitting in a Legislative Council. Bearing probably in mind that a man might be deported without any just or reasonable cause, as it is believed happened in the case of Lala Lajpat Rai, Lord Morley could not perhaps bring himself to agree to a deportation being by itself made a ground of disqualification. We may take it that his Lordship gave his assent to clause (i) being enacted in the belief that it was less open to objection. But with due respect to his Lordship, I venture to submit that this clause is open to even greater objection than the disqualification of deportees as such would have been. In the case of a deportation the Local Government has to satisfy the Government of India why action should be taken under any of the drastic Regulations relating thereto. This new clause empowers the Local Government on its own authority to declare a man to be ineligible, and thereby to do irreparable injury to his character. The judgment of the Local Government may be entirely unjust, but there can be no appeal from it. How seriously liable to abuse this clause is, is demonstrated by the case of Mr. Kelkar, editor of the *Mahratta*. Mr. Kelkar offered himself as a candidate for election to the Bombay Council. Thereupon his Excellency the Governor of Bombay made a declaration under the clause in question that in his Excellency's opinion Mr. Kelkar's antecedents and reputation were such that his election would be contrary to the public interest. Now, gentlemen, the knowledge which his Excellency the Governor has of Mr. Kelkar's reputation and antecedents, is presumably not his own personal knowledge, but must have largely been derived from reports. There happens to be another man, however, in the Bombay Presidency, aye, in Poona itself, where Mr. Kelkar has lived and worked, whose solicitude for the public interest is, it will perhaps be conceded, not less keen, and whose opinion, as to what would be contrary to the public interest, is not entitled to less weight than that of even Sir George Clarke or his colleagues, and that is my esteemed brother Mr. Gokhale. He has one great advantage in this respect over Sir George Clarke, that he has a personal knowledge, born of many years of personal contact in public work, of Mr. Kelkar's character. When the declaration in question was made Mr. Gokhale felt it to be his duty to protest against the action of the Governor of Bombay and to publicly bear testimony to the good character of Mr. Kelkar. Mr. Kelkar appealed to the Governor, but his appeal has been rejected, and he remains condemned unheard! (Shame.)

NON-OFFICIAL MAJORITIES.

One of the most important features of the reforms which created widespread satisfaction was the promise of a non-official majority in the Provincial Councils. The Congress had, in the scheme which it put forward so far back as 1886, urged that at least half the members of both the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils should be elected and not more than one-fourth should be officials. Congressmen regarded this as the *sine qua non* for securing to the representatives of the people a real voice in the administration of their country's affairs. Lord Morley did not think it fit, however, to give us yet a non-official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council. We regretted the decision. But Lord Morley had been pleased to accept the recommendation for a non-official majority in the Provincial Legislative Council, and we decided to accept it with gratitude, in the confidence that after the Provincial Legislative Councils have worked satisfactorily for a few years under the new scheme, the more important concession of a non-official majority in the Imperial Council was certain to come.

We are glad and thankful to find that a real non-official majority has been provided in the case of Bengal. And I take this opportunity of expressing our high appreciation of the large-hearted and liberal support which Sir Edward Baker has given to Lord Morley's proposals of Reform. It is due to that support that Bengal will shortly have the advantage of a Council Government. To Sir Edward Baker alone, among all the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors of the different provinces, belongs the credit of having secured a non-official majority of elected members in the Legislative Council of the great province over which he rules. The Regulations for Bengal lay down that

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out of a total of 49 members of the Council, 26, *i. e.*, more than half shall be elected, and that the members nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor shall not exceed 22, not more than 17 of whom may be officials, and 2 of whom shall be non-officials to be selected one from the Indian commercial community and one from the planting community. But in sad contrast to this stands the case of the second largest province of India, *viz.*, the United Provinces. The provision for a non-official majority has there been reduced to a practical nullity. Sir John Hewett had warmly supported the proposals for the creation of Imperial and Provincial Advisory Councils. Those proposals, as we know, were rejected by the Secretary of State for India. But his Honour seems to have been so much fascinated by them that he has done a good deal to make his Legislative Council approach the ideal of what were proposed to be Advisory Councils. (Hear, Hear.) Out of the total number of 46 members of the Council, only 20 are to be elected, and 26 to be nominated, of whom as many as 20 may be officials. Sir John Hewett has nominated the maximum number of 20 official members, and his Honour has shown great promptitude in nominating six non-official members. Two of these are independent Chiefs, *viz.*, his Highness the Nawab of Rampur and his Highness the Raja of Tehri, and the third is his Highness the Maharaja of Benares who is practically regarded as an independent Chief. No subject of the British Government has any voice in the administration of the affairs of these Chiefs. What justification can there be then for giving them a voice in the discussion of any legislation or other public questions which affect the weal or woe of the subjects of the British Indian Government? I mean no disrespect to these Chiefs when I say that they do not study the wants of the latter. They cannot be expected to do so. And even when they have formed an opinion about any matter that may come up for discussion, they cannot always afford to express it, except when it should happen to coincide with that of the Government. (Hear hear.) It is thus obvious that they cannot be useful members of the Council which they are to adorn. Why then have they been nominated, if it be not to act as a counterpoise to the influence of the educated class? Of the three other nominees of Sir John Hewett, one is a Mahomedan Nawab who is innocent of English, and one a European indigo planter. The sixth nominee is a representative of the non-official Indian commercial community, which the Regulations required him to be, but he too is innocent of English!

Some of the other objections to which the Regulations are open have also been most forcibly illustrated in the case of my unlucky province. Our Mahomedan fellow-subjects constitute only 14 per cent. of the population there. But four seats have been allotted to them out of the total of 20 seats which are to be filled up by election in consideration of their proportion to the total population *plus* their alleged political importance. In addition to this they have been allowed to participate in the elections by mixed electorates, and they have won two seats there. The Government has, besides, nominated two Mahomedans as non-official members. Thus out of 26 non-official members 8 are Mahomedans. Among the elected members as many as 8 are representatives of the landed aristocracy, and only five of the educated classes. The non-official majority has thus been reduced to a farce.

Time will not permit me to deal at length with the case of the other provinces. But I cannot pass over the case of the Punjab, the grievances of which are very real. Having regard to its position, its population, and the educational, social, and industrial progress made by it, the number of members fixed for its Legislative Council is quite inadequate, and the number of elected members is extremely meagre, being only 5 in a total of 25. Besides this the franchise for the general electorates, through which alone the non-Moslem population can take any part in the election of any member for the Council, has been limited to an extremely small number of persons. The number of Municipalities in the Punjab is larger than in any other province of India. In more than one hundred of them, elected representatives of the people have been serving for a long time past. Yet the privilege of voting for the election of members of the Council, has, I regret to find, been confined to only nine of these bodies! Can there be

any justification for narrowing the franchise in this manner? The people of the Punjab would seem to be entitled to as much consideration as the people of any other province in the Empire, and if a large number of members of Municipal and District Boards in other provinces were considered to be fit to exercise the franchise usefully and beneficially, the privilege should have been extended in at least an equal degree to the people of the Punjab. I do not wish to dwell upon the resentment which has been caused in the province by its being so unjustly dealt with. I trust the Government will be pleased to consider whether the exclusion—on the face of it an unreasonable and unjustifiable exclusion—of vast numbers of educated men in a progressive province like the Punjab from a privilege which has been extended to their fellow-subjects in other parts of the country and even in their own province, is not quite a serious political blunder. (Hear, hear.) The allaying of discontent was one of the main objects of the scheme of Reform. I venture humbly to say that the way in which the Reform has been worked out here is certainly not calculated to achieve that end. Every consideration for the welfare of the people and of good administration seems to me to demand that as large a number of men of intelligence, education and influence as may be available should be given the right to exercise a constitutional privilege and thus invited to employ their time and energy in the service of their country.

Gentlemen, I will not detain you by dwelling on the defects of the Regulations for the other provinces. Speaking generally, we find that the Regulations have been vitiated by the disproportionate representation which they have secured to the Mahomedans and to the landed classes, and the small room for representation which they have left for the educated classes; also by the fact that they have made an invidious and irritating distinction between Moslem and non-Moslem subjects of his Majesty, both in the matter of the protection of minorities and of the franchise, and lastly in that they have laid down unnecessarily narrow and arbitrary restrictions on the choice of electors.

Such are the Regulations which have been promulgated under the Reform scheme. I would respectfully invite Lord Morley himself to judge how very far they have departed from the liberal spirit of the proposals which he had fashioned with such statesmanlike care and caution. I also invite Lord Minto to consider if the Regulations do not practically give effect, as far as they could, to the objectionable features of the scheme which was put forward in Sir Harold Stuart's letter of 24th August 1907, which were so widely condemned, and also to judge how different in spirit they are from the proposals for which the people of India tendered their warmest thanks to his Lordship and to his noble chief at Whitehall. Is it at all a matter for wonder that the educated classes in India are intensely dissatisfied with the Regulations? Have they not every reason to be so? For more than a quarter of a century they have laboured earnestly and prayerfully through the Congress to promote the common interests of all classes and sects of the people, and to develop a common feeling of nationality among the followers of all the different religions in India, which is not less necessary for the purposes of a civilized Government than for the peaceful progress, prosperity and happiness of the people. The Regulations for the first time in the history of British rule have recognised religion as a basis of representation, and have thus raised a wall of separation between the Mahomedan and non-Mahomedan subjects of his Majesty which it will take years of earnest effort to demolish. They have also practically undone, for the time being at any rate, the results of the earnest agitation of a quarter of a century to secure an effective voice to the elected representatives of the people in the Government of their country. It is not that the Congress did not want, or does not want, that our Mahomedan fellow-subjects should be fairly and fully represented in the reformed Councils. It is firmly believed, and it is fully expected, that if a general electorate would be formed on a reasonable basis, a sufficient number of representatives of all classes of the community would naturally find their way into the Councils. But it is desired that as they would have to deal as members of the Councils, with questions which affect equally the interests of all classes and creeds, they should be returned to the Councils by the common suffrages of

their countrymen of all classes and creeds, and that their title to the confidence of their countrymen should be based on their ability to protect and promote their interests by their education, integrity and independence of character, and not on the accident of their belonging to any particular faith or creed, or of their having inherited or acquired a certain number of broad acres. (Hear hear.) We are naturally grieved to find that when we had caught a glimpse of the promised land by the extremely fortunate combination of a liberal statesman as Secretary of State and a liberal-minded Viceroy, our old friends of the bureaucracy have yet succeeded in blocking the way to it for at least some time to come.

Gentlemen, the attitude of educated Indians towards the reforms has been misinterpreted in some quarters. Some of the criticism has been quite friendly and I am sure we all fully appreciate it. But I wish that our friends looked a little more closely into the facts. Their criticism puts me in mind of a very instructive ancient story. Vishvamitra, a mighty Kshatriya King, the master of vast hordes of wealth and of extensive territories, felt that there was a still higher position for him to attain, *viz.*, that of being a Brahman, whose title to respect rests not on any earthly possession or power but on learning and piety and devotion to philanthropic work. He accordingly practised saintly and severe austerities, and, with the exception of one Brahman, every one acclaimed him a Brahman. That one Brahman was Vashishtha. Vishvamitra first tried to persuade Vashishtha to declare him a Brahman; then he threatened him; and having yet failed in his object, he killed a hundred children of Vashishtha in order to coerce him into compliance with his desire. Deeply was Vashishtha distressed. If he had but once said that Vishvamitra had qualified himself to be regarded a Brahman, he would have saved himself and his hoary-headed wife and the rest of his family all the sorrow and suffering which Vishvamitra inflicted upon them. But Vashishtha had realised the truth of the ancient teaching सत्यं पुत्रघाताद् वरम्. He valued truth more than a hundred sons. (Hear hear.) He would not save them by uttering what he did not believe to be true. In his despair, Vishvamitra decided to kill Vashishtha himself. One evening he went armed to Vashishtha's hermitage with that object. But while he was waiting in a corner for an opportunity to carry out his evil intent, he overheard what Vashishtha said to his wife, the holy Arundhati, in answer to a query as to whose *tapasya* shone as bright as the moonlight in the midst of which they were seated. "Vishvamitra's," was the unhesitating answer! The hearing of it changed Vishvamitra. He cast aside the arms of a Kshatriya, and with it the pride of power and anger. And as he approached Vashishtha in true humility, Vashishtha greeted him a *Bramharshi*. Vishvamitra was overcome. After he had got over the feelings of gratefulness and reverence which had overpowered him, and had apologised for all the injuries inflicted by him upon Vashishtha, he begged Vashishtha to tell him why he had not acknowledged him a Brahman earlier, and thus saved himself the sorrow and Vishvamitra from the sin of killing his sons. "Vishvamitra," said Vashishtha, "every time you came to me ere this, you came with the pride and power of a Kshatriya, and I greeted you as such. You came to-day imbued with the spirit of a Brahman; I have welcomed you as such. I spoke the truth then, and I have spoken the truth to-day." Even so, gentlemen, I venture humbly to claim, have my educated countrymen spoken in the matter of the reforms. The first proposals published in Sir Harold Stuart's letter were open to serious and valid objections, and they were condemned by them. The proposals published by Lord Morley last year were truly liberal and comprehensive in spirit, and they were welcomed with warm gratitude and unstinted praise. The Regulations framed to give effect to them have unfortunately departed, and widely too, from the spirit of those proposals, and are illiberal and retrogressive to a degree. Educated Indians have been compelled to condemn them. They have done so more in sorrow than in anger. Let the Government modify the Regulations to bring them into harmony with the spirit of Lord Morley's proposals, and in the name of this Congress, and, I venture to say, on behalf of my educated countrymen generally, I beg to assure the Government that they will meet with a cordial and grateful reception. (Cheers.) I do not ignore the fact that there is an assurance

contained in the Government's Resolution accompanying the Regulations that they will be modified in the light of the experience that will be gained in their working. That assurance has been strengthened by what his Excellency the Viceroy was pleased to say in this connection both at Bombay and Madras. But I most respectfully submit that many of the defects pointed out in them are such that they can be remedied without waiting for the light of new experience. And I respectfully invite both Lord Morley and Lord Minto to consider whether in view of the widespread dissatisfaction which the Regulations have created, it will be wise to let this feeling live and grow, or whether it is not desirable in the interests of good administration, and to fulfil one of the most important and avowed objects of the Reforms, namely the allaying of discontent and the promotion of good will between the Government and the people, to take the earliest opportunity to make an official announcement that the objections urged against the Regulations will be taken early into consideration. (Hear, hear, and cheers.)

POVERTY AND HIGH PRICES.

I have done, gentlemen, with the Reform Regulations. There are a few other matters, however, to which, I wish, with your permission, to invite attention. There is no doubt that at the present moment the Regulations occupy the greatest portion of public attention. But there are other causes of discontent, and some of them far deeper than the objections urged against the Regulations. Amongst them all there is none greater than the deep poverty which pervades the land. I do not wish to enter here into the controversy whether the poverty of the people has increased or diminished since the country came under British rule. What I ask is whether the condition of the people to-day is such as might reasonably have been expected from their being placed under a highly organised, civilised administration? Is that condition such as to be a ground for congratulation either to the Government or to the people? It is true that a fraction of the population have become more prosperous than they were before. But vast millions of the people are still dragging a miserable existence on the verge of starvation and large numbers of them have been falling easy victims to plague and fever. This is a question of vital importance, and deserves far graver consideration than it has yet received. (Hear, hear.) The sufferings of the people have been greatly increased by the high prices of food stuffs which have ruled for the last few years. The hardships to which the middle and poorer classes have been subjected can be better imagined than described. Gentlemen, I do not know whether our rulers have taken note of the evil effects which have been produced upon the minds of the people by these hardships to which they have been thus exposed for several years now, from one end of the country to the other, from year to year, from month to month, from week to week, and from day to day. I do not know whether they have obtained any official estimate of the numbers of those that have thus been suffering in silence so long. Nearly two years ago the Government of India was pleased to promise an enquiry into the high prices of food stuffs. Has the enquiry been made? If not, why not? It is not unreasonable to ask that when the Government finds that a vast proportion of the people entrusted to its care are so poor as they are in India, and that the prices of food stuffs have suddenly gone up as high as they have, it should lose no time in instituting an expert enquiry into the matter and hasten to adopt the remedies which may be suggested by such an enquiry.

SANITATION AND EDUCATION.

Along with the high prices that have prevailed, there have been other troubles which have added to the woes of our people. A wave of malarial fever has passed over large portions of the country, and has inflicted a vast amount of suffering and loss upon the people. Death rates have been running high. These are indications not of prosperity but of deep and widespread poverty. The appalling numbers of deaths from plague during the past few years are again a sadly eloquent and yet an unmistakable indication of the weak condition of the people. It is of course the duty of the Government to take every reasonable step it can to promote the health, the stamina and the national prosperity of the people. And we

are grateful for what the Government has done in any of these directions. But we urge that the steps taken have been quite inadequate, and that much more should be done to meet the requirements of the situation. Take for instance the question of sanitation. Sanitation is in a most unsatisfactory condition among vast portions of the population and in the greater portion of the country. The grants made hitherto for it have been wholly inadequate. Take again the question of education. The provision made for it also is woefully short of the needs of the country. The people as a whole are still steeped in ignorance, and that ignorance forms an obstacle to every improvement. Every time an attempt is made to reach them by instructions to help to save them from any great evil, as for instance to tell them to seek the benefit of inoculation against plague, or even to use quinine to protect themselves from malaria, the Government finds itself face to face with the stupendous difficulty that they are so largely illiterate. Now that illiteracy, that ignorance lies really at the root of every trouble to which the people are exposed. And yet it is sad to find that progress is not being made in the matter of education as it should be. Nearly two years ago the Government of India virtually promised that primary education would be made free all over the country. But that promise has not yet been fulfilled. The Government of India have for fifty years past by their declarations held out the hope that primary education would be made universal in India. We have been waiting and waiting to see this done. Many measures costing money which should not have been introduced have been carried out. Measures which should have been carried out have been kept back. Among this latter category has unfortunately fallen the question of making elementary education free and universal. Elementary education was made free and compulsory in England so far back as 1870. Japan, an Asiatic power, also made it compulsory nearly forty years ago. It has long been compulsory in America, in Germany, in France, in all the civilised countries of the West. Why should India alone be denied the great advantages which accrue from a system of free and compulsory primary education? (Hear, hear.) That is the one foundation upon which the progress of the people can be built. Is agricultural improvement to be promoted and agricultural education to be imparted for that purpose? Are technical instruction and industrial training to be given? Are habits of prudence and self-respect and a spirit of helpfulness to be fostered among the people? A system of free and general elementary education is needed equally as the basis of it all. I earnestly appeal to the Government of India to take up this question of free and universal primary education as one of the most important questions which affect the well-being of the people, and to deal with it as early as may be practicable.

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION.

Along with this question should be taken up the question of technical education. If vast millions of people in this country are to be rescued from poverty, if new avenues of employment are to be opened and prosperity spread over the land, it is essential that an extensive system of technical and industrial education should be introduced in the country. The examples of other countries point out that to be the road to prosperity. Germany was not at one time noted as a manufacturing country. It has so greatly improved its position as to become a formidable rival to England. America has enriched herself beyond description by multiplying her manufactures and industries. Japan has in the course of thirty years altered her position from a mainly agricultural into a largely manufacturing country. The industrial progress and prosperity of every one of these countries has been built upon a wide-spread system of scientific, technical and industrial education. The people of India are not wanting in intelligence or industry. They are willing to undergo any amount of labour that may be required of them. But they lack the education, the skill of the trained man, and are therefore being beaten day by day by the manufacturers of every foreign country which has built up a system of technical education, and thereby laid the foundation of its industrial prosperity. The manufactures of these countries are flooding our markets and impoverishing our people. It is high time that the Government took up the question in right earnest, and adopted a system of technical education co-extensive with the needs of the country.

PROVINCIAL DECENTRALISATION.

Gentlemen, I have no doubt that the Council Regulations will be improved. I have no doubt that the Reforms foreshadowed in Lord Morley's despatch will sooner or later, be carried out in their entirety. But even when the Regulations have been improved and those Reforms have been carried out, there will still not be much hope for a real improvement in the condition of the people, unless and until one other essential measure of reform is carried out, and that is a Decentralisation of financial power and responsibility from the Government of India to the various Provincial Governments. It appears from some remarks in one of Lord Morley's speeches that this question of a larger decentralisation than has been dealt with by the Royal Commission, has not escaped his Lordship's keen eye, but that he has allowed it to stand over for consideration in the future. In order to effect a real advance in the condition of the people, it is essential that the Government of India should make very much larger grants to the various provinces, should allow Provincial Governments to appropriate a much larger share of provincial revenues to be devoted to provincial needs than at present. But I must say that I have not much hope of this being done unless the vital change that I have referred to above is brought about in the existing system of financial administration. Under that system the Government of India holds itself to be the master of all the revenues of the various provinces, and makes allotments to them, by means of what are called Provincial settlements for provincial expenditure. Under this system nearly three-fourths of the entire revenues of the country is taken up for Imperial purposes and only about one-fourth is left to provide for all Provincial expenditure. What hope can there be for improvements being effected in the condition of the people, of primary education being made free and universal, of technical education being promoted, of agricultural improvement being brought about, of sanitary surroundings being secured to the people, and of their being saved from malaria, plague and famine, unless a very much larger proportion of the revenues derived from the people is allowed to be spent by Provincial Governments on purposes which directly benefit the people? (Hear, hear.) What is needed is that the Government of India should require a reasonable amount of contribution to be made for Imperial purposes out of the revenues of each province, and should leave the rest of the revenues to be spent for Provincial purposes. It should require Provincial Governments to make an addition to their contributions when any special cause may arise therefor, but should look to revenues derived from what are called Imperial heads to meet the rest of its ordinary expenditure.

REDUCTION OF EXPENDITURE.

One great advantage of such a system will be that the Government of India will have to somewhat curtail or restrict its expenditure. And it is hardly necessary to say that there is a crying need for such a reduction. In the present condition of the people, it is not possible, it will not be just, to raise taxation to a higher level than where it stands. But there is a source of revenue derivable from economy itself, and justice and the highest considerations of good government demand that this source should be tapped to a reasonable extent. For years together the Congress has been begging Government to practise economy in the various departments of its administration. In the first place there is the military expenditure. Such a large proportion of the revenues is absorbed by it, that there is not sufficient money left for expenditure on many more useful directions. The Congress has been urging for years that the expenditure should be reduced; but it has unfortunately been very much increased. There are several ways of reducing that expenditure. One is to reduce the number of the men in the army. That probably the Government will not agree to. The second is that as the army is maintained not merely for the benefit of India but for Imperial purposes as well, the British treasury should contribute a fair proportion of the military expenditure of the British Indian Empire. This is a prayer which has often been urged in the past, and it is a prayer which we must urge yet again.

HIGHER CAREERS TO INDIANS.

The cost of the civil administration also is extravagantly high, and can well be reduced. The Congress has urged times out of number that the cheaper indigenous agency

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should be substituted wherever practicable for the costly foreign agency in all the various departments of the administration. It has urged that higher appointments should be thrown open to Indians in a much larger measure than they have been heretofore. We have urged this on the ground of economy as well as of justice. We are thankful to Lord Morley that he has appointed two of our Indian fellow-subjects as members of his Council. We are deeply thankful both to him and to Lord Minto for their having appointed an Indian to the Executive Council of the Governor-General. What we feel however is that the claims of Indians to a reasonable share in the higher appointments in the service of their country will continue to have but a poor chance of being satisfied until all examinations relating to India which are at present held in England only, shall be held simultaneously in India and in England, and until all first appointments which are made in India shall be made by competitive examinations only. (Hear, hear.) You know, gentlemen, how keenly, how earnestly and perseveringly, that prince of patriots, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji (cheers) has been advocating this important reform for nearly forty years. But unfortunately for us the change has not yet come. In order to qualify themselves for service in their own land, the educated youth of India are still required to go several thousands of miles away from their homes, to pass an examination in England for admission to the Civil Service of India! This is entirely unjust. It is unjust not only to our educated young men but to our people as a whole. The system is responsible for keeping up the expenditure on the civil administration at a much costlier scale than is justifiable. We must therefore earnestly press that simultaneous examinations should be held in India and England for admission into the Indian Civil Service.

Before I leave this subject, I should refer to the appointment of the Right Honourable Mr. Ameer Ali as a member of his Majesty's Privy Council. We all know with what satisfaction the news of that appointment has been received throughout the country. I beg in your name to tender our thanks to Lord Morley for this further remarkable instance of his desire to appoint Indians to higher offices under the Crown. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, it is very much to be hoped that the Government will earn the gratitude of Indians by throwing open higher careers in the army also to them. It is too late in the day to say that Indians shall not be appointed to the higher offices in the army in India. Indians who are loyal, who have proved their loyalty by the life-blood which they have shed in the service of his Majesty, the King-Emperor and whose valour and fidelity have been repeatedly recognised, ought no longer to be told that they cannot rise to appointments in the army higher than Subadar-Majorships and Risaldar-Majorships. Reason and justice favour the departure for which I plead. The Proclamation of 1858 has promised that race, colour or creed shall not be a bar to the appointment of Indians to any posts under the Crown, the duties of which they shall be qualified to discharge. We ask Government to give effect to that noble Proclamation, to do justice to the claims of the people of India, by opening the higher branches of the army for qualified Indians to enter. If the Government will accede to this reasonable prayer, it will deepen the loyalty of vast numbers of people in India, and, I venture humbly to say, it will never have any cause to regret having taken such a step. On the other hand, the exclusion of Indians from such appointments is a standing ground of dissatisfaction and complaint. It is in every way desirable that it were removed. By throwing higher careers in the army open to Indians, the Government will open another important door for satisfying the natural and reasonable aspirations of important sections of his Majesty's subjects. Their attachment to the Government will thereby be enhanced, and if the opportunity ever arose, the Government would find a large army of Indians trained and prepared to fight under his Majesty's flag to defend the country against foreign invasion and to help the Government in maintaining peace on every possible occasion. (Cheers.)

INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

This brings me to the question of the status of Indians in other countries. It is not necessary for me to say how deeply it has grieved us all to hear of the unjust, the cruel, the disgraceful treatment to which our countrymen in the Transvaal have been subjected. (Hear, hear.) The indignities which have been heaped upon them the hardships and

harassments to which they have been exposed, have excited deep feelings of indignation and grief throughout the country. These feelings are not confined to educated Indians. They are shared by the literate and the illiterate alike. They have penetrated even into the *senani*, as is evident from the lists of subscriptions collected by ladies which have appeared in the Press. Touching appeals have come to us from our sisters in the Transvaal for brotherly help and sympathy in their trials. We admire the unflinching courage, the unbending determination with which our noble brother Mr. Gandhi and our other countrymen have been fighting for the honour of the Indian name. (Cheers.) Our hearts go forth to them in sympathy, and we are sorely grieved to find that the Government of his Majesty have not yet been able to come to their rescue. Our brethren have repeatedly appealed for protection and support to the Sovereign and Parliament of England, whose sway they live under. And it is a matter of deep grief to them, and to us, that, being the subjects of his Majesty the King-Emperor of India, and being fellow-subjects of Englishmen they should find themselves so long without protection against cruel and unjust treatment, against humiliating insults, in a colony of the British Empire. (Shame, shame.) It is not right to say that the British Government cannot exercise any influence upon the Boer-British Government. It was but yesterday that the Government of England went to war with the Boers, one of the avowed grounds being that Indians had been badly treated by the Boers. Has the position become weaker since the Government has established the might of its power there, that it is afraid to require that the Boer-British Government should follow a course of conduct towards its Indian fellow-subjects different from the one pursued before—a course of conduct consistent with the claims of a common humanity and of fellowship as subjects of a common Sovereign? (Cheers.) I have no doubt, gentlemen, that the Government of India have made many and earnest representations in this matter to the Imperial Government. I have no doubt that they will make further representations still. For the honour of the Empire itself, let us hope that the Imperial Government will yet interfere to bring about an early and honourable settlement of this painful but momentous question. (Hear, hear.) But however that may be, the Government of India are bound in honour and in duty to their Indian fellow-subjects to take steps now to actively resent and to retaliate the treatment which is accorded to them in South Africa. (Hear, hear.) And the least that they ought to do is to withdraw all facilities for enlisting indentured labour for South Africa, until the white colonists there agree to recognize Indians as their equal fellow-subjects. (Cheers.) The matter has been under discussion too long. The intensity of feeling which it has created throughout the country, demands that it should no longer be allowed to rest where it is. I will not detain you longer on this question, as time will not permit me to do so. I have no doubt that you will pass a strong resolution expressing your sympathy and admiration for our brethren, Hindus, Muhammadans, Parsees and Christians, who are fighting a heroic fight for the honour of the motherland in South Africa, and urging upon the Government both in India and in England the justice and necessity of an early and honourable settlement of this great Imperial problem. (Cheers.)

ANARCHICAL CRIMES.

Gentlemen, there is yet another painful matter for which I must claim attention, and that is the evil advent of anarchical ideas—of the assassin's creed—into our country. (Hear, hear.) It has filled us with grief to find that this new evil has come to add to our sorrows and to increase our misfortunes. Earlier in the year the whole country was shocked to hear that Sir William Curzon-Wyllie was shot dead by a misguided young man, and that while attempting to save Sir William, Dr. Lalkaka also lost his life at the hand of the assassin. The detestable crime filled all decent Indians with grief and shame;—with grief that a gentleman who had done no one any harm, who had on the contrary befriended many young Indians in England, and who was trying to befriend his assassin even at the moment when he was attacked by him, should have been killed without any cause, without any justification; with shame, that an Indian should have been guilty of such an atrocious crime. The pain caused by the news was widespread and deep. There was one circumstance however, of melancholy satisfaction in the

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tragedy ; and that was that if one Indian had taken the life of Sir William, another Indian had nobly given up his own in the attempt to save him. Gentlemen, in the name and on behalf of the Congress, I beg here to offer to Lady Curzon-Wyllie and to the family of Dr. Lalkaka our deepest sympathy with them in their sad bereavements. (Cheers.)

As though we had not had enough cause for sorrow, we have recently had the misfortune to hear of another equally atrocious crime committed at Nasik. The murder of Mr. Jackson has sent another thrill of horror and sorrow throughout the country. Mr. Jackson was being entertained at a party by Indians who honoured and esteemed him because of the good service he had rendered, and because of the sympathy he bore to them. And it was at such a party that a young man, filled with ideas as impotent to produce any good as they are wicked, took away his life! The news has been received with unutterable grief throughout the country, and the deepest sympathy is felt for Mrs. Jackson in her cruel bereavement. I beg to offer to her also our sincerest condolence.

And there was another, wicked attempt at a similar crime, though it happily proved unsuccessful. I refer, of course, to the bomb which was thrown the other day at Ahmedabad on the carriage of his Excellency the Viceroy. It is a misfortune that Lord Minto has had to introduce several measures of repression. But I believe that there is a general feeling all over the country that his Lordship has throughout meant well, and that he has laboured as a friend to promote what he has conceived to be the interests of the people. (Cheers.) The large-hearted liberal-mindedness which Lord Minto has shown in connection with the scheme of Reform has entitled him to our lasting gratitude and esteem. And it has been a matter for profound regret throughout the country that an attempt should have been made even upon his Excellency's life. That feeling has happily been relieved however by an equally profound feeling of satisfaction and thankfulness at his Lordship's providential escape. (Cheers.)

I do not know, gentlemen, in what words to express the abhorrence that I am sure we all feel for these detestable, dastardly and useless crimes. It fills me with grief to think that in this ancient land of ours where *ahimsa*—abstention from causing hurt—has been taught from the earliest times to be one of the greatest virtues which can be cultivated by civilised man ; where the great law-giver Manu has laid down that no man should kill even an animal that does not cause any hurt to others ; where the taking away of life generally is regarded as a great sin, the minds of any of our young men should have been so far perverted as to lead them to commit such inhuman acts of cold-blooded murders without any provocation. Such crimes were confined until a few years ago to some of the countries of Europe. We had no doubt occasional cases of religious fanatics, called *ghazis*, who now and then took away the life of an Englishman on the frontier. But we are grieved to find that these new political *ghazis* have now risen in our midst, and have become a new source of shame and sorrow to the country. I am sure we are all of one mind in our desire to do all that we can to eradicate this new evil from our land. But we do not know what steps should be taken to do so. We have repeatedly denounced these outrages, but those who commit them have obviously gone beyond the reach of our influence. It should be obvious to the meanest understanding that these crimes cannot do any good to our country—they have never done any good to any country,—but, on the contrary, they have done and are doing us a great deal of injury. They are condemned by our *shastras* and are opposed to the noblest traditions of our race. अयुष्मानस्य बधो निःशेषकरणं स्मृतम्—“the killing of a man who is not standing up to fight is a sin which leads to the extinction of the sinner,”—says the *Mahabharat*. The whole of the *Mahabharat* illustrates and emphasises the great truth that it is righteousness alone that wins, because its victory is real and lasting, and that unrighteous and wicked deeds though they may secure a temporary seeming advantage, lead eventually to certain degradation and destruction. It proclaims that even in a war, we should not think of winning a victory by wicked means धर्मैव निधनं श्रेयः न जयः पापकर्मणा—“better death by pursuing a righteous course of conduct, than victory by means of a wicked deed.” (Hear, hear.) It is inexpressibly sad to think that in a country where such

wise and noble teachings have come down to us through long ages, the assassin's creed should have found acceptance in the minds of any person, young or old. Let us endeavour to instil these noble teachings into the minds of our young men. We owe it to them and to our country, to try so far as it lies in our power, to keep them from being misled into the path of evil and dishonour. Let us do it, and let us hope and pray that such crimes, which we all deplore and detest, will soon become matters of past history. (Cheers.)

DEPORTATIONS AND THE PARTITION.

Gentlemen, I have referred in an earlier portion of my address to some of the causes of discontent. I should refer to two other matters which have contributed largely to swell it in the last few years. One of them is the deportation of Indians without any trial. (Hear, hear.) The Government cannot be more anxious than we are in the interest of our country's progress, to see good will and confidence grow evermore between the Government and the people. And we are pained to find that by resorting to a lawless law like the Regulation of 1818, to punish men against whom no offence has been openly urged and established, the Government by its own action excites a great deal of ill-feeling against itself. We all remember how intensely strong was the feeling excited by the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai, and how deep and general was the satisfaction when after six months' confinement, he was restored to liberty. Since then, however, nine other gentlemen from Bengal have been similarly deported. The reasons which have led to their deportation have not been made known. Every effort to induce the Government to publish those reasons has failed. Public sympathy is consequently all on the side of those who have been deported and all against the Government. This cannot be regarded as a gain to good administration. (Hear, hear.) If the Government will only have recourse to the ordinary law of the land, to bring to justice any person or persons who might be guilty of encouraging violence or lawlessness or of promoting ill-will or hostility to Government, there will be no room left for complaint. The Indian people are an eminently reasonable people. Let them know that a brother has been guilty of a crime; let the Government only satisfy the public that there is reasonable ground for depriving any man of his liberty, and they will cease to sympathise with the offender. Where sympathy will not entirely die out, its nature will be greatly changed. There will be no feeling left against the Government. But to send away men who have been leading peaceful and honourable lives to distant lands, and to confine them under the deportation regulation without giving them any opportunity to hear and answer charges which have been formulated behind their backs, is a course unworthy of the British Government, and it ought to be put an end to as early as possible (Cheers.) Even the Egyptian law of deportation is better in this respect than the Indian law. Under that law an opportunity is given to the person whom it is proposed to deport to hear the charges laid against him, though *in camera*, and to answer them. In that way injustice is largely if not entirely avoided. I hope that if the Government is determined to retain the Regulation of 1818 and similar regulations in the statute book, it will at any rate recognize the necessity in the interest of good administration as much as in the interest of justice, of introducing amendments in the said Regulations to make them similar in the particular respect pointed out, to the law of Egypt. (Hear, hear.) I cannot leave this subject without referring to the great service which Mr. Mackarness has been rendering to the people of India in this connection. (Cheers.) It is only right that we should make a grateful acknowledgment of that service. (Cheers.)

The other matter to which I think it my duty to invite attention is the question of the partition of Bengal. It is unnecessary for me to say what an amount of discontent and bitterness this question has created in Bengal. That discontent and that bitterness has travelled far beyond the limits of Bengal, and has produced a most deplorable influence in the country. It may appear to be a vain hope, but I do hope that the Government will yet reconsider this question. I do not propose to take up your time by recapitulating the arguments which have been urged against the partition, and the pleas which have been put forward for a modification of the partition so as to bring together the entire Bengali-speaking community in Bengal under one Government. But I will mention one new and important fact in support of my recommendation. And that is this, that under the Reform scheme the people of Western Bengal are to receive the benefit of a Council Government,

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Eastern Bengal is not to have it, and finds that the destinies of its 31 millions of people are still left to be guided by one single man. (Hear, hear.) This gives an additional ground of complaint and dissatisfaction to the people of Eastern Bengal. The partition as it has been made cannot be defended. It ought therefore to be mended. If the Government will modify the partition it will restore peace to Bengal, and win the good will and gratitude of millions of men there. It will also enhance thereby its prestige in the eyes of the people throughout the country, as they will feel that the Government can afford to be as just as it is strong. (Cheers.)

The mention of these grievances of Bengal reminds me of some of the grievances of the Punjab. My friend the Chairman of the Reception Committee has already referred to some of them. They will be laid in due course before you, and I trust that you will give them the consideration which they deserve. It is true that some of these questions affect only one province now: but they involve questions of principle, and may affect other provinces in the future. One of these, the imposing of restrictions on the alienation of land, already affects two provinces. The Punjab Land Alienation Act has been followed by a similar act for a portion of the United Provinces, and there is no knowing when similar acts may not be extended to other areas. These acts have revived a procedure of protecting the interests of agriculturists which has become obsolete in civilised countries. The right course for the Government to follow is to illumine the minds and strengthen the wills of zamindars and agriculturists by means of education, so that they may be able to protect their interests and increase their incomes. Instead of pursuing that natural and healthy course, the Government has had recourse to an obsolete and not very rational method of helping them to protect their properties by depriving them of the power of dealing freely with them, and by compelling the agriculturist to sell his land to a brother agriculturist only. This gives the richer agriculturist the opportunity of buying up his humbler brother, and prevents the latter from obtaining as fair a price as he would get if he were to sell his property in the open market. It also prevents non-agriculturists from acquiring land, and from investing their capital in enriching it. The subject is a very important one, and I trust you will give it your attention.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGRESS.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have detained you very long. But I must crave your indulgence for a few minutes more. I wish before I conclude to say a few words about the constitution and the present position of the Congress. Ever since the unfortunate split at Surat, the Congress has come in for a great deal of criticism, both friendly and unfriendly. It is said that there has been a division in the Congress camp. It is true, it is sad. We should have been happy if it was not. We hear a great deal of disapproval, of condemnation, of "a disunited Congress," and a great desire expressed for "a united Congress." I ask, gentlemen, how are we "a disunited Congress?" Are we not here a united Congress, united in our aims and our methods, and in our determination to adhere to them? (Hear, hear.) If we are not a united Congress who is responsible for the disunion? Have we departed in the smallest degree from the lines on which the Congress was started twenty-four years ago? Have we shut out any fellow-countryman of ours who wishes to work with us on those lines from coming to the Congress? I emphatically say, no. It is said that we have adopted a creed. Yes, we have done so, because it had become necessary, owing to the influx of some new ideas into the country, to define the objects for which the Congress was organised to prevent a misinterpretation or misrepresentation of those objects. The creed we have adopted is however no new creed. It has been the creed of the Congress from the beginning. The foundation of the Congress rests on loyalty to the British Government. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) That has always been the basic principle of the Congress. The Congress has at no time done or sanctioned anything being done which would give the smallest countenance to any idea that it wanted to overthrow the British Government. I believe that the vast bulk of the thoughtful people in India, I mean, of course, those who can and do understand such questions, are as much convinced to-day as they were when the Congress was started, that British rule is good for India, and that it is to our advantage that it should continue for a long

time to come. (Cheers.) That certainly is the feeling of the vast bulk of educated Indians. And, my countrymen, let me personally say this, that if I did not believe that British rule was good for India, I would certainly not say so. If the fear of the law of sedition would deter me then from speaking against it, I would hold my peace, but not soil my lips with a lie, and thereby expose myself to a far more terrible punishment than any that can be inflicted for infringing the law of sedition. (Cheers.) I do believe that British rule is meant for the good of India, meant to help us to raise our country once more to a position of prosperity and power. Our duty to our country itself demands that we should loyally accept that rule, and endeavour steadily to improve our position under it, so that while we suffer some certain inevitable disadvantages of that rule, we should realise all the advantages which we can undoubtedly derive by our being placed under it. That being our position, gentlemen, ever since the Congress was organised, it has made it its duty to bring the grievances of the people to the notice of the Government, with a view to their removal by the Government, and to secure constitutional changes in the administration which could only be brought about by the Government. I may say in passing, that it is the strongest and most unanswerable proof of the loyalty and good will of the Congress towards the Government that it has tried during all these years to press those questions on the attention of the Government which affected the weal or woe of the people and therefore constituted a real grievance of the people. The raising of the minimum of assessment of the income-tax, the reduction of the salt-tax, the prayer for the larger admission of Indians into the public services and the many other reforms urged by the Congress, all illustrate the point. If the Congress were hostile or unfriendly to the Government, it would have left the grievances of the people alone, and let discontent grow among them. It is true that there were at one time some narrow-minded officials who regarded the Congress as disloyal. Their race, I hope, is now extinct. I hope that among the officials of Government there is not a responsible man now who thinks that the Congress means any harm to the Government; I believe that there are a good many among them now who are satisfied that it is the best helpmate that the Government could have to help it to conduct the administration of the country on sound and popular lines. I have referred to this not to defend the Congress against any accusation of unfriendliness to Government, but to emphasise the fact that though the Congress did not for a long time adopt a written constitution, it was clear as daylight from the very beginning that it was an organisation whose object it was to bring about reforms in the existing system of administration and a redress of the grievances of the people by appealing to the constituted authority of Government. Later on when some of our brethren earnestly urged that the Congress should have a written constitution, such a constitution was agreed upon, at the Lucknow session in 1899, and it laid down in clear words that the object of the Congress was to agitate for reforms on constitutional lines. That is the object of the Congress to-day. The cardinal principle of the Congress has now been formulated in even more explicit, more unmistakable language. The change has been in the direction of amplifying the objects not of narrowing them. The first Article of the Constitution of the Congress, the Congress creed as it has been called, runs as follows :

“The Objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment, by the people of India, of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire, and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These Objects are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economical, and industrial resources of the country.”

I should like to know, gentlemen, if there exists another organisation throughout the length and breadth of this vast Empire which has set nobler objects before itself to achieve. (Cheers.) We have made it absolutely clear that we want self-government within the British Empire; a system of Government, that is to say, similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire; and that we want to participate on equal terms in the rights and responsibilities of that Empire with those other members. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, what higher aim could a sensible practical patriot and statesman place before himself? Bear in mind the present status of our country, and you at once see how noble, how honourable is the desire to raise it to the position of being a member of a great federation of a great Empire under one Sovereign, holding some objects in common for the benefit of the Empire and pursuing others independently for its own special benefit. Japan is an entirely independent power. And yet Japan has considered it an advantage to enter into a friendly alliance with England, and England to do the same with Japan. Some good people tell us that we have gone too far in fixing our aim. Others tell us that we have not gone sufficiently far. But I have not heard one single responsible man put forward any programme of agitation which goes even so far as ours, leaving alone of course one or two irresponsible talkers, whose wild talk is happily not heard now in this country. We have fixed our aim with the utmost deliberation. We consider it high enough to give opportunity for the utmost exercise of patriotic feeling. We feel that with this ideal before us, we can rise to the height of our growth under the British Government by agitating by lawful and constitutional means for obtaining all the privileges which our fellow-subjects in England and other countries enjoy. (Hear, hear.)

It is sometimes urged against us that our representations are not heard or heeded, and that in spite of many years of constitutional agitation, we are still labouring under various disabilities and disadvantages. That is unfortunately true; but only partly so. The success achieved by us is by no means ignoble. But even if we had entirely failed that would not establish the inefficacy of constitutional agitation. It would only prove the necessity for more persistent, more strenuous agitation. It is again said that several repressive measures have been introduced during the last two years and that they have made the task of even honest workers difficult. I fully share the regret that these measures have been passed. Let us hope that they will soon cease to be operative, if they may not be repealed. But making allowance for all that, I venture to say that the freedom of speech and action which we yet enjoy under the British Government will enable us to carry on a constitutional agitation to achieve all the great objects which the Congress has set before us. I ask you, my countrymen, not to allow the aspersions which are made against the Congress to go unanswered any longer, and to dispel the wrong notions which have been created in the minds of some of our people about its objects. I ask you to tell all our people that those objects are high and honourable enough to demand the steadfast devotion of the most patriotic minds, and to ask them to co-operate with us in realising them. It is a great change that we want to bring about in the system of administration,—a change by which the affairs of the people shall be administered by the voice of the representatives of the people. That change cannot be effected in a day, nor yet in a decade. But I venture to say that if we can educate all our people to stand aloof from and to give no countenance whatever to seditious movements;—I do not mean to suggest that they in any way do encourage such movements at present;—if we can prevent sedition from throwing obstacles in our path, and teach our people to devote themselves to build up national unity, to promote public spirit among ourselves and to agitate more earnestly and steadfastly than we have yet done to further constitutional reform, we shall in ten years' time succeed in obtaining a larger measure of reform than was foreshadowed in Lord Morley's despatch. (Hear, hear.) The objects of the Congress are large and comprehensive enough to afford occupation to the most varied inclinations in the minds of our people. If there are some amongst us who do not wish to take part in agitation for political reforms, let them devote themselves to the promoting of national unity, to the fostering of public spirit, and to the developing of the intellectual, the moral and the economic resources of the country. Here is work enough for every Indian who feels the fervour of a patriotic impulse to take up. Let him choose the work which he finds most after his heart and labour to promote it. But let it not be said that the Congress has narrowly circumscribed the scope of its organisation. Let it not be said, for it is not true, that the objects of the Congress are not high and honourable enough to satisfy the cravings for activity of the most patriotic minds. The problems which press for consideration at our hands are both vital and numerous. The condition of our people is deplorable. Vast millions of them do not get sufficient food to eat and sufficient

clothing to protect themselves from exposure and cold. They are born and live in insanitary surroundings and die premature preventable deaths. Humanity and patriotism alike demand that, in addition to what the Government is doing, and may do, we should do all that lies in our power to ameliorate their condition. Let every particle of energy be devoted to the loving service of the motherland. There is no land on earth which stands more in need of such service than our own. It is true that we are labouring under numerous difficulties and disadvantages. Let not those difficulties and disadvantages daunt us. Duty demands that we must solve them; and let us remember that they will not be solved by having small divisions and narrow parties amongst us. In union alone lies the hope of a happy future for our country. Differences there often arise among workers wherever there is a large association of men. But differences should be brushed aside, and all earnest patriots, all true lovers of the country, should unite in a common endeavour to promote common objects by methods and ways about which there is a common agreement throughout the country. (Cheers.)

THE NATIONAL IDEAL.

And here, gentlemen, I wish to say a few words to our brethren of the Moslem League. I deeply grieve to say it, but I think it would be well perhaps that I should say it. I am grieved to think that our brethren have allowed the interests of a sect, nay of a party, to predominate in their counsels over the interests of the country; that they have allowed sectarian considerations to prevail over patriotic considerations. Gentlemen, no Indian is entitled to the honour of being called a patriot, be he a Hindu, Mahomedan, Christian or Parsee, who would desire for a moment that any fellow-countryman of his, whatever his race or creed may be, should be placed under the domination of the men of his own particular persuasion or community, or that any one section should gain an undue advantage over any other section or all other sections. Patriotism demands that we should desire equally the good of all our countrymen alike. (Cheers.) The great teacher Veda Vyasa held forth the true ideal for all religious and patriotic workers to pursue in the noble prayer which he taught centuries ago :

सर्वे च सुखिनः सन्तु , सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु , न कश्चिद्दुःख भाग्भवेत् ॥

“ May all enjoy happiness ; may all be the source of happiness to others ; may all see auspicious days ; may none suffer any injury.”

That is the ideal which the Congress has placed before us all from the moment of its birth. (Hear, hear.)

I am a Hindu by faith, and I mean no disrespect to any other religion when I say that I will not change my faith, for all the possessions of this world or of any other. (Cheers.) But I shall be a false Hindu, and I shall deserve less to be called a Brahman, if I desired that Hindus or Brahmans should have any unfair advantage as such over Mahomedans, Christians, or any other community in India. (Cheers.) Our brethren of the Moslem League have by their sectarian agitation at a critical period of our history, thrown back the national progress which we have been endeavouring for years to achieve. It is painful and humiliating to think that this has been so. But it is no good fretting too much about an irrevocable past. Let us try to forget it. It is a relief to know that there are many amongst them who realise that a mistake has been committed; many who realise that any temporary advantage which a few members of one community may gain over the members of other communities, is a trifle which does not count in the consideration of large national interests. What does it matter to the vast masses of the people of India that a few Hindus should gain some slight advantage over a few Mahomedans, or that a few Mahomedans should gain some small advantage over a few Hindus? How ennobling it is even to think of that high ideal of patriotism where Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis and Christians, stand shoulder to shoulder as brothers and work for the common good of all. And what a fall is there when we give up that position, and begin to think of furthering the sectarian interests of any particular class or creed at the expense of those of others. (Cheers.) I invite my brethren to respond to the higher call, and to feel that our lot having been cast in this

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now our common country, we cannot build up a national life such as would be worth having, in separation, but that we must rise or fall together. (Cheers.)

And I have to say a word in this connection to some of my Hindu brethren also. (Hear, hear.) I have been grieved to learn that owing to the unfortunate action of the members of the Moslem League,—and let me say here once again that I do not make a single one of these remarks without a feeling of pain: I say what I say not to offend any brother, but in order that a better understanding should grow between the two great communities;—I say, gentlemen, that owing to the action of our brethren of the Moslem League, owing to the manner in which the agitation for securing what they had persuaded themselves to believe would be a fair representation for their community, and especially owing to several unfortunate and regrettable things that were said during the course of that agitation, a great estrangement has taken place between Hindus and Mahomedans generally all over the country, but particularly in the Punjab and the United Provinces. Under the influence of this feeling, some of my Hindu brethren have been led to think and to advocate that Hindus should abandon the hope of building up a common national life, and should devote themselves to promote the interests of their own community as Mahomedans have tried to promote those of theirs. They have also said that the Congress agitation has done harm to the Hindu community. With all respect to those who have taken this view, I wish to ask what harm the Congress has done to the Hindus. Have not Hindus benefited equally with other communities by the raising of the minimum of assessment of the income-tax and the reduction of the salt tax, and by the other measures of reform which the Congress has successfully agitated for? But, it is said, some of the officials of Government have shown preference for Mahomedans over Hindus in the public service because the Hindus have offended them by agitating for reforms, while the Mahomedans have not. Well, I am sorry to think that there seems to be some ground for such a complaint as this in the Punjab and the United Provinces. But, gentlemen, these are mere passing incidents, things of the moment. (Cheers.) The favours shown are not to live. Let it be remembered that *ex hypothesi* those favours have been shown not out of any love for our Mahomedan brethren, but in order to keep them quiet, to keep them from standing shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brethren to agitate for reforms. Let the delusion disappear, let Mahomedans begin to take their fair share in agitating for the common good of all their countrymen, and these favours will cease to come. (Hear, hear, and cheers.) If there was a real partiality for our Mahomedan brethren, one should have expected to see some real concession made to them, for instance, in some privileges which are denied to us all in the matter of the Arms Act or Volunteering, being extended to them. (Cheers and laughter.) But the thought of extending such a privilege to Mahomedans has not, you may safely assume, ever entered the minds of even those among the officials, who have been known to be most inclined to favour them. No, gentlemen, this policy of partiality will not live, as it does not deserve to live. And any temporary disadvantages which may have been caused by it to our Hindu brethren in some parts of the country ought not to lead them to swerve from the path of duty, wisdom and honour which the Congress has chalked out for all patriotic Indians to follow. (Hear, hear.) I do not object to representations being made to prevent any unjust preferential treatment being shown to the members of any particular community. It seems to me to be not inconsistent with the true spirit of a Congressman to point out and protest against any partiality shown to any member or members of any community on the ground of his or their belonging to that particular community. If a Mahomedan, Hindu or Christian is appointed to a post in the public service on account of his merit, such an appointment is for the benefit of the public, and no one can have any reason to complain. If a Hindu is preferred to a Mahomedan, not because he has superior qualifications to serve the public, but merely because he is a Hindu, that is a just ground of grievance to the Mahomedans; and not only Mahomedans but all communities will be entitled without departing from the principles of the Congress, to protest against such an appointment on the broad ground of equal justice for all, and

because it will excite jealousy and promote ill-will and disunion among people who ought to live in amity and good will. If on the other hand a preference is shown to a Mahomedan over a Hindu who is not surperior but inferior to him in merit and qualifications, a Hindu can protest as much as any other community against such an appointment without departing from the principle of the Congress. But pray let it be done, when it must be done, out of a regard for public interests which demand equality of treatment, equal justice, for all commun ities. Let it be done with the desire of avoiding causes of disunion. Let it not be done out of a feeling of narrow sectarian jealousy. Let us endeavour to win over our brethren who differ from us to the noble ideals which we have hitherto placed before us. Let not their faults lead us to turn away from those ideals. I have faith in the future of my country. I have no doubt that the policy of the preferential treatment of one community over another and all other obstacles which keep the great communities of India from acting together, will slowly but steadily disappear, and that under the guidance of a benign Providence feelings of patriotism and brotherliness will continue to increase among Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians and Parsees, until they shall flow like a smooth but mighty river welding the people of all communities into a great and united nation, which shall realise a glorious future for India and secure to it a place of honour among the nations of the world. (Loud and continued applause.)



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

PUBLIC MEETING

Held on Tuesday, the 5th March, 1918

AT THE

CALCUTTA TOWN HALL

TO PROTEST AGAINST

THE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

REGARDING

INTERNMENTS & DEPORTATIONS

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A Public Meeting was held at the Calcutta Town Hall on the 5th of March, 1918, at 5 p.m., to protest against the policy of the Government regarding internments and deportations. The meeting was very largely attended, the hall being literally packed to the utmost. A few ladies were present, and, amongst others, the following gentlemen were present—Sir Rash Behary Ghose, Sir Benode Chandra Mitter, the Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, the Hon'ble Mr. Abul Kasem, the Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Ray, Mr. B. Chakravarti, Rai Yatindra Nath Chaudhuri, Babus Mati Lal Ghosh, Monoranjan Guha, Panchkari Banerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Hirendra Nath Datta, Messrs. J. Chaudhuri, C. R. Das, J. N. Roy, S. C. Mookerjee, C. C. Ghose, A. N. Chaudhuri, S. N. Haldar, P. Ray Chaudhuri, C. C. Dass, R. C. Bonnerjee, I. B. Sen, J. M. Sen-Gupta, Sudhir C. Ray, D. C. Ghosh, Surendra Nath Tagore, Babus Debi Prosad Khaitan, Hemendra Nath Sen, Basanta Kumar Bose, Jitendra Lal Banerjee, Lalit Mohan Das, Suresh Chandra Samajpati, Ambika Prosad Bajpai, Dr. Sundari Mohan Das, Kumar Saradindu Narain Ray, Babus Bijoy Krishna Bose, Gobinda Chandra De Rai, Bipin Behari Ghosh, Upendra Lal Ray, Akhil Bandhu Guha, Sasanka Jiban Ray, and Pulin Chandra Das of Chittagong.

I.

Sir Rash Behary Ghosh proposed that Mr. B. Chakravarti do take the chair. The proposal being seconded by Babu Mati Lal Ghosh and supported by Rai Yatindra Nath Chaudhuri was carried by acclamation.

On taking the chair, Mr. Chakravarti thanked the meeting for the great honour done to him in being asked to take the chair on an occasion when they had assembled to deliberate over a such serious subject. He then called upon Mr. B. K. Lahiri to read before the meeting the message received from Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore and communications received from other gentlemen who were unable to attend the meeting.

II.

Mr. B. K. Lahiri read the following letter from Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore :—

DEAR SIR,

Though owing to ill-health I am unable to attend your meeting, I take this opportunity of repeating my conviction that great harm, political and moral, is being wrought by the internment policy and the method of carrying it out as adopted by our Government. I am convinced that some of the noblest of our men have fallen victims to this regulations only because they made themselves too conspicuous by their self-imposed mission of beneficence so as to offer easy targets to those bombs of punishment that cannot have the discrimination to choose only the criminal sparing the innocent. I am utterly unable to believe that truth has been reached oftener than error where evidence has not been judiciously sifted and in circumstances where underhand means of extracting so-called confession cannot be guarded against. And yet when I think that these men who never had a trial worth the name, and who, placed in unnatural surroundings, demoralising and intimidating, may have made incriminating statements

communications against themselves or others, have suffered and are suffering treatment harsh enough to send some of them to death's door and others to worse than a living death, I cannot but deprecate such policy in the name of humanity and in the hope that such policy being against the traditions of British justice, I may move those in authority to come to the rescue even at the risk of prestige.

It is now publicly known that a boy from my Shanti Niketan School had been interned who is now released. I have not the least hesitation in declaring that he could not have had any connection with any anarchist movement, and even if any statements said to be made by him be on record, I emphatically assert that I cannot believe those to be true. I know that, for obvious reasons, it is impossible for anybody to prove that such statements made in the police thana are not genuine and voluntary, but that they are so has also to be proved by the strict method of judicial enquiry before we can accept them as of any value. The place where investigation ought to have been made about this boy's antecedents and about the circumstances connected with his escapade was Shanti Niketan. But this obvious course was not taken and we were not even informed of his detention. If this be a sample of how carefully enquiries are made in the cases of these unfortunate detainees, then all I can say is: May God help them!

Yours sincerely,
RABINDRA NATH TAGORE

Mr. Lahiri then read the following letters and telegrams—
From Maharajah Jagadindra Nath Ray of Natore—

I am indeed very sorry I am unable to be present at the meeting owing to some pressing engagements. I have every sympathy with the object.

The Honorable Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee (from Delhi)—

I received your telegram last evening inviting me to the Town Hall meeting to be held day after tomorrow. If I had got the telegram earlier, I might have been able to attend this meeting. I fear it is impossible to do so now. But you have my heartiest good-wishes and I wish you every success. I have been doing something here in the same direction. I have given notice of a resolution which will come on for discussion about the middle of March. I have also put several questions which have not yet been answered.

The Honorable Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar of Faridpur—

Deeply regret unavoidable absence, heartily sympathise with meeting.

From Babu Jatra Mohan Sen of Chittagong—

Regret am not in proper health. Strong protest against indiscreet internment should be made.

From Babu Ananda Chandra Roy of Dacca—

Regret inability to attend meeting, sailing since fortnight. Have my full sympathy.

From Rai Baikuntha Nath Sen Bahadur of Murshidabad—

I regret to say that I shall not be able to attend the great internment meeting on the 5th instant. Wishing success.

The Honorable Babu Akhil Chandra Dutt of Comilla—

To-day's Town Hall meeting has my whole-hearted support. There should be national protest against indiscriminate application of Defence of India Act and Regulation of 1818. The people should as of right demand discrimination between proof and suspicions and such humane treatment as political prisoners receive all over the civilized world. Regret inability to attend.

From the Secretary, Peoples' Association, Tippera—

Tippera Peoples' Association has full sympathy with the objects of to-day's Town Hall meeting.

III.

The Chairman then delivered his address as follows—

We have met in this historic hall once again to enter our emphatic protest against the internments and deportations of our countrymen under the

Defence of India Act and the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 respectively. This is in pursuance of a demand strenuously made from all parts of this Presidency indicating that the public mind is not satisfied with the latest explanation of the position and the attitude of Government in this connection formulated by His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay in the Bengal Legislative Council on the 20th of November 1917. At the same time, I must say that we are deeply grateful to His Excellency for such information as was made public by him; because, under the present system of Government in this country, he need not have done so. The public demand for a meeting like this was persistent and strenuous and was not confined to any particular section or class of the Bengalee people. On this question, the whole Bengalee race—the so-called moderates and extremists, the Home Rulers and the Non-Home Rulers, the Hindus and the Mahomedans—is of one mind and is bent on making its united voice felt in the counsels of the Government. (*Hear, Hear*).

This public protest was to have come sometime ago. It has been overdue. We owe an apology to the public for this delay and I unhesitatingly and unreservedly render it on behalf of the organisers. The delay is to be explained by our efforts to get all our leaders and representative men on this platform. This meeting had to be put off from time to time owing to the ill-health of Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore who was to have headed this public protest. Unfortunately it is not possible for him to be with us even to-day. The Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee has been kept away on account of public business at Delhi. How I wish they and all our friends who have unavoidably been kept away were present here to-day and by their presence lend further weight, strength and wisdom to our deliberations.

This is a Public Meeting and I wish our European friends were with us here in large number, for, in that event, they would have been able to gauge to some extent the depth of feeling which agitates our countrymen over this question. But it is satisfactory to be told by one of the leaders of the European Community that the latter propose to equip themselves for taking a larger share in the political life of this country than they have so far done. It is still more satisfactory to learn that, of this preparation, a better knowledge of their Indian fellow-subjects and an appreciation of their point of view are to form no unimportant parts. As pointed out the other day by my friend Mr. Shirley Tremearne, sympathy and knowledge on the part of our European fellow-subjects will go a great way towards the solution of the problems of Government in India.

Let us, therefore, make clear to the rest of the world what is our point of view on the question of internments and deportations. We stand at a critical point in the history of India. It is a time of peculiar difficulty and trial both for the Government and the people. There is need to be specially watchful of what we say and do. There is no question of "playing the game" or of "political license" as Sir Hugh Bray has recently put it. The point is to clear our minds of cant and express ourselves freely, firmly, fearlessly and unequivocally on the subject which may be before us for our consideration.

Chakravarti: Gentlemen, during the last decade we have seen quite a crop of repressive legislation disfiguring the Statute Book of our country. Measures after measures of repression followed in quick succession. I shall content myself by mentioning a few of them. There is the Seditious Meetings Act passed in 1907. That Act was passed, as its preamble says, to make better provision for the prevention of public meetings likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquillity. I remember our distinguished countryman Sir Rash Behary Ghose raised his voice of protest in the Imperial Council. He pointed out that the measure proposed could but only have one effect, viz., of driving crime, if any, underground. The Indian Government did not heed either his words or the many public protests which were made at the time. The next year saw the passing of the Newspapers Incitement to Offences Act. In the same year again was passed the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act to provide, as its preamble says, for the more speedy trial of certain offences and for the prohibition of association dangerous to the public peace. In 1910, was passed the Indian Press Act to provide, as its preamble says, for the better control of the Press. And in 1913, was passed the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act to provide for the punishment of criminal conspiracies. Then came this great war in August 1914, the end of which, unfortunately is not yet visible. In March 1915 followed the Defence of India Act. And now we are threatened with further legislation to enable the Government to deal effectively with criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India. (Shame).

Gentlemen, you are all aware of the working of the police during the last decade, armed as they were with this repressive legislation. I shall not repeat them here. You are all painfully aware of them. House-searches, arrests, shadowing by the police, deportations, and political trials were the order of the day. One never knows what a vast amount of public money has been spent on the mischievous workings of the C. I. D. and these futile political trials. People were taken by surprise. They wondered and groaned: they protested again and again: they were sullen and silent. But who cared? The idea on the part of the authorities was to meet acts of violence on the part of a small group of youngmen who had lost all faith in constitutional agitation by organised terrorism, lawless law and C. I. D. activities. I believe I am justified in saying that there was no attempt to discover the root-cause which had led the law-abiding and peaceful Bengalee youths unto these paths of violence. Gentlemen, it might be said that there was some excuse for the bureaucratic Government which was mainly alien and which was not of the people, by the people and for the people to lose its balance when face to face with new and destructive forces and [rush into forging remedies which were worse than the disease and were so declared by competent critics at the time. But what excuse is there for making a regular practice of it and not only retaining such enactments on the Statute Book but asking for more? The belief in terrorism is indeed as old as human nature. It has been stated that "everyone who talks of the need for law and order, while ignoring the still greater need for justice, is a terrorist. The terrorist is a man in terror trying to strike terror in somebody else. Thus,

any one of us is liable to become a terrorist on occasions of panic and excitement. We do not deserve severe condemnation; however, until we make deliberate practice and philosophy of our fear." Mr. Chakrav

Gentlemen, we have been taken to task by the Government, our Anglo-Indian friends, and the Anglo-Indian Press, for not being exact in our facts and figures. Firstly, I ask whether facts and figures are only what are stated to be such by the Government, our Anglo-Indian friends or the Anglo-Indian Press? Secondly, I further ask, are facts and figures about internments and deportations available to the public? Again and again, we have clamoured for information but it has been systematically denied to us. (*Shame, shame*). There have been interpellations in the Council but to what effect? The Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee, on 26th July 1915, soon after the Defence of India Act was passed, wanted information about internments and deportations. But what answer did he receive? The Hon'ble Mr. Kerr said in reply—"Government do not consider it consistent with public interest to publish, in the proceedings of this Council, the names and position of life of the persons on whom orders have been served or to give public information as to the places where they have been ordered to reside." Even as late as the 20th of November last, to a similar question by the Hon'ble Babu Akhil Chandra Datta, the Government gave a similar answer. I shall give you another sample of information supplied by the Government with regard to this matter. The Hon'ble Babu Bhabendra Chandra Ray on the 20th of November 1917 put the following questions to the Government—

- (a) In how many instances have the Government received complaints regarding the unsuitability of the places of domicile of detenus and what enquires have been made with regard thereto and with what result?
- (b) What is usually the nature of the complaints?
- (c) In how many cases have the places of domicile been described—
- (i) malarious :
 - (ii) desolate :
 - (iii) infested with snakes
 - (iv) unusually damp :
 - (v) jungly.

The Hon'ble Mr. Kerr in reply said :—"The collection of the information asked would involve an additional burden on already overworked officers and Government do not think that the public utility of the information when obtained would be commensurate with the labour entailed."

I leave it to you, gentlemen, to judge about the charge levelled against us that we do not give facts and figures.

His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay told his Council on the 20th November last,—I shall give you his exact words—"I wish I could place before the public all the information which Government possesses." "If I could,"—His Excellency continued,—"I venture to think that such phrases as 'the oppression of India's Act for the prosecution of innocent young men' would speedily disappear from the repertoire of our platform orators and from public Press." Gentlemen, may I with great respect to His Excellency also express another pious wish? I also wish His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay was here occupying this chair and in my position and fully alive to the feeling actuating all of us. If he was,

Chakravarti I doubt not, gentlemen, His Excellency would have said the same thing as we are saying, perhaps more. His Excellency would have done the same thing, as we are doing, perhaps more. (*Laud applause*).

I shall, however, confine myself to the facts and figures and the information furnished to us, meagre as they are. I shall mainly depend on the speeches in the Council and the answers, uninforming though they are, to the interpellations by the Hon'ble Members in Council. I feel so sure of our case and the justice of it that I shall not travel beyond. I shall base my case on admitted facts and figures, on official facts and figures, and on the official presentation of such facts and figures.

This policy of internments and deportations has run its course now for close upon three years. According to the official figure given on 14th March 1917, approximately 800 of our fellow-countrymen have been "regulated" out of their liberty either under the Defence of India Rules or the Bengal Regulation III of 1818. It is the prevailing impression that the number has increased since that date, but official figures up to the present time are not forthcoming. The personal liberty of so many of our fellow-subjects has been arbitrarily invaded without charge, without trial, and without conviction of any crime by a competent Court and under executive dictation. (*Shame, Shame*.) "To bereave a man"—says Blackstone—"of life by violence, to confiscate his estate without accusation or trial, would be so gross and notorious an act of despotism as must at once convey the alarm throughout the whole kingdom. But confinement of the person by secretly hurrying him to gaol, where his sufferings are unknown or forgotten, is a less public, a less striking, and therefore a more dangerous engine of arbitrary Government." (*Hear, Hear*).

His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay in his speech took Sir Rabindra Nath (*cheers*) to task for deliberately stating that the public "are justified in thinking that a large number of those punished are innocent." "That is,"—His Excellency continued—"a grave charge for any responsible person to make against any Government and it is one which I cannot allow to pass unnoticed." Sir Rabindra Nath, however, subsequently reiterated his statement and said "that the policy of secret condemnation and punishment hitherto pursued has naturally led a very large number of my countrymen to conclude that a great many of those punished are innocent. Imprisonment in jail, in some cases in solitary cell, savours to the public at large more of vengeance than of precaution." "Moreover,"—Sir Rabindra Nath continues—"the harassment to which a detenu is subjected even after his release by reason of continued shadowing by the police may not be admitted by those who are responsible but is too painfully patent to those who share the suffering." Gentlemen, in this statement, Sir Rabindra Nath has only voiced the public opinion in Bengal and I have no doubt you endorse every word of it. (*Hear, Hear*). It seems to me the Government is under a misapprehension in this matter, for I find that, in answer to a question in the Council on the 13th of December 1916, the Hon'ble Mr. Kerr said "Government are aware that there is a feeling among

many people in Bengal that people are being interned upon insufficient materials," Mr. Chakrav

But, mark the words which follow,—“Government are also aware that there is also a feeling among many other people in Bengal to the opposite effect.” I venture to think that this “many other people” is only a microscopic minority in Bengal: at any rate, the public have not had the privilege of learning first-hand from any such people whether they entertain such a feeling, why they do so and what opportunities they have had of considering the question. (*Cheers*).

Gentlemen, you are aware that some of the detenus have been dealt with under the Bengal Regulation III of 1818. That old and archaic provisions, suitable to the times when it was enacted, has been resuscitated from the cast-out statute book and has been summoned to the aid of the Government. The main difference, as I understand it, in dealing with the detenus under the Defence of India Rules and those under the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 is that persons dealt with under the Regulation are confined in jail, whereas persons dealt with under the Rules are domiciled in select areas. Therefore, whatever I say about internments under the Defence of India Rules apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the deportations under the Bengal Regulation III of 1818.

The Defence of India Act, as you are aware, was passed in March 1915. This measure was considered and passed at a single sitting of the Imperial Council. And yet this is a measure, the like of which is not known in the constitutional history of any country, so far as its provisions relate to internal administration. (*Hear, Hear*). I say this without fear of any contradiction and challenge all concerned, to point out any other legislation in any civilised country and in civilised times intended to deal with its internal administration which is parallel to this measure.

We have been told again and again that this is not merely a war measure. The Act itself shows that. But I say this, that under the cover of a war measure has been passed this drastic measure dealing with the liberty of the subject and affecting the internal administration of the country. Indeed, Sir Reginald Craddock pointed out, while introducing this measure in the Council, that it was really a Defence of the Realm Act (which was a temporary measure adopted in England for the successful prosecution of the war) to which he was inviting the assent of the Council. He added further that the powers he was asking for were primarily required in the military interests of the country. There is no doubt, there was a reference by him to the internal situation in Bengal as a cause for the introduction of the provisions affecting internal administration. But, gentlemen, I ask this in all sincerity, what was the emergency of this measure so far as the internal administration of the country was concerned. Why was this part of the measure mixed up with the war measure? His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay stated in his speech in his Council about the movement in Bengal:—“Though it has sought to take advantage of the war in which the Empire is engaged, it is not”—mark the words—“product of the war; it existed long before the war.” Again I ask, why was advantage taken to pass this legislation so far as it affects the internal situation in the country, in such great haste and in connection with a temporary measure for the successful prosecution of the war? (*Shame*).

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I now pass on to the particular provision of the Defence of India Act dealing with internment. The Defence of India Act, sec. 2, cl. (f), provides as follows:—

“to empower any civil or military authority where, in the opinion of such authority, there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that any person has acted, is acting or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety to direct that such persons shall not enter, reside or remain in any area specified in writing by such authority, or that such person shall reside and remain in any area specified in writing by such authority or that such person shall reside and remain in any area so specified, or that he shall conduct himself in such manner or abstain from such acts or take such order with any property in his possession or under his control, as such authority may direct.”

Then a Rule has been framed under this clause which runs as follows:—

“Where in the opinion of the Local Government there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person has acted, is acting or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of British India, the Local Government may, by order in writing, direct that such person—

- (a) shall not enter, reside or remain in any area specified in the order ;
- (b) shall reside or remain in any area in British India so specified ;
- (c) shall conduct himself in such manner or abstain from such acts or take such orders with any property in his possession or under his control as may be specified in such order ;

Provided that a Local Government shall not make an order under cl. (b) of this rule specifying an area outside the province without the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council.”

Gentlemen, the statutory provision in the Act and the rule framed under it deal with a generality. It is left entirely in the hands of the executive

without any limitation whatsoever. There is no counterpart to this in the English Act. There could not possibly be any.

Sir Reginald Craddock, while comparing the English measure with its Indian counterpart of cl. (f), said,—“Sub-clause (f) which permits of control over the movements and acts of individuals is paralleled by English regulations which allow of the removal of the inhabitants of whole areas as well as individuals, the direction to them to remain within doors within specified hours and to extinguish lights and the taking census of private goods.” With the greatest respect to the Hon’ble Member, I fail to see any analogy whatsoever in this with the internment clause. (*Hear, Hear*).

There is only one rule under the English measure which has any similarity to this and that is Rule 14B, which provides for the internment of persons of hostile origin or association. But even under this, the interned person may submit his case to an advisory committee which shall be presided over by a person who holds or has held high judicial office. It is, therefore, clear that even under this solitary provision, the Government in England has not tried to bring British subjects within the scope of the executive authority. There, the executive authority has to submit to the decision of the advisory committee presided over by one holding high judicial office. This provision affords some guarantee that the liberties of persons, even of hostile origin or association, shall not be lightly interfered with.

But, gentlemen, I ask what guarantee have we in this country? What is the procedure followed in this country? I shall show this from the procedure, the Government says it follows and I shall show that there is no guarantee, no safeguards in this country.

The Hon’ble Mr. Kerr said on the 4th of September 1916—

“In the case of each suspect who is interned under the Defence of India Rules, he is informal generally as to the allegations made against him and is asked what he has to say in answer to them.”

On the same day again the Hon'ble Member said in answer to another question—

“Full enquiries are made in the case of each suspect by gazetted officers of the police. The enquiry is of an executive character. Orders of internment are not passed by Government until the papers of each case and all representations, if any, made by and on behalf of the suspect have been considered.”

It is therefore, clear that up to that time, no charge used to be framed against the detenus and that action was taken on the initiative of the gazetted officers of the police. (*Shame, Shame*).

Then again we find that the Hon'ble Mr. Kerr said this on the 3rd of July 1917:—

“For some months past, however, the charges have been reduced to writing and written replies are taken. The person concerned is invited to sign the paper to indicate that he has understood the charges. The original charges and answers are forwarded with the other papers of the case to Government. Government sees no reason to alter the present practice.”

So, the Government does not make over such written charges to the suspects but takes them away. A person who is thus ruled out of his liberty is not even entitled to keep the written charge against him with him! (*Shame*).

Then we find H. E. Lord Ronaldshay assuring his Council on the 20th of November that all proper precautions are taken. He says this—

“We have taken the most careful precautions against the chance of our committing injustice by any action which we are driven to take by virtue of it. Every person dealt with under it is charged in writing with a definite offence and is invited to write his reply. The whole of the evidence against him is submitted to a judicial officer for his opinion. I do not believe the Act could have been better administered with greater care or with more consideration for those against whom it has been employed.”

With the greatest respect to His Excellency, I fail to see, gentlemen, how anything is done, even now, to safeguard the interest of the detenus. On the other hand, it merely has laid open the door for the so-called confessions and criminating statements of approvers. What can the judicial officer do on *ex parte* evidence? How can he test the evidence? Where is the right of appeal to the advisory committee under the English law against the arbitrary action of the executive?

Lord Carmichael in his last speech to his Council on the 14th of March 1917 said that approximately 800 people have been dealt with either under the Defence of India Act or Bengal Regulation III of 1818 and attempted an analysis of the so-called evidence in the possession of the Government against these detenus.

His Lordship said:—

- (a) 121 have been implicated by their own confessions made here in Bengal;
- (b) 229 are implicated by confessing associates whose statements are supported by corroborative evidence such as finds of arms or property known to have been stolen in dacoities or by documentary evidence or by their own conduct on arrest;
- (c) 161 are implicated by the confession of associates, generally two or more but without such corroborative evidence as I have just mentioned;
- (d) 195 are implicated by such corroborative evidence supported by statements made by informers;
- (e) 70 have been implicated by evidence of informers coupled with evidence of association. Of these seventy, ten are accused by informers, who have been murdered. This strengthens on my mind at least, the case for believing that the information given was probably true. In six other cases bombs were produced by the sources who gave the information. In 21 more of the 70 cases what seems to be very strong evidence of association with

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known criminals is relied on, in addition, of course, to the informers' statement. In 17, the men are accused though only on the evidence of informers of such dangerous crimes that I do not think Government would be justified in giving up such control as they have of them."

May I pause. The graver the charge, the less the necessity for evidence. This is the uncross-examined evidence on the strength of which the Government of Bengal has thought fit to deprive about 800, if not more, of His Majesty's subjects of their personal liberty. (*Shame*).

This was in March 1917. But apparently His Lordship had not all along the same confidence about the cogency of the evidence at His Lordship's command. His Lordship in a speech to his Council on the 4th of April 1916, when the Act had run its course for about a year, said—

"So far we have not been able to produce, I wish we could exact evidence to bring home their guilt beyond a shadow of doubt to the individuals who committed those crimes. But we have evidence which goes a long way towards it."

And His Lordship's Government confidently acted on this evidence!

But, gentlemen, this is not all. After four months of this speech, His Lordship in another speech to his Council on the 4th of July 1916 reiterated the same fact. I shall quote again His Lordship's words lest I do His Lordship any injustice. His Lordship said—

"I can assure you that Government believe that they have been fully justified in all they have done. We may of course have made mistakes in some cases but we have interfered with the liberty of no one against whom we did not feel that there is evidence, though we admit it is not evidence which ought to lead to conviction in an ordinary Court of law."

But what proof does a Court of law require for a conviction? It does not demand anything extraordinary. I shall tell you what the Court of law requires in such matters in the words of Sir Lawrence Jenkins, the late Chief Justice of Bengal, and one of the most eminent Judges who ever adorned the Bench of the High Court at Fort William in Bengal. I shall give you his exact words. In his judgment in the case of the *Emperor of India v. Nagendra Nath Sen Gupta*, reported in 19 C. W. N. 923, His Lordship said—"We decline to hold him guilty or that his guilt is so probable that a prudent man ought under the circumstances of this case to act upon the supposition that he is guilty." This is all that the ordinary Court of law demands. This is all that the Evidence Act demands. But, according to Lord Carmichael, the evidence before His Lordship's Government was not evidence that came to that standard. I leave you to judge if it is wise or politic—not to say legal—to act on this evidence. Yet, His Lordship's Government all along acted confidently on that evidence!! (*Hear, Hear*).

But it seems His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay and his Government have more confidence in the matter. His Lordship in his speech in the Council on the 20th of November said—

"The evidence now in our possession, proving that this is so, is over-whelming. I wish I could place before the public all the information which the Government possesses."

And His Lordship, following Lord Carmichael, made a similar analysis of the evidence at the disposal of the Government. His Lordship said—

(a) Over 200 persons dealt with under the Defence of India Act alone have confessed to definite complicity in revolutionary movement;

- (b) Nearly 300 others are implicated by their associates, the evidence of their complicity being Mr. Chakrav corroborated in every case by other evidence of an entirely independent character ;
- (c) Rather more than 200 others are implicated by their own incriminating statements or by finds of arms or seditious literature or by the circumstances of their arrest, the evidence in nearly all these cases being confirmed by information obtained from other sources.

But need I tell you that it is not the volume of the evidence which makes it overwhelming? It is the character and quality of the evidence that counts. (*Hear, Hear*). But what is the quality of the evidence on which His Excellency's Government has acted or is acting? It is either confessions or incriminating statements of associates and approvers, information of informers and spies, sometimes corroborated by finds of arms or seditious literature. You are all well and painfully aware, perhaps to your cost, of the nature of such evidence. We have seen a good deal of it from the year 1907. You are again seeing it now. We have seen it again and again in our law Courts. Judges after Judges have passed severe strictures and condemnation on this class of evidence. Gentlemen, if I had to deal with you only, I would have been content to leave the matter there. But His Excellency's Government holds a different view. His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay was not here during the time when the character of such evidence was, time after time, laid bare before the public. I will content myself only by quoting the remarks of Sir Asutosh Mookerjee in the case *The Emperor of India v. Nagendra Nath Sen Gupta*, [19 C. W. N., p. 928,] to which I referred before. His Lordship said,—

"I am in full agreement with the views set out in the judgment of the Court, which has just been read out by the Chief Justice and to which I am a party. I desire only to emphasise that after anxious consideration of every element in the case, as it was developed before us from day to day, I am strongly convinced of the absolute innocence of the accused; my deliberate conclusion is that the endeavour made to establish a connection between this innocent lad and a dastardly crime, by means of evidence tainted in a large measure by manifest untruths and manufactured incidents, had been completely unsuccessful."

This is, gentlemen, as you are doubtless all aware, the nature of the police evidence in this country on which His Excellency's Government has felt confident to act in spite of general protest in the country.

We ask—and the question has been again and again asked—If you have such overwhelming evidence in your possession why do you not prosecute them in the law Courts? The answer is very simple, as far as we are concerned. Because it will not carry conviction. Lord Carmichael also said so more than once. But His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay has pointed out *two* difficulties of His Excellency's Government in doing it.

First difficulty. His Excellency says— "Much of our evidence including the numerous confessions made to us by persons who have actually taken part in these crimes, consists of statements made to the police." In England, such statements made after due warning has been given are admissible as evidence before the Courts. Here they are inadmissible under the provisions of the Indian Evidence Act.

With great respect to His Lordship, may I submit that the Indian Legislature has in its wisdom laid down this salutary rule and had very good reasons for doing so? Judges after Judges have approved of it. It is too late for His Lordship now to complain about it. Even in England, evidence of a confessional character is always looked upon with suspicion and seldom acted upon unless corroborated by strong evidence of an independent character. In England as well as in India, elaborate rules have been laid down limiting the use of confessions for the purpose of proof of guilt.

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May I, gentlemen, with your leave, refer to the instructive words of Chief Justice Straight with regard to "confession" in Indian Courts and the working of the Indian police from his judgment in the case of *Empress v. Babulal*, I. L. R. 6 All., p. 509?

My experience in this Court has conclusively convinced me that the primary object towards which the police direct their attention and energies is, if possible, to secure a confession. . . . To repeat a phrase I used on a former occasion, instead of working up to the confession, they work down from it, with the result that we frequently find ourselves compelled to reverse conviction, simply because, beyond the confession, there is no tangible evidence of guilt. (*Hear, hear*). Moreover, I have said and I repeat it now, it is incredible that the extraordinarily large number of confession which came before us should have been voluntarily and freely made in every instance as represented. (*Hear, hear*). I may claim some knowledge of an acquaintance with the ways and conduct of persons accused of crime and do not believe that the ordinary inclinations of their mind which in this respect I take to be pretty much the same all the world over to make any admission of guilt. I certainly can add that, during 14 years of active practice in Criminal Courts in England, I do not remember half a dozen instances in which a real confession once having been made was retracted. In this country, on the contrary, the retraction follows almost invariably as a matter of course. It is impossible not to feel that the average Indian policeman, with the desire to satisfy his superior before him and the terms of the Police Acts and Rules behind him, is not likely to be over-nice in the methods he adopts to make a short cut to the elimination of a difficult case by getting a suspected person to confess." (*Cheers*).

And may I quote a few words from the judgment of the late Mr. Justice Mahmud in the same case :

"The Legislative provisions (referring to section 25 of the Indian Evidence Act) leave no doubt in my mind that the Legislature had in view the malpractices of Police Officers in extorting confession from accused persons in order to gain credit by securing convictions and that those malpractices went to the length of positive torture. (*Hear, hear*). Nor do I doubt that the Legislature in laying down such stringent rules regarded the evidence of Police Officers as untrustworthy and the object of the rules was to put a stop to the extortion of confession by taking away from the Police Officers the advantage of proving such extorted confession during the trial of accused persons. That the extortion of confession by torture continued to be a rampant evil in India is further shown by the fact that Legislature in framing the Indian Penal Code provides two special sections directed specially against such malpractices secs. 330, 331."

That is, gentlemen, the view we take as regards confession before the police in India. Again, when all is said and done, what is the value of the

Evidence & Confessions. *ex parte* evidence which His Excellency so carefully enumerates, untested by cross-examination? Can any prudent man act on it? (*Cries of 'no,' 'no'*). That is the question the Indian Evidence Act asks. Then, again, can any one believe that the confession from real criminals and conspirators can be so plentiful as His Excellency's government would have us believe? I ask you, gentlemen, in all simplicity and sincerity, do you believe that a criminal and a conspirator of the type that His Excellency's government would make these detenus to be would so easily confess? Can you believe that these confessions are real and voluntary? *Cries of 'no' 'no'*

Second Difficulty: His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay in his speech mentions a second difficulty, viz., that there is an unfortunate disinclination on the part of the public to come forward and give evidence against these persons. But there is nothing to wonder at this. The public believe that most of these persons are innocent. The public maintain that these people are being interned on insufficient evidence. They have their doubts as to how these confessions, incriminating statements, and information by spies are worked. What sympathy can the public have with

the police when their methods and their policy are so well-known to them? Mr. Chakravarti
 Arrests without definite charge of any crime; imprisonment in solitary cells, want of proper medical treatment, discontinuance of educational facilities and prospect of employment even after release, suicides, lunacy—all these are incidents rankling in the mind of the public. (*Cheers*). I ask in all sincerity, what sympathy the public may have with this policy of internments and deportations by the Government?

His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay very confidently propounds this rider for his councillors.—“Do you seriously suggest that it would be in the best interest of the society at large that these men should be released to continue their career of conspiracy and crime?”

*Paradox—
a fallacy.* His Excellency thinks that this paradox is un-answerable. With great respect to His Excellency, I shall attempt an answer to His Excellency's dilemma. First of all, there is a fallacy in His Excellency's question. His Excellency assumes that these men are conspirators and criminals. That is begging the whole question. His Excellency, in the phrase of common parlance, gives the dog a bad name and then hangs him. We say, prove by the tests laid down by the ordinary law of the land that they are conspirators and criminals. (*Hear, Hear*). The question is not what His Excellency suggests. But it is and I shall raise it in the words of Lord Morley (*Loud Cheers*)—“Have the gazetted officers of the police got a blank cheque (*Prolonged Cheers*) to draw on the personal liberty of the British subject in India?” That is a question which the Government will have to answer. It may not be answered to-day. It may not be answered to-morrow. Pre-occupation of the British Empire in the great war may postpone an effective demand for an answer to this query. But, gentlemen, I do not doubt it that, before long, this question will have to be answered before the High Tribunal of the Indian people and Princes and before the High Tribunal of the people of the British Empire. (*Loud Applause*).

Let us take a recent case. The recent communique on the Shindubala case has betrayed the hollowness of the so-called safe-guards. Her case has further disclosed this fact that persons are liable to arrest and detention without any reference to any responsible person whatsoever. If some Police Officers think that the person in question should be arrested and detained, he is arrested and detained. The liberty of none of us is worth a moment's purchase. Indignities may be inflicted on us—not only on men but women—if your name, my name, happens to be mentioned in some documents in the possession of the C. I. D. (*Shame, shame*).

Gentlemen, though we so heavily pay for the C. I. D., it has proved to be notoriously incompetent. Important documents are mislaid. Responsible *Incompetent
C. I. D.* officers leave their offices, leaving no one in charge during the time they are away. In the meantime, any of His Majesty's subjects may be arrested, detained and subjected to humiliation beyond recompense in the eyes of the Government and his countrymen. (*Shame, shame*). What amends, I ask, has the Government up till now made to this woman, for the humiliation she was subjected to?

Shankaravarti

Errors of judgment, gentlemen, are inevitable. But was this case one of error? Why this undue haste, particularly when dealing with a woman? (*Shame*). Would the Government officers dare to deal with a European woman in this country or any other in the same way !!! (*Cries of 'never'*).

We are told that the Act and the Regulations thereunder are preventive and not punitive. But, what are the facts? Imprisonment in solitary cells—
 Preventive or Punitive. internment in unhealthy areas, leading to break-down of health, and in some cases, insanity and even death—do they suggest mere prevention? Do they not make it absolutely clear that, under the guise of internment, the police are pursuing a course of real punishment and repression?

It has been asserted both by the Government and our Anglo-Indian friends and newspapers that the situation in Bengal is a special situation, requiring special remedy and that the Indian Penal Code is not sufficient for the purpose. But I venture to think that the ordinary law of the land is quite adequate and there need be no difficulty in securing conviction, if the evidence, as it is suggested, is really overwhelming. I have carefully considered the provisions of the Indian Penal Code with the recent amendments made and it is my deliberate opinion that there is no difficulty in securing a conviction in a Court of Law if the evidence on which the Government is relying will stand the test of investigation by ordinary tribunals of the country and it is also my clear conviction that the Government is not entitled to invoke the aid of a different and separate standard so far as the evidence is concerned.

His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay has told us that these extraordinary measures, with their inevitable errors of judgment, are meant only to secure the safety of the public. Such an argument is not new to India!
 Public Safety. We find this argument laid bare again and again in Lord Morley's '*Recollections*' where he characterised it as Russian (*Loud Cheers*). Gentlemen, you are all aware, by this time, of the serious disclosure about the deportations made by Lord Morley in his '*Recollections*' recently published. His Lordship in an interesting and instructive chronicle—which covers a period of five years from 1905 to 1909—unravelled a state of things which we all at the time condemned and deplored. The situation so graphically portrayed by a master-hand offers a wonderful parallel to the present situation which we have met here to-day to condemn. The same argument of "necessity of public safety" was raised. Lord Morley's patience was tried; and at last, in October, 1907, Lord Morley thus plaintively appealed to Lord Minto about deportation:—"It is all very well to say that these proposals are held by the Government of India to be necessary 'for the peace of the country.' But what is the use of saying that when Parliament won't accept it? And I for one should think I was abusing the confidence of Parliament if I tried to make them accept it." And in another letter—a year later—His Lordship wrote to say that the English People could not give "a blank cheque to all the officials and Magistrates in India." At last, he seemed to have lost all patience, and distinctly stung with the thought of being an unwilling party to a policy of deportations, he wrote in November 1909 to Lord Minto thus—"I won't follow you in deportations!"

You state your case with remarkable force, I admit. But then I comfort myself in my disquiet at differing from you by the reflections that perhaps the Spanish Viceroy in the Netherlands, the Austrian Viceroy in Venice, the Bourbons in the Sicilies and a Governor or two in the old American Colonies used reasoning not wholly dissimilar and not much less forcible. Forgive this affronting parallel. It is only the sally of a man who is himself occasionally compared to Stafford, King John, King Charles, Nero, and Tiberius!" (*Loud and prolonged cheers*).

If this be the view of the state of things in that period—how much more powerful must not these arguments be when applied to the present state of things, when internments and deportations are matters of common experience? Students of History will search in vain to find a parallel to the present internment policy of the Government. Even Lord Morley's "affronting parallels" must cry shame to the singular state of things we are day to day experiencing.

Gentlemen, His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay forestalled in a speech to his Council on the 20th of November that a Committee would be appointed on internments. The public looked forward to it with great hope, but they were disappointed when the communique appointing the Committee was published on the 10th December 1917. The scope of the enquiry and the personnel of the Committee were both extremely disappointing and created no confidence in the public mind. The Committee is appointed (1) to investigate and report on the nature and extent of the Criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India and (2) to examine and consider the difficulties that have arisen in dealing with such conspiracies and advise as to legislation, if any necessary, to enable the Government to deal effectively with them.

Gentlemen, we miss in the terms of reference any mention of an enquiry into the policy of internment, into the merits of the individual cases of internment, or into the procedure which is followed. We have again and again insisted upon Government taking the public into confidence in this matter. Attempts have now and again been made in Council to appoint a Committee to enquire into the cases of internment and an advisory committee like that in England, to which an interned person, if aggrieved by an order of the executive, may apply. But the Government has systematically refused to adopt such a course. As regards the personnel, it is generally felt that Bengal should have been more properly represented, and there should have been some strong non-official members in the Committee.

Gentlemen, the Defence of India Act is as strong a dose of repressive legislation as the country can bear; but if it is contemplated to administer a stronger dose in the shape of fresh legislation the Government will be taking upon itself a responsibility which the Government is not likely to bear easily. Fresh legislation has been suggested in the Council speeches of the Governors and it seems to be suggested by the official communique appointing the Committee on Internment, dated the 10th of December 1917. As a loyal citizen, I feel it my bounden duty to raise my humble voice of protest and warning against any more repressive legislation.

Chakravarti which may be in contemplation. And this done, I have done my duty. I can do no more. (*Loud applause*).

Gentlemen, I have shortly portrayed to you the long course of repressive legislation during the last decade under which we are groaning to-day. It is said that the legislation has been successful: the crime has decreased. Is that correct? The external manifestations may be less, but I am afraid the disease is there and is likely to eat into the vitals unless remedied soon. The series of drastic and repressive legislation points to one thing and one thing only, viz., that there is something wrong with the "body politic." Do you not think that the remedy of this is not what the Government has applied or is threatening to apply? Do you not think that the remedy lies in the immediate granting of substantial constitutional reforms to India? There is no doubt as to your answer. (*Hear, Hear*). I commend that answer to His Majesty's Government in India and England.

Gentlemen, I have taxed your patience for a great while. (*No, no*). I have to thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me. I have but few more words to add. I demand on your behalf—

- (1) that the Defence of India Act, so far as it is not a war measure but is intended to affect the internal administration of the country, be repealed;
- (2) that the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 be also repealed;
- (3) that such detenus against whom there is adequate evidence be tried in the Courts of Law;
- (4) that the rest of the detenus be at once set at liberty; and,
- (5) that any further idea of repressive legislation be abandoned.

Gentlemen, I am afraid that in inviting us to place implicit confidence in their action in this connection the Government is losing sight of the fact that it is an alien bureaucratic Government and not a national one. Even if this claim was adduced by a national Government, it could have been appropriately disputed as founded not on the principles of free Government but on the arbitrary decisions or views of a close body of officials, however honest and well-intentioned, they might be. The Government of India and His Majesty's Secretary of State for India and his advisers are at the present moment engaged in devising the first instalment of Responsible Government which India is to have. This meeting invites them to take a step towards Responsible Government by bringing the executive under the purview of the ordinary laws of the land. This will create an atmosphere which will enable the people of this country to make such "reasoned representations" as His Excellency the Viceroy mentioned on the proposals of constitutional reform when they are published. We respectfully urge our claims in this behalf on the Government in their interest, in our interest and in the interest of all nationalities residing in this ancient land of ours. (*Hear, hear*). We believe in constitutional struggle and have urged it on our fellow-countrymen, in season and out of season. We have also urged it on the Government and do so again. The only alternative to constitutional struggle is revolution. The majority of our people still have faith in constitutional struggle. Only a handful had lost faith in it and revolutionary tendencies manifested themselves. If those tendencies are to be counteracted, constitutional struggle should be encouraged and people's faith therein is to be re-established. (*Hear, hear*). It depends on the Government as to

whether the struggle is to be constitutional or otherwise. Struggle there must be. Some people dream of liberty won without struggle. "Liberty has never been so won, nor even so maintained. A virile nation does not shrink from struggle nor seek for beneficent bestowal of gifts. It wins its rights. We must no longer hesitate in the face of difficulty, hope for smooth and easy progress, beg for small boons." We are prepared to concede the claims of other nationalities residing in India. We are prepared to co-operate with them in matters affecting us all. But we must be insistent on our rights and there is no power on earth,—not even the might of the strongest of Government,—which can thwart us in the attainment of our just rights. (*Loud and prolonged cheers*)

IV

The Chairman then called upon Mr. C. R. Das to propose the first resolution on the Agenda paper, which was as follows— First Resolut

That this meeting protest against the policy of the Government regarding internments and deportations under the Defence of India Act and the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 respectively and demands—

- (i) *That the Defence of India Act, so far as it is not exclusively a war measure, but refers to the internal administration of the country, be repealed;*
- (ii) *That the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 be also repealed;*
- (iii) *That such of the detenus against whom the Government has sufficient evidence for conviction be tried in the ordinary Courts of law;*
- (iv) *That the rest of the detenus be at once set at liberty; and*
- (v) *That any further idea of repressive legislation be abandoned.*

Mr. Das, who was received with prolonged cheers, spoke as follows—

Mr. C. R. Das

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I feel thankful to you for giving this opportunity to raise my voice in protest against this arbitrary and unjust piece of legislation. Indeed, I feel at this moment that no argument is necessary to convince you of the injustice of this measure. Mr. Chakravarti has dealt with it so fully and elaborately and has put before you all the considerations with reference to this matter with such force and lucidity that it seems unnecessary to continue this argument. I will, therefore, take up the resolution which has been entrusted to me and place it before you with a few observations which I have to make. The resolution consists of five clauses. (*Mr. Das then read to resolution,*)

I will deal with the third clause first, because it admits in my opinion of no discussion at all. Take all the arguments which had been advanced by His Excellency's government; accept them all. And even then there can be no justification for the present policy of the Government. (*Hear, hear*). Either there is evidence against these interned persons or there is no evidence. If there is no evidence against them, there is an end of the matter at once. And if there is evidence against them, what justification can there be in not bringing them to trial? It only makes people

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C. G. R. Das

suspicious that there is not sufficient evidence against them. If there is sufficient evidence, what justification can there be, I repeat, in not placing them instantly before a Court of Justice for trial? The argument that the present machinery of justice is insufficient is an argument which nobody believes. I say it will be a dangerous thing if the idea goes abroad that people are kept in jail, in police custody, without being brought to trial, while the Government has evidence against them. I say it will be a dangerous thing if this idea goes abroad, because people will at once come to the conclusion that probably there is no such evidence which can secure conviction in a Court of Justice. I cannot conceive of a more dangerous consequence.

Let me now deal with the other clauses of the resolution. I am one of those who never believe in tinkering in the matter of legislation. Either this measure is just or unjust. If it is unjust, there can be no ground for keeping it on the Statute Book. The Chairman has put this case very clearly before you. He described this Act as "lawless law" (*Hear, hear*). I want you to fully realise the meaning of that observation made by the distinguished chairman. I say that behind that observation lies the fundamental objection which we have got against the Act. What is "lawless law"? Any law which the object is not to serve and secure that justice upon which the stability of society depends, must necessarily be "lawless law." It is something which is put forward under cover of law, which is not law, which offends against every principle of justice, which is a negation of justice and therefore negation of law (*cheers*). We protest against this Act because it offends the fundamental rights of man. (*Hear, hear*). To be taken and kept in custody for an indefinite period of time without being told what evidence there is and without being brought to justice according to the law of the land ('*Shame, shame*) is a denial of the primary rights of humanity (*Hear, hear*). This is "lawless law" (*Prolonged cheers*).

You must realise what this Act is. I desire to read some portions of it to you, because many of you are not lawyers and probably do not know what grim injustice lies behind the apparently innocent expressions which you find in this Act. It is called the Defence of India Act. It is an Act for the public safety and yet public safety is nowhere defined. It is a vague generality (*Hear, hear*). The public denounce it, (*Hear hear*) people do not want it (*Hear, hear*). Is it to be forced down the throat of the public—this Act which is based upon grievous and intolerable injustice? (*Cries of 'no' 'no'—loud cheers*).

Let us follow the text of the law still further. This Act gives power to certain officials, 'civil or military,'—when in the opinion of such authority there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that any person has acted, is acting or is about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety, to direct that such persons shall not enter, reside or remain in any area specified in writing by such authority or that such person shall reside and remain in any area so specified or that he shall conduct himself in such manner or abstain from such act, etc. etc. How beautifully vague! (*Hear, hear*). These are admittedly innocent words; and when the Act was passed, was there

any one amongst us present here to-day who had the slightest idea of the use to which this Act might be put? Who at that time ever dreamt that this Act would be used for taking away young lads from their homes, keeping them in prison for days and months, keeping them in solitary cells and for putting them to indignity after indignity? Was this the intention of the legislature when it was passed? One can understand a war measure, one can understand that drastic legislation is necessary at the time of war when the enemy is at the gate. But is it just to take away young lads from their homes, from their mothers' arms, as it were (*shame, shame*) and keep them imprisoned (*shame, shame*) without telling them why, without bringing them to justice (*'shame', shame—loud cheers*)? Is any argument necessary to demonstrate that such an act is oppressive and must be abrogated? (*Hear, hear,—loud cheers*). The answer is necessity, which Lord Morley has characterised as the old familiar plea of tyrants, (*shame shame, hear hear—loud cheers*). Law is necessary for the preservation of society (*Hear, hear*), but not this thing which you call law (*Cheers*). Could any law be more arbitrary, more unjust than this Act? (*Cries of 'no' 'no.'*) I ask you to consider this plea of necessity again. Surely it is not for defending India against the enemy, not for defending Bengal which has suffered most under this oppressive legislation. (*Cries of 'shame,' 'shame,' 'no,' 'no.'*) People who suffer and groan under this repressive legislation may easily misread and misunderstand your real object and think that it was intended to crush that hunger for liberty, which no bureaucratic government can tolerate for one single moment (*loud cheers*).

This policy, as the Chairman has reminded you, began in 1905 with those illegal circulars which you may remember. Those circulars then, as you all know, led to a good deal of misunderstanding. There were circulars against the shouting of '*Bandemataram*' and various circulars directed against students. Some people thought that the object of these circulars was also to prevent our self-development and to suppress our growing hunger for liberty (*loud applause*). I ask the Government, can you blame the people who suffer from such injustice, if they misunderstand your object and misconstrue your action?

We feel it is our bounden duty to raise our voice of protest against this Act. The object ascribed is wrong. What is the real object? They say "there is a vast conspiracy in the country." My answer is, I admit it; I know and believe and I am sure of it—as sure as I am standing here to-night,—that there is a revolutionary party in Bengal. But what then? Do you think that you will be able to suppress that revolutionary party in this way? Has revolution ever been checked by unjust legislation? Give me one instance from history where the Government has succeeded in putting down revolutionary movements by oppressive legislation. I admit that the thing is an evil. I admit that the activity of the revolutionary party is an evil in this country which has to be eradicated. But what is the duty of the Government? Is it not their duty to take such step as will effectually eradicate it? (*Hear, hear*). Does the Government really believe that the revolutionary party wants any other foreign power in this country? (*Cries of 'no,' 'no.'*) I venture to think

Resolution : that they do not. If not, what do they want? Has the Government ever en-
 R. Das quired into the causes which led to that revolutionary movement? From 1905, we have been hearing of it; up to now, repressive measure after repressive measure has been passed (*Cries of 'shame, shame'*), but has any attempt of any kind whatsoever been made to discover the real causes of this revolutionary movement? (*Cries of 'no', 'no'.*) I may tell you as I have told many of those in authority that I know more about these people than probably any body else in this hall: I have defended so many of the cases and I know the psychology of their mind. I know the cause of this revolutionary movement is nothing but hunger for freedom. (*Hear, hear.*) Within the last 150 years, what have you done to make the people of this country free or even really fit for freedom? Do we not constantly hear that we are not fit for self-government? (*'Shame, shame'*) that we are illiterate, that we are not sufficiently educated (*shame, shame*). May I retort by asking—"You have been here for the last 150 years, with the best of motives, with the object of making us fit for self-government: Why is it then that you have done nothing to this end?" (*Loud cheers*).

This is the psychology of the revolutionary movement. Our educated young men see that nations all over the world are free. They compare their position with the position of other nations, and they say to themselves—“Why should we remain so? We also want liberty.” (*Cheers*). Is there anything wrong in that desire? Is it so difficult to understand their point of view? Do we not all know this hunger for liberty? These young men burning with the enthusiasm of youth feel that they have not been given any opportunity of taking their legitimate part in the government of their country, in shaping the course of their national development. Give them that right to-day, you will hear no more of the revolutionary movement (*loud cheers*). Give them that right to-day, tell the people of this country—“Here it is, we mean to change the system of Government, the government will be yours (*loud, cheers*)—Government of the people and by the people; work for the good of your country, build up your nationality, shape the course of your history” (*loud and prolonged cheers*). I guarantee that from the next day, the revolutionary party will cease to exist. (*Hear, hear, loud and prolonged cheers*). I have said this. Our leaders have said this over and over again to those in authority. But we have not been listened to.

On the contrary we are told that the only remedy is the Defence of India Act. (*'Shame,' 'shame'*). We have been told that political crimes have decreased, since the passing of this Act. I say it is not so. Overt acts are not the only measure of political crimes. How could political crimes have decreased when disaffection has increased? (*Hear, hear*). Members of the revolutionary party may remain grim and silent; but I am sure, every case of internment under this Act increases the volume of discontent and disaffection in this country. Does not that strengthen their hands? This is the real danger (*Hear, hear*). It is acting like poison and eating into the vitals of our nationality. (*Hear, hear*). I protest against this Act as it is a menace to our liberty. (*Hear, hear*). I protest against this Act as it is a menace to our loyalty to the Empire to which we belong. (*Hear, hear, loud and prolonged cheers*).

There are people in this country who will tell you that the Government will never repeal this Act. To my countrymen I say,—“Do not be disheartened.” (*Hear, hear*). I believe in my heart of hearts that once the people of this country unite and raise their voice,—the voice of a united nation,—there is no power on the face of the earth which can resist it (*loud and prolonged cheers*). Let us all say—“Repeal this Act, we will not have it.” (*Hear, hear*). Let this cry reach the country, every village, every town: let this meeting be followed up by hundreds and thousands; let us all be united in our demand for the repeal of this Act, and I say this Act shall stand repealed (*loud and prolonged cheers*).

The Honorable Mr. A. K. Fazl-ul-Huq in seconding the Resolution said:—

After all that has been said by Mr. Chakaravarti and Mr. Das, I do not think that there is any necessity for me to say very many words on this Resolution. This is not the first time that I have been in this hall, and this is not the first time that I have had the privilege of taking part in proceedings where we have raised our voice, in no uncertain terms, demanding the repeal of what has been called lawless law. I have often wondered that with all their usual vaunted boast about justice and equity, where is it that our British Administrators have lighted upon this most un-British piece of legislation. I think I have now found out the solution. You know that for some time past, Great Britain and Russia happened to be very great friends; and I think that, for want of a better precedent, our administrators had good preceptors in the Russian despots, and that this piece of legislation is only a heritage of that friendship between Great Britain and Russia. (*Hear, Hear*). If I am right in my surmise, there are good grounds for demanding a repeal of these Acts. Russia has recently played false to the Allies and deserted England. Therefore, it is time for our administrators to go back to the old state of things (*Cheers*). Let them abandon this Russian despotism and make themselves worthy of the British administrators of whom we are all of us so proud. With these few words, I commend this Resolution to your enthusiastic acceptance. (*Applause*).

Mr. C. C. Ghose said:—

In supporting this resolution, I propose to occupy your attention for a very brief period. I regard to-night's demonstration as a pledge on the part of Bengal to do all that is humanly possible to secure the early repeal of the legislation referred to in the Chairman's address, (*Applause*). And I desire to emphasise the supreme need for unity among us on this momentous question (*hear, hear*). I say it is a momentous question because it concerns the personal liberty of the subject and personal liberty is the indispensable foundation of all national well-being and progress, moral and material. Whether we are Home Rulers or not, (*hear, hear*) we have all of us this duty to perform to our country, namely, that we have to sink all personal feuds and quarrels and unite as one man and say to the Government that, in the best interests of the country, in the interests of law and order which we have as much at heart as the Government have, we demand the cessation of the activities that have been going on under cover of the Defence of India Act. It is imperatively necessary that we should do so at once, because I foresee that if this legislation is allowed to remain on the Statute Book and if the officers of the C. I. D., are to be allowed to take their own courses as they did take very recently in Bankura,—it is because I foresee that times of great trouble and distress are in store for us as well as for the people who rule over us,—it is because I foresee all this that I want you to be united among yourselves to press this matter upon the attention of the Government. Our distinguished Chairman has referred you to the Acts of which we complain. He has dealt in great detail with the Defence of India Act. I do not propose to follow him because I have nothing whatsoever to add to what he has so elaborately laid before you.

There are, however, just one or two facts that I want to bring to your notice about the Deportation Regulation III of 1818. Now, those of you who are students of history will

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r. C. Ghose

remember, in 1773, there was passed an Act commonly called the Regulating Act by Parliament which gave power to the East India Company to pass Regulations. Under that very Regulating Act, it was incumbent upon the Government to register in the Supreme Court the Regulations which they passed from time to time. Now, this Regulation III of 1818, you will be surprised to hear, was never registered in the Supreme Court. The advantage of registration in the Supreme Court was this: there used to be a public discussion in the Supreme Court about the merits of the Regulation when the Government went up to the Supreme Court to have a Regulation registered. One instance of this comes to my mind, namely, the discussion before Sir Francis Macnaghten, Judge of the Supreme Court, over the Regulation about the Press that was brought before the Supreme Court in 1823. Then what further happened was this: everyman who was dissatisfied with the registration of a Regulation in the Supreme Court had two months time to object to such registration. Even if the objection proved unavailing here, under that very Act, the Regulation had to be published in the East India House in London and everyman who was dissatisfied with the registration of a particular Regulation, which he considered obnoxious, had two months' further time to petition the Houses of Parliament and ask for the disallowance of the Regulation. That course was not followed in the case of Regulation III of 1818. And there is room for the contention that the Regulation itself is not valid. This is a question, of course, which concerns lawyers principally. But I want you also to consider it, because the struggle will not be only here; the struggle will have to be carried to the Houses of Parliament. Then again, look into the preamble of the Regulation itself. The preamble amply shows that the object of the framers of the Regulation was to use it against European 'interlopers' who came to this country to shake the pagoda tree.

There is just one other point. You know, gentlemen, how the people who have been interned under the Defence of India Act are faring. I don't propose at this late hour to give you anything which is not available to the Government. But I desire to read to you the latest memorial forwarded to H. E. the Viceroy, by the mother of one of these interned gentlemen,—Jyotish Chunder Ghosh. This is what the unfortunate lady says,—and I am certain, as I am of my own existence at the present moment, that a perusal of this harrowing document ought to melt the dried-up heart of even a typical sun-dried bureaucrat. This is what she says—

"That after the memorial dated 9th February 1918 had been written, your Excellency's humble memorialist's brother Babu R. B. Mitter went to Berhampore on the 9th February last to see her son Jyotish Chundra Ghose in the Lunatic Asylum, after duly receiving permission from the Government. He was there with Jyotish for about an hour and a half and watched him very carefully. The description of the condition of Jyotish which she received from him is horrible and will even melt a stone.

"That when her brother went there Jyotish was lain straight on his back on a bedstead in a corner of his cell. His look was vacant. His hairs were almost all grown grey. His jaws were firmly closed. He could not speak. His legs were stiff and crooked, most likely paralysed. He could not walk. He could not move his limbs. Jyotish could not recognise your Excellency's Memorialist's brother, nor did he respond when he cried aloud by his name. Babu B. B. Mitter tried to attract the sight of Jyotish from all directions but to no avail. He gave Jyotish a shaking, raising his hands and in every possible way examined him and tried to attract his attention. Jyotish had been in an unconscious state, oblivious of his condition and irresponsible to all sensations". (*Shame, shame*).

I do not propose to read to you the paragraphs which follow, because you will find the memorial printed in to-day's Amrita Bazar Patrika. And talking about the "Amrita Bazar Patrika," I cannot let this occasion pass without acknowledging the public service (*ap- plause*) the splendid service it has performed by its persistent attention to the question of the internment of young men in this country.

Now, gentlemen, we have formulated our demands. But we demand also that immediately there shall be appointed a Court of Visitors to enquire into the present condition of these internees, accounts of which have appeared from time to time in the public papers. We have here in this country at the present

moment, a learned Judge of the King's Bench Division.

with the examination of those cases which have been mentioned from time to time in the public press, and if you like, associate with him Sir John Woodroffe, the senior Barrister, Judge now in the Calcutta High Court. Mr. C. C. G

There is another matter to which I must draw your attention. It is said that as a result of the labours of the Rowlett Committee, fresh legislation will be undertaken.

Evidence. I do not know. But I wish to place before you the opinion of Sir James Fitz-James Stephen, the gentleman who was responsible for the Evidence Act and for section 124A of the Indian Penal Code. You will find it in the life of Lord Mayo by Sir William Hunter, in the 2nd. Volume. Sir James Fitz-James Stephen says that, after the Evidence Act had been passed, he was asked by District Officials in various parts of India as to whether the law of evidence was not very unsuitable for an Oriental country like India. The District Officers said to him "Your Law of Evidence is so very comprehensive. Everything has to be taken down, formalities have to be complied with, and the result is, we cannot mete out Justice." The answer which Sir James Fitz-James Stephen, who was by no means sympathetic as far as Indians were concerned, gave to the District Officers was this "If you want the country to be administered on British lines, if you want it to be governed according to law, you must have the same system and the same rule of evidence in India as prevails in England." Now, gentlemen, this is a very remarkable observation coming from such high authority, and in the event of future legislation, we must in every possible way guard against anything calculated to remove the safeguards which are at present existing in the Criminal Law of this country so that an innocent man may not suffer and only the guilty may be punished (*applause*).

The Honorable Mr. Abul Kaseem said :—

I think it will be a real infliction on you if I attempt to deliver a speech at this late hour. I will, therefore, simply support the resolution with one or two observations. Firstly, you in this resolution demand that certain things be done, that certain Acts be repealed, and that the detenus should be released or placed under trial. How are you to get this demand satisfied? You have to answer that question. You have been told by Mr. Das, in the most feeling way, that this Act has been passed not for the saving of the Empire, not for the Defence of India,—but to check the growth of the nation, or to stunt our efforts. And, if you are determined to see that this development is not checked, if you prove that they have failed in their attempt to check our growth, or at any rate, even to make the pace slower, in that case and in that case alone, will that Act be repealed by the Bureaucracy. Mr. Abul Kaseem

It is absurd to suppose and no sensible man can believe that a few boys,—wrong-headed or misguided,—a few boys of a country which is disarmed and helpless, can shake the foundations of a great Empire. This repressive legislation has been introduced simply to see that no sort of political agitation is carried out in the country. (*Shame*). I am sorry to say that, to some extent the C. I. D. have succeeded in their efforts, because, in the mofussil, there are people who now hesitate to join any organisations for fear that their names may be put into the C. I. D. books and they or their relatives may be interned.

A proposal has been put forward that a Committee should be appointed to enquire into the cause of the present condition of the Detenus. An attempt was made by some of our friends in the Council to have such a Committee appointed by the Government, but the Government refused it. Why did they refuse it? Because they knew that the treatment of the detenus and the tortures which they were subjected to by the Police would not stand scrutiny by an independent Judge or by the independent members of the Committee. (*Hear, Hear*). The state of things that we hear about in the papers are but the extreme cases where people die in the jail or have to be sent to a lunatic asylum,—but we know nothing about the serious hardships of the ordinary lives which detenus lead. He is supposed to be in comfortable quarters but he is really most miserable and is undergoing tortures day after day and from month to month.

You have just been asked by the Chairman, what reparation was made in the case of the ladies—Sindhu Balas—who were arrested and detained by error of judgment on the

Resolution : part of the Police officers. The Chairman was reminded also that the husband of one of them
 Abul Kassem had also been interned. (*Shame*). I ask you, if I would be far wrong, if I were to say that
 the husband was arrested because of the agitation in the Press about the two ladies Sindhu
 Balas? (*Cheers*). He has been interned, because an attempt was made in the Bengal Council
 to get the officer who was responsible punished for what was done (*Hear, hear*). Was
 there any justification for this error of judgment? I think this is a clear piece of injustice,
 and this might happen to you or to me or to the ladies of our family.

If you really and sincerely desire that the resolution should be given effect to, you should
 make it a point to see that your demands are satisfied and not sit idle. If you can determine
 upon that, then to-day's meeting will be successful, otherwise it will be of no use and it will be
 like the voice of one crying in the wilderness. (*Loud applause*).

J. P. Khaitan. Babu Devi Prasad Khaitan said as follows:—

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen—I stand before you to-day under the honest con-
 viction that the policy of internment is not the result of sound statesmanship and is neither
 good for the Government nor for the people. Having regard to the large number of speakers
 abler than me by far to discuss this matter, I do not intend to detain you long; I shall place
 before you my view on this question as shortly as possible.

The success of the Government in any country is measured by the extent to which the
 people enjoy a sense of security of life and property, and feel that justice is administered
 and that the fundamental constitutional rights of a subject's liberty are not taken away
 without a fair and open trial.

No argument is needed to establish that the policy of internment, far from protecting
 such fundamental rights, is clearly subversive thereof. We are all aware of the procedure of
 internments. It is wholly *ex parte* and the sentence is based upon reports
 hatched in secret, without any public enquiry, without questioning the
 person concerned, and without any explanation whatsoever being asked of the person
 doomed to the miserable tortures of an internment. He is not allowed to ask any questions
 of the persons who have reported against him. He lives his usual life until, one fine morning,
 he suddenly finds himself in the hands of the Police, without even being informed of the
 charges against him or of the reasons for any suspicion against him. He is not allowed
 to take any advice, he is not permitted to see any of his relatives or friends, which, even
 convicts are allowed to do.

I will not hazard the statement that there are not some among the interned who are
 really guilty. But the public are never told the reasons which led to the internments. So
 far as the public is aware, the victims may have committed no wrong whatsoever. It cannot
 be said that innocent persons have not been brought within the operation of this harsh
 measure. The exercise of the powers under the Act is left to the sweet will of the officer in
 charge who would act on the reports of the C. I. D., without, perhaps, ever seeing the face of
 the persons suspected. The people at large feel that no one is safe, that any one may at any
 time be interned, and the incurring of the displeasure of an officer of the C. I. D., is dreaded
 as something dismal and is feared as being sufficient to bring a man within the clutches
 of the Defence of India Act. Once suspected, he is gone. The reports against him cannot
 be denied or explained away: he must submit; he cannot know the charges, he cannot
 demand a trial. (*Hear, hear*).

The fears cannot be said to be groundless. And in order that the public may have the
 sense of security, a public trial is essential. An enquiry should be held in the presence of
 the suspected person with full opportunity for cross-examination, explanation and defence.

When the Defence of India Act was passed, it was said to be on the lines of the Defence
 of Realm Act prevailing in England. The English Act is designed to prevent persons from
 communicating with the enemy, to secure the safety of His Majesty's Forces and Ships, to
 prevent the spread of false reports, to secure the navigation of vessels in accordance with the
 directions of the Admiralty and to prevent assistance being given to the enemy. It specially

deals with persons of hostile origin. But our Indian Act, whatever it may have originally been intended for, is interpreted to have a very wide sphere. It is construed to embrace within its scope persons whom the officers of the C. I. D., cannot dare to bring forward for trial in any public court established for the administration of justice, for the punishment of proved offences, and for the protection of the liberties of persons who are not proved to be guilty. The fundamental reason for bringing a person within the purview of the Act is that there is no evidence which can satisfy a Court of Justice that the accused person is guilty. The reason is not that the trial of the person in a public Court would lead to the publication of information to the enemy. It is not restricted to persons who hold any communication or have any intention of communicating with the enemy. Although it is used against persons against whom there is no evidence to establish their guilt, the effects of the application of the Act are much more rigorous and miserable than those of a trial at which satisfactory evidence is adduced and when a person is convicted after proof of Rigours of law.

his guilt. There he knows the period of his imprisonment, he can be seen by his relatives; but, when the evidence is too weak to establish a guilt and to bring home to the accused person a properly formulated charge, the period of his internment is without any limit and remains unknown not only to the victim, but, I may add, to the very officers entrusted with the administration of the Act. Such a procedure gives birth to a feeling of injustice, oppression and arbitrariness and creates an under-current of great insecurity in the minds of all. Some may frankly express it, some may keep it concealed. But it perforce exists. It is a very undesirable state of affairs. Far from suppressing, it gives rise to sedition. Far from bringing the Government and the people nearer and closer towards each other and making their relationship that of trust and affection, the procedure only helps to increase the gulf between the rulers and the ruled. So long as these statutes remain laws, the best of intentions are bound to be misunderstood. Actions cannot be viewed with any

Effect. charitableness of feeling. The existence of the Regulation and the Defence of India Act, I venture to say, weakens the position of the Government before the universe and before the Bar of History as regards its fitness. It is naturally to be expected that the fitness of the Government should be evidenced by an abrogation of stringent measures and placing trust in the people. Evolution alone can ameliorate the condition of the people; but evolution requires full, free and fair play. The sooner the law is brought into conformity with the spirit of the Resolution before you, the better it would be for the Government and the people.

Gentlemen, further elucidation and the giving of illustrations would require a long time. I shall not tire you further but end by reading a famous passage from Lord Shaw's judgment which will ever remain memorable for his true grasp of liberty of a British subject:

Lord Shaw. "Once grant Government a discretion over all things and persons and rights and liberties for public safety and defence, what Regulations may issue? This one is founded on "hostile origin or associations." It enters the sphere of suspicion, founded not on conduct, but on presumed opinions, beliefs, motives, or prepossessions arising from the land from which a person sprang. This is dangerous country; it has its dark reminders. It is the proscription, the arrest of suspects, at the will of men in power vested with a plenary discretion. If the power to issue Regulations meant thus to warrant a passage from proof to suspicion and from the sphere of action to the sphere of motive of the mind, let us think how much this involves.

No far-fetched illustrations are needed; for, my Lords, there is something which may and does move the actions of men often far more than origin or association, and that is religion. Under its influence men may cherish beliefs which are very disconcerting to the Government of the day, and hold opinion which the Government may consider dangerous to the safety of the realm. And so, if the principle of this construction of the statute be sound, to what a strange pass have we come! A Regulation may issue against Roman Catholics all, or, say, in the South of Ireland, or against Jews,—all, or, say, in the East of London—they may lose their liberty without a trial. During the war that entire chapter of the removal of Catholic and Jewish disabilities, which has made the toleration of Britain famous through the world, may be removed not because her Parliament has expressly said so but by a stroke of the pen of a Secretary of State.

at Resolution :
D. P. Khaitan.

Vested with this power of proscription, and permitted to enter the sphere of opinion and belief, they, who alone can judge as to public safety and defence, may reckon a political creed their special care, and is that creed be socialism, pacifism, republicanism, the persons holding such creeds may be regulated out of the way, although never a deed was done or word uttered by them that could be charged as a crime. The inmost citadel of our liberties would be thus attacked. For, as Sir Erskine May observes, this is "the greatest of all our liberties—liberty of opinion."

Babu Hirendra Nath Datta supported the resolution. He spoke in Bengali as follows—

হীরেন্দ্র নাথ দত্ত। সভাপতি মহাশয়, ভগ্নীগণ ও ভ্রাতৃগণ !

এই টাউনহলে অনেক সময় অনেক মহতী সভার অধিষ্ঠান হয়েছে, কিন্তু অতীতের মত গুরুতর বিষয় খুব অল্প সভাতেই আলোচিত হয়েছে। আজকের আলোচ্য বিষয়—সরকারের অন্তরীণ-নীতি।

এই অন্তরীণ-নীতির প্রয়োগের ফলে সারা দেশময় এমন একটা বিবাদ, একটা বিরক্তি, একটা বেদনা, এমন একটা অসন্তোষ, রোষ, আতঙ্ক ও নৈরাশ্য-ভাবের সঞ্চার হয়েছে যে তার ইয়ত্তা করা যায় না—যেন সমগ্র জাতির হৃদয়কে একটা নিবিড় যবনিকায় আচ্ছন্ন করেছে। আর তার অন্তরালে সি, আই, ডি'র তাণ্ডবনৃত্য ও ভৈরব অট্টহাস্ত শুনা যাচ্ছে। বাস্তবিক এখন সি, আই, ডিরই রাজত্ব চলছে—রাজ-পুরুষেরা যেন তাদের উপর রাজ্যভার সমর্পণ করে নিশ্চিন্তে নিদ্রা যাচ্ছেন। আর সি, আই, ডি এমন চমৎকার ভাবে রাজ্য-পালন কচ্ছেন, তাঁহাদের সমস্ত চেষ্টার মধ্যে শ্রয়, ধর্ম, সাধুতার শাসন এমন অক্ষুন্ন রেখেছেন যে, কবির ভাষায় তাঁহার উদ্দেশ্যে বলিতে হয়—

তোমারি উপমা, সখি ! তুমি এ মহীমণ্ডলে। [করতালি]

অবশ্য, এই প্রিয়তমার লৌহভুজের নিবিড় আলিঙ্গনে আমরা সময়ে সময়ে কিছু কাতর হয়ে পড়ি, কিন্তু প্রেমরাজ্যে ইহা স্বাভাবিক ঘটনা। এই গরীয়সী সি, আই ডি'কে দুর্ভুলোকে নাকি 'টিক্‌টিকি' বলে। হা ধিক্ ! [হাস্যরস] টিক্‌টিকিতে গা' চাটলে গরল হয় বটে,—আর সি, আই, ডি'র দংশনে আজ আমাদের সমাজ-শরীর জরজর, তাও স্বীকার করি—তথাপি আমি কখন এই 'শুদ্ধ অপাপবিদ্ধ' সি, আই, ডি'কে 'টিক্‌টিকি' বলিব না—আমি এমন কৃতর নহি। তবে অবশ্য সি, আই, ডি'র অর্থ সম্বন্ধে মতভেদ থাকতে পারে।

সাধারণ লোকে জানে সি, আই, ডি'র অর্থ Criminal Intelligence Department। ইহার অজ্ঞ। ইহারা জানে না যে সি, আই, ডি হচ্ছেন এ যুগের দেবতা ; আর দেবতার পরোক্ষ-প্রিয়। 'পরোক্ষপ্রিয়া বৈ দেবাঃ'। সেই জন্ম দেবরাজ, যাহার প্রকৃত নাম "ইন্ডিয়া", তাঁহাকে সাধারণ লোকে ইন্ড্র বলে জানে। এই যে সি, আই, ডি ইহাদের প্রকৃত নাম Crush India Department, কিন্তু সাধারণে ইহাকে Criminal Intelligence Department বলিয়াই জানে। [করতালি]

এই সি, আই, ডি-টিক্‌টিকির দংশনে আমাদের সমাজ-শরীরে (যাহাকে body politic বলে) যে উৎকট মহাব্যাধির সঞ্চার হ'য়েছে, সে ব্যাধি এক অত্যাশ্চর্য ব্যাপার। বেদে, পুরাণে, বৈথকে, নিদানে এর তুলনা পাওয়া যায় নাই। তবে, আমাদের বাল্যকালে এই কলিকাতা সহরে দিন কয়েক এক রকম নিশি ডাকার ব্যাধির উৎপাত হয়েছিল। একতকটা সেই ধরণের। লোকে সুখে নিদ্রা যাচ্ছে, অতর্কিতভাবে কখন কেমন কা'কে কোথা থেকে নিশি ডাকলে,—আর যেমন তুমি সেই ডাকে সাড়া দিয়েছ, অমনি নিশি তোমার আত্মাকে একটা শিশির মধ্যে ছিপিতে পুরে, কোন্ অজানা দেশে উধাও ক'রে নিয়ে গেল। সি, আই, ডি মহাশয়েরাও সেই ভাবে কার্য কচ্ছেন। কার কখন ডাক পড়বে ঠিক নাই। ডাক পড়লেই, যে যখন যে অবস্থাতেই থাকুক, তৎক্ষণাৎ যেতে হবে। কোথায় নিয়ে যাবে, তারও ঠিকানা নাই। শিশির ডাকে তবু উত্তরের অপেক্ষা থাকত ; তোমার নাম ধরে ডাকলে তুমি যদি সেই ডাকে সাড়া না দিতে, তবে নিশিকে বিফলমনোরথ হ'য়ে ফিরতে হ'ত। সি, আই, ডির ডাকে কিন্তু সাড়ার অপেক্ষা থাকে না। সাড়া দাও চাই না দাও, তোমায় যেতেই হবে। [Hear, Hear]

আর একটা দেখা যাচ্ছে যে, এই সি, আই, ডি-জনিত ব্যাধি একটা উদার সাম্য-নীতির অনুসরণ কচ্ছে। ইহা 'সমোহম্ সর্বভূতেষু'। হাইকোর্টের ভূতপূর্ব চিফ জাস্টিস জেফ্রিস সাহেবের ভাষায় from prince to beggar—প্রাসাদবাসী রাজা হইতে কুটীরবাসী ভিক্ষুক পর্যন্ত—

ইহার বুড়া জাল কেহই এড়াইতে পারে না। ইহা জাতি, ধর্ম, বর্ণ নির্বিশেষে—without distinction of caste, creed or colour—সবলকে আক্রমণ করিতেছে। ইহার এমনি নির্দোষ সাম্য। [উচ্চ হাস্যরব]

First Resoln
শ্রীহীরেন্দ্র নাথ

আরও দেখুন, এ ব্যাধি বয়সের অপেক্ষা রাখে না। শোনা যায়, পঞ্চাশের কোঠা পার হলে diabetes আর আক্রমণ করতে পারে না; কিন্তু সি, আই, ডি'র কাছে বয়সের বাচবিচার নাই। 'তেজসীসাং হি ন বয়ঃ সমীক্ষতে'—তেজস্বীরা বয়সের অপেক্ষা রাখে না। যাঁরা মেঘের আড়ালে বসে ইন্দ্রজিতের মত আমাদের উপর চোঁরাবাণ বর্ষণ কচ্ছেন, তাঁরা তেজস্বী নয় তবে তেজস্বী কে? এই দেখুন শ্রদ্ধাস্পদ মতিলাল ঘোষ মহাশয় [করতালি] নিরীহ জরাজীর্ণ বৃদ্ধ, বায়াস্তর বৎসর অতিক্রম করেছেন, কিন্তু তা' বলে তিনিও সি, আই, ডি'র তাক্কচক্ষু এড়াতে পারেন নাই। আমরা কিছুদিন পূর্বে শুনেছিলাম, তাঁহার অজ্ঞাতবাসের সবঠিকঠাক হয়ে গেছে—স্থান ঠিক হয়েছে, বাড়ী ঠিক হয়েছে,—এমন কি বাড়ীর সাজসজ্জা অবধি প্রেরিত হয়েছে। অবশ্য তিনি একলা যেতেন না, আমরাও দুই তিন জন তাঁহার সঙ্গী হতেম, এবং কাজের বন্ধগাটে যে সৌভাগ্য এখন হয় না, অন্তরীণে বিরলে তাঁর মুখে কৃষ্ণ কথা শুনতাম, এবং হয়ত, সি, আই, ডি'র অনুগ্রহে, কৃষ্ণ পেতাম। [উচ্চ হাস্যরব ও Hear, Hear]

আপনারা হয়ত ভাবছেন যে এটা গুজব কথা। সি, আই, ডি, কখনও কি এমন হৃদয়হীন হ'তে পারে যে এই অশীতিপর স্ববিরকে অন্তরীণে আটক করবে? আচ্ছা, মিসেস্ বেসার্ণের [উচ্চ করতালি] কথা স্মরণ করুন। তিনি তো মতিবাবুর চেয়ে বেশী বর্ষীয়সী। তাঁর একগাছি চুলও কাঁচা নাই। সেই শুভ্রকেশা স্বদেশী-বেশা রমণী কেন অন্তরীণে আবদ্ধ হ'লেন? অবশ্য স্বীকার করি, তাঁর অনেক দোষ ছিল। ইংরাজ রমণী হয়ে, তিনি ভারতবাসীর স্মৃৎ দুঃখের ভাগী হয়েছিলেন! তাহার উপর যে Heaven-born bureaucracy (স্বর্গচ্যুত আমলাবর্গ) এই ভারতবর্ষকে ভূ-স্বর্গে পরিণত করেছেন, তাদের নিন্দাবাদ ক'রেছিলেন!! তাহাও যদি সহ করা যায়, কিন্তু তিনি আবার কিনা দেশপূজ্য দাদাভাই নাওরাজী [করতালি] ১২ বৎসর পূর্বে যে স্বরাজভেরী মন্ত্রিত্ব করেছিলেন, সেই ভেরী আবার নিনাদিত করে সমস্ত ভারতবর্ষকে মুখরিত করেছিলেন!!! এত দোষে, তাঁহাকে ইনটার্ণ করা সঙ্গতই হইয়াছিল। কিন্তু সিন্ধুবালা? পল্লীবাসিনী অস্তঃপুরিকা বঙ্গের কুলবধ সিন্ধুবালা! যে কোন জন্মে রাজনীতির ধার ধারে না,—যে অজ্ঞাত পল্লীর নিভৃত গৃহকোণে বাটনা বাটিত, কুটনা কুটিত ও স্তনক্লয় শিশুকে স্তন্যপান করাইত,—সে গ্রেপ্তার হয় কেন? সে'ত আর সিন্ধুপতি জয়জ্ঞেথের মত চক্রবাহ রচনা করে' সি, আই, ডি'র ধর্মপুস্তুর যুধিষ্ঠিরদের বন্দী করবার চেষ্টা করে নি? সে বন্দিনী হয় কেন? ও হো, ভুল হ'য়েছে! কোন দূরদেশে কাহার নিকট এক টুকরা চোখা কাগজে "সিন্ধুবালা" নাম পাওয়া গিয়াছিল। অকাট্য প্রমাণ!! [Hear, Hear] সিন্ধুবালা ও তাহার অভাগী নন্দনী উভয়ে নিশ্চয়ই এই যুগের Joan of Arc!!! ইহাদের গ্রেপ্তার কর,—গ্রেপ্তার কর। নতুবা জার্মান হুনেরা এসে ভারতবর্ষ দখল করিবে!!! এই না তোমরা বলতে যে হাইকোর্টের জজের সমতুল্য এক জনের অনুমোদন না নিয়ে কাউকেও গ্রেপ্তার করা হয় না? এ সব কি রচা কথা? হরি, হরি! অবশ্য, "রাজার নন্দিনী প্যারী, যা কর তাই শোভা পায়।" তোমাদের কিছু বলব না—তবে রাজ-পুরুষদের দুই একটা কথা শোনাতে ইচ্ছা করি।

১। প্রথম কথাটা তোমাদের সচিবশ্রেষ্ঠ লর্ড মরলের কথা—ভারতসচিব মর্লেটের গুরু John Morley-র কথা। "Mere bullying is not government and it has unmistakably failed"—কেবল গুণ্ডামি দ্বারা রাজ্যশাসন হয় না, ইহা কোন দিন সফল হয় নাই। [Hear, Hear] আয়ারল্যাণ্ড সম্বন্ধে মর্লের এই উক্তি। ইতিহাসের এশিক্ষা ভুলো না। সেখানেও bullying ও dragooning খুব চলেছিল, ফল হয় নাই। সেখানেও Crimes Act পাশ করেছিল,—Habeas Corpus suspend করেছিল,—Magna Charta স্তম্ভিত রেখেছিল। কিন্তু, তাতে কি ফল হ'য়েছিল? যে আয়ারল্যাণ্ড সম্বন্ধে এই সকল ব্যাপার ঘটেছিল, আজ তাকে ডেকে সেধে যত্ন ক'রে হোমরুল বা স্বরাজ দিতে হচ্ছে। ভারতবর্ষেও ঠিক তাই হবে। [উচ্চ করতালি] আমরা যদি দৃঢ়, স্থির, অচল ভাবে এই সমস্ত সহ করতে পারি,—আমরা যদি এই সব অন্তরীণ ব্যাপারে বিচলিত, বিমূঢ় না হই,—তবে অচিরে হোমরুল আমাদের করায়ত্ত হ'বে। একথা কখনই বিস্মৃত হও না, সাতশত বৎসর পূর্বে, যে জাতি Magna Charta-য় ঘোষণা ক'রেছিল যে আইন অনুযায়ী বিচার ব্যতীত কেহ কখনও কারাবদ্ধ হ'বে না—No man, of whatever state or condition that he may be, shall be taken nor imprisoned nor disinherited nor put to death without being brought to answer by due course of law—তোমরা সেই জাতির বংশধর। এই

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দেখ নাথ হস্ত।

সুকল উচ্চ কথা কখনও ভুলো না। ধর্মকে তোমাদের রাজ্যের ভিত্তি কর, শ্রায়কে ভিত্তিকর, —মঙ্গল হবে।

২। আর এক কথা। যদি রাজ্য রক্ষার জন্য, লোকের স্বাধীনতা হরণ করতেই হয়, তবে অবরুদ্ধ ব্যক্তিদের যতনা দিও না। তাদের স্বচ্ছন্দে পুরাণ, তাদের সঙ্গে মনুষ্যোচিত ব্যবহার কর। ষষ্ঠ বৎসর পূর্বে, লর্ড মিণ্টোর আমলে, যখন আর একবার ধর-পাকড় করেছিলে, তখন ত কাহারও প্রতি অসদ্ব্যবহার কর নাই। এই কয় বৎসরে তোমাদের এমন অধঃপতন হ'ল কেন? যাদের অন্তরীণে আবদ্ধ রেখেছ, তাদের মধ্যে কেহ পাগল হচ্ছে, কেহ আত্মহত্যা কচ্ছে, কেত জন hunger-strike কচ্ছে—কেন? কেন লোককে ঠাণ্ডা গারদে—solitary cellএ—আবদ্ধ রেখেছ? এরূপ ব্যবহারে যে বিধাতা নারাজ হন—অতএব সাবধান হও।

৩। শেষ কথা; আর যাই কর, নারীর নির্যাতন করো না। [Hear, Hear] এ দেশের বিশ্বাস, এ দেশের ইতিহাস, এ সম্বন্ধে বড় মন্দ। এ দেশের লোক নারীকে জগন্মাতা জগদম্বার অংশকলা মনে করে। এ দেশে যখন যে নারীর অপমান করেছে, কারও ভাল হয় নাই। দেখ, এত বড় যে রাবণ রাজা,—শিব ভক্ত—নারীর নির্যাতন করে তার কি দুর্দশা হ'ল। আমরা ছেলেবেলা গানে শুনেছিলাম, ভগবতী মহাদেবকে বলছেন,—

দেখবো কেমন রাখতে পার রাবণে।

ধরেছে নারীর কেশে, আমি নারী না জানে ॥

আবার দেখ, দুর্ব্যোধন—ভারতের একছত্র সম্রাট—দ্রোপদীকে অপমান করেছিল, তার অত বড় সাম্রাজ্য কোথায় অন্তর্হিত হ'ল! আরো বড় রাজা বৃত্রাসুর—স্বর্গ মর্ত্য পাতালের অধীশ্বর, দেবতারার যাঁর আজ্ঞাকারী, মহাদেব যাঁর সহায়,—সেই বৃত্র শচীর নির্যাতন করলে। অমনি শিবের বিষণ বেজে উঠল। মহেশ্বরের রোধ-বলি দিঙমণ্ডলে সংস্কৃত হয়ে উঠল। নিঃশব্দ বৃত্রের চক্ষে পলক পড়ল। আর তার এত ঐশ্বর্য, এত প্রভুত্ব, এত মহিমা, এত গরিমা, বৃদ্ধদের মত সব মিশাইয়া গেল। সেই জন্য তোমাদের সাবধান করতে ইচ্ছা হয়। আমরা সহিষ্ণু জাতি—অনেক সয়েছি, আরও সহিতে প্রস্তুত আছি। কিন্তু যদি আমাদের নারীদের নির্যাতন কর, তবে হয়ত আমাদেরও সহিষ্ণুতার সীমা অতিক্রম করবে। [বহুক্ষণব্যাপী উচ্চ করতালি]

Babu Manaranjan Guba Thakurta also supported the resolution in Bengal as follows—

শ্রম ওহ
ঠাহুরজ।

গাছের শেকড় যেমন মাটিকে আকড়ে ধরে বড় ঝঞ্ঝাবাত হইতে বৃক্ষকে রক্ষা করে, ইংরাজের বিশ্বাস যে, পুলিশ ডিপার্টমেন্টই সেইরূপ সাম্রাজ্যের প্রকৃত রক্ষক—রাজ্যরূপ বৃক্ষের মূল ও শেকড়। এইজন্যই রাজপুরুষগণ পুলিশের একান্তই পক্ষপাতী। বাস্তবিক কি পুলিশই ইংরাজ রাজ্যের মূল ভিত্তি? প্রকৃত পক্ষে ভারতে ইংরাজ রাজ্যের মূল ভিত্তি কামান নয়, বন্দুক নয়, এবং পুলিশ ও নয়। ভারতীয় জনসাধারণের অভঙ্গ-বিশ্বাসই এদেশে ইংরাজ রাজ্যের প্রকৃত ভিত্তি। [Hear]

ইংরাজের স্বশাসন, সুবিচার ও আইনের উপর এদেশীয় লোকের বিরূপ বিশ্বাস ছিল, দুই একটা কথায়ই তাহা ব্যস্ত করা যায়। সামান্য গ্রাম্য লোকেরাও বিশ্বাস করিত যে ইংরাজ রাজ্যে আইনই তাহাদের রক্ষাকর্তা। কেহ অবিচার বা অত্যাচার করিলে, দুর্বল লোকেরা এই বলিয়াই প্রবলকৈ ভয় দেখাইত যে, “একি মঘের মুল্লুক? এ কোম্পানীর রাজ্য,—মহারাজার রাজ্য,—এখানে অবিচার চলিবে না।” আমার নিজের বাল্যকালের একটা মনের কথা আপনাদিগকে বলিতেছি। যখন বাংলার ইতিহাস পড়িলাম, তখন মনে হইল যে, মুর্শিদাবাদের নবাব সাহেব বিরূপ নির্বোধ লোক। যেরূপ ভাবে তাঁহার রাজ্য কাড়িয়া লওয়া হইয়াছে, তিনি সেজন্য হাইকোর্টে নালিশ করিলে অনায়াসে রাজ্যটা ফিরিয়া পাইতে পারেন; তাহা না করিয়া নিশ্চিন্ত বসিয়া আছেন কেন? [উচ্চ হাস্যরব] বস্তুতঃ ইংরাজের আইনের প্রতি ও সুবিচারের প্রতি লোকের এইরূপই বিশ্বাস ছিল। এবং এইরূপ বিশ্বাসই ইংরাজ রাজ্যের দৃঢ়ভিত্তি। এই ভিত্তির উপর আঘাত, আর বৃক্ষের উপর বজ্রাঘাত একই কথা। পুলিশ যদি সত্যিই রাজ্যরূপ বৃক্ষের মূল ও শেকড় হয়, তবে হয়ত বড় ঝঞ্ঝার হস্ত হইতে সে বৃক্ষকে রক্ষা করিতে পারে, কিন্তু বজ্রাঘাত হইতে রক্ষা করিতে পারে না। জনসাধারণের অবিশ্বাসরূপ বজ্রাঘাতের হস্ত হইতে কেহই সাম্রাজ্যকে রক্ষা করিতে পারে না। যে কোন ব্যক্তি,— তিনি যিনিই হউন না,—এই বিশ্বাসের ভিত্তিতে কুঠারঘাত করিবেন, তিনি প্রকৃতপক্ষে ইংরাজের শত্রু,—ইংরাজ সাম্রাজ্যের শত্রু। তিনি স্বয়ং রাজা হইলেও রাজদ্রোহী। [Hear, Hear] আর

স্বাহারা ইংরাজের অবিচারের প্রতিবাদ করিয়া অবিচারের প্রতিরোধ ও প্রতিকার করিতে চাহেন, তাঁহারাই প্রকৃতপক্ষে ইংরাজ সাম্রাজ্যের রক্ষক ও বন্ধু। যদি আপনারা শত্রু হইতেন, তবে নীরব হইয়া থাকিতেন; ভাবিতেন যে, পাপ বাড়িতে দাঁও,—অবিচাররূপ অগ্নি ছলিতে দাঁও,—এ পথে পতন নিশ্চয়। [করতালি] কিন্তু আপনারা তাহা করেন নাই। আপনারা ইংরাজ রাজত্বকে দৃঢ় ভিত্তির উপরেই রাখিতে চাহিতেছেন; হুতরাং আপনারাই সাম্রাজ্যের বন্ধু। আর যাহারা অবিচারের পক্ষ সমর্থন করিতেছে,—তাহারা ইংরাজ হউক, ভারতবাসী হউক, উচ্চ রাজকর্মচারী হউক, আর পুলিশ হউক—তাহারাই ইংরাজ সাম্রাজ্যের প্রকৃত শত্রু। [Hear, Hear]

শ্রদ্ধ আপনারদের আলোচ্য বিষয় প্রধানতঃ দুইটী—(ক) অন্তরীণের আইনটাই অবৈধ; (খ) উক্ত আইনের ব্যবহার প্রাণী অত্যন্ত দুষ্টীয়।

এই আইনটিকে ১৮১৮ সনের তিন আইন বলা হয়। “তিন” শব্দটার শক্তি অসীম। “তিন” বলিতে আমরা বুঝি—ব্রহ্মা বিষ্ণু শিব, স্বস্ত রজঃ তম, সৃষ্টি স্থিতি প্রলয়। বস্তুতঃ এই তিন আইনটায় এই সকল অর্থই খাটে। ইনি সৃষ্টি কর্তা, পালন কর্তা ও সংহার কর্তা। একটা ঘটনার সৃষ্টি করিতে পারেন, উহাকে রক্ষা করিতে পারেন এবং সকলকেই সংহার করিতে পারেন। ইহার সকল গুণই আছে, হুতরাং ইনি ত্রিগুণময়। ইনি কোন বর্জন মানেন না, কোন নিয়মের ধারণা করেন না।

আমাদের একটা বন্ধু আহার, বিহার, শয়ন, ভোজন কেনিও ব্যাপারেই বিন্দুমাত্রও নিয়ম মানিয়া চলিতেন না। একদিন রাগ করিয়া তাঁহাকে বলিলাম—“তুমি কি কখনও নিয়মের রাজ্যে পা দিবে না? কখনও তোমাকে ঠিক সময় ধরা যায় না। একদিন ৮টায় স্নান ১০টায় ভোজন, কখনও ১টায় আহার ২টায় স্নান, সব কাজেই এইরূপ, তোমার কি কোন কর্মজেরই নিয়ম নাই?” বন্ধুর একটু মুচকী হাসিয়া বলিলেন “ভায়া হে, আমার নিয়ম তোমাদের মতন নয়, আমার নিয়ম কখনই ভঙ্গ হইতে পারে না। আমি এইটাই নিয়ম করেছি যে, অনিয়মেই চলবো। দেখ তোমাদের নিয়মগুলি এমনই লক্ষ্মীছাড়া যে, পুলিশের দায়োগার মতন, তোমাদের পেছনে সদাই তাড়া দিচ্ছে। আমার নিয়ম সদাই আমার অনুগত, আমাকে তাড়াও দেয় না, বিরক্তও করে না; অথচ আমি আমার “অনিয়মে-চলা নিয়মকে” কখনই লঙ্ঘন করি না।

এই “তিন-আইনটীও বে-আইনী আইন, হুতরাং এই আইনের বে-আইনী করার সম্ভাবনাই নাই, কেননা ব্রহ্মা বিষ্ণু শিবের মতন, ইনি সমস্ত বৈধাভেদের বহির্ভূত। কাজেই, এই আইন যে কিছু বে-আইনী করিতেছে, সে কথা বলার জো নাই। [উচ্চ হাস্যরস]

আমাকে যখন নির্বাসন করা হয়েছিল, তখন দুইজন খেতাজ কতকগুলি পুলিশের লোক সঙ্গে করে আমার বাড়ীতে প্রবেশ করলে এবং একজন খেতাজ আমাকে স্পর্শ করে বলিল যে, সে আমাকে এরেফ্ট করবে, এখন তাদের সঙ্গে আমাকে যেতে হবে। আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করিলাম—“ওয়ারেন্ট আছে?” সাহেব বলিলেন যে সে পরে দেখান যাবে। আমি ত অবাঞ্ছিত। কয়েক জন অপরিচিত লোক, কিছুমাত্র রাজকীয় হুকুমানা না দেখাইয়া, একজন ব্রিটিশ প্রজাকে বিনা বিচারে অনির্দিষ্ট কালের জগা কোনও অজ্ঞানিত দেশে লইয়া যাইতে পারে, এরূপ বিশ্বাস আমার ছিল না। কিন্তু উপায় কি? যদি আমি ওয়ারেন্ট না পাইয়া তাহাদের সঙ্গে যাইতে রাজী না হইতাম, তবে তখনই সেখানে একটা সিডিনের সৃষ্টি হইত। বোধহয়, সুযোগ্য পুলিশ সাহেবগণ (তাহার হুকুমই উচ্চ পুলিশ কর্মচারী) ওয়ারেন্টখানা সঙ্গে লইতে তুলিয়া গিয়াছিলেন; তা' এরূপ তুল-আর তেমন দোষের কিসে? তবে তৎক্ষণাৎ এরেফ্ট করিতেই হইবে, কাজেই বিনা ওয়ারেন্টে তাঁহার আমাকে গ্রেফতার করিলেন। তিন-আইন যখন কোন আইনেরই অধীন নয়, তখন আর এ সকল কাজ বে-আইনী হইবে কিরূপে?

পুলিশের অসুস্কারানের প্রাণী এবং রাজপুরুষদিগের তথ্য সংগ্রহের প্রাণী সম্বন্ধে দুই একটা কথা বলিব। কোন রাজ্যে এক মহাজনের নৌকা ঝড়ে নদীতে ডুবিয়াছিল। তখন মহাজনদিগকে “সাধু” বলিত। সাধু নাশিশ করিল—“মহারাজ, আপনার পুণ্য-রাজ্যে আমার নৌকা কেন ডুবিল, বিচার করিতে আজ্ঞা হউক।” মন্ত্রীর কিছুকাল চক্ষু বুজিয়া চিন্তা করিলেন। পরে রামচন্দ্র নামে এক কুস্তকারের প্রতি ওয়ারেন্ট বাহির হইল। রামচন্দ্র রাজ-দরবারে হাজির হইলে, মন্ত্রীর তাহাকে শুলে চড়াইবার আদেশ দিলেন। সে বেচারী ত অবাঞ্ছিত। করজোড়ে জানিতে চাহিল, “কি অপরাধে তাহার প্রাণদণ্ড হইবে? মন্ত্রী বলিলেন,—“তুমি এই সাধুর নৌকা নদীতে ডুবাইয়াছ।” কুস্তকার বলিল, কোন জন্মে এই মহাজনের সঙ্গে তাহার পরিচয় বা সাক্ষাৎ নাই, সে কেন ইহার নৌকা ডুবাইবে? এবং কেমন করিয়াই বা ডুবাইল? মন্ত্রী বলিলেন “তোমার অপরাধ

Resolution :
রক্ষণ চব্ব
ঠাকুরতা।

বিশিষ্ট প্রমাণের দ্বারা প্রমাণিত হইয়াছে। [Hear, Hear] কুস্তকারেরা প্রতিদিন ইটের পাঁজা পোড়াইয়া থাকে, তাহা হইতে ধূম উৎপন্ন হয়, সেই ধূম হইতে মেঘের সৃষ্টি, মেঘ হইতে বৃষ্টি উৎপন্ন হইয়া নদীতে সাধুর নৌকা ডুবাঁইয়াছে; অতএব কুস্তকারগণই এই বিপদের কারণ। সেই কুস্তকারগণের মধ্যে তুমিই রাজধানীর কাছে বাস করিতেছ, অতএব তোমার সাজা না হইবে কেন? [উচ্চ হাস্যরব] মন্ত্রীবর কবি ছিলেন; সুতরাং তিনি কবিতায় তাঁহার রায় প্রকাশ করিলেন, যথা,—

“কুস্তকারে ধূম্কার, ধূম্কারে মেঘাকার,
মেঘাকারে হলো বাও, তাতে ডুবলো সাধুর নাও।”

অতএব রামচন্দ্র কুস্তকারের প্রাণদণ্ড অর্থাৎ শূলারোহণ সুনিশ্চিত। কি সূক্ষ্মদর্শিতা! কি অপূর্ব ঞ্চায় বিচার! [উচ্চ করতালি] সিদ্ধুবালাদের গ্রেপ্তার এবং বহু অন্তরীণের গ্রেপ্তারের সঙ্গে আপনারা এই মন্ত্রীবরের বিচারের তুলনা করিয়া দেখিবেন।

পুলিসের কার্য প্রণালী সম্বন্ধে আমি অনেক দৃষ্টান্ত দিতে পারি, সে প্রলোভন পরিত্যাগ করিলাম। কিন্তু একটা ঘটনা বলিব—

গিরিডিতে একটা স্বদেশী সভা হইয়াছিল। পাড়ার মধ্যে, কোনও ভদ্রলোকের বাড়ীতে সভা হওয়ায়, অনেক সজ্জাস্ত মহিলা সেখানে উপস্থিত ছিলেন। সেখানে যে প্রবন্ধ পাঠিত ও সঙ্গীত এবং বক্তৃতা হইয়াছিল, অশিক্ষিত হিন্দুস্থানী দারোগা যে সে সকলের কিছুই বুঝে নাই, সে কথা পরে তাঁকে স্বীকার করিতে হইয়াছিল। কিন্তু সে ব্যক্তি সমস্ত ভদ্রমহিলাদের নামে ওয়ারেন্ট বাহির করিল। ওয়ারেন্টের ভাষা এই যে, অমুক বাবুর বাড়ীর সমস্ত স্ত্রীলোকগণকে আগামী কল্য ১০টার সময় থানায় উপস্থিত হইয়া জবানবন্দী দিতে হইবে। বলা বাহুল্য, যে সমস্ত বাঙ্গালীর বাড়ীতেই এই নোটীশ টাঙ্গাইয়া দেওয়া হইয়াছিল। [Shame]

এই ঘটনায় মহরে বিরূপ ক্রোধ ও আন্দোলন উপস্থিত হইয়াছিল, বুঝিতে পারেন। লাট সাহেবকে টেলিগ্রাফ করিয়া, ভূপেন্দ্রবাবুকে তদ্বিষয়ের জন্ত তার পাঠাইয়া, সফর-গত ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটকে সংবাদ দিয়া যদি এই অত্যাচারের প্রতিরোধ করা না হইত, তবে পরের দিন ১০টার সময় হয়ত দলে দলে কনফেবল সঙ্গে লইয়া দারোগা প্রতি ঘরের মহিলাগণকে টানিয়া লইয়া বাইতে চেফ্টা করিত! তখন কি ঘটনা ঘটিত, তাহা কল্পনারও অগোচর। জিজ্ঞাসা করি, কি ভরসায় একজন দারোগা সমস্ত সজ্জাস্ত পরিবারের মহিলাদিগের উপর এরূপ নোটীশ দিতে সাহস করিল? উপরওয়ালার কাছে কতদূর আস্কারা পাইলে এইরূপ কাজ করিতে পারে? যদি বাঙ্গালীগণ তদ্বির না করিতেন, তবে সমস্ত মহিলাগণকে সিদ্ধুবালাদিগের অবস্থা ভোগ করিতে হইত!!!

ইহার পরে, যখন ছোটনাগপুর ডিভিসনের কমিশনার সাহেবের বার্ষিক রিপোর্ট বাহির হইল, তাহাতে দেখা গেল তিনি লিখিয়াছেন যে, তাঁহার ডিভিসনে পাঁচটা জেলার মধ্যে একমাত্র গিরিডিতেই সিডিসন আছে। বলা বাহুল্য যে, পূর্বেকর্ত পুলিস ধর্মুর্দরের রিপোর্টের উপরই কমিশনার মহোদয়কে নির্ভর করিতে হইয়াছে। এই রিপোর্টের ও মন্তব্যের পরিণামফল একেবারে ব্যর্থ হয় নাই, তাহা বোধ হয় আপনারা বুঝিতে পারিয়াছেন।

ঘটনাগুলির বিরূপ অনুসন্ধান হয়, সে বিষয় একটা দৃষ্টান্ত দিতেছি।

মনে করুন, একজন বড় দারোগার ইচ্ছা হইল, অমনি তিনি রিপোর্ট করিলেন যে, বরিশালে হিন্দু-মুসলমানে ভারি বিরোধের সম্ভাবনা। ছোটলাট ফুলার সাহেব এই বক্তিত আশঙ্কা নিবারণের জন্ত বরিশালের অদূরে সাদ্রপাঙ্গ-সহ উপস্থিত হইলেন। তাহার পর কনফারেন্স ডল করা, নেতাদিগকে অপমান ও বালকদিগকে নির্ধাতন করার খবর আপনারা জানেন। নেতাগণ এই ঘটনা জানাইয়া বড়লাটকে তার করিলেন এবং প্রতিকার চাহিলেন। বড়লাট যথারীতি ছোটলাটকে তদন্ত করিয়া রিপোর্ট দিতে বলিলেন। যথারীতি ছোটলাট কমিশনার সাহেবের প্রতি তদন্তের আদেশ দিলেন। কমিশনার সাহেব বরিশাল ডাকবাংলায় থাকিয়া ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেটের উপর তদন্ত ও রিপোর্টের ভার দিলেন। ম্যাজিষ্ট্রেট সাহেব সেই বড় দারোগার উপর ভার দিলেন। সেই দারোগা,—যাঁহার দোষে এই লঙ্কাকাণ্ড ঘটিয়াছিল,—তিনি যে রিপোর্ট দিলেন, সেইটাই যথারীতি পরিচিত পথ দিয়া, বড়লাটের কাছে উপস্থিত হইল। সুতরাং, আশ্চর্য ঘটনাটাই আমাদের দারোগা মহাশয়ের দ্বারা ঘটিল; সৃষ্টি স্থিতি প্রলয় সকলই তিনি করিলেন। অনেক স্থলেই, অনুসন্ধানের প্রণালীটা প্রায় এইরূপ।

এতদিন শুধু শিক্ষিতলোকেরাই অত্যাচার ও অবিচারের বিরুদ্ধে প্রতিবাদ করিয়াছেন।

ওয়েব সাহেব ও শুরুরমণি সম্বন্ধীয় হৃদয়-বিদারক ঘটনার পুনর্বিচারের জন্য আমরা দশ হাজার লোকের স্বাক্ষরিত একখানি আবেদন পত্র বড়লাটকে পাঠাইয়াছিলাম। কিন্তু লর্ড রিপণের শাসন কালেও তাহার প্রতিকার হয় নাই। এইরূপ ঘটনাপুঞ্জ শিক্ষিতলোকের বিশ্বাসকে শিথিল করিয়া দিয়াছিল; কিন্তু গ্রাম্য লোকদিগের ইংরাজের সুবিচারের প্রতি বিশ্বাস একরূপ অটলই ছিল। কিন্তু, এতগুলি যুবককে বিনা বিচারে কারারুদ্ধ করায়, প্রতি গ্রামে বিষাদের ছায়া পড়েছে এবং ইংরাজ-রাজ্যের স্বশাসনের ও সুবিচারের প্রতি একেবারেই বিশ্বাস নষ্ট হইয়া যাইতেছে। জনসাধারণের যে বিশ্বাস একবার ভাঙ্গে, তাহা জোড়া লাগা বড়ই কষ্টকর। ইহার উপরে, কুলমহিলাগণকে ঘর হইতে ধরিয়। বথায় তথায় লইয়া যাওয়া, অবিচারে কারারুদ্ধ করা ইত্যাদি ঘটনায়, সমগ্র জাতীয় হৃদয়ে নিদারুণ মর্ষবেদনা উপস্থিত হইয়াছে। এই সিন্ধুবালাঘর—এই ঘটনায় সমাজের চক্ষে হীন হইয়াছেন, ইহাদিগকে বিশেষ ভাবে সম্মান দেখান, দেশবাসী মাত্রেরই একান্ত কর্তব্য।

পূর্বে আমরা বলিয়াছি, বাঁহা পুত্র আছে, ভাই আছে, আত্মীয় বন্ধু যুবক আছে, তাঁহারা এই বে-আইনী তিন আইনের প্রতিবাদ করিতে অগ্রসর হউন; এখন বলিতেছি, বাঁহাদের মাতা আছে, ভগিনী আছে, কন্যা ও পুত্রবধু আছে, আত্মীয় মহিলা আছে, তাঁহারা সকলে মিলিয়া এই সাংঘাতিক যন্ত্র তিন আইনের হাত হইতে জাতি, মান রক্ষা করিতে প্রস্তুত হউন, প্রাণপণে সকলে প্রতিকারের চেষ্টা করুন। [করতালি]

The Resolution was then put to the Meeting and carried unanimously by acclamation.

V

The Chairman then called upon Mr. R. C. Bonnerjee to move the second Resolution on the agenda which ran as follows—

That this meeting appoints a Committee, to be called the Bengal Civil Rights Committee with Sir Rashbehary Ghose as President and Messrs. B. K. Lahiri and B. C. Chatterjee as Joint Secretaries, and with the following gentlemen as members—

The Hon'ble Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee.

The Hon'ble Babu Kamini Kumar Chanda.

The Hon'ble Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq.

The Hon'ble Babu Akhil Chandra Datta.

Dr. Mrigendralal Mitra.

Mr. Hirendra Nath Datta.

Mr. C. R. Das.

Mr. B. Chakravarti.

- (i) *To watch over, protect and safeguard the civil rights and liberties of the people of this Province, specially with reference to the working of the Regulation III of 1818 and the Defence of India Act and other enactments and legislation, present or prospective, curtailing the liberties of the subject;*
- (ii) *To afford relief, pecuniary or otherwise, to the families of the detenus who are unable to maintain themselves in cases where adequate provisions for their maintenance have not been made by the Government;*
- (iii) *To enquire into and report on the cases of persons detained under the two aforesaid enactments and their physical and mental conditions when under such detention and to take all measures to afford them any necessary relief or help;*
- (iv) *To carry on agitation both in this country and in England with a view to make the law in this country consistent with the rights and the liberties of the people; and,*
- (v) *To raise funds for carrying out of the above-mentioned objects.*

Resolution: Mr. R. C. Bonnerjee in moving the resolution said:—
C. Bon-

It falls to my duty this evening to move the second resolution on the agenda paper. All of you have copies of the resolution and it is not necessary for me to read it to you, for you know what it is. Those of us who do study—most of us have to study—the Anglo-Indian papers and the opinions of our so-called Anglo-Indian friends, are told that there are two and only two things necessary for the regeneration of this country, these two things being the balanced-mind and moderation. But when we come to examine the definition of these two virtues, we discover that, to our critics, the balanced-mind means the disease of having no opinions and moderation means the disease of not expressing opinions (*applause*). I sincerely trust that none of us here will suffer from one or both of these two most baneful diseases. One of the accusations that the Government has always been making, and so far as one can see, have some justification in making against the youth of this country, is that they are undisciplined and that they do not listen to the advice of their seniors and elders. Well, that is precisely the mistake that Government itself is making. It does not listen to the advice of the seniors and elders of this country. That is why it lands itself in this hopeless tangle of law-making. It is not for me to keep you from Mr. Bepin Chunder Pal who is succeeding me on this motion. But let me say this much that we have been accused of being divided in our councils—of quarrelling over politics, of having sordid quarrels with one another. For this, at any rate, we should be highly grateful to the Government, for by legislation of this description, it makes it difficult for those called moderates to quarrel with the so-called extremists; and it is absolutely necessary that we, if threatened with legislation of this description, should unite together abreast to succeed in abolishing what we consider an injustice (*applause*).

Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal in seconding said:—

B. C. Pal My leader, Mr. Rutton Bonnerjee, has practically left it to me, in order to save time, to read the resolution to you. I will not take it for granted that every one present in this hall has been kindly supplied by the organisers of this meeting with a copy of the resolution. So I will, with your permission, read the resolution. [*Then he read the resolution*].

You will at once recognize the necessity of this resolution, if you are really earnest in regard to the resolution that has been previously passed. In that resolution, we condemn the Suicidal Policy. Defence of India Act and the Regulation III of 1818. We say that it is an unlawful law. We say that it frustrates its declared purpose, it violates the fundamental civil rights of the citizens of this country. But we are powerless to alter that law. We do not know when under the benign Providence of the Almighty, it will be given to the present Bureaucratic Government to recognize the suicidal policy which they are pursuing,—suicidal to themselves, suicidal also to our highest national self-realisation; and, I will add, suicidal to the peace of the world—and realise the suicidal folly of the way in which the Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818 are being administered. We may say all that but they are not likely to understand the folly of this course immediately. And if they do understand at all, it will not be because we are asking them to do so, not because we are putting arguments and facts before them, but they will understand it by the inevitable pressure of political circumstances, in and outside India. (*Hear, Hear*).

But in the meantime, what are we going to do? We have some duty to perform, and it is in pursuance of the demand of this duty, that we propose to pass this resolution. This resolution says that we are to have a Committee to protect and safeguard our civil rights. I wish my leader, Mr. Rutton Bonnerjee, had explained to the audience, what civil rights meant in legal language. I will just tell you what I understand by Civil Rights. civil rights. By civil right, I understand my right not to be condemned not to be punished, without a regular trial before a duly constituted tribunal. The Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818 deprive me of my civil rights—I will not say as a British citizen—but as a civilized man. They refuse my rights to demand the definite formulation of the offence with which I am charged and the production of valid evidence if

proof of my guilt, before I am convicted. My civil rights demand cross-examination of the evidence that may be adduced against me. They demand that I shall not be accused in secret, examined in secret, and be punished in secret, without a regular and open trial. That is what my civil rights demand. And we ask this Committee to take such steps as they may think necessary, from time to time, to protect and safeguard our civil rights.

Second Resolution
Mr. B. C. Pal

You have heard a great deal about the Defence of India Act, and my friend, Mr. Das, read out to you the most important sections of that Act. In that regulation, we are told that whoever has acted, is acting or is likely to act in a manner prejudicial to public safety, shall be dealt with according to this regulation. I was asking my lawyer friends if there was any definition of the words "public safety" in this precious Defence of India Act and I am afraid, Sir, there is no definition of it. I then wanted to know if there is any definition of "public safety" in the General Clauses Act of the Government of India or in any other document. I could not be enlightened upon this point and I do not know that there is any definition of it. But I know what is understood by "public safety" by the Executive Government in India. Now, how do I know it? A little over a year ago, one evening, I was served with a notice under this Defence of India Act by the great and mighty Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. And, what was the notice that was served upon me? "Whereas Babu Bepin Chunder Pal has acted, is acting or is likely to act in a manner prejudicial to public safety, etc.," he is asked not to do this, that and the other thing. The thing I was asked not to do was not to enter the boundaries of the country under the jurisdiction of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. I do not know, Mr. Chairman, and I could not find out what I was doing to endanger public safety or what I was likely to do to endanger public safety, or what I had done to endanger public safety? I will tell you. Sir Michael O'Dwyer came out with the explanation himself in a few months later. Addressing a Durbar, or his Council in Lahore,—I forget which,—His Honour said that his Government had served certain orders under the Defence of India Act upon two gentlemen prohibiting them from entering the Punjab, and that he was forced to do it, because he believed that the ideals and opinions of these gentlemen were likely to endanger public safety. My dear friends, will you tell me,—is one's opinion an Act? "You are acting, have acted or you are likely to Act?" Now I hold certain opinions. Is that an act? My grammar tells me that it is not an act. I do not know if law says that an opinion is an act. Now I hold certain opinions. What are these opinions? I hold the opinion that I must be, in my own country, as every man, who is a civilized man, is in his own country. I hold the opinion that I must be the master of my own destiny. I hold the opinion that my people should control their own history, their own political or social evolution. I hold the opinion that it is a sin against the law of God and man alike to deprive any people of their right,—to quote British statesmen,—the right, namely of self-determination. That, ladies and gentlemen, is an opinion which is prejudicial to public safety. Why?—Mr. Montagu declared that it was the goal of British Policy in India; Parliament declared that it was the objective of British administration in this country. What, did I want more than what Mr. Montagu declared in Parliament and what the King and the ministers of the King in Parliament wanted to do? I did nothing. I have no other opinion except the opinion which has been declared to be the goal of British rule in India. (*Hear, hear*).

This is the kind of law which the Defence of India Act gives us. But these internments, we are told, are due to the revolutionary movement in Bengal. But, even the Government admit that this revolutionary movement, had its origin before the war. The war has had nothing to do with it. Is there anybody here who believes that this revolutionary movement in Bengal,—to whatever extent it may exist among us, we do not know the extent—is there anybody in Bengal with a head-piece on his shoulders who honestly believes that this revolutionary movement has been engineered by the King's enemies? If it has been created in Bengal, it has been created by the folly of the British Bureaucracy and not by anybody else (*applause*). To replace England by Germany has

Revolutionary
movement.

nd Resolution: never been and is not the will of Bengal. None of our Nationalist schools or parties, not even B. C. Pal our swadeshi agitators, ever wanted to have Germany in their midst. Germany had no hand in it. Bengal is not going to repeat the stupendous folly of the past. (*Applause*). Bengal is not going to tolerate a Mirjafar or a Umichand again. (*Hear, hear*). We are not going to do it. Whatever we may want or we may not want, we certainly do not want to replace the British administration in India, by a German or Turkish or Russian administration. (*a voice "Japan"*). No, not even Japan. We do not believe in it.

It is not a war measure, but at the same time we must beware of goading the people who were peaceful and law-abiding ten years ago. Misguided repression drove a section of them to catch the contagion of imported revolutionary ideas. Do not make the whole people revolutionaries, either actual or prospective, because then the results both to the Government and the people will be disastrous. I see only a couple of thousand or a little more than a couple of thousand people in this hall. I see only half a dozen of the mothers and sisters of Bengal present in this historic hall. But I feel it,—I see it with my mental vision—that the whole of the motherhood of Bengal, that the whole of the sisterhood of Bengal, the whole of the fatherhood of Bengal, the whole youth and age of Bengal, stand behind these two thousand and odd people in this hall supporting them (*applause*). The day before yesterday, I was in North Bengal and I was introduced to an elderly gentleman whose son had been interned. This elderly gentleman is a man of the world; and, would you believe it—when I was introduced to him,—that elderly gentleman put his hand to his face and started weeping like a child? Will all this weeping go in vain, (*cries of no, no*). Will all this breaking of hearts go in vain (*cries of no, no*)? It cannot; and that, Mr. President, is my fear. I was talking to a Government official only the other day,—a Government official who is the concentrated essence of loyalty. He will be nameless and you will not be able to find out who he is. He was talking about education and he said—"I am afraid of my boy. I am anxious about my boy who is reading in school. He is not with me. He is in Calcutta. And when all these things are going on, I am afraid for the safety for that boy." Now, if a Government official, with such a strong hereditary tendency towards concentrated allegiance to the present Bureaucracy, is afraid of the risk his boy is running, why, my son runs that risk, your son, Sir, runs that risk. The son of every father and the son of every mother in the country runs that risk. Why?—Because they read the newspapers. They read the cases of Jyotish Ghose, the Sindhubalas, and they read the cases of other detainees and their young blood boils within them. And is it surprising that some one among these youngmen should be goaded into frenzy by their desperation, into doing things that they would not do in their cooler moments,—into doing things that their parents do not want them to do, into doing things that the Government want to prevent them from doing? This is the psychology of it. If you want peace, if you want safety,—make the conditions of the country favourable in the direction of peace and safety. Before this Defence of India Act, we know what the condition of the country was. These activities were actually creating a feeling of repulsion in the elder and soberer section of the community. What is the feeling to-day? Nobody sympathises with revolutionaries. But, can we honestly say that there are not thousands and thousands of men and women who have been driven to desperation by these internments, and through desperation, are coming to sympathise, much against their widdom, with this revolutionary movement (*applause*)? If you want to kill revolution, if you want to get at the root of it, do not try to stifle it by the mal-administration of these laws. We want to prevent this evil. By forming this Committee, we are only trying to help the Government to preserve peace and order by making peace and order possible,—by curtailing lawless and unjust proceedings by the police and the Magistrates.

Babu Suresh Chunder Samajpati supported the resolution, speaking in Bengali.

Sasanka J. Roy Babu Sasanka Jiban Roy in supporting the resolution said:—

At this late hour, I do not propose to inflict a speech upon you. I will only say one or two words about the 4th clause of this resolution. This clause relates to the carrying on of agitation in India as well as in England, to make the laws of this country consistent with the

rights and liberties of the people. It has hitherto been the proud boast of British statesmen and historians, that with the advent of British rule in this country, the people of this country have been granted the great boon of freedom, the great boon of liberty of speech. It has hitherto been the proud boast of our people that we have always lived under a reign of law, a rule of law; but with the introduction of repressive measures beginning with the Seditious Meetings Act of 1907 and culminating in the Defence of India Act of 1915, that proud boast has been scattered to the winds. We may as well say that we are living now-a-days under a reign of law which is nothing but a misnomer, when enactments which are passed by the legislature are made in order to authorise the doing of things which are clearly illegal and subversive of the fundamental rights of man. It is our bounden duty to agitate and agitate effectively against the operation of the Defence of India Act and the other repressive measures. Until and unless these repressive legislations are repealed, there cannot be any genuine, any *bond fide* intention on the part of our rulers to give us substantial responsible government in this country. If the governing authorities in India as well as in England are really serious about their expressed intention of granting self-government to this country, they must repeal these repressive measures at once. Therefore, gentlemen, I beseech you that we must at once start a successful campaign, not only in the metropolis, but also in the mofussil, in order to secure repeal of the Defence of India Act. With these few words, I beg to support the resolution.

The Resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

VI

Babu Panch Cowry Banerjee in moving a vote of thanks to the Chair spoke at some length in Bengali which was punctuated by frequent and loud cheers. The vote of thanks was carried by acclamation.

The President then dissolved the Meeting.

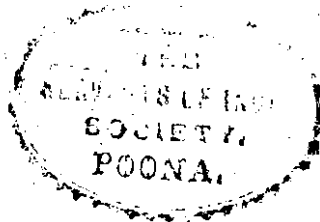
Owing to persistent shouts for a speech from Babu Jitendra Lal Banerjee, the Chairman requested him to say a few words.

Babu Jitendra Lal Banerjee said :—

It will not add to your conviction if I add my feeble voice to the protest which has already been made. You know that you have formed a Committee for the purpose of protecting such rights as you have and to see that these rights are not further invaded and to see that your liberties may be protected and that further encroachments upon it may not be made. So much you know. As for the rest, it depends upon you. You know that this Act has lasted in this country for three years. You sometimes say that it is a shame, but to me it appears that if it is a shame to the Government, it is no less a shame to us. Had we been earnest, had we been striving with an united front, I am sure that, by this time, this law would have been abrogated. I am quite sure that this blot on our civilisation would have been removed. That this law remains on the Statute Book is a proof that the British people have deteriorated in character. Is it not also a proof that we are wanting in sufficient earnestness, that we are wanting in sufficient strength of mind? Let me hope that, from to-day, strength will come to us,—that this earnestness will grow upon us—and we will make it manifest to the world we are doing our best to remove it, whatever the enemy's strength may be, whatever possible obstacles may be in our way (*applause*).

The Meeting then separated.

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SPECIAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE.

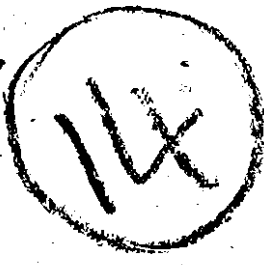
WELCOME ADDRESS

BY

Mr. S. KASTURIRANGA IYENGAR,

Chairman, Reception Committee.

MADRAS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1917.



AS CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE OF THIS SPECIAL provincial conference, I beg to accord a most hearty welcome to delegates and visitors who have responded to our invitation and are present in this hall. The conference, it is needless to say, has been convened under special circumstances. We are in the midst of a momentous political crisis in this country. The fortunes of the great war which is being waged and the results of which will affect for better or for worse the conditions of this country, as much as of any other portion of the British Empire, are being closely watched with anxious solicitude by the people of the land from the highest to the lowest. There has been a revolution in thoughts, aims, ambitions and perspective among people of all classes. No thoughtful man can deny that it is a wise stroke of policy on the part of British statesmen to have determined to take occasion by the hand and to endeavour to make the British connection with this country stable and beneficial in the permanent interests of Great Britain and India. The people of this country have acclaimed with universal satisfaction, the historic decision as a result of which the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, has been deputed to this country to confer with H. E. the Viceroy and the leaders of the Indian people in order to give effect to the declaration made by His Majesty's Government on the 20th August last, that a substantial step should be taken in the realisation of a system of responsible government in this country. In its larger aspects, British administration of India has been in the past a chain of broken pledges and the blasting of national expectations. It is from an extremely short-sighted, selfish standpoint that a section of the European community seeks to thwart the legitimate aspirations of the people and the success of the mission for which Mr. Montagu has come out to India. The virulence of Anglo-Indian and European opposition is not an unknown feature in the history of India when questions of India's constitutional progress come up for consideration, but it has largely overshot its mark in the present case by its utter perverseness of attitude and glaring defiance of obvious facts. The pronouncement of His Majesty's Government regarding Indian constitutional changes is, we find, impugned, the deputation of the Secretary of State and other members of the delegation questioned, and the prospect of sanctioning any measure approaching self-government for this country is denounced as revolutionary and as fraught with the greatest danger to the interests of this privileged class whom Mr. Macaulay called the white aristocracy, as

well as to the people of the country. The necessity for convening this special conference will be easily understood when we realise the number and nature of the reactionary forces that are working against our national interests. Such obstructive elements are more numerous and mischievous in this part of the country than elsewhere and it is to be hoped that the proceedings of this conference, added to the other representations that have been made, would enable His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, and His Excellency the Viceroy, to obtain some insight into the conditions which the present system of administration has brought into existence, in this Presidency, and which cannot be improved except by the grant of a substantial measure of responsible government. My remarks on this occasion will be devoted to further the said purpose with such knowledge of and acquaintance with public affairs as I may claim to possess.

THE LEGISLATURE.

In countries constitutionally governed, the legislature is the chief organ of Government. It enacts laws, empowers taxation and grants funds for public expenditure and it has the power of supervision in respect of such matters. These functions being performed by means of an assembly composed of representatives of the people, the result is an administration in consonance with the best interests of the people, a sound system of practical political training, and, as has been pointed out, the invigorating effect of freedom on character in developing patriotism and public spirit, self-reliance and energetic self-help. President Wilson of the United States says in his book on "Congressional Government: "—"No one, I take it for granted, is disposed to disallow the principle that the representatives of the people are the proper ultimate authority in all matters of Government, and that administration is merely the clerical part of Government. Legislation is the originating force. It determines what shall be done and the President, if he cannot or will not stay legislation by the use of his extraordinary power as a branch of the legislature, is plainly bound in duty to render unquestioning obedience to Congress. And if it be his duty to obey, still more is obedience the bounden duty of his subordinates. The power of making laws is in its very nature and essence the power of directing and that power is given to Congress. The principle is without drawback and is inseparably of a piece with Anglo-Saxon usage."

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S POWERS.

Even in India, at the time when the Legislative Councils were reconstituted in 1909, it was intended by means of them, "to effectively associate the people of India with the Government not only of occasional legislation but of actual, every-day administration." And the then Prime Minister Mr. Asquith declared: "It is most desirable in the circumstances to give to the people of India the feeling that these legislative councils are not mere automatons the wires of which are pulled by the official hierarchy. It is of very great importance from that point of view that the non-official element should be in the ascendant, with proper safeguards." Far from the non-official element being in the ascendant, the legislative councils in their actual working are shams as reflecting the opinion of the community. They are mere pageants of mimic power, and are a negligible factor in determining the course of legislation as well as every-day administration. I shall take a few cases which will illustrate my point and show the importance of the subjects which the non-official members

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brought up before the council and how they were treated by the President, the official members of the council and the nominated members. It is well in the first place to bear in mind that the President of the council, as Lord Pentland has observed, is also the Governor of the Presidency. Without intending any disrespect to His Excellency all his actions in respect of the council proceedings are colored by the consciousness that he is the Governor and the executive head of the administration. Lord Pentland's experience as assistant whip for the Liberal Party in the British Parliament has also been of service to the official party in the Madras Legislative Council, His Lordship as Governor has had the opportunity of making nominations to the office of non-official members in two successive terms. In both occasions most of the nominated members have been excellent additions to the voting strength on the official side, and they could by no stretch of imagination be described as representatives of popular interests. Such members as the Prince of Arcot and Archbishop Aelen are but ornamental appendages to the Council. They are typical examples of the nomination made of non-official members, who scarcely interest themselves in the proceedings of the council by putting a question or participating in debate on any subject, but in a division are almost always found voting on the Government side along with the European elected and nominated members. The power of disallowing any interpellation or proposed resolution is vested in the President, and it is a common complaint of the non-official members that, wherever discretion is vested in the President under the Regulations, it is almost always exercised against the non-official member claiming the benefit of it. Between 1910-1917, the total number of resolutions disallowed by the President was about 230. Of these such as were disallowed by reason of their being out of time, though the Governor had the power to allow the same, were nearly 50. The disallowed resolutions related to subjects of great importance, matters relating to the well-being of the masses of the people, regarding which the Government should have welcomed the opinions of the non-official representatives of the people in the Council. Some of the most important of the resolutions were with reference to the following subjects:—(1) Village Panchayats. (2) Female education. (3) Elementary education. (4) Assignment of waste lands for the depressed classes. (5) Village libraries. (6) Encouragement of popular scientific literature through the vernaculars. (7) Schools for Panchamas. (8) Medical inspection of schools. (9) Encouragement of indigenous systems of medicine. (10) Itinerant dispensaries. (11) Publication of papers relating to the Kannambady project. (12) Official migration to the hills. (13) Committee to compose religious differences among Hindus, Muhammadans and Christians. (14) Modification of the Council Regulations. (15) Abolition of grazing fees. (16) Determination of the permanent strength of judges in the High Court.

INTERPELLATION AND RESOLUTIONS.

As regards interpellations sent by non-official members on matters of general public interest, the President has practically an absolute discretion. Even when allowed, questions are sometimes mutilated and modified to a form to which the member concerned has to submit. In the matter of allowing and disallowing resolutions and interpellations, it is the will of the executive department of Government that is the dominating factor rather than the fulfilment of the intentions of the framers of the council regulations.

As President of the Council Lord Pentland has not succeeded in shaking himself free from the trammels of the bureaucratic environment. At the meeting of the local Legislative Council in April last, when the financial statement was being discussed, Lord Pentland ruled in the course of the speech of a non-official member, that the latter had no right to refer to matters not included in the Budget. As a result of the President's ruling the hon'ble member was obliged to stop in the middle of his observations. Lord Pentland's view is directly opposed to the Government of India's despatch on the reform proposals of 1908 in which they observed, that "it is permissible for members to draw attention to any matter they please, whether it arises directly out of the budget proposals or not." The Hon'ble Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, the late Finance Member, said as Vice-President of the Imperial Council:—"In addition to the new and more intimate discussion on the detailed figures we thus retain the old liberty of general criticism." In another matter of much public interest, Lord Pentland exercised his power as President in curtailment of the rights of non-official members of Council. Motion for leave to introduce a bill for the formation of Village Panchayats was refused by His Lordship although the ruling was shown to be contrary to law and practice, and this contention is supported by the legal opinion obtained on the point from no less an authority than Sir John Simon, the late Attorney-General of England. At the last meeting of the local Council, when a resolution proposed by a non-official member had been discussed, a division was taken by show of hands and Lord Pentland declared that it was lost. Thereupon a poll was demanded and His Lordship ordered that the members, mostly officials, who were absent should be sent for to be counted in the division. Objection was taken that the votes of those who were not present during the discussion of the subject and when the first division was taken should not be counted. Lord Pentland overruled the contention, allowed the fresh official votes to be counted and the resolution was declared lost. The right of framing rules for the conduct of business in the Councils vested in the Governor-in-Council subject to the sanction of the Governor-General-in-Council. These rules are rarely framed, as may be expected, by way of increasing the freedom of the non-official members in the discharge of their duties and it is an extraordinary thing that non-official members are not permitted information as to any proposed modifications, and requests for publication of draft rules for public criticism are disallowed. It should be clear that the proposal in the Congress-League scheme that the head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council but that the Council should have the right of electing its President is thus the result of bitter experience in the Legislative Councils in India. The position and functions of the head of the bureaucracy and of the President of a representative assembly are utterly incongruous and incompatible, and they should not be allowed to co-exist.

KANNAMBODY RESERVOIR PROJECT.

Even a Governor who comes out to India for a period of five years possessing the training and the traditions of English Parliamentary life is not, under the present system, able to enter into the spirit of the scheme under which the Legislative Council is constituted, and to work in harmony with the aims of the representatives of the people. One of the resolutions disallowed by Lord Pentland as President, of the Council related to the

Kannambady Reservoir project in Mysore, a most important matter in which hundreds of land-holders in the Madras Presidency and in the Mysore State as well as the respective Governments were interested. The dispute was referred to the arbitration of a high judicial officer. It was dealt with however as a subject in which only the two Governments were parties and to numerous representations on the part of the Madras landholders that they should be allowed to intervene and represent their claims the Madras Government gave a negative reply and a resolution in the Legislative Council requesting the material papers to be published for the benefit of the landholders was not even allowed to be brought up. The matter in dispute was eventually decided by the arbitrator against the Madras Government to the detriment of their own revenue as well as of the far larger interests of the landholders. The Madras Government appealed against the arbitrator's decision to the Government of India and while the said appeal was pending the landholders claimed to be heard and sent up a memorial to be forwarded to the Government of India. It was at this stage that the Local Government were able to perceive the importance of the interests at stake of the landholders and the justice of their claim to make a representation in support of their interests and in forwarding the memorial it was stated as follows :—

“The Governor-in-Council does not propose to discuss the legal and engineering arguments put forward in the memorial from the landholders of the Tanjore and Trichinopoly districts but he desires to impress on the Government of India that the memorialists represent the most advanced and progressive section of the people of this Presidency. They fill many positions of distinction in the Public Service, at the Bar and in the press, and their influence is powerful & widespread. A decision adverse to their interest will be a keenly scrutinised & any proposal to settle the claim of Mysore by a compromise giving each party a portion of the matter in dispute will be bitterly resented and produce serious discontent and agitation. Nor, in the opinion of the Governor-in-Council, is the case one of compromise. Madras rights are of enormous importance and great antiquity. It is not merely a question of loss of land and irrigation revenue to the Government. But the loss to the Government would be insignificant compared to the loss to the landowners, and it is on this feature of the case that the Governor-in-Council desires that stress should be laid in considering any proposed settlement by compromise.” These remarks show how thoroughly ill-considered and fatally faulty their own action was in shutting out the landholders from participation in the arbitration proceedings which were of a quasi-judicial nature and in refusing access to them even of the material papers. In the result the decision of the Government of India was also against the landholders and the Madras Government and an appeal against it is now pending before the Secretary of State for India.

VILLAGE PANCHAYATS.

The action of the Madras Legislative Council in regard to the subject of the Village Panchayat system is a topical illustration of the utter futility of popular opinion in influencing the actions of the Executive Government. Not to go so far back as the opinions held on the subject by Sir Thomas Munro, and Dewan Rangacharlu of Mysore. Lord Morley as Secretary of State for India expressed his conviction that the village in India has been the fundamental and indestructible unit of the social

system surviving the downfall of dynasty after dynasty, and desired that policy should be inaugurated which would make the village a starting point of public life and the Royal Commission on Decentralisation after full enquiry recommended the adoption of the Village Panchayat system. The Government of India referred the matter to Local Governments for the consequent action. Notices of a resolution for the establishment of Village Panchayats were given by a non-official member in 1912. This was disallowed on the extraordinary ground that it was contrary to the public interest to discuss the same. The proposal was renewed in 1913 with the same result. In 1914 a resolution was given notice of which again was disallowed. In 1915 the subject was brought up in the Council when the Government opposed the motion and on a division the Council was equally divided, and the Vice-President of the Council, a civilian member of the Executive Council gave his casting vote against the resolution. The subject of Village Panchayats had in the meantime been referred to the district officers for opinion. All the Collectors in the Presidency, except two, reported in favor of the proposal. But the Board of Revenue composed of four members of the Civil Service, and a bureaucratic stronghold, detected a political flavour in the popular demand and delivered themselves of the following opinion:—"It can hardly be questioned that if a representative body composed of members of all castes was ever found at all generally at the head of the villages in Southern India, this state of things was so long ago, and has left so little trace of its existence, that it is mere pedantry to talk of 'reviving' the panchayats, and that the question whether they are to be created or recreated has a purely academic importance. It seems equally certain that the present proposal, if given effect to, must largely restore and perpetuate the very state of things which it has been one of the main objects, and one of the most difficult problems of British rule to terminate the selfish domination and exploitation of the laboring classes by the higher castes. The Board is emphatically of opinion that the proposals are fraught with the gravest dangers. The scheme is presented under the attractive guise of a revival of ancient institutions but it appears to the Board that the constitution of standing village panchayats in Madras would amount to the introduction of a brand new system based on accidental ideas of self-government. It is true that the Indian facade of the new edifice might recommend it to those politicians and journalists to whose imagination is due a now familiar species of pseudo-history inspired by political motives the aim of which is to show that the West has given the East nothing and that the most liberal institutions and the most surprising inventions of Europe and America were anticipated in ancient India." The civilian members of the Madras Government are, it is needless to say, as much obsessed as the Board Members with the idea of the movement for the instituting of Village Panchayats being fostered by political considerations and the Government were of opinion that the Panchayat system should be established on a voluntary and not on a statutory basis. A system of Irrigation Boards constituted in the Nellore District by the voluntary co-operation of the people under official supervision, by an Indian Collector, worked with great success to the knowledge of the Government, but after a time the system failed for want of statutory power to enforce liabilities upon recalcitrant individuals. The next stage in the history of the question was the attempt by a non-official Member to introduce a Bill in the Council empowering the formation of Village Panchayats. The President of the Council, as already stated, refused leave, contrary to law,

even to allow the motion to be placed before the Council. A resolution was again brought forward in the Council in May last asking the Government to introduce a Bill for the constitution of Village Panchayats in this Presidency. The Government as usual stoutly resisted the proposal and the Resolution was defeated, 18 members voting for, and 21 against it which included all the official Members reinforced by the non-official European and Anglo-Indian elected and nominated members.

OTHER INSTANCES.

Of 478 Resolutions regarding matters of general administration moved in the Council between 1910-17, only 59 were passed. Of 162 resolutions proposed during the same period relating to the budget only three were passed. As at present constituted, the non-official members of the Legislative Council have not the smallest influence over the actions of the Executive Government not only in matters of general administration but also in matters of public expenditure. They are not even allowed access to information on such matters till after the expenditure had been sanctioned. The proposal of the Government to erect official quarters for high European officials in so ancient and well equipped a city as Madras was made and sanctioned without the knowledge of the non-official Members. A question was put in the Council as to whether the Government proposed to acquire sites in Madras for erecting bungalows for officials and for whom the bungalows were to be erected and so on. The answer was "Government are unable to furnish the information asked for as details have not yet been settled." At the next meeting of the Council, a resolution was moved that the proposal to erect bungalows for the use of high officials in the city of Madras should be abandoned. It was opposed by the Government and defeated, although it was pointed out in the course of the debate that there were many other pressing public demands which could not be met for want of funds.

In April this year a resolution was moved suggesting that the Government should appoint a non-official as the president of one district board as an experimental measure. It was unanimously supported by the Indian non-official members. The Government opposed the resolution tooth and nail, and the Hon'ble Member who spoke on behalf of the Government declared that the time was not ripe for the experiment and declared his inability to find out one suitable non-official to fill the office of the president of a district board. After the lapse of a few months, a Government Order was issued that the Government have had for a long time under consideration the question of appointing non-officials as presidents of district boards and stating that they had resolved to appoint four non-official presidents in the districts!

As regards the efficacy of interpellations in exposing cases of abuse of power and inducing the Government to take remedial action, the cases of Messrs. Sykes, Vibert and Wells may be cited as examples.

OFFICIAL HIGH-HANDEDNESS.

Mr. Sykes, I. C. S., Sub-Collector and First Class Magistrate of Tiruppur, convicted a railway gang cooly of theft and sentenced him to suffer 25 stripes. This sentence was reported in the Madras Press by five respectable residents of the place to have been carried out by the Magis-

trate himself one evening in December 1913 when there was no medical officer present in circumstances of great brutality. It was also stated that Mr. Sykes had on several occasions carried out sentences of whipping, and according to a calculation made at the time, he had sentenced 47 persons to whipping who had suffered altogether 790 stripes. Interpellations were put in the Legislative Council on these facts, and the Government replied that the allegations were unfounded, except that Mr. Sykes inflicted corporal punishments on three youthful offenders which the Government strongly disapproved. The Government also enunciated the startling doctrine that the personal infliction of the punishment of whipping by a Magistrate was not illegal. A civilian member of the Executive Council also informed the non-official member who put the interpellation that an untrue statement having been made against a member of the Civil Service, according to the opinion of the Government, his duty and that of the journal which published the version of the correspondent's was to withdraw the same and express regret. The journal in question refused however to do so, re-affirmed its belief in the published statements and challenged the Government to prosecute it for alleged false statement if they thought a prosecution could be sustained. The Government did not think fit to proceed further with the matter. Mr. Sykes was not only a Magistrate but also the chairman of a municipal council. At a meeting of that council at which the administration report was to be considered and passed Mr. Sykes was stated to have summarily closed the proceedings and to have committed various irregularities in the conduct of the meeting. Five of the eight councillors present at the meeting, four of whom were influential Mahomedan businessmen, wired to the Government reporting the irregular proceedings of Mr. Sykes. The Government took no immediate action thereupon and on the matter being interpellated in the Legislative Council, the Government replied that they had received a report from the Collector and were satisfied that the complaint of the five councillors was without foundation. The councillors had no notice whatever of any enquiry by the Collector or the Government into their allegations. As *ex officio* chairman of the municipal council, Mr. Sykes, it was brought to the knowledge of the Government, had attended only one meeting in the course of two years. This member of the Civil Service was not only a Magistrate of the first class and chairman of the municipal council but also a Collector and Revenue Officer, disposing of revenue and rent suits. Mr. Sykes' dilatory and unsatisfactory method of disposing of suits under the Estates Land Act was brought to the notice of the Government by means of interpellations in the Legislative Council but the Government replied that they did not think it necessary to call even for a report in respect of the allegations made against him.

Another matter which evoked much public comment at the time was what is known as the Trichinopoly toll-gate contractor's case. On a certain night in October, 1915, a servant of one Mr. Ormsby, an European employee of the South Indian Railway Company, was riding on his bicycle past the toll-gate when the agent of the contractor demanded the toll fee for the bicycle, on refusal to pay which the bicycle was detained. The servant reported the fact to his master. Mr. Vibert, Collector and District Magistrate of Trichinopoly, who was dining with Mr. Ormsby on the night in question, drove over to the toll-gate, paid the fee and took away the bicycle and directed the police to charge the toll-gate contractor.

for theft of the bicycle. The contractor was accordingly charged, arrested and remanded to jail. Two days after, Mr. Vibert, in his capacity as president of the district board, cancelled the toll-gate contract and made over the business to the board's own management. Applications for release on bail of the accused contractor made to Mr. Vibert, the District Magistrate, and also to the Sessions Judge were rejected. An application for bail was made to the High Court supported by an affidavit setting out the facts and an order for release on bail was made, which the Deputy Magistrate, an immediate subordinate of the District Magistrate, delayed to give effect to for several days after receipt of the High Court order, during which time the contractor continued to be in the jail. An application was also made to the High Court for transfer of the case of theft for trial from the Trichinopoly district to some other district on the ground that the District Magistrate, Mr. Vibert, was interested in the case. When the application for transfer came on for disposal before the High Court, the Public Prosecutor intimated to the Court the fact that the case of theft against the contractor had been withdrawn by the District Magistrate. The illegal and oppressive proceedings in which an innocent respectable man was deprived of his personal freedom as well as of his right of property aroused much public indignation. In November 1915, six weeks after the incidents took place and which had been published and commented on in the public press, during which period the Government had taken no action, the attention of the Government was specially drawn to the matter in the Legislative Council by means of interpellations and a motion for leave to introduce a Bill regarding the cancelment of the toll-gate contract; thereupon the Government said they would call for a report upon the subject. In February next, on being again interpellated, the Government replied that they had received a report and were considering it. In the following April upon being again questioned on the subject, the Government said in the Legislative Council "that suitable orders" had been passed and that the papers connected with the subject would not be published. The public were left entirely in the dark as to what the Government's conclusions and orders were in a matter in which gross abuse of power, and official persecution had been established against the district officials.

A recent case relating to Mr. Wells, I.C.S., Sub-Collector and First Class Magistrate of Chicacole, was the subject of a proposed interpellation in the Legislative Council. A young Baniya was rising his mouth in the early morning in the pial of his house, and spitting upon the ground. Mr. Wells who was passing along the street imagined that the young man was making way faces at him and sent a municipal sanitary inspector to fetch the young man, upon whose arrival before him he taxed him with having insulted him. The Baniya protested his innocence but Mr. Wells, according to the young man's statement published in the papers, forced him down by his neck and made him kiss his boots, and warned him to salaam him whenever he met him. Notice of an interpellation on the subject was given by a non-official Member of the Legislative Council, but the Government refused to allow the question to be put except upon the member accepting responsibility for the accuracy of the statements made. Nor does it appear that the Government took any kind of action upon the allegations published in the papers against the officer in question.

At the last meeting of the Council, the Government were asked a number of questions relating to the fact that the Principal and a Professor of the Presidency College deprived a student of his scholarship and obtained an apology from him because, in writing a composition upon the subject, or a very similar one, of the responsibility of European races in their rule over the dark races which he had been asked to write upon expressed views which he conscientiously held but which were distasteful to the Professor. The Government in their reply contented themselves with the statement that the suspension of the scholarship was a matter within the discretion of the College authorities and that they had not taken nor proposed to take any action in the matter.

ABOLITION OF STOCKS.

The question of the abolition of the degrading form of punishment of stocks was raised by an interpellation in the local Council in January 1914, when the Government said that the power of awarding this punishment would be withdrawn from village officers when Regulation XI of 1816 came to be revised. A non-official member brought in a motion for leave to introduce a Bill to amend this particular Regulation at the meeting held in May 1915, so as to secure the abolition of this form of punishment and in the course of his speech, he referred to its degrading character. The seconder of the motion also referred to the strength of feeling in the depressed classes on whom generally this punishment was inflicted, regarding the degrading distinction. Sir Harold Stuart, Member of the Executive Council, agreed with the remarks of these members as regards the character of the punishment, but said he could not accept the motion as he thought he was sure that within a period of two months from that date, a comprehensive measure dealing with the Regulation as a whole would be introduced, containing a provision for the abolition of this particular form of punishment. The Government were then requested to issue executive instruction to officers not to award this punishment, but the Hon'ble Member in charge of the Judicial Department replied that he could not give a definite promise or assurance that he would interfere by an executive order with a legislative enactment, but that he would consider the proposal and see how far the infliction of the punishment could be put an end to. No amending legislation, however, was, as promised, introduced either in the November session of that year, that is 1915, or in the year 1916, and, in the circumstances, the same member brought forward for a second time the identical motion in the February meeting of the current year. It may be noted that, in the meanwhile, the punishment had been inflicted on more than a thousand persons. The motion was resisted this time also, the Government replying that they hoped to introduce amending legislation in November next, and the motion was lost. Up to this time executive instructions do not seem to have been issued to prevent this punishment being awarded, though the long promised Bill was introduced in November last.

MEASURES DISCOURAGED BY JUDICIARY

ADOPTED IN COUNCIL.

All the above instances to which many more may be added have been cited to show the utter futility of interpellations and the ineffectiveness of the Legislative Council as a means either for the ventilation of popular

grievances or for the removal of administrative abuses. In framing legislation the Executive Government has as little regard for the views and wishes of the people's representatives as in their everyday administration. The Legislative Council is often used as an instrument for enacting into law measures which are discountenanced by the highest judicial tribunals and which are injurious to the interests of the people. The Land Encroachment Act, the Irrigation Cess Act and the Encumbered Estates Act are instances in which the Courts had exposed the illegality and injustice of executive acts, and the Government took advantage of a plastic majority in the Legislative Council made up of official and nominated non-official members to pass into law measures calculated to legalise such acts. In a recent case in which all the Courts including the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council held that the claim of the Government to certain water rights in Zemindari tracts was unsustainable the Government have replied to an interpellation in the Legislative Council that they are preparing a Bill to be introduced to give effect to the claim which they set up in the Courts and which was found untenable. A knowledge of the practical working of the Legislative Council in regard to all its functions according to its present constitution clearly demonstrates the wisdom of Edmund Burke's observations: "The laws reach but a very little way. Constitute Government how you please, infinitely the greater part of it must depend upon the exercise of the powers which are left at large to the prudence and uprightness of ministers of state. Even all the use and potency of the laws depends upon them. Without them, your commonwealth is no better than a scheme upon paper—and not a living active, effective constitution."

REPRESSIVE MEASURES AND THE PRESS ACT.

It is in view of these considerations that the Congress-League scheme asks that a resolution of the Legislative Council should be binding upon the Executive Government unless vetoed by the Governor-in-Council and that the Legislative Council should have full control in respect of legislation, taxation and public expenditure. In this country, where the bureaucracy is almost entirely composed of aliens that look down upon the people of the land as if they were lords of human kind who walk the earth with pride in their port and defiance in their eye, the conditions for political emancipation and general progress for the indigenous population are particularly hard and trying. The members of the Civil Service who hold and pull the reins of the central administration as well as of all its branches must be relieved of their present privileged position by a system in which the representatives of the people will have full scope for their talents, energies and proved capacity for public business. The aggressive and sometimes unlawful use of power by members of the Civil Service without sufficient redress from the central government by reason of its being chiefly manned by members of the said service cripples the civil liberties of the people, and cramps their progress. The practical working of the Indian Legislative Councils can leave no doubt in the minds of reflecting persons, that there are among the people, large numbers who feel a keen concern for the interests of the various elements of the community, that the present system is a visible token of their political impotence and a negative factor in the promotion of good government. The bulk of educated Indians are painfully conscious that they are substantially devoid of constitutional freedom as well as civil freedom because

it is the former that affords security for the latter. It has been pointed out by an eminent constitutional lawyer in England that the control of the executive by Parliament is not less necessary to ensure political freedom than the maintenance of its legislative power. It is political freedom that leads to the preservation and development of civil liberties. In India, constitutional freedom is non-existent and the civil liberties of the people are precarious, and they suffer not only by acts of the legislature not being in accordance with the wishes and interests of the people but also in consequence of the irresponsible acts of the executive. The present widespread national movement for political reform in this country has brought into public view many instances of the exercise of arbitrary power on the part of the agents of the Executive Government. In this Presidency, since the time when Lord Pentland delivered his speech at the Legislative Council meeting in Ootacamund in May last deprecating the reform proposals contained in the Congress-League scheme, there has been a series of repressive measures by executive officials which have caused a feeling of acute estrangement between large sections of the educated classes and the agents of the Government. The bitterness of feeling produced in the country by the internment of Mrs. Besant and her fellow-workers, and the indignation and public agitation which were its immediate consequences are well-known. By the rescission of the order of internment, a great act of justice was done by the Imperial Government and the country has reason to feel grateful for the righteous step though responsible Indian opinion will not agree with the views expressed in the House of Lords even by official spokesmen that the original order of internment by the Madras Government, was a necessary, just and lawful measure. To my mind nothing was more un-British than the orders of internment passed against Mrs. Besant and against Messrs. Arundale and Wadia. They cannot be justified under any principle of constitutional or civil law with reference to the facts capable of being established against them. The debate in the House of Lords, clearly showed that the British statesmen are disposed to judge of things, which take place in India almost entirely upon the principle of expediency, and no higher considerations govern their judgment. Immediately after the delivery of Lord Pentland's speech in the Ootacamund council meeting, there was a flood of criticism in the press and in public platforms in respect of its antagonistic character to the Indian political demands. This was promptly followed by repressive measures taken by the Executive Government to stifle criticism and to discourage by various means the holding of public meetings. The internments served but to aggravate the situation both in respect of the popular excitement and various methods of official coercion and police oppression. It is at such times that the helplessness of popular leaders, and their negative influence in the counsels of the Government become manifest. The Legislative Council for all it was worth in its present constitution and mode of working, was not in session, the Government being on the hills and 6th months being the interval between the last session of the Council and the next. Several of the organs of Indian opinion fell under the ban of the Government's displeasure by reason of their outspoken attitude in regard to the actions of the Government. I must state here plainly that the Indian press is in a marked disadvantage in its relations with the local Government as compared with the Anglo-Indian Press. The Indian Press Act is an instrument of intimidation and oppression in the hands of the agents of the Government towards those Indian news-

papers which endeavour to discharge their duties honestly and fearlessly. In countries where a system of popular representative government exists, Professor Sidgwick observes that "the control over government given to the governed by periodical elections is likely to be ineffective and ill-directed, unless the danger of blindness or apathy on the part of the governed be met by full and free criticism of current legislation and administration. At the same time such criticism is likely to be often very distasteful to the governmental organs criticised even when it is highly useful; hence there is a *prima facie* reason for including in any rigid constitution rules protecting the citizen's right 'to speak the thing he will' from undue governmental interference." In a country where there is no popular government in the true sense of the term, the need for a vigilant independent Press is even greater and when the government is composed of men of a different race and color from that of the governed, it is indispensable for the purposes of good government. At the same time the all-powerful bureaucracy would be more than human if it does not try to put forth all its efforts to suppress organs of independent opinion. It is an irony of fate that, under the regime of a Governor reared in the traditions of the Liberal Party, a repressive campaign against the liberty of the Press in this Presidency should have been set on foot. The persecution which the *New India* has suffered at the hands of the bureaucracy is now a matter of history. It has, on the whole, emerged triumphantly out of its suffering in consequence of the indomitable energy of its founder, Mrs. Besant, of the justice of the cause which it has espoused, and of the tide of national feeling upon which it is borne.

Other Indian journals including the *Hindu* in this Presidency have been threatened with pains and penalties for discharging their duties of legitimate criticism of the measures of the Madras Government, while an Anglo-Indian paper of the stamp of the *Madras Mail* is allowed to act as if it were a chartered libertine of the Press. It is a vicious system which allows the members of the Executive Government, whose actions or daily the subject of criticism in the newspapers, should constitute the judges of the legitimacy or otherwise of the criticism. In most cases they are not equipped with the necessary knowledge and are not free from prejudice to discharge the extremely difficult task of keeping the functions of the judge uncorrupted by the prejudices of an accuser. It is now a matter of notoriety to what lengths the *Madras Mail* has gone by way of indulging in vituperation and invective of the highest officials in the Indian hierarchy. What can bring the British administration in this country into contempt more surely than to accuse the Viceroy of making false statements and the Secretary of State for India of acting in a cowardly manner? Yet, such allegations have been made with practical impunity in the *Madras Mail*. Notice of a resolution was given by a non-official member to be moved at the last meeting of the local Legislative Council that:

"This Council begs to invite the attention of His Excellency the Governor-in-Council to the activities of the "Madras Mail" and of its editor Mr. T. E. Welby, since the middle of August last in carrying on an agitation, and creating a political crisis in India by writing which

- (a) are likely to cause alarm to sections of the public;
- (b) are calculated to aggravate racial feelings and hostility;
- (c) hold out threats of injury to His Majesty's Secretary of State the Right Honourable Mr. E. S. Montagu in the performance of his duties;

(d) attempt to bring his authority as the servant of the King into contempt and lower the dignity of his office and to recommend that they may be pleased to consult their Law Officer with a view to take such action as they may be advised to prevent the development of any serious crisis".

The resolution was disallowed under Rule 7 of the Resolution Rules as being opposed to public interests. The Hon'ble Member in a communication to the press pointed out.

Under Rule 7 of the Resolution Rules it is open to His Excellency the President to disallow any Resolution or part of a Resolution without giving any reason therefor other than that in his opinion it cannot be moved consistently with the public interests and I was informed by letter dated 12th November that my resolution had been disallowed under that rule as, in the opinion of His Excellency the President, the discussion of the Resolution in the Legislative Council would not be in the public interests. If the letter had been accompanied by any assurance that the matter was receiving the attention of the Government, I would not have cared to pursue the subject further. I now notice however from the answer to one of the interpellations that the Government do not propose to take any action and have not taken any action in the matter.

Rule 8 of the Resolution Rules does not permit of any discussion in Council in respect of any order of the President under Rule 7 and I have therefore no option left but to ventilate the matter in the Press. It was because public interests were suffering and were likely to more seriously suffer and feelings of animosity between communities were constantly being roused and effectively so that I thought it necessary to give notice of the Resolution. But His Excellency the President disallowed it also in the "public interests." It remains for the public to decide whether public interests have been rightly served in this case. The "Madras Mail" is allowed with impunity to indulge in abuse of and attributing base motives to high officials of State. They, however, are not on the spot to protect themselves."

It seems incredible that the Madras Government should hold that writings alleged to excite class hatred and impugning the conduct and character of the very highest officers of the Indian Government, viz., the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, are not matters which in the public interest should be scrutinised for suitable action. That in England, it is deemed necessary that responsible Ministers of the Crown should protect their reputation by taking suitable action when their character is basely and causelessly attacked in newspapers is proved by the action which was recently brought in the High Court by Mr. Lloyd George, the present Prime Minister, against a journal which accused him of cowardice. It seems to me to be established beyond doubt that the Indian bureaucracy pursues quite different lines of policy in regard to the Indian and the Anglo-Indian Press in the country. The members of the Civil Service ought not, in my opinion, to be entrusted with the responsible and delicate task of sitting in judgment over Indian newspapers when, throughout their career, whether in the district official life or in the secretariat their actions and vagaries have often to be exposed and criticised in the public Press. It has been said by a member of the Civil Service of that legislative monstrosity, the Indian Press Act, that no honest journalist need have any fear of its provisions. The answer to this remark is that there is no guarantee whatever in the present state of things that the law is honestly administered. If the Hon'ble Mr. Gillman's view as to what constitutes objectionable writing in a newspaper which I have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with is sound, no journal can perform its legitimate functions.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST HOME RULE MOVEMENT.

Mr. Gillman as member of the Executive Council is in charge of matters relating to the Press and also of the Judicial portfolio. He thought

it fit to convey an admonition to a contributor to the *Hindu* through his brother an Indian district judge that his contributions should not be continued in the form in which they usually were. It is this judicial officer that sent round a circular to the subordinate judicial officers in his district calling for information as to which members of the legal profession are taking interest in the Home Rule leagues and Swadeshi movements. The Government were asked at the last meeting of the Legislative Council whether they issued any such instructions to the judicial or executive officers in their service to which the answer was in the negative. It is a fact however that many executive and judicial officers throughout the Presidency interested themselves in putting down the Home Rule and Swadeshi movements and discouraged and persecuted the promoters of them in various ways. The prosecutions in connection with the Home Rule flags in Coimbatore, Erode, Guntur, and other places, the proceedings taken under the Legal Practitioners' Act by the District Magistrate of Chingleput against a pleader, the action taken by local authorities in various places to suppress public meetings, were manifestations of the intolerant spirit of the local bureaucracy and its determination to block the path of political reform. Some officials in high position European and Indian have not scrupled to devise means to sow the seeds of discord between one community and another and among the leaders of different sections of the Indian people. The Madras Presidency had been till a year ago particularly noted for the harmony and amicable social relations which subsisted between the members of all the varied communities. Since the Memorandum of the Nineteen Members of the Imperial Legislative Council and the Congress-League Scheme have been published, there has been feverish activity in creating schism in one community after another, and producing a state of social and political demoralization in this Presidency. The non-Brahmin movement was started with distinctly official support and guidance. Conferences to produce cleavage in that community and to protest against the National Congress Scheme have been organized with official help in various places. There had been hitherto no division of opinion among the members of the great non-Brahmin community as to their agreement with the aims and objects of the Indian National Congress. The split which has been created in this community and which has resulted in the formation of two rival associations, one of them supporting the Congress Scheme and the other in inveterate opposition to it is the outcome of official machination, and the perverted employment of the energies of some individuals belonging to the community. The division that now exists in the local Mahomedan community owes its origin to the same cause. The formation of the Southern India Islamia League on the 21st November last from out of the members of the Moslem League who had deliberately adopted the address to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, accepting the Congress League Scheme and the prompt acknowledgment of it by the local Government in order to present a separate address repudiating the said scheme, is a circumstance the significance of which is very clear. The schism now existing among the zemindars of this Presidency which culminated in the Landholders' Association not presenting the address supporting in the main the Congress Scheme which it had adopted at its last meeting has been likewise largely fostered by official influences. In so simple a matter as the regulation of the presentation of addresses to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, the Madras Government has laid itself

open to grave misconstruction by its method of accepting addresses from newly formed and insignificant bodies protesting against the Congress-League Scheme and rejecting addresses from influential and representative associations supporting the said scheme. Under the present system even the judiciary, not excluding the High Court, cannot be said to be absolutely beyond the influence of the Executive. The appointment and promotion of subordinate judicial officers rests with the Executive Government. It is a sound principle which has been hitherto acted upon, that the opinion of the High Court should be taken and followed in such matters. This tradition does not seem to be respected by the Madras Government under the present regime, and judicial subserviency under such circumstances on the part of the subordinate judicial officers must cease to be a matter of complaint. The practice of appointing temporary and acting Judges of the High Court gives a large scope to the Executive Government to exercise judicial patronage even in appointing high judicial officers. The combination of judicial and executive functions in the same officer gives to the executive a close grip on the magistracy. The executive Government of which the members of the Civil service form the backbone is thus paramount in the administration.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Hon'ble Mr. Ambika Charan Muzumdar, an aged veteran in Indian public life, who was President of the last Indian National Congress held at Lucknow, has made the following true observations. He said, "The Indian Civil Service forms the citadel and the stronghold of this bureaucracy, and that service is so deeply saturated with selfish prejudices and so highly inflated with the legend of its natural superiority that it cannot heartily entertain any proposal of reform which necessarily militates against its vested interests, and which if forced upon it by higher statesmanship naturally excites its secret opposition. The entire administration from the Government of India down to the smallest District charge is practically vested in one train of officials who belong to this service and who as such form a compact fraternity. They are with honourable exceptions traditionally conservative in their ideas and exclusive in their habits and manners, while their systematic training in the arts of autocratic Government leave little or no room for the development of those instincts which might go to curb their insular pride, and inspire confidence and respect in those whom they are called upon to govern. In vain would one try to find a single instance in which with very rare exceptions, the members of the Service have supported any Government measure of reform of the administration which they as a body naturally regard either as an infraction of their status, or as a reflection upon their capacity for good government." Writing soon after the appointment of the last Royal Commission on the Indian Services, the late Sir Henry Cotton who was himself a distinguished member of the Civil Service said "What is wanted now is no scheme for bolstering up the decaying fabric of a service adapted only to obsolete conditions which have passed away and never can return . . . The Indian Civil Service is moribund and must pass away after a prolonged period of magnificent work, to be replaced by a more popular system which will perpetuate its efficiency while avoiding its defects." The provision in the Congress-League Scheme that the members of the Civil Service should not ordinarily be appointed Members of the Executive Council is thus in accor-

dance with the general consensus of opinion among all those who are competent to judge. That the Indian Members of the Executive Council should be elected by the non-official members is also a measure suggested by the requirement that such Members should be in living touch with popular opinion and popular interests. The cardinal point which should not be lost sight of in any scheme of political reconstruction is that the Government of the country should be so constituted that its agents are made responsible for the due discharge of their duties of the people. No important Governmental functions should be beyond the scrutiny and control of the representatives of the people.

CONCLUSION.

The most important and pressing matters in which provision should be made for the voice of the representatives of the people having adequate control over the Executive Government, are taxation, legislation, expenditure of public funds, administration of justice, and education. Unless the Executive Government is made subordinate to the Legislative Council, and the latter made fully representative of the people, the essential improvement in the general administration which is now urgently called for cannot be brought about. The proposal of compartmental autonomy which is made in some quarters, and which relates to some of the minor departments of administration, apart from its other defects, leaves out of account the necessity for effecting radical changes in important departments of Government which the proposal does not affect and for making which changes the existing constitution does not afford the means above referred to, as its actual working has shown. The fundamental principles for the realisation of Self-Government, and for attaining the objects of all sound systems of Government, viz., the happiness and prosperity of the people are the same in all modern civilized countries. The Imperial Government must take a broad and bold survey of the Indian situation and apply to the solution of the question the lessons taught by the political history of advanced nations.

The ebb and flow of the fortunes of the war that is working havoc in the civilised world render it prudent and statesmanlike on the part of the British Statesmen to cement the ties of loyalty which bind the people of India with the British Crown with ungrudging recognition of the justice of their demands. Mr. Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, speaking recently of India in the House of Commons said, "How bravely, how loyally they have supported the British arms. The memory of the powerful aid which they readily accorded in our hour of trouble will not be forgotten after the war is over, and when the affairs of India come up for examination and action."

It would be an element of incalculable strength to the British Empire during the pendency of the war and ever afterwards if the British democracy will place itself on truly fraternal relations with the Indian people, and help to realise their long cherished desire to obtain responsible government for and by themselves.

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Selections from the Proceedings



of the

Godavari District Association

1917.



THE OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC.

Whatever information English Officials as foreigners can acquire, is and must be obtained from the people themselves; and it may be obtained from the right men or from wrong men. And in this matter, the ordinary official is under great disadvantages, because as the local magnate and the dispenser of official favours he is naturally surrounded by self-seekers who do not deal in disagreeable truths. It is the interest of these men to flatter him and for their own protection to keep him out of touch with the independent men of his district; also to persuade him that these men are unfriendly and even (vague and terrible word) "seditious." Many an official is thus brought into antagonism with the best men and falls into the hands of secret police and the miserable class of spies and informers. Independent Indians of high character and public spirit are to be found in every province and in every district, but they must be sought out with care; they do not willingly present themselves in official quarters where they may be met with suspicion from the authorities and insult from underlings. Now it was this class of high-minded men in solid agreement throughout India, friends of India and England whom Mr. Hume took as advisers." (Sir Wm. Wedderburn).

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THE

Annual report of the Godavari District Association for the year 1917.

We beg to submit the report of the work done by the Godavari District Association during 1917 together with the usual statements.

Constitutions:—On 1st January 1917, there were 444 members on the rolls of the Association and at the end of the year the number stood at 437. The Honourable Mr. K. R. V. Krishnarow Bahadur B.A., Zamindar of Polavaram has been the President, Mr. V. Kameswararow Pantulu B.A., Vice-President; Mr. V. Bhavanarayana B.A., B.L., Secretary, and Mr. D. V. Prakasarow B.A., Joint Secretary and treasurer of the Association throughout the year. The Managing Committee consisted of 39 Members including the 4 office bearers and the 3 Presidents of Taluk Associations ex-officio.

Accounts:—The total receipts for the year exclusive of the opening balance of Rs. 5216-6-4 amounted to Rs. 3044-13-8 and charges amounted to Rs. 2,916-3-5 leaving a balance of Rs. 620-2-7 made up of Rs. 608-10-10 in the Savings Bank Deposit Account with the Indian Bank Ltd. and Rs. 117-9 in cash with the Treasurer on the 1st instant. The chief items of receipts are Rs. 433 by subscriptions from members Rs. 300 on account of night schools, Rs. 1,800 by contribution from the Reception committee of the IV Andhra Conference held at Cocanada in 1916 and Rs. 175 handed over to us by the Godavari District Agricultural Association. The chief items of expenditure are Rs. 734 for establishments, Rs. 318 for night schools, Rs. 800 paid to the Literary Association for execution of repairs to the District Association portion of the Town Hall building, Rs. 800 deposited in the Godavari District Co-operative Banking Union as a fixed deposit for one year, Rs. 175 loaned at Rs. 12% interest per annum on Promissory note and Rs. 383-2-8 an account of printing charges. The sum of Rs. 90 due towards interest on the Rs. 1,000 invested on land mortgage at Ramachendrapuram was not realized before the close of the year.

District and other Conferences:—The eleventh Godavari District Conference was held at Amalapuram on 6, 7 and 8 April 1917 under the presidency of M. R. R. Peri Narayanamurti Garu B.A., B.L., Vakil, High Court of Madras. The conference was well attended by the members of our Association residing in Cocanada, Rajote, Ramachendrapuram, Rajahmundry, and Peddapur Taluks in addition to those of the Amalapur Taluk. The report of that conference was published by this Association. The Conference passed a resolution appointing ten members of this Association to form a deputation and wait upon the Collector of the District to present the resolutions passed at that conference and furnish him with such information as he might require on the several points discussed therein. The Collector informed that before meeting any deputation, he would desire to become intimate with the conditions of the district and would, therefore, propose to let the matter lie over for some time. Before he could make it convenient to meet the deputation, the Collector was transferred from this district and the resolution could not be carried into effect. A Special Godavari District Conference was held at Ramachendrapur on 18th November 1917 to emphasize and reaffirm the adherence of the people of this district to the political reforms outlined in the Congress—Moslem League Scheme, and to neutralize the undesirable effects anticipated at the time from the Bikkavole programme. It was presided over by Mr. Ch. V. S. Narsimharaju B.A., B.L., of Vizagpatam and was attended by 2500 registered delegates in spite of the questionable methods adopted to defeat the special session and its objects. The credit of having held such a successful session at short notice was entirely due to the enthusiasm of a handful of members of the District Association at Ramachendrapur who braved all difficulties and obstacles and overcame them with determination. The presence and co-operation of Messrs. Ranganatham, Mudalyar and Soundararaja Ayyangar deputed by the Home Rule League

Madras, and of Mr. Sreeramulu Naidu, deputed by the Madras Presidency Association also contributed largely to the success of that session. One characteristic feature of that conference was that 5 Panchama delegates sent out from Cocanada were housed and boarded in the fort along with other delegates and the 20 Panchama delegates in all were seated promiscuously in the Conference pavillion without hitch or murmur. This Association sent 5 Panchama delegates at its expence to the Audi Andhra Conference held at Bezwada in November last and they were satisfied with the reception accorded to them.

Our Institutions:—The Association maintained the two night schools throughout the year, one in Rechupeta for the Panchamas, and the other for Sudras in Ramakrishnarow peta. The former was held in a rented house and the latter in a private house free of rent. The two buildings in which the schools were held being insecure and uncommodious, necessary furniture and other equipment could not be supplied. A site measuring 108 square yards was purchased in Rechupeta for Rs. 77 for the Panchama school, and a building will be constructed shortly as Rs. 379-1-2 are at credit of these two schools in the funds deposited in the Indian Bank. This amount will however not suffice for the school house and it will have to be supplemented by contributions and donations from members. There were 41 pupils in the Panchama school and 35 pupils in the Sudra School at the end of the year and the results of inspection by educational officers were pronounced to be on the whole satisfactory. There has been a falling off in attendance in both the schools owing to high prices and unfavourable season, as the pupils were either labourers or sons of labourers.

Meetings:—8 meetings of the Managing Committee and one meeting of the General Committee were held during the year at Cocanada. The Joint Secretary addressed meetings or held conversational meetings with ryots and others at Amalapuram, Tatipaka, Modekurru, Undoor, Gollalamamidada, Vulapalle, Medurupaka, Ramachendrapur, Medapadu, Anaparty and Aryavattam on topics relating to irrigation, agriculture, and land revenue. No propogandistic work on a regular basis as in 1916 could be conducted as the services of the Travelling Secretary had to be dispensed with for want of funds. He created interest in the work and aims of the Association by his systematic touring in 1916, and the demand for a paid Travelling Secretary is great as people are to be educated in the legitimate ways and means of ventilating their peculiar grievances and as people are anxious to have more Co-operative Societies in villages and to be acquainted correctly with the trend of events towards which the present political agitation in the country is directed. Three village Associations at Vadapalem, Palivela, and Doddigunta were affiliated to the District Association during the year.

Publications:—300 copies in English of selections from the proceedings of the District Association, 700 copies in Telugu of the annual report for 1916 together with a clear summary of the proceedings of the Association for the same period, 1000 copies in Telugu of the report of the 11th Godavari District Conference were published for free distribution. The Honourable Mr. K. R. V. Krishnarow Bahadur B.A., President of the Association published at his own cost some thousands of copies of Telugu pamphlets on Village Panchayats, Village Associations and Record of Rights and offered them for sale to the public at 6-8.0 per hundred through our Association, on the condition of the profits thereon being appropriated by the Association. A number of District and Taluk Associations, and some Taluk Boards in the Circars and in Kurnool District purchased some copies thereof. The support given to the publications which were pronounced to be useful and instructive being meagre, the further publication of pamphlets on kindred subjects as at first contemplated had to be given up, more especially on account of high price of paper.

District Agricultural Association paid a contribution of Rs. 75 and the amount was lent on a promissory note at 12.0/0 as per resolution of the managing Committee of 9th July 1917. During the year under report our Secretaries co-operated with the Officers of the Agricultural Department in enlightening the ryots on the advantages of manurial depots established on Co-operative basis and of establishing a bone crushing machinery at a convenient centre in the delta. To secure this object, the Association entered into detailed correspondence with the departments of Fisheries, Industries, and Agriculture and gathered full information on the subject. One of our Secretaries was present at the meetings of ryots held for this purpose by the Assistant Director of Agriculture at Gollalamidada and Anaparty. An Agricultural Co-operative Society with a membership limited to rural Co-operative Societies only was formed at Anaparty in November and it is satisfactory to note that the managing body of that Society mostly consists of Members of the District Association. The following extracts from the report of the Agricultural Department for 1916-17 will be found interesting in this connection. The Assistant Director of Agriculture, Anakapalli writes: "The Godavari District Association with its energetic and enthusiastic Secretary has been doing very useful and educative work not only in agriculture but also in the improvement of rural tracts. The appointment of honorary visitors to the farm at Samalkot has its inception from this. But honorary visitors have not taken the interest expected of them. Some of the members have been demonstrating on their own lands, the economic planting of paddy and green manure making them small demonstrational farms for the benefit of neighbouring ryots." In para 52 of his report to Government, the Director of Agriculture remarked that the Godavari District Association had done good work both educative and demonstrational.

The Association purchased some quantity of Uttarakar paddy seed from the Samalkot Farm and distributed it among ryots at Ramachendrapur, Correpudy and Cocanada for experimental cultivation during the 2nd crop season. The results are awaited.

Army:—Without going into details, it will suffice to say that our president took particular interest in the matter of voluntary enrolment of young men of this city in the India Defence Force by addressing meetings and doing all other necessary help to selected candidates. Our members have been sending news-papers, books and other comforts to the Andhra Soldiers in the East African Campaign so far as circumstances permitted.

Work of the Association:—The correspondence carried on by the Secretaries and the replies received thereto from the Officers of Government and others, as well as monthly statements of receipts and charges were placed before the Managing Committee from time to time for perusal and confirmation. The following are some of the important topics dealt with during the year.

- (1) Establishment of a B.A. Examination Centre at Rajahmundry.
- (2) Preservation of Jain images at Tatipaka and Pittapur.
- (3) Supply of boats to Tahasildars of the Upper Godavari taluks.
- (4) Improvement of drains in the Eastern and Central deltas.
- (5) Establishment of the District Munsiff Court at Ramachendrapuram.
- (6) Termination of the Indentured Labour Emigration from India.
- (7) Improvement of Kotipalli & Bodasakurru ferries.
- (8) Establishment of Schools for fishermen of some maritime villages in Cocanada Taluk.
- (9) Supply of Ballcuts over certain canals in the Eastern delta.
- (10) Repairing and widening bridges over canals in the Eastern delta.
- (11) Criticism of Taluk Board Election rules.
- (12) Suspension of Railway-cess in this district during War.
- (13) Amendment of rules regarding water applications.

(14) Publication of four programmes of Veterinary Assistants in Telugu.

(15) Assessment of back-yards.

(16) Prevention of contamination of water in the Cocanada canal above Chintapalli Lock.

(17) Improvement of surroundings and extension of compound of the Peddada School.

(18) Reconstruction of the Mukkamala Bridge.

(19) Correct preparation of Taluk Boards Voter's lists.

(20) Construction of a road from Anaparty to Chagalnad through Duppalapudy.

(21) Early closure of liquor shops in Cocanada during Dasserah.

(22) Training L. F. School Teachers in agriculture in the Samalkot Farm.

(23) Publication of results of late transplantation of paddy in the Samalkot Farm.

(24) Protest against alleged discontinuance of distribution of sugar cane varieties known as B 6450 & B 3412 from Samalkot Farm.

(25) Appointment of a non-official President to the Peddapur Taluk Board.

(26) Protest against appointment of Municipal Councillors as Bench Magistrates and vice-versa.

(27) Construction of Indian Refreshment Rooms at Rajahmundry and Tuni Stations.

(28) Reclamation of the old tank behind Amalapuram Taluk Office.

(29) Distinction between 1st and 2nd crop seasons in the delta.

(30) Sub-Registrars as Union Members and Union Magistrates. The Members of the Association in every taluk took active interest in obtaining signatures on the Congress Moslem League petition got up by Mr. M. K. Gandhi for presentation to the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu, His Majesty's Secretary of States for India.

A Deputation :—The Association resolved to present an address to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble the Viceroy and Governor General and the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India on behalf of the people of the district on the occasion of their visit to Madras. A casket was purchased and the address got printed at Madras. On 12th, ultimo, the Madras Government wired that the Godavari District Association which has been in existence for 23 years was not included in the final programme of Madras deputations although Associations and Societies of a few months existence were considered worthy of the honour. A copy of the address had, therefore, to be sent to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for India, by post with a request to place it before Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu for his kind acceptance.

Conclusion :—In Mr. T. Ranganakuru Naidu, the Association lost a sincere well wisher and earnest co-worker at head quarters. There has been a considerable falling off in members for want of a paid worker to go to taluks and keep touch with members in villages. Unless steps are taken to remove this want, sustained work will not be possible whatever be the amount of labour bestowed by the office bearers at head quarters. The 11th District Conference Committee did not spare any funds for the continuance of the appointment of the Travelling Secretary just as the 10th District Conference Committee at Ramachendrapur did the previous year. It is hoped that the 12th District Conference Committee at Rajole will not ignore this important fact which is calculated to enhance the reputation of this Association and enlarge the scope of its operations in useful directions.

Cocanada,
January 27, 1918.

V. BHAVANARAYANA,
D. V. PRAKASAROW,
Secretaries.

**Financial Statement of the Godavari District Association,
Cocanada for 1917.**

Receipts.		Rs.	A.	P.	Payments.		Rs.	A.	P.
Opening Balance	5791				Establishment charges and travelling allowances.	326	0	9	
Cash at Bank	436-2-2				Night School charges	318	7	3	
Cash in hand	85-4-2				Deposits in Bank	875	0	0	
Due from members	84-0-0	605	6	4	Refunds	24	0	0	
Subscriptions received and due.	535-0-0				Post and Telegraph charges.	48	5	3	
Night School receipts	300-6-0				Printing charges	383	2	8	
Interest on Investments.	26-15-8	882	5	8	Auditor's fee	5	0	0	
Contributions.					Repairs to Buildings	800	9	0	
Audra Conference Committee.	1800 0-0				Lady Hardinge Prize Fund	6	0	0	
Amalapur Conference	136-4-0				Cost of Books and Publications etc.	14	0	0	
Other Contributions	98-0-0	2031	4	10	Stationary	3	8	0	
Miscellaneous	...	103	14	6	Lighting charges	1	6	0	
Sale of old materials	...	7	1	0	Casket charges	76	9	0	
Receipts from Agricultural Association.	75 0-0	75	0	0	Bad debts written off	74	0	0	
		3687	15	6	Closing balance	2955	12	11	
					Cash in Hand	11-7-7			
					Cash in Bank	608-10-10			
					Due from Members	112-0-0			
						732	2	7	
						3687	15	6	

**Balance Sheet of the Godavari District Association
Cocanada 1917.**

Liabilities		Assets	
Lady Hardinge Prize Fund	100-0-0	Cash in Hand	11-7-0
Building maintenance Fund	1800-0-0	... in Bank	608-10-19
Capital of the Association	13662-7-6	Out standings from members.	112-0-0
	15562-9-6	INVESTMENTS	
		P. Venkatramiah & Bros., mortgage A/c.	1000-0-0
		Cocanada Co-operative Union Bank Ltd.	100-0-0
		District Co-operative Banking Union.	800-0-0
		L. Sarabhayya Garu	75-0-0
		Other property	
		Town Hall site A/c	12000-0-0
		Library A/c.	600-0-0
		Furniture A/c.	150-0-0
		Interest Accured due	100-14-11
		Rent Accured due	4-8-0
			15562 9 6

I hereby certify that the above balance sheet represents the true financial position of the Association as shown by the books of the Association on 31st December 1917,
D. V. PRAKASA ROW, Joint Secretary,
(Sd.) K. KRISHNA RAU, Government Certified Auditor.

ABKARI.

CLOSURE OF LIQUOR SHOPS.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Collector, Godavari District, dated Cocanada, 26-7-17, No. 164.

Referring to your letter D. Dis. 3804 Rev. dated 4th October 1916, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to issue orders in consultation with the Abkari Department, if necessary, for the closure of liquor shops in this city and in the towns of Rajahmundry and Peddapur during the ensuing Dasara festival days from 6 p. m. every day.

(2)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Secretary to the Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue, Madras, dated Cocanada, 21-9-1917, No. 190. In letter No. 195, dated 27-9-1916, this Association requested the Assistant Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue Department, Cocanada Sub-division to order the closure of all liquor shops in this town by 6-30 p. m. every day as a special case during Dasarah holidays with a view to remove temptations for excessive drinking among the labouring and other lower classes.

In his letter No. 3804 Rev. dated 4th October 1916, the Collector informed the Association that it would have been possible to consider our suggestion if it had been made in time to reach him before the Dasarah festival. In letter No. 164, dated 26th July last, the attention of the Collector was solicited to the above said letter, and he was requested to issue orders for the closure of liquor shops in the three Municipal towns of this district during ensuing Dasarah festival days from 6-30 p. m. every day.

(1)

Although nearly two months have since elapsed, no reply has been vouched to the Association to its submission nor do any instructions appear to have been issued departmentally.

I have therefore the honour to request that the Board will be pleased to issue orders in the manner prayed for as Dasarah is approaching again.

(3)

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, D. No. 960 Abkari dated 9th December 1917.

SUBJECT.

Informing the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association that all the liquor shops in Cocanada were closed on the occasion of the Dasarah and Mohurram Festivals of 1917.

The Hon'ble Mr. C. G. Toddhunter, I. C. S., Agt. 3rd Member, Board of Revenue and Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue.

Read petition from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association Cocanada, No. 190, dated 21-9-1917.

Resolution:—

ABHAR

In reply to his letter No. 199, dated the 21st September last, the Secretary to the Godavari District Association will be informed that the closure of all the liquor shops in Cocanada was ordered by the Collector on the occasion of the Dasarab and Mohurram festivals of 1917.

To The Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Copy to the Collector of Godavari.

A - AGRICULTURE.

Memorandum R. O. C. 92, Government, dated 18-2-17 from the Director of Agriculture, Madras.

The Director of Agriculture, Madras, regrets that owing to the necessity of economising in printing and stationery during the war, he is compelled to reduce the publications hitherto forwarded to you. In future the following publications only will be sent free. Copies of other publications can be obtained on payment. A list up to date with prices will be found in Agricultural Calendar, price one anna, published annually.

To the Honorary Secretary, District Agricultural Association of Godavari.

Scientific Reports of Anakapalli Farm, copy each.

Central Farm, Coimbatore.

B - AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS AND MANURE DEPOTS.

(1)

Resolutions passed at the XI Godavari District Conference held at Amalapur in April 1917 and communicated to the Director of Agriculture, Madras, with letter No. 111, dated 12th May 1917.

XII. This Conference resolves to request Government (i) that a fish curing yard be established in this district with a view to supply cheap fish manure to ryots as on the west coast: (ii) that a coconut experimental farm be also established in this district as on the west coast.

XVII-(9) that a MODEL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL be established in the Samalkot Farm to teach scientific agriculture to the people of this district and that model farms be opened in all Taluks of this district.

(2)

Letter R. O. C. No. 478-P, dated Madras 19th May 1917 from G. A. D. Stuart Esq., I.C.S., Director of Agriculture, Madras, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 111, dated 12th May 1917 enclosing copy of resolutions of the XI Godavari District Conference.

(2) With regard to resolution XII (i) you should address the Honorary Director of Fisheries.

(3) With regard to resolution XIX (ii) the question of the necessity for a Coconut Experimental Farm on the East Coast will be considered later on. At present the available staff is required for more urgent matters. The results obtained on the West Coast Farm should be largely applicable to the East Coast conditions.

(4) With regard to resolution XVII (ix) scientific agriculture cannot be taught in a school, but only at a properly equipped college such as that at Coimbatore. As for model farms I am of opinion that if such were maintained by wealthy and practical landowners on their own lands they would be a much more useful demonstration of improved agriculture than any Government-run farm. I should always be glad to assist and advise gentlemen who wish to establish model farms. It is out of the question to have a Government farm in every Taluk for very many years yet. It is hardly possible to have one in every district.

Letter No. 123, dated Cocanada, 24th May 1917 from the Godavari District Association, To the Honorary Director of Fisheries, Madras.

In forwarding herewith copy of resolutions passed at the XIth Godavari District Conference held at Amalapuram on 6th, 7th and 8th ultimo, I have the honour to solicit your attention, at the instance of the Director of Agriculture, to resolution XII (ii) thereof for favourable consideration.

Letter Ref. No. 1250, dated Calicut, 5th June 1917 from Sir F. A. Nicholson, S.C. I. E. Honorary Director of Fisheries, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Referring to your No. 123, dated 24th May last, I have the honour to state that several fish curing yards have already been established in the Godavari District where fish is being salted and dried for consumption. But I presume that by a "fish curing yard" your conference really meant a place where fish oil and guano is prepared as on the West Coast. If so, I would point out that the fishing conditions are very unfavourable for such factory in your district. Fish oil and guano is manufactured from the oily sardines which are caught in immense quantities at certain seasons on the West Coast but they are not found in anything like such abundance on the East Coast and then practically only on the Northern parts. It will be an economic waste if other valuable food fishes now available are converted into manure.

As you wish to introduce fish guano among your ryots, the only way to do so is to get down the stuff from the West Coast where it can be had from Rs. 60 to Rs. 90 per ton. To keep down the charges, etc., you will have to organise a Co-operative Society for the district, who will arrange to collect the orders for such manures, combine them into a single order, get a large quantity e.g. a full truck load, at a time and then distribute the stuff to the clients. The Nidamangalam Co-operative Society in the Tanjore District is already helping the ryots in this way and has been buying fish manure from the West Coast during the last two years. My Assistant Director Mr. V. Govindan, will be glad to help you in the matter with further information.

In his letter No. C-75, Pet., dated 14th June 1917, the Assistant Director of Agriculture, Anakapalli informed the Association that fish manure would be very valuable to paddy, sugar-cane, and other garden crops and it would be a useful addition to the available manures in the delta tracts.

(6) NOTE. A soil survey and analysis of about 100 samples of soil of the Tanjore District by the Assistants of the Research Institute, Coimbatore revealed the fact that the

Tanjore Delta was largely granulated (of Phosphatic manures). This research was in agreement with the experience of the ryots who said that their soils had deteriorated affecting their output. The soil of the Cauveri contains all the plant food required by a paddy crop. Duing to various dams, and regulators on the way, clear water is available for irrigation and places where no silt deposit takes place, the recoupmnt of phosphatic acid in the Kaveri Delta soils is needed. A Co-operative manure Society for the Tanjore District, was therefore started for production of bone-dust and flour phosphate, and their distribution among members. The Society was started on 1st October 1916. Its objects are to purchase bones, phosphatic nodules, fish manure, oil cakes, superphosphates, green manure, seeds, and other manures and to refine or mix them to sell to members for cash, the finished products such as bone-meal, flour phosphates etc., and to do such other work as might be conducive to the furtherance of those objects. There were in the Society 40 members with a paid-up share capital of Rs. 455; in addition there were 45 Associate Members, who did not contribute any share capital to the Society. These are Pariahs who gather bones to the Society. It was a type of non-credit agricultural Co-operative Society both for production and distribution. The Society hired a disintegrator attached to a 9 B. H. P. Oil Engine for converting bones into bone-meal and bone-dust and for milling poona etc. Bones were regularly collected by advancing a small sum of money to the Associate Members on their pledging their spades for advances received. For every spade an advance of 10 Rupees and a gunny bag were given. Generally two people joined together for this work. From 12-10-16 to 15-7-17 about 6½ tons of bones were collected after deducting 10% of the actual weight for wastage. The Pariah Associate Members were paid Rs. 1-8-0 for 100 lbs. of bones collected and delivered at the Office store-room. Before the Society came into existence, the Pariahs were selling bones to merchants at Rs. 18 per ton, who sold them to European Firms at about Rs. 40 per ton. The Co-operative Society paid to the Associate Members who collected the bones at about Rs. 35 per ton ensuring an earning of annas eight per day, instead of the ordinary wages of 5 annas for a man coply. The economic condition of the Pariahs was thus improved with corresponding benefit to the Society which could purchase on an average at Rs. 32-8-0 per ton bones after deducting 10% during purchases for wastage. To produce one ton of bone-meal and bone-dust, it cost Rs. 32-8-0 + Rs. 7 for breaking bones into pieces etc. + Rs. 20 being hire for producing one ton of dust in the disintegrator or Rs. 59-8-0. The Society fixed a rate of Rs. 65 as the sale price per ton of bone dust. The bone meal of this manure Society is said to contain 4 0/0 Nitrogen 24 0/0 phosphoric acid the same quality being sold by manure firms at about Rs. 80 per ton. Bone meal containing 20 0/0 phosphoric acid is sold by firms at Rs. 65 to Rs. 70 per ton. The agricultural department advised the Society to mix one cwt. of bone meal with one cwt. of fish guano and use 2 cwt. of such a mixture for an acre of land. Bones of the value Rs. 6595 were exported from Cocanada to Ceylon in 1911-12, Rs. 46465 in 1913-14, Rs. 31,300 in 1914-15, and Rs. 20,539 in 1915-16. This decline in the last two years was due to the war and the shortage of tonnage available. As plenty of material is available locally, and as bones are collected and sold at Rs. 10 per ton for being railed to other places, it was considered desirable to make an effort for starting a manurial Society on Co-operative basis in the Godavari District also. It was ascertained by calculations that bone meal locally manufactured and fish guano obtained from the west coast could be sold here at cheap rates so that the cost of manuring an acre of delta land would not exceed Rs. 8/12 against Rs. 12/4-0 of manures bought of firms.

A meeting of the ryots (of whom many are Members of the District Association) was held at Gollalamidada on 4th October 1917 to concert measures for starting a manure Society on Co-operative basis in the Eastern Delta 150 ryots were present. The meeting was addressed by the Assistant Director of Agriculture 1 circle.

Anakapalli and by the joint secretary of this Association and a modus operandi was arrived at.

It was eventually resolved to establish an Agricultural Co-operative Society at Anaparthi with a membership limited to rural Co-operative Societies of the District. The Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies, and the Assistant Director of Agriculture, and the Joint Secretary of this Association were present and took part in the deliberations of the meeting. The Society is awaiting the final orders of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies to start work.

C-TOUR PROGRAMMES OF VETERINARY ASSISTANTS

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the Collector Godavary District, dated Cocanada, 6-5-17, No. 96.

The tour programme of the Veterinary Assistant working in this district is being published in the body of the District Gazette in English. In order to serve the purpose for which the notification is issued, I have the honour to request that you will be pleased to issue instructions for its publication in Telugu also in the village sheet of the Gazette which is supplied to the village officers. As full Gazette is not supplied to village officers, the ryots, for whose benefit the notification is intended, cannot otherwise be aware of the tours of the Veterinary Assistants in the several taluks and the result will be a very poor outturn of work in the taluks visited by them. The Vaccinator's programme is invariably published in the vernacular of the district only.

(2)

Proceedings of the Collector, Godavary.

H. H. Burkitt Esq. i. c. s. Collector, Godavary. D. Dis. 2622 Rev. of 1917 dated 12-6-1917.

Read:—Letter No. 96 dated 6-5-1917, from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada suggesting the publication in the village sheet, in Telugu, of the tour programmes of the Touring Veterinary Assistants.

Read this office N. Dis. Pet. No. 1353 Rev. of 17 dated 12-5-1917 and reply of the Superintendent, Civil Veterinary Department, Madras, endorsement on G. R. No. 2067 G. C. of 17 dated 1-6-1917.

ORDER

The tour programmes of Veterinary Assistants are at present published in the District Gazette in English only. In order that the movements of the Veterinary staff may be better known to the ryot population and their services more generally utilised, it is hereby ordered that their tour programmes be published in diglotti in the village sheet of the District Gazette.

2. The Treasury Deputy Collector is requested to have the programmes translated in Telugu and published accordingly.

To the Treasury Deputy Collector

Touring Veterinary Assistants in the District.

Superintendent, Civil Veterinary Department.

Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association.

D—AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE COIMBATORE.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the Collector Godavary District, dated Cocanada 4-10-17 No. 199.

At the suggestion of this Association Government were in their order No. 2748 Rev. Mis dated 8-11-1915 pleased to direct the Collector of this district to submit proposals for the appointment of honorary visitors to the Samalkot agricultural station, preference being given to none who was not a practical farmer with bonafide interest in agriculture. Mr. Ch. Seshagiri Row Pantulu M. R. A. S. F.L.S. of Kotipalli, Ramachendrapur Taluk is one of the agriculturists of this district who was selected in accordance with that G. O.

Mr. C. Seshagiri Row's agricultural experiments and his practical experience in delta irrigation are well known to the Agricultural Department to their Excellencies Sir Ather Lawley, and Lord Pentland to Sir Harold Stuart and the Collectors of this district from Mr. J. A. Cumming downwards.

It is significant to note that while Ganjam could furnish an honorary visitor to the Coimbatore Agricultural College Farm, the Godavari District with its 4 lakhs of acres of delta irrigation, and possessing a large number of educated practical farmers should be left unrepresented in the body of visitors to that farm. Possibly Government have not hitherto requested the Collector to recommend a suitable person from this district to be so appointed. Mr. C. Seshagiri Row is the adviser to this Association in agricultural and irrigational matters. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to recommend him to Government for being appointed as an honorary visitor to the Coimbatore Agricultural Farm in consideration of the importance of this delta district and his qualifications to eminently discharge the the duties expected of him in that capacity.

E—AGRICULTURAL TRAINING TO L. F. SCHOOL MASTERS.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the President Vizagapatam Taluk Board dated Cocanada 5-10-1917 No. 200.

It would appear that some teachers of the Boards Schools under your jurisdiction were sent last year and this year to the Anakapalli Agricultural station to learn practical lessons in agriculture and teach the subject in the schools with practical knowledge. It is further stated that during the period of training of the deputed teachers at the Agricultural station, substitutes were appointed at Board's expense where necessary, and that daily batta was also sanctioned this year for days halted at Anakapalli.

I have the honour to request that you will so good as to enlighten the Association on this subject, as it seems desirable to move the Godavary District Board and the Taluk Boards with a view to their following the same course in this district, since we have a well equipped Agricultural Station at Samalkot, where agricultural training can be given with facility and convenience to Local Fund Teachers.

(2)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the Assistant Inspector of Schools Godavary District, dated Cocanada 4-10-17 No. 201.

Requesting him to ascertain from the Assistant Inspector of School, Vizagapatam District the terms and conditions under which L. F. School Masters were sent to the Anakapalli Farm for training.

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(3)

Letter R. C. 1739/17 dated Vizagapatam 19-10-17 from M. R. Ry. C. V. S. Narasimharaju Garu B.A., B.L. President, Taluk Board, Vizagapatam, to the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 200 dated 5-10-17 I have the honour to state that 6 of the intelligent teachers in the Board schools were ordered to receive instructions in agricultural improvements at the Anakapalli Agricultural Farm for about a fortnight when the schools were closed for summer vacations last year and they were paid a single railway fare to and fro actual expenses for road journey and a halting allowance of Rs. 6-0-0 per day.

A similar recommendation has been made by the educational officers this year and steps will be taken to send some of the teachers for training during Christmas vacations.

Copy to the Secretary Godavari District Association for perusal and necessary action if he thinks that a similar procedure can be adopted in that district also.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the President Godavary District Board, dated Cocanada 26-10-17 No. 212.

In enclosing copy of letter No. 200 dated the 5th instant to the President Vizagapatam Taluk Board and his reply No. 1739 dated 19th instant thereto, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to see your way to ask the Presidents of Taluk Boards in this district to try the experiment of deputation of elementary school teachers in batches for receiving instructions in agricultural improvements at the Samalkot agricultural station. In an almost delta District like Godavary, the agricultural training given to L. P. School Masters will be of incalculable benefit to the villages in which the schools are established by the boards.

I am sending also copy of your endorsement under reference to the Agricultural Farm. I am sending also copy of your information.

(5)

Letter No. 266 Gl. dated Chicacole Road (camp) 3-11-1917 from the Assistant Director of Agriculture I circle.

Reference: Copy of letter from the Assistant Inspector of Schools Vizagapatam to the Presidents, Taluk Boards, Vizagapatam, Vizianagaram, Paryatipur, and Narsapatam.

In conformity with the procedure of last year, I have the honour to propose the sending of 6 intelligent Board school masters under your taluk Board for receiving practical training in the Government Agricultural Farm, Anakapalli for a period not exceeding 3 weeks in November next for favour of your sanction.

The rate of pay, the teachers are receiving will be continued to them and they may be paid the single railway fare for journeying to and fro and daily batta at 6 annas for the period spent in training at Anakapalli.

The total expenditure for each Taluk Board will not exceed Rs. 45 on this account and as selection of teachers will be made in schools containing more than one teacher no school need stop work or remain closed.

The Assistant Director of Agriculture has promised to bestow his personal attention upon the training and give the teachers efficient instruction. I request the favour of your early sanction for the proposal.

R. C. No. 1500 M. 117 dated 18-10-17.

Copy to the Sub-Assistant Inspectors in the District who are requested to record candidates in the following form:

- I. (1) Serial No. (2) Name of teacher (3) Name of school and designation (4) Age (5) Pay
- II. Names of teachers trained in 1916 and results of their work.

There need be no substitutes for teachers to be selected and no more than one be selected from a school. The work will begin from 2nd week of November. The teachers may be ordered to be ready to join on receipt of orders.

Copy to the Assistant Director of Agriculture, I Circle for information. No. 266 Gl. dated 3-11-17.

Copy to the Secretary Godavari District Association for perusal and necessary action if he thinks that a similar procedure can be adopted in that district also.

(Sd.) D. BALAKISTNAMURTY,
Assistant Director

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association to the Assistant Director of Agriculture, I Circle Anakapalli dated Cocanada 5-11-17 No. 218. Referring to your endorsement No. 265 Gl. dated 3rd instant, I have the honour to state that the President District Board, Godavari was already requested in my letter No. 212 dated 20th ultimo, to instruct the Presidents of Taluk Boards in this district to try the experiment of deputing Board Elementary School teachers in batches for receiving instructions in agricultural improvements in the Samalkot Agricultural Farm. I am sending also copy of your endorsement under reference to the President for his information.

(2)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association to the President District Board Godavari dated, Cocanada, 5-11-17 No. 219. In continuation of my letter No. 212 dated 20th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith for your information copy of endorsement No. 266 pet. dated 3rd instant from the Assistant Director of Agriculture I circle Anakapalli in the matter of giving practical training to board school masters in agricultural farms. The total extra expenditure to each Taluk Board in the Vizagapatam District for training 6 teachers for 3 weeks is estimated at Rs. 45 and a like amount can, it is presumed, be very easily spared by the local boards in this district also for that purpose.

F. LATE TRANSPLANTATION

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association to the Director of Agriculture, Madras dated Cocanada, 7-10-1917 No. 202.

It is within the experience of the delta ryots that there will be considerable diminution in the yield of paddy by late transplantation and this fact has become more evident owing to the inadequate supply of water through the pipe system which necessitates the prolongation of the transplantation period. It would appear that a series of experiments have been laid out in the Samalkot agricultural station to test the effects of late transplantation of paddy in delta irrigation. But the results are not

available to the public. The Association therefore begs to request that you will be so good as to direct their publication in diglott in the Godavary District Gazette for general information and guidance.

(2)
Letter R.O.c. No. 1003 P. dated Madras, 18th November 1917 from G. A. D. Stuart Esq, P. C. S. Director of Agriculture, Madras to the Secretary Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

In reply to your letter dated 7th October 1917, I have the honour to inform you that the results of the experiments on the time of transplanting of paddy at Samalkot Farm will be published in the report for that farm for 1917-18.

(G) UTTARAKAR PADDY.

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Farm Manager, Samalkot Agricultural Station, dated Cocanada 10-10-17 No. 204.

I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to favour me with information by return post if convenient, whether you can supply to this Association 10 kunchams of Uttarakar paddy which it is stated can be sown immediately after the first crop harvest without waiting till February, as ryots now do in the delta with regard to dalwa paddy. Please quote the price which will be sent by the peon of this Association on receipt of your reply. I shall be obliged for any instructions as to the method of the use of this variety of paddy.

It is a fact that it need not be transplanted but only sown like Narada paddy in a puddled field.

(2)
Letter R.O.c. No. 474 of 17, dated Samalkot, 11-10-1917 from the Farm Manager, Samalkot, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 204 dated 10-10-1917. 10 kunchams of Uthirakar paddy seed can be supplied at Rs. 5-8-0 per bag of 166 lbs.

I like to say that this variety was tried on the Farm only once i. e., during the last 2nd crop season and it was found that unlike other Dalwa varieties it was a success when cultivated in November, December, January,

It can be both transplanted and broad casted. In the latter case, about 35 lbs per acre must be sown and great care should be taken to make the field almost even in level.

(3)
I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to direct necessary measures to be taken in the manner stated to have been mentioned in the above letter.

One full bag of paddy was purchased and distributed among three ryots of Cocanada, Gorrepudy and Ramachendrapur in equal quantities to experiment according to the above instructions. The result is awaited.

D. V. PRAKASARAO,
Joint Secretary.

SOIL SURVEY IN GODAVARI.
 Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Assistant Director of Agriculture, Anakapalli, dated Cocanada 6-8-17 No. 172 (Agri. section.)

I have honour to request that you will be so good as to favour the Association with information as to whether soil survey of the Godavary Delta (Eastern and Central deltas) has been made and an official report of the same published. If so what has been the result of the analysis of soils. A copy of the published report may be kindly supplied either gratis or for sale if available.

N. B.—A reply was given that soil survey was not made. (D. V. P.)

I. SUGAR CANE VARIETY B. 3412.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Director of Agriculture, Madras, dated, Cocanada 12-10-17 No. 209.

At a meeting of the ryots of Cocanada and Ramachendrapur taluks held on 4th instant at Gollalamamidada, to adopt measures for starting a manure distribution society on co-operative basis, the Assistant Director of Agriculture of circle Anakapalli was also present and he addressed the meeting explaining the benefits of bone meal among others in delta irrigation. A large number of ryots who attended that meeting were members of the District Association. Incidentally, the Assistant Director mentioned at that time that under departmental orders received by him the distribution of sugar cane from Samalkot Agricultural station would hereafter be restricted to Java variety only, and that if ryots wanted varieties known as B. 6450 and B. 3412 they should make their own arrangements. This news came upon them as a surprise. The ryots of Vulapalli etc., entered their protest then and there and expressed their disapproval but the Assistant Director stated that he could do nothing in the matter as he was bound to carry out the orders of his superiors.

Attention is solicited to the accompanying translation of a letter from the village Association Konkuduru, Ramachendrapur taluk on this subject.

4. This subject was also considered at a meeting of the managing committee of this Association held on the 10th instant and the following resolution was passed unanimously.

"The Director of Agriculture will be requested to direct the Samalkot Agricultural Farm authorities to supply all varieties that are now being maintained and supplied without restricting it to the Java variety only and that all varieties that are now kept in stock may be continued and supplied as heretofore."

5. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to cause necessary enquires to be made with a view to the orders stated to have been issued in the manner indicated above, being revised, and the cause of anxiety among sugar cane growers removed.

(Translation.)

The ryots of the village have used sugar cane No. 3412 issued from the Samalkot Farm. It grows well and does not need much manuring. It is well suited for delta lands.

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requesting the Assistant Director, I circle, Anakapalli to supply the No. 3412 this year also, he has informed that under orders of the Director, it will not be issued hereafter to ryots from the Farm and that Java variety only will be issued if required. The site in question will have to be excavated to excavate the same. The site in question will have to be excavated to excavate the same. The site in question will have to be excavated to excavate the same.

- 3. Java variety is not of much use to our fields.
- 4. We request you to obtain the orders of the Director for the issue of cane No. 3412 to the delta ryots who are convinced of the preference of that variety to others.

(Sd.) M. KRISHNAMARAJU, D
Secretary.

The Association has since been informed that the Agricultural Department do not recommend B. 3412 as a suitable cane for delta conditions and consequently this will not be distributed from the Samalkot Farm.

Archæology.

A—EXCAVATIONS AT ARYAVATTAM.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association to the Superintendent of Archaeological Survey Southern Circle, Madras, through the Collector Godavari, dated Cocanada 22-1-17 No. 10. In enclosing true translation of a letter dated 15th Instant from members of this Association residing at Annayaram, suggesting that the Department may be addressed to undertake excavations at Aryavattam in the Cocanada Taluk, and copy of resolution No. VI passed by the general committee at its annual meeting held on the 20th instant, I have the honour to request that the matter may receive your favourable consideration at an early date. Buddhistic and Jain images displaying highest skill in workmanship were discovered in the vicinity and two of them are now secured by this Association in the Town Hall. One of them is just like the illustration given on page facing page 18 of Dr. Ananda Kumaraswamy's Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon. It is believed that attempts made in the direction indicated in the resolution will not be barren in results.

(Enclosure.)

VI. Read letter dated 15th instant from members of the District Association at Annayaram requesting that the Archaeological Department be addressed to undertake excavation of the fields near Aryavattam in Cocanada Taluk where relics of historical and Archaeological interest may be found.

This may be done.

(Sd.) K. R. V. KRISHNA RAO,
President.

Copy of letter No. 105 dated 22nd February 1917 from the Superintendent Archaeological Survey Department, Southern Circle, Madras, To the Secretary to the Godavari District Association Cocanada (through the Collector of Godavari District)

I have the honour to state that I am obliged for your letter No. 10 dated the 22nd January 1917 concerning the Buddhist and Jain images discovered in the village of Aryavattam. I shall arrange to inspect the site shortly and ascertain what steps are required to excavate the same. The site in question will have to be demarcated and written permission obtained from the owner of the land before the work is commenced.

(Sd.)
Superintendent.
(True Copy.)

D. Dis. 965 Rev. of 17 dated 7-3-17,

Forwarded.

2. The Tahsildar, Cocanada is being instructed to do the needful with reference to the last sentence of the Superintendent's letter. The Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association is requested to furnish the Tahsildar with any further information that may be necessary to identify the localities referred to in said letter.

(Sd.)

For Collector.

Archival

B-THE TATIPAKA JAIN IMAGE.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Tahsildar Rajole Taluk, dated Cocanada 6-3-1917 No. 28.

I beg to convey my thanks to you for the trouble you have taken at my instance in prevailing upon the inhabitants of Tatipaka to allow the so-called Jain image buried up to its neck the head of which is more than life size, to be excavated. It would appear that even Mr. Burkitt I. C. S., a former Sub Collector at Rajahmundry could not induce the villagers for lifting the image to the surface so that its full size and form might be visible to all. Your persuasive conversation produced the desired effect and it is hoped that ere long the image would be mounted on the pedestal for which subscriptions were raised on the spot.

The image is not a Jain image but that of a Buddha treated as a Yogi. The pose in which we see the image at Tatipaka does not represent any sort of mortification of flesh. Dr. Ahanda Kumaraswamy describes the position as one which has been immemorably adopted in India as most convenient for meditation, because the body remains self supported without effort, and on the other hand without a tendency to sleep. Exactly similar images found elsewhere have been described by writers on Indian Sculpture as the likeness of a Yogi as a flame that burns without movement. The Bhagavat Gita describes the likeness of a seated Yogi to a lamp in a windless place that flickers not. That the image at Tatipaka is not intended to represent an ordinary man but it is to be like the unwavering flame, an image of what all men can become by regulated meditation. The educated inhabitants of the village may be interested to know the above details.

Letter No. Ref. on G. C. No. 271 of 17 dated Rajole the 7th March 1917 from M. R. Ry. M. Narasimham Pantulu Garu B.A. B.L. Tahsildar of Rajole Taluk, To the Joint Secretary Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

While thanking you for the very interesting information contained in your letter No. 28 dated 6-3-17 about the image of Tatipaka, I have the honour to inform you that I will explain these facts to the people when I next visit the place.

2. Every attempt will be made to have the image mounted on a pedestal as early as possible.

BUDDHISTIC IMAGES AT PITTAPUR.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, to the Head Quarters Deputy Collector, Coacanada dated 15-3-1917 No. 39.

Near Vadrevuvari house at Pittapur, to the right hand side of the Pittapur Gollaprolu road there are three stone images sitting cross legged in a contemplative attitude. Locally they are known as "Sanyasi Devulu" and it is stated that a festival is held in honour of them annually to avert drought and to ensure regular rainfall. The popular belief is that they are Jain images.

The images are not Jain images but images of Buddah and Bodhisatvas. The central image is that of a Buddah the likeness of a Yogi as a flame that burns without movement. The following description of such images from Dr. Ananda Kumarswamy's "The Arts and Crafts of India and Ceylon" will be appropriate in this connection.

"If the dancing figure (Siva as a cosmic dancer) stands for evolution, the ever-lasting becoming, the Yogi type of the seated Buddah is an equally dramatic image of withdrawal of complete independence of evolution. It is well to remember that this pose does not represent any sort of mortification of flesh, it is simply that portion which has been immemorially adopted by Indian thinkers as the most convenient for meditation because the body remains self supported without effort, and on the other hand without a tendency to sleep. How little this stillness is related to inertia appears in the familiar simile. The likeness of a seated Yogi is a lamp in a windless place that flickers, not (Bhagavad Gita VI 19) it is just this likeness that we must look for in the Buddha image and this only, for the Buddha statue was not intended to represent a man it was to be like the unwavering flame an image of what all men could become, not the similitude of any apparition."

Images of this description have been found at Aryavattam in the Coacanada Taluk, Nedunuru in the Amalapur Taluk, and Tatipaka in the Rajole Taluk. The one found at Aryavattam has been given by the owners of the field to this Association and it is now preserved in the Coacanada Town Hall and the Godavari District Association grounds. The image at Tatipaka which had for a very long time been lying on the road side buried up to its neck was allowed at the persuasion of the present Tahsildar of Rajole Taluk to be excavated in order to get it mounted on a pedestal to be constructed by local subscriptions.

There is reason to believe that the deep ruts on the chest and on the shoulders of the central image at Pittapur were due to an act of vandalism. The nose was injured beyond natural restoration and if the stone is to be chiselled at the nose the original symmetry of the image will be spoiled.

In view of the historic importance and antiquity of the three images at Pittapur, it is desirable that steps should be taken for their preservation in future, free from further molestation. Official interest will ensure their preservation as relies of an ancient civilisation which did not regard religion and aesthetics as conflicting and sharply distinguishable but as inseparably united. A common pedestal three yards long and four feet wide may be constructed at the very place where the images are now lying on the bare ground, and a small tiled roof put over them. The Deputy Tahsildar of the division, the Chairman of the Major Union and the Head Master of the High School may be asked to form themselves into a committee to do the needful. A roof is not so essential because the images can withstand the inclemencies of the weather or the ravages of time if not otherwise disfigured.

I much regret and hesitate to trouble you with this reference, an attention to which does not form part of your legitimate duty as a Revenue Divisional Officer.

EMIGRATION.

MARUPAAN VANDAM (4) TA TRUOD THIRUM

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras and The Secretary, to Government of India, Commerce and Industry Department, Delhi, dated Cocanada 16-2-17 No. 25.

I am directed to submit for the information of Government, copies of the following resolutions passed at a public meeting held yesterday in the Pydah Venkatachalapaty Town Hall under auspices of the Godavary District Association and the Home Rule League Cocanada with the Hon'ble the Polavaram Zamindar in the chair to protest against the continuance of the indentured labour system.

I. That the citizens of Cocanada in public meeting assembled do hereby place on record their indignation at the inhuman treatment now accorded by the colonies to the indentured labourers and that they emphatically protest against the proposed continuance of the indenture system for five more years in Fiji and other places and that they strongly urge His Majesty's Government and the Government of India to forthwith abolish the indenture system of emigration as being wholly opposed to common dictates of humanity and morality.

II. That the citizens of Cocanada in meeting assembled also place on record their full sympathy and agreement with the objects of the Anti-Indenture League started recently in Madras and that they also urge the necessity of actively co-operating with the said league in carrying out its objects as much as possible.

(2)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Secretary to the Government of India, (Department of Commerce and Industry, Delhi.)

Dated Cocanada 22-3-17 No. 46.

I am directed to convey to the Government of India the grateful thanks of this Association for the issue of an order prohibiting the emigration of labourers from India and more especially for the explanation that the prohibition really applies to recruitment of indentured labour. Although the measure is declared to be a war measure for the time being, the Association has little doubt that it is the beginning of the end of the degrading indentured labour system.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector and District Magistrate (Godavari) dated Cocanada 1-17 No. 216.

Letter No. 533 E. D. dated Delhi, the 23rd February 1917 from the Hon'ble Mr. E. F. Howard, C. I. E. S. Secretary to the Government of India, To the Joint Secretary, Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 16 February 1917 and to say that it will be submitted for the consideration of the Government of India.

(4)

Letter No. 539-1 dated Fort St. George, the 24th February 1917 from E. A. Harvey Esq. I. C. S. Ag. Secretary to the Government of Madras, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated the 16th February 1917 forwarding copies of resolutions passed at a meeting held on the 15th February 1917, under the auspices of the Godavari District Association and the Home Rule League, Cocanada.

Judicial.**MUNSIFF COURT AT RAMACHANDRAPURAM.**

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Chief Secretary to Government of Madras. Through the Registrar High Court Madras dated Cocanada 14-2-17 No. 21.

I have the honour to submit herewith letter dated 13th instant from the chairman of the public meeting held at Ramachandrapuram on the 11th instant requesting that Government be pleased to pass early orders for the location of the District Munsiff's Court of Ramachandrapuram at Ramachandrapuram only.

2. The acting Munsiff in charge of the Temporary District Munsiff's Court Ramachandrapuram now located at Cocanada having in his letter No. 1668 dated 15th December 1916 requested this Association to state which, in its opinion, was the most suitable place for the permanent location of the Ramachandrapuram Court a reply was sent to him in conformity to the Resolutions passed at the Godavari District conferences at Paddapuram in 1915 and at Ramachandrapuram in 1916 urging the undisputed claims of Ramachandrapuram town for the location of the Court. The District Judge Rajahmundry was also informed to the same effect in our letter No. 250 dated 25-12-1916.

3. The District Judge who received on the 4th ultimo a deputation of ryots of Ramachandrapuram Taluk and who gave an assuring reply, must have sent with his report the innumerable telegrams received from each and every village of the Taluk and other communications praying for the early establishment of the Munsiff's Court at Ramachandrapuram.

4. The Association trusts that the Government will be pleased to pass favourable orders and relieve the people of the Ramachandrapuram Taluk from an avoidable harassment caused by the continuance of the Munsiff's Court sanctioned for the Taluk at Cocanada.

N. B.—The Court was opened at Ramachandrapur after summer vacations.

BENCH MAGISTRATES.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Collector and District Magistrate Godavari, dated Cocanada 4-11-17 No. 216.

In letter No. 159 dated 22nd August 1916 this Association felt bound to bring to your notice, that for reasons given, it was considered undesirable to permit Bench Magistrates to offer for election as Municipal Councillors and to request you to pass orders to put a stop to the objectionable practice of the functions of the prosecutor and the judge being combined in one and the same individual. The Association considers it necessary to bring this fact to your notice again, and to this effect the subjoined resolution was passed at a meeting of the managing committee held yesterday. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to give due consideration thereto in connection with the appointments to be made by the formation of a first class Bench of Honorary Magistrates in this city and any changes occurring thereby in the composition of the existing Bench of Magistrates.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Secretary to Government of Madras, Judicial Department Madras, dated Cocanada 4-11-17 No. 217.

In its letter No. 159 dated 22nd August 1916, this Association felt bound to bring to the notice of the Collector that for reasons given, it was undesirable to permit Bench Magistrates to offer for election as Municipal Councillors and to request him to pass orders with a view to put a stop to the objectionable practice of the functions of the prosecutor and the judge being combined in one and the same individual. It would appear that in the formation in this city of the first class Bench of Honorary Magistrates, under contemplation, that some magistrates of the existing second class Bench would likely be elevated to that Bench, and that attempts are being made by some Municipal Councillors, to step into the existing Bench of 2nd class Magistrates to fill up the possible vacancies. The Association therefore deemed it necessary to pass the subjoined resolution and submit it to the Collector and the Government for favourable consideration.

The Collector and the Government of Madras be requested not to nominate either in existing Benches of Honorary Magistrates or in Benches of Honorary Magistrates to be formed hereafter, Municipal Councillors as Honorary Magistrates nor to grant permission to Honorary Magistrates to stand for election as Municipal Councillors as it is highly undesirable to combine both the functions of a prosecutor and the Judge in the same individual and as there is no paucity of men to fill the various offices."

BACK YARDS.

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Collector Godavari District dated Godavari No. 100 dated 19th July 1917.

I have the honour to submit herewith for favourable consideration true translation of a letter dated 10th ultimo, from some inhabitants of Modakurru, Rajole Taluk requesting that a comprehensive standing order may be kindly published by you in the District Gazette embodying therein the latest orders of Government issued, if any, on the method of assessing back yards in this district as there do not seem to be any clear and well defined orders. hitherto issued by the Collector or the Board of Revenue on the subject for the guidance of the public.

(2)

Revenue standing order published in the Godavari District Gazette dated July 2nd 1917.

No charge should be levied upon any back yard, attached or detached, which does not exceed twenty five cents in extent and which is either uncultivated or which is cultivated only with flowers, vegetables or fruits.

In case of any back yard, attached or detached which exceeds twenty five cents in extent or which is cultivated otherwise than with flowers, vegetables or fruits, a charge at the highest rate of the village will be levied on the excess over twenty five cents in extent or on the area cultivated otherwise than with flowers, vegetables or fruits, provided that in order to avoid the necessity for measurement of petty extents, the minimum of such charge shall be one Rupee. In case in which a back yard exceeds twenty five cents in extent and contains cultivation other than flowers, vegetable or fruits a free area up to twenty five cents may be allowed, provided that so much is either uncultivated or cultivated only with flowers, vegetables or fruits.

CONDOLENCES: Letter dated Simla 9th May 1917 from the Assistant Private Secretary to the Viceroy To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association Cocanada.

I am desired by their Excellencies to thank you for your kind message of sympathy.

Letter No. 87 dated Cocanada 4th May 1917 from the District Association Cocanada to the Private Secretary to H. E. the Viceroy and Governor General of India, Simla.

I am directed to request you to convey to H. E. the Viceroy the sincere condolences of this Association for the death in action of His Excellency's son Lieut. the Hon'ble F. Thesigar in Mesopotamia.

B.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Hon'ble Sir Dinshaw Wacha Bombay, dated Cocanada 9-7-17 No. 149.

I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to transmit the enclosed resolution passed at a meeting of the citizens of Cocanada held in the Town Hall on the 8th instant with the Hon'ble Sri K. R. V. Krishna Row Bahadur B. A. member of the Legislative Council, Madras, in the chair, to the family of the late Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji.

(Enclosure)

Resolved that the citizens of Cocanada in meeting assembled express their sense of profound sorrow at the irreparable loss which the country has sustained in the death of Dr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the greatest patriot of India and that a copy of this resolution be communicated to the Hon'ble Sir Do E. Wacha for transmission to the members of the bereaved family.

Proposed by Mr. A. T. Ponnuswamy Iyer M. A.

Seconded by Mr. D. V. Prakasa Row B. A.

Supported by Mr. V. Krishnabrahmam B. A.

Carried in silence, the whole audience standing.

Deputations.

A—TO THE COLLECTOR.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector Godavari District, dated Cocanada 16-4-17 No. 72.

I have the honour to submit herewith a true copy of resolutions passed at the 11th Godavary District Conference held at Amalapur under the presidency of Mr. P. Narayanamurthy B. A. B. L. High Court Vakil Madras. The proceedings were conducted entirely in Telugu from the beginning to the end. 860 delegates attended from Rajole, Amalapur, Ramachandrapur, Cocanada, Rajahmundry and Peddapur Taluks, Pittapur and Tuni Divisions,

In resolution 38 (1) the conference appointed a committee of 10 representative members of different taluks to wait in deputation on you and formally present the resolutions to you in person offering such explanations there on as you may ask them at the time. I request you may be pleased to fix a date and place for receiving the deputation and intimate the same to this Association at your convenience so that arrangements may be made for assembling them in proper time.

With reference to your letter No. 85 dated 4-5-17, I have the honour to inform you that I desire to become intimate with the conditions of the District before meeting any deputation. I propose therefore to let the matter lie over for some time.

N. B.—The Collector was transferred from the district before he could decide to receive the deputation.

TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA.

Letter from The Hon'ble Mr. K. R. V. Krishna Rao Bahadur B. A. President Godavari District Association to the Chief Secretary to Government of Madras dated Cocanada 9-11-17 No. 221.

Adverting to Government Press communique (Public Department) dated (Cota-camund) 10-11-17, I have the honour to submit herewith 5 copies of an address which the Godavari District Association proposes to present to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India on behalf of the people of the Godavari District during his approaching visit to Madras about the middle of the next month. The following gentlemen have been selected to form the deputation for presenting the address to the Secretary of State for India.

- (1) The Hon'ble Sri K. R. V. Krishna Rao Bahadur B. A.
 - (2) Sri Rajah K. Ramachandraraju Bahadur Garu.
 - (3) Sri Rajah H. M. R. Suryaprakasa Rao Garu
 - (4) Chelikabi Venkata Row Garu
 - (5) A. V. Venkatasubba Rayudu Garu
 - (6) Nalam Ramalingiah Garu.
 - (7) S. Subba Rao Garu
 - (8) Mirza Abdul Ghani Khan Sahab Bahadur
 - (9) D. Venkateswarlu Garu
 - (10) Bokka Narayanamurty Garu
 - (11) N. Butchi Venkatapathiraju Garu
 - (12) D. V. S. Prakasa Rao Garu, Secretary of the Association
- Instructions are solicited as to the date on which the deputation should present itself before the Secretary of State for India.

Letter No. 4800-W-2 dated Fort St. George the 24th November 1917 from Hon'ble Mr. L. Davidson, c. s. i. c. s. Acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, To the Hon'ble Mr. K. R. V. Krishna Rao, President Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 9th November 1917, requesting permission to present an address in connection with the visit to Madras of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State and to state that the orders passed with regard to your request will be communicated to you at an early date.

Letter No. 5106-83 Dated Fort St. George, the 10th December 1917 from the Hon'ble Mr. L. Davidson Esq. Acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras To the Hon'ble Mr. K. R. V. Krishna Rao Pantulu Garud. A. President, Godavari District Association, Cocanada

With reference to your letter dated the 9th December 1917, I am directed to express the regret of His Excellency the Governor in Council that it has not been found possible to include your address in the programme of deputations and addresses as finally approved by the Government of India.

Letter from the President, Godavari District Association, To the Private Secretary to the Right Hon'ble Mr. E. S. Montagu M. P., Secretary of State for India, Government House Madras, dated Cocanada 18-12-17 No. 245.

At a meeting of the managing committee of the Godavari District Association, (a representative political body of 23 years standing with 450 members) held on the 3rd ultimo it was resolved to present an address to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble The Viceroy and Governor General of India and the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India on behalf of the people of this district, and 12 members were elected to wait on deputation on them during their visit to Madras in this month. Copies of the draft address were submitted to the Government of Madras with a request to arrange for the deputation. The draft address was ratified at a special session of the Godavari District Conference held on the 18th ultimo at Ramachandrapuram, which was attended by 2500 registered delegates. On the 12th instant, the District Association was informed by a telegram from the Madras Government that the Godavari District Association was not included in the final programme of Madras deputations. Since the Association has not been given any opportunity of presenting the address on behalf of the people of the district and wait on deputation to express its views on the proposed reforms through its representatives, it was resolved at an emergent meeting of the managing committee held on the 17th instant to submit the address by post to the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for his information and kind perusal.

Therefore, have the honour to forward herewith the copy of the address with the request that you will be so good as to place it before the Secretary of State for India for his kind acceptance.

His Excellency the Right Honourable
FREDERIC JOHN NAPIER BARON CHELMSFORD,
P.C., G.M.S.I., G.C.M.G., G.M.I.E.,
Viceroy and Governor-General of India.

The Right Honourable Mr. E. S. MONTAGU, M. P.,
Secretary of State for India

May it please your Excellency and Sir,
On behalf of the people of the Godavari District we take this opportunity of tendering to you both, our most hearty welcome on this occasion of your visit to our province the earliest seat of Government established by the British people in our country. We desire to give expression to our feelings of steadfast and profound

oyalty to the British Throne and Crown and pray that His Imperial Majesty, King George, whose love for the people of this ancient country has been so abundantly manifested and given expression to on more than one occasion, may be long spared to rule over us who have been, by tradition and temperament, a grateful and law-abiding nation. We are sorry that the great war, which is now raging in Europe, and which is arresting the march of civilisation and which has brought grief and trouble to almost every British home, should still continue its devastation. We assure you that we sincerely feel and strongly believe that our well-being and progress are dependent on the success of the British arms, which entered on this career of a great worldwide war in the cause of justice, humanity and righteousness. It is a source of gratification and pride that our country has been allowed to take part in this great war but we sincerely feel that, for want of opportunities and better conditions, we are not able to do more, which we strongly desire and devoutly wish for.

It may not be out of place to mention in this connection that in our district the Zamindars and the people alike have not only co-operated most willingly and enthusiastically in contributing to the several war funds and subscribing to the war loan recently issued but are willing and prepared to do all that they can for the success of British arms.

We feel that the industrial and economic backwardness of our country depending solely on agriculture is retarding her advance in modern material wealth and welfare and we cannot but regard this as the sore spot in the Indian body politic. Though our district is one of those which have some peculiar advantages for agricultural industry, we feel that sufficient attention has not been bestowed on the improvement of that industry and in teaching the people modern scientific methods for its advancement and prosperity. We invite your attention to the great necessity and urgency of establishing at least one Agricultural College for the coast districts of the Telugu country of this province and one good agricultural school for each district and affording other facilities for imparting modern methods of scientific agriculture to the land-holders and ryots.

Our district had at one time some important cottage industries. They have a great deal declined and have been now struggling for their very existence owing to foreign competition. We feel that sufficient attention has not been paid either to their encouragement or their development and the gradual decline, if not total extinction, of the cottage industries in this district is not only viewed with great concern and dismay, but felt very keenly by the people of this district as elsewhere, especially since the out-break of the war. We submit that for the development of cottage industries, encouragement from the hands of the Government is necessary and essential. We invite your attention and request that adequate help and encouragement may be given to these industries in our country in order to restore them to their proper condition.

We are of opinion that the high percentage of illiteracy in this country is one of the causes, if not the sole cause, for many of the evils and disabilities which our people have been now labouring under. We feel that free and compulsory primary education should be provided in our country without further delay and that every village in our province should be provided with at least one primary school for boys and girls.

We are deeply grateful to the British Government for the great irrigation works of our district which are rightly stated to be the monuments of the engineering skill in India. The canal system has brought a larger area of land under irrigation and extension of irrigation is considered possible by further schemes proposed from time to time but not undertaken. The ryotwari system is in force in our district as in all other districts of this presidency. In spite of the apparent prosperity of the people attributed to it, it has its serious defects, and we are of opinion that the time has

come when periodical resettlements should be given up and the assessment on land should be made permanent and perpetual. In a country where 72% or more of the population are agriculturists who are obliged to depend in some form or other for their subsistence upon the soil, the existing policy of periodical settlements is not calculated to benefit such a large proportion of population. So far as the Godavari District is concerned, there had already been two settlements within the last fifty years and a third one will have to be undertaken within the next ten years unless there be a change of policy. The worry, anxiety and uneasiness which resettlement operations create in the minds of the people need not be dilated upon here. In Regulation VII of 1822 it is laid down that, a moderate assessment being equally conducive to the true interests of Government and the well-being of its subjects, it is the wish and intention of the Government that, in revising the existing settlements, the effects of the Revenue Officers should be chiefly directed not to any general and extensive enhancement of the Jama but to the objects of equalising the public burthens and of ascertaining, settling and recording the rights, interests and properties of all persons and classes owning, occupying, managing or cultivating the land. The Secretary of State's Despatch of 1862 authorised a Permanent Settlement in tracts where 4/5th of the cultivable area had been brought under cultivation and assessed. In 1853, Sir Charles Wood (afterwards Lord Halifax), the then Secretary of State for India, expressed his entire approval of the proposal of a Permanent Settlement of the land revenue of India. Sir Stafford Northcote, another Secretary of State for India, approved and sanctioned the Permanent Settlement in the whole of India. The Government of Lord Ripon laid down in 1882 the principle that districts which had been surveyed by the Settlement Department and assessed should undergo no further revision except on the sole ground of a rise in prices. It cannot be denied that on the whole, the present method of Government assessment does not leave enough food to the average cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year, as observed by Sir William Hunter a great statistician, from his place in the Imperial Legislative Council 34 years ago. The late Mr. O'Conor, Director-General of Statistics for India speaking with an experience of 40 years spent on a study of the economic condition of the people of India, observed that it was no complete defence of the agrarian policy of the Government to compare the present assessments on the land with the assessments in the days of the predecessors of the British Government. He held that it did not follow that the Government were very moderate in their demands on the land because they did not take so much as was squeezed from the cultivators by rulers and governors who were highly esteemed if they did a man the favour of allowing him to live. He therefore recommended that the Government ought to arrange to let the cultivator live and thrive, not taking from him the competitive rent of a private landlord. We, therefore, submit that the Permanent Settlement of land revenue would be in the highest degree beneficial to the people and would add to their wealth, prosperity, and staying power. Three Governors-General under the East India Company, three Viceroys under the Crown (Lords Canning, Lawrence and Ripon) exerted their influence towards imposing a permanent limitation on the land tax in India. The Indian National Congress from its early years, the All India Moslem League and the Provincial and the District Conferences recommended it year after year. Secretaries of State, Royal or Government Commissions, Viceroys, Lieutenant-Governors, Members of Councils and other high officers of State have discovered and acknowledged the harm which periodical resettlements of land revenue demand entail. We, therefore, pray that the boon of Permanent Settlement be granted and that the land revenue of the Permanent Settlement be limited by statutory provision as recommended by the Royal Commission on Decentralisation.

In view of securing efficiency and facility in administration and the development of the Telugu country as a whole, the Andhras of the 11 Telugu districts of this presidency have been demanding that they should be formed into a separate province and placed under the administration of a Governor-in-Council. Our request which is mainly based upon the desirability and necessity of reconstituting the

his country on linguistic basis, in order that a sense of solidarity and homogeneity might be fostered and strengthened in the people of each province and that there might be better facilities for their development, may be favourably considered.

We take this opportunity to express our deep sense of gratitude to your Excellency's Government, the Secretary of State for India and the British Cabinet for the announcement made on 20th August last, that the policy of His Majesty's Government is to associate the Indians in an increasing measure with every branch of administration and to steadily develop self-governing institutions, with a view to the realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. Feeling strongly that the time has come when the Government of our great country should be made responsible to the people, we express our unqualified approval of the scheme of reforms proposed by the Indian National Congress and the All India Moslem League and passed at their sessions held at Lucknow in December last and submit that it is essential that the reforms recommended in that scheme should be introduced soon after the termination of the war as the first step towards the attainment of self-government, due provision being made to safeguard the different interests of this province. We venture to express our disapproval of the suggestion put forth from some quarters, of the compartmental delegation of control over certain departments to the non-official members of the Legislative Council, which is at once inworkable and impracticable as it would tend to create frequent friction between the executive and the legislature. We are also of opinion that the administration of the country is far too centralised, and controlled too much by the Secretary of State and the Government of India, and that a full measure of provincial autonomy should no longer be delayed. For this decentralisation of control, it becomes necessary that the provincial administration should be made to rest on a wider popular basis, as otherwise, the transfer of power from one authority to another would not be, by itself, of any advantage and may even prove a worse evil. In view of development of industries, commerce, and trade of this country, the Government of India controlled by the elected representatives of the people should be made to possess complete and full powers in fiscal and financial matters; and we entirely disagree with any proposal that would tend to minimise or deny those powers, which we think are necessary and indispensable for the moral and material progress of our country.

We cherish the hope that our great country will be given a place equal in status to the Self-Governing Dominions of the Empire in the new Empire Council. We sincerely trust and fervently desire that your great mission and visit to this country will result in the inauguration of an era of peace, prosperity, and progress in the country, tending to raise the classes and masses to a higher level of comfort and contentment and afford to them a brighter outlook of life and make them more helpful, vigorous and manly citizens of his worldwide empire.

We beg to subscribe ourselves,

Your Excellency's and Your most obedient and humble servants,

Educational

A—VILLAGE OFFICERS' SPECIAL TEST EXAMINATIONS.

SUZAHOMUD DZIYIART—C

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector Godavary District Cocanada, dated Cocanada 8-1-17 No. 4. I have the honour to request that with reference to the decision contained in your letter D. Dis. No. 1002 Rev. dated the 16th March 1916, the results of the village

officers special test examinations held in October 1916 in Telugu also as they have been published in English only in the district gazette for this month.

Memorandum D. Dis. No. 571 Rev. of 17 dated Cocanada 9-2-1917 from the Collector Godavari.

Lists of Candidates (in Telugu) who are declared to have passed the village officers' Special Test Examination held in October 1916 are therewith forwarded to the Deputy Collector in charge of the Press for publication in Telugu in the ensuing issue of the District Gazette.

For Collector to the Treasury Deputy Collector with the list; copy to the Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada with reference to his letter No. 4 dated 8-1-1917.

B-CENTRES FOR B.A. EXAMINATION.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Registrar of the Madras University dated Cocanada 23-4-17 No. 79.

I have the honour to state that at the Xth Godavari District Conference held at Amalapur on 6th, 7th and 8th instant under the presidency of Mr. P. Narayana-murthy B.A., B.L. High Court Vakil Madras, it was resolved in resolution XVII(13) that the University of Madras be required to open centres for B. A. Examination at Vizianagaram, Rajahmundry and Masulipatam, and to request that you will be so good as to obtain the sanction of the Senate to the same, in consideration of the avoidable hardship entailed on students of the east coast districts, to the north of Madras by compelling them to repair to the capital city for the said examination.

Letter No. 5652 dated Senate House Madras, 13 August 1917, from Francis Dewsbery Esq. B.A., L.L.B. Registrar, University of Madras, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter dated 23rd April 1917, communicating a resolution of the Association requesting that new centers for the B. A. Degree Examination may be appointed at Vizianagaram, Rajahmundry and Masulipatam, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that the Syndicate has resolved that Rajahmundry be added to the centres for the B. A Degree Examination 1918.

C-TRAINING OF MECHANICS.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Executive Engineer Godavari Headworks Division, Dowlaiswaram dated Cocanada 4-5-17 No. 91.

Referring to G. O. No. 179 W dated 30th January 1917 containing rules for the training of four mechanics in the P. W. Work Shop, at Dowlaiswaram with effect from 1917-18, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to favour the Association with information as to whether applications have been invited by means of an advertisement in the District Gazette from candidates for apprenticeship and whether the selections have been made by you. From the file of the District Gazette in this Association, it does not appear that a notice has been yet published therein inviting applications.

Letter No. 1217 M dated Dowlaiswaram, 15-6-1917 from H. R. Dogra Esq., Executive Engineer, Godavary Head Works Division, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

SUBJECT:—APPRENTICES. Referring to your No. 91 dated 4-5-17, I have the honour to state that there was no necessity for an advertisement as a sufficient number of applicants were forthcoming.

D—THE PEDDADA SCHOOL.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the District Magistrate Cocanada through the Assistant Inspector of Schools Godavary District dated Cocanada 28-5-17 No. 125.

There are few huts of Telaga snake charmers, quite close to the Board Elementary School at Peddada in the Cocanada taluk. The school is popular and progressive and is susceptible of improvement. These snake charmers have no ostensible means of livelihood and are stated to have been bound over under security sections for bad livelihood. Some of them have undergone imprisonment also. The inspecting officers have recorded that such a neighbourhood is both abhorrent and undesirable. In addition to less safety to the jewels and other things of the boy and girl pupils attending the school, it is a constant source of nuisance as it is stated to eat objectionable kinds of food within sight of pupils.

These snake charmers are permanently settled there as they built their huts on sites granted to them by the revenue department. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to enquire whether it is not necessary that such dangerous neighbours should be removed to a distance, and the land be given over to the school to be used for a garden and a play ground which are wanted badly.

Letter from the Joint Secretary the Godavary District Association To the Head Quarters Deputy Collector through the Sub Assistant Inspector of Schools Cocanada Range dated Cocanada 29-5-17 No. 129.

There is no play ground attached to the Board Elementary school at Peddada in Cocanada Taluk which is in a flourishing condition and which is likely to improve in future. There is a vacant Asahalminha land in front of the school building with a number of palmyrah trees in it. It adjoins the fresh water well sunk by the Board. Its exact measurements are not known to me. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to assign the land in question for use of the school to which it would prove a valuable acquisition. On ascertaining the wishes of the people of the village, they welcomed the idea and stated (orally) that it was not required for a better purpose.

INTERNMENTS.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To Dr. Sir, S. Subrahmanya Iyer Madras dated Cocanada, 20-6-17 No. 139.

I am directed to convey the whole hearted sympathy of this Association with the objects of the meeting to be held in the Gokhale Hall to-morrow to protest against the orders of the Madras Government interning Mrs. Besant, Messrs B. P. Wadia and G. S. Arundale. The action of the Government is calculated to excite unnecessarily the public mind through out this vast country. As a result of the universal disapprobation expressed from all quarters, it is hoped that the Supreme Government will interfere without delay to allay the public feeling roused by the attempts made to suppress constitutional agitation in this country for the attainment of self government without which the political advancement of India is not possible.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Private Secretary to the Viceroy and Government General of India dated Cocanada 28-6-17 No. 145.

I am directed to submit a copy of the resolutions passed at the meeting of the members of the Godavary District Association held on the 24th instant, protesting against the speech of H. E. Lord Pentland at Ootacamund on the 24th ultimo, and the orders of internment passed against Mrs. Besant, Messrs. Arundale and Wadia, and to request that they may be laid before His Excellency for favourable consideration.

(3)

Resolutions passed at the public meeting of the citizens of Cocanada held on 17-7-1917 to protest against the internment of Mrs. Besant etc with M.R Ry. Rao Saheb D. Subrahmanyam Pantulu garu in the chair.

That this meeting desires to record its emphatic and respectful protest against the action of the Government of Madras in interning Mrs. Besant Messrs. G. S. Arundale and B. P. Wadia and restraining their liberty in other directions.

Proposed by G. Subbarayudu Garu B.A., B.L. High Court Vakil.

Seconded by Pydah Suryanarayanamurti Garu Sowcar.

Supported by V. Bhavanarayana Garu B.A., B.L. High Court Vakil.

Carried unanimously.

II. That this meeting solemnly affirms the determination of the people to carry on in a systematic and persistent manner by all constitutional means, of the propaganda for the establishment in India of Self-Government under the aegis of the British Empire as laid down by the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League held at Lucknow in December last.

Proposed by Ch. Sundayya Garu Merchant.

Seconded by Ch. Lakshminarayana Garu Merchant.

Carried unanimously.

III. That this meeting respectfully urges upon the Government of India, the immediate withdrawal of the recent internment orders and the complete disavowal of the policy announced by Lord Pentland which has filled the country with anxiety and alarm in view of the fact that the methods adopted by the three interned persons are of a constitutional and legitimate nature.

Proposed by Dr. V. Gopalakrishna.

Seconded by Parepalli Venkataramayya Garu Landlord.

Carried unanimously.

Irrigation.

A—OPENING CHANNELS FOR SECOND CROP.

--(1)--

Petition of Coringa ryots to the Collector requesting supply of water for 2nd crop to Coringa irrigation channel, received with Collector's endorsement No. N. Ref. Pet. 2612 of 16, dated 4th December 1916.

No. 991-R dated 9th December 1916.

Returned to the Collector, Godavari. In this connection, I invite your attention to para. 2 of my letter No. 917 R dated 21/24-11-1916 (reply to your No. N. Ref. Pet. 2289/Rev. of 16 dated 29-10-16).

2. I do not find any necessity for giving the present petitioners under Coringa channel any special concession. They are no worse off than others and if one such 'closed' channel is to be kept open, why not all? This, of course, could never be done, as these channels which are to be kept open in 1917 would suffer. This would then give them an opportunity of petitioning next year 1918 to have these closed channels opened on the ground that the supply in 1917 (during their sanctioned 'turn') was very deficient owing to the closed channels having been supplied.

3. I do not anticipate that there will be any more water supply during 1917 2nd crop season than usual. The water level at the anicut is now only normal for this time of the year. All shutters are up.

(Sd.) A. E. FERNS,

Executive Engineer,

Godavari Eastern Division.

(2) (2)

Endorsement No. 125 G. C. dated Vizagapatam 18-1-1917 from M. R. Kharegat Esq. A. M. I. C. E. Superintending Engineer, First Circle.

Letter No. 151 dated 3rd January 1917 from Mr. A. E. Ferns, Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division, to the Superintending Engineer, First Circle.

Subject: Water supply to Coringa Channel for second crop in 1917.

With reference to your rescript No. 1227 G. E. dated 11-12-1916 herewith returned with enclosures, I beg to state that two petitions on the subject were already received by me from the Coringa ryots, one direct and the other through the Collector. For the petition received direct, an endorsement was given in this office No. 237 E. P. dated 3-12-1916 that the Gazette Notification would be adhered to. For the petition received through the Collector, a reply was sent to the Collector in this office endorsement No. 991 R. dated 9-12-1916.

Copy of it is enclosed herewith for your information. Under the circumstances explained therein, I do not consider it necessary to give any special concession to the ryots under Coringa channel, as it will lead to endless trouble and petitions from the ryots under other channels.

Copy with copy of the Executive Engineer's reply No. 991-R, dated 9-12-1916 to the Collector is forwarded to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada, with reference to his letter No. 236, dated 4-12-1916.

2. The undersigned agrees with the views expressed by the Executive Engineer and considers that the programme should not be deviated.

3. The undersigned regrets, he is unable to accede to the request of the petitioners. If one is treated as a special case, there are many others similarly situated which should receive the same treatment.

Copy of letter No. 9-R dated 4-1-17 from the Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division, to the Revenue Divisional officer, Cocanada.

Subject :- Water supply to Coringa irrigation channel for second crop for 1917.

With reference to your N. Dis. Pet. No. 936 H. D. C. of 16 dated the 24th December 1916, herewith returned with all enclosures, I have the honour to inform you that I do not find any necessity for giving the present petitioners under Coringa channel any special concession as they are no worse off than others and if one such "closed" channel is to be kept open why not all other closed channels be given the same concession. This of course could never be done as those channels, which are to be kept open in 1917 would suffer. This would give them an opportunity of petitioning next year 1918 to have the closed channels opened on the ground that the supply in 1917 (during the sanctioned turn) was very deficient owing to closed channels having been supplied.

2. A similar petition from Coringa ryots was already received through the Collector and a reply was sent to the Collector as stated above in this office No. 99 R. dated 9-12-1916. Another petition was received from the Coringa ryots direct and an endorsement was given to them in this office No. 237 E. P. dated 3-12-1916 that the gazette notification will be adhered to.

3. A similar communication from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association forwarding a true translation of the petition from the ryots of Coringa, Manjair, Patavala and Tallarevu etc. was received through the Superintending Engineer 1st Circle, and it was also replied to similarly.

(5)

Communicated to the Secretary Godavari District Association with reference to his letter No. 237-4-12-16 for information.

(Sd.)

For Hd. Qr. Dy. Collector.

B—EXECUTIVE ENGINEER'S ADMINISTRATION REPORTS.

Mem. No. 60-G. E. dated 17-1-1917, from the Superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, to the Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division.

Subject :- Furnishing copies of P. W. D. Administration Reports to the District Association Godavari.

With reference to his No. 8 S. dated 4-1-1917, begs to forward herewith a copy of G. O. No. 1286 W dated 2-9-1916, passing orders on a similar requisition from the Secretary, Ganjam District Association.

2. The Government are not in favour of furnishing copies of the Executive Engineer's Administration Reports to the District Association.

3. The Joint Secretary, Godavari District Association, may be informed accordingly drawing his attention to the concluding sentence of the Government Order.

(Sd.) M. R. KHAREGAT,
Superintending Engineer, 1st Circle.

Copy with copy of G. O. No. 1286 W 2-9-1916, forwarded to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada, in reference to his letter No. 257 of 27-12-1916 for information.

2. The attention of the Joint Secretary is drawn to the concluding sentence of the G. O. No. 1286 W 2-9-1916.

(Sd.) A. E. FERNS,
Executive Engineer, G. E. Division.

Proceedings No. 1286-W., dated 2nd September 16.

Read the following paper :—

From the Secretary Ganjam District Association dated 30th June 1916.

With reference to his letter read above requesting to be furnished with a copy of the Annual Administration Report of the Irrigation Branch submitted by the Executive Engineer, Ganjam Division. the Secretary, Ganjam District Association, will be informed that the annual administration reports, submitted by the Executive Engineers contain confidential matter and cannot be published. The consolidated report for the Presidency gives the available information in great detail and will usually be sufficient but if, further information is requested about any particular works, or class of work, it will, if possible be furnished by the Superintending Engineer on application being made to him.

(Sd.) S. B. MURRAY,
Joint Secretary to Government.

G—SUPPLY OF BOATS TO TAHSILDARS.
Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Collector Godavari District Cocanada, dated Cocanada 8-2-17 No. 19.

At the meeting of the Legislative Council held on 21-11-1914, the Hon'ble the Zamindar of Polavaram who was then the Vice President of this Association enquired by means of an interpellation whether Government would be pleased to consider the desirability of supplying dingies to the Tahsildars of Bhadrachalam and Nugur Taluks as in the case of Forest Rangers of those Taluks and the District Forest Officer Upper Godavari. The Government answered that they were prepared to consider the supply of boats to the Tahsildars mentioned, should the Collector recommend such a course as in the interest of local administration. The two Tahsildars do not seem to have been asked whether they would require them or not, although there is no question whatever about the use of boats during flood and rainy season in particular (vide copy of letter D. Dis. No. 1014 dated 23-8-15 from the Tahsildar, Bhadrachalam enclosed).

In letter No. 1069 dated 3-9-1915 this Association requested the Revenue Divisional Officer Bhadrachalam to enquire into the matter and see his way to recommend the supply of dingies which the Government were prepared to sanction. Apparently he took no action on that letter.

The Hon'ble the Polavaram Zamindar who is now the President of the Association asked the following question at the meeting of the Legislative Council held on the 6th instant and elicited a reply thereto. With reference to my questions Q 85 No. 65 and 59 asked at the meetings of the Legislative Council held on 2nd April and 20th November 1914 respectively will Government be pleased to state what action has been taken in the matter of supplying *Navas* to the Tahsildars in the Godavari Delta and *Dingies* to the Tahsildars in the Bhadrachalam Division.

Answer 8; The Government have sanctioned the supply of boats to seven Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars in the Godavari Delta. The Government have not received any recommendation from the Collector of Godavari for the supply of boats to the Tahsildars of the Bhadrachalam Division.

As the necessity for the supply of boats to the Taluk officers in the Delta has been established and recognized, there is an equal necessity for it in the Upper Godavari Taluks also. The Association therefore begs to request that you will be so good as to obtain the sanction of Government for the supply of dingies to the Tahsildars of the Bhadrachalam and Nugur Taluks in the interests of administration and to ensure useful tours of inspection in those regions.

(2)

Letter R. C. No. 96/Ag. of 1917 dated Cocanada 23-3-1917 from C. B. Cottrell Esq. C. I. E. I. C. S. Government Agent and Collector of Godavari, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

In acknowledging your letter of the 8th February last, I have the honour to inform you that the Government have been addressed to sanction boats to the officers in question.

(3)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Tahsildar of Bhadrachalam dated Cocanada 24-3-17 No. 50.

In continuance of copy of my letter No. 19 dated 8-2-17 to the Collector Godavari District requesting supply of dingies to the Tahsildars of Bhadrachalam and Nugur, furnished to you for information, I have the honour to state that the Government Agent has in letter R. C. No. 96 Ag. dated the 23 instant informed the Association that Government had been addressed by him to sanction boats to both of you.

D-FLOOD BANK TO TEKI DRAIN.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Head Quarters Deputy Collector, Cocanada, dated Cocanada 9-2-17 No. 21.

A sum of Rs. 5,000 was provided in the D. P. W. budget for the current year for providing a flood bank along the right side of the Teki drain below the straight cut to Tallarevu lock. In letter No. 173 dated 7-9-1916, this Association requested the Superintending Engineer I Circle to be informed whether there was any possibility of the budget allotment being utilized before the close of the official year. The Superintending Engineer stated in reply in his letter No. 7552 GL dated 22nd idem that the question of land required has to be settled by the Revenue Department and the land being under water necessary survey could not be made. He was, however, of opinion that the grant for the work could be utilized during the current year if the land were handed over in time.

From a letter received today from a ryot of Pallipalem who is a member of this Association, it would appear that the work of embanking the drain has not been begun at all. Immense has been the damage done to crops for want of this flood bank. Its importance and necessity have been urged on the attention of Government and the D. P. W. officers in the Districts for the last five years. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to take steps for prompt acquisition of land and for its being handed over to the P. W. D. without further delay.

Letter Pet. No. 135 H. D.C. of 1917 dated Cocanada 23-2-1917 from M.R.Ry. D. N. Ramaswami Ayyar Averghal M. A. Revenue Divisional officer, Cocanada, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 21 dated 9-2-17, I have the honour to state that the land therein referred to was acquired in the Cocanada Tahsildar's award No. 1 of 1917 and the Executive Engineer Godavari Eastern Division was addressed to take possession of the same.

(3)

In enclosing copies of letter No. 21 dated 9th ultimo to the Head Quarters Deputy Collector and his reply thereto, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to take possession of the land in question and proceed with the completion of the flood bank, the absence of which has for some years past been causing damage to the crops of Pallipalem systematically.

(4)

Letter No. 271 M (dated Dowtaiswaram 14-3-1917) from A. E. Ferns Esq. Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division, to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association Cocanada.

Reference :- Your letter No. 27/4-3-1917.
Subject :- Flood bank on right side of Teki drain near Tallarevu.

With reference to the above, I have to inform you that the land plans and schedules have not yet been prepared owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the boundary between the Government and the ryot's lands and the land has not yet been handed over to this department. It is not understood what award is referred to by the Revenue Divisional Officer Cocanada.

2. The boundary is now being fixed by the Revenue Department.

(5)

Letter D. Dis. No. 1256 Rev. of 17 dated Cocanada 22nd March 1917 from C. B. Cotterell Esq., C.I.E., I.C.S. Collector, Godavari District, To the Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 22 dated 9-2-17 I have the honour to state that the Deputy Tahsildar, Coringa has been ordered to demarcate the land required to provide for the flood bank along the right side of the Teki drain, with the help of the concerned ryots and the P. W. Department.

(6)

Letter D. Dis. No. 436 H. D.C. of 1917 dated Cocanada 23-3-1917 from M.R.Ry. O. N. Ramaswamy Ayyar Averghal M. A. Revenue Divisional Officer, Cocanada To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 33 dated 19-3-17, I have the honour to state that the award referred to in this office Ref. Pet. 135 H. D. C. of 17 dated 23-2-17

relates to the land acquired for the lock works at Manjeru. There is no correspondence in this office in connection with the construction of the flood bank on the right side of the Teki drain near Tallarevu.

E--IRRIGATION FACILITIES IN COCANADA TALUK.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Superintending Engineer I Circle Vizagapatam through the Collector Godavary District, dated Cocanada 20-3-17 No. 43.

In submitting herewith true translations of the two petitions dated 23rd ultimo received from the ryots of Karapa in the Cocanada taluk regarding the improvements and alterations to the existing sources for the irrigation and drainage of the fields of that village and of the salt pan and other waste lands sold by Government in the vicinity, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to give the matter the consideration it seems to deserve. In May 1906 Mr. Molesworth, the then Executive Engineer informed the petitioners that he was unable to do any thing in the matter just then, as the whole locality was then being surveyed and a scheme of improved irrigation was being investigated. The Kovur Manjair junction canal was subsequently closed for navigation and has since been ordered to be reopened. The other scheme is evidently awaiting attention. It is however noticed that for the last few years, provision is being made in the P. W. D. estimates annually for improvement of irrigation facilities under the Kovur, Manjair junction canal. Whether the improvements and alterations considered necessary by the ryots have been included in the schemes under your departmental investigation, is not possible for the public to know. If the matter has received your attention already, the ryots will be thankful for early execution of the repairs etc. which will relieve them from recurring loss of crops and a source of anxiety.

Letter No. 2411-GI, dated Vizagapatam 31-8-1917 from M. R. Kharegat Esq., A. M. I. C. E. Superintending Engineer First Circle, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada, through the Collector Godavary.

Subject:—Petitions from the ryots of Karapa.

With reference to your letter No. 43 dated the 20th March 1917, I have the honour to inform you that two subjects are involved in the petitions referred to viz: (1) Improvements to the irrigation channels of the village and (2) Improvements to the drainage system of Tulyabhaga drain and a brief history about their present stage of progress is noted below.

(1) Improvements to Irrigation channels: The channels being Zamindari ones and not belonging to P. W. D. nothing has been done in their case in connection with piping and other improvements since joint inspection. The question of acquiring these channels is under consideration.

(2) Improvements to the Drainage System:—The work of improvements to the mouth of Tulyabhaga drain in the Cocanada Bay is now under execution and an estimate for improving the drain from Gorrupudi aqueduct to Matlapalem bridge which has been recently prepared is now under correspondence between the Chief Engineer and myself.

Estimates for improvements to minor drains above the aqueduct are now before the Government of India.

Letter D. Dis. No. 4227 Rev. of 17 dated Cocanada 15-9-1917 from H. H. Burkitt Esq., I. C. S. Acting Collector, Godavary, To the Superintending Engineer First Circle, Vizagapatam.

In returning herewith your letter No. 2411 G. L. dated 31-8-1917 addressed through me to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association regarding improvements to irrigation and drainage channels, I have the honour to request that you will be good enough to communicate it direct to him, if you so desire.

Endorsement No. 2678 Gl. 2-10-17.

Forwarded to the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association.

M. R. KHAREGAT.

Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable in the deltas has been prepared talukwar and is available to the public for sale or other wise. If such a list is forthcoming, applications for water will not be submitted unnecessarily.

WATER APPLICATIONS

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Collector Godavary District dated Cocanada 27-4-17 No. 811. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to issue instructions for notification regarding water applications to be published in English only on page 108 of the Godavary District Gazette for April 1917 being republished with its Telugu translation as a Collector's standing order and in the village sheet also for the information and guidance of the agricultural population of the district. It is a very important order affecting the whole of the ryot population.

The Association begs to further request to be informed whether a list of lands, "Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable" in the deltas has been prepared talukwar and is available to the public for sale or other wise. If such a list is forthcoming, applications for water will not be submitted unnecessarily.

(Extract.)

All revenue officers are informed that an arrangement has been made by which the D. R. W. have agreed to divide into two classes all cases in which they find it necessary in future to reject applications for water for the irrigation of dry lands during the first crop season in the Godavari Eastern and Central deltas (i) U = Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable (ii) W. N. G = Water not granted. When water is taken after rejection of application under (i) U, penal rate should ordinarily be imposed at two, five and ten times etc in succeeding years in accordance with the rules. When it is taken after rejection under (ii) W. N. G, single water rate should be charged unless the taking of water deprived other lands of water for which they had a right. In this case, penal rates must be imposed. Taking water after rejection of application under U should be penalized equally with taking water without application to the disadvantage of others.

C. B. COTTERELL, Collector.

With reference to the notification regarding "water applications" published by the Collector on page 108 of the Godavary District Gazette for the current month in consultation with your department, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to inform the Association whether a list of lands classed as "Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable" has been prepared by your department and is available to the public for sale or free supply.

In returning herewith your letter No. 472 M dated 4th May 1917, I am sorry to find that through me to the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association regarding improvements to irrigation and drainage and having the honour to request that you will be so good as to inform the Association whether a list of lands classed as "Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable" has been prepared by your department and is available to the public for sale or free supply.

(3)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Collector Godavary District dated Cocanada 11-7-17 No. 156.

In continuation of letter No. 85 dated 27th April 1917 from this Association, I have the honour to state as follows :-

(a) The Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division states in his letter No. 472 M dated 4th May 1917 that no list of lands classed as "Uncommandable or otherwise objectionable" has been prepared in his department and that such a list does not seem necessary at all.

(b) The Tahsildars of Ramachandrapur, Amalapur, Rajole and Cocanada state that no such lists of lands are available in their offices. The Tahsildar of Rajole, however, adds that ryots put in applications for all lands they require water and that they will learn from the orders passed on the applications whether the D. P. W. treat the lands as commandable or uncommandable or otherwise objectionable.

(c) The Tahsildar of Cocanada is under the impression that the lists of lands in question are maintained in the Executive Engineer's Office to which the applications are sent for disposal.

It is not understood what the nature of arrangement made with the D. P. W. is with regard to the division of lands into two classes. There should be some definite information to be guided by either in the Revenue or the Public Works Department. As matters now stand, the classification will be left to the arbitrary decision of the D. P. W., which the Revenue Department has often to interfere with and get modified. The determination of lands as commandable or otherwise by a mere reference to the vayat maps every year, is likely to cause dissatisfaction, as lands for which water has been allowed for a number of years may be declared in any one year to the contrary. With regards to class (W.N.G), it appears to the Association that the responsibility of determining whether the taking of water would injuriously affect other lands is thrown upon the applicant when that duty should legitimately devolve upon the department which has all the necessary information at its disposal. This shifting of the responsibility, places the ryot at the mercy of the officers of the department who in the end might turn round and say that the water taken has injuriously affected other lands. Further, it gives room for vexatious complaints being made by other ryots who may not be in good relations with the applicants. The Association submits that as the notification inflicts great hardship upon the ryots and places undue powers in the hands of departmental subordinates, it may be suitably modified and definite instructions issued in the matter.

POLLUTION OF CANAL WATER

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Executive Engineer, Godavary Eastern Division, Dowlaiswaram, dated Cocanada 23-5-1917 No. 119.

The Village Association of Konkuduru has brought to the notice of this Association that the owners of the cotton mill at Pandalapaka on the Cocanada canal have been systematically letting into that canal, the spill water of the mill rendering the canal water up to Chintapalli lock impure and dangerous to health, and requests that the canal officer be addressed to put a stop to this objectionable practice. It is stated that the Deccan Sugar and Abkari Coy., Samalkot discharge the spill water in their factory into a drainage beyond the main canal by means of pipes laid underground across the canal. The same sort of arrangement may be adopted by the Pandalapaka cotton mill.

I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to enquire into the matter and set it right to prevent pollution of canal water as far as practicable.

(2)

Letter No. 558 M dated Dowlaiswaram 1-6-1917 from A. E. Ferns Esq. Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

Reference :— Your letter No. 119 dated 22-5-1917.

Subject :— Waste water from Pandalapaka Cotton Mill.

With reference to the above, I have the honour to inform you that necessary instructions were already issued in this office No. 118 E. dated 25-4-1917 to the Manager of the Mill not to let out any waste water into the canal.

STAYANAZAL ANTARINI - II

(3)

Letter No. 379 R dated Dowlaiswaram 17-7-17 from A. E. Ferns Esq. Executive Engineer, Godavary Eastern Division To the Collector Godavary District Subject. Sri Suryanarayana Spinning and Weaving Mill at Pandalapaka.

I have the honour to bring to your notice that the owners of the above Cotton Mill, have been systematically letting into the Cocanada canal the sullage or spill water from their mill rendering the canal water up to Chintapalli Lock impure and dangerous to public health. The villagers lower down have complained of it and also the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada brought this to my notice in his letter No. 119 of 22-5-1917.

I have issued necessary orders to the Manager of the Mill in my No. 118 E. P. 25-4-1917 not to let out the waste water from the mill in to the canal as it may be detrimental to the public health, though I am not the custodian of public health. But my Sub Divisional officer, (Northern) now reports that the Mill owners are still discharging this sullage into the canal.

The only feasible means for this is to discharge the sullage into Komaripalem drain by means of a syphon under the Cocanada canal and Tossipudi south side channel if no valid objection is raised by the ryots for its discharge into the Komaripalem drain, which falls into the Tulyabhaga drain. For this purpose of the Government and the ryots, I have the honour to request that the necessary drainage arrangements are to be provided by the mill owners at their cost and the land required for the purpose is also to be acquired by

them. The question of the construction of the syphon is now under contemplation by the Mill owners and they have now applied for permission for the construction of the syphon. This subject is now under my consideration.

If this sullage is dangerous to health, it should not be allowed to be discharged either into canal, channel or drain till it has been suitably treated. It can then be discharged into the Tossipudi North side channel. I therefore request you will be good enough to issue necessary orders to the Mill owners not to discharge the sullage into the Cocanada (canal) until proper arrangements are made for its discharge into the Komaripalem drain or other wise.

No. 579 R. 23-7-17 Copy forwarded to the Joint Secretary, Godavary District Association, Cocanada, in continuation of this office No. 358 M/1-5-1917 for information. This seems to be a matter to be dealt with by the District Magistrate if this pollution endangers public health.

Letter No. 2296 Gl. dated Vizagapatam 16th August 1917 from M. R. Khareghat Esq. A. M. I. C. E. Superintending Engineer, First Circle, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 140 dated 23-6-17, I have the honour to inform you that the two channels noted in the margin were handed over to the village Irrigation Boards from the commencement of the irrigation season of 1916-17 (Fasli 1326) for internal control and a report on the working of the system is awaited from the Executive Engineer, Godavary Eastern Division.

1. Channel taking off the pipe sluice at 11 M 3 fur of the Mandapeta canal in Tapeswaram limits (Godavari Eastern Division)
2. Chunchula channel in Komaragiripatnam limits (Godavari Central Delta).

H-IRRIGATION PANCHAYATS.

(19)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Superintending Engineer I Circle Vizagapatam dated Cocanada 22-6-17 No. 140

With reference to G. O. No. 1286 W 2-9-1916 communicated by the Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division with his endorsement 105/1-2-17 I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to inform the Association in how many channels of the Godavary Eastern and Central deltas has the experimental system of water distribution by village Panchayats been introduced during last year and whether it has been found to be working satisfactorily. If so, I shall be obliged to be favoured with information whether it is proposed to extend the system to some more channels in this district as a tentative measure.

I-IRRIGATION IN AMALAPUR TALUK

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector Godavary District dated Cocanada 10-8-17 No. 175

In enclosing a translation of the petition dated the 3rd instant signed by 140 inhabitants of Amalapur, Perur, Samansa, Vannichintalapudy, Tandavapalli, Bhimnapalli, Gopavaram, Gudala and Tadikona of the Amalapur Taluk, I have the honour to solicit your attention to the representation therein contained that 33850 acres of wet land has been left uncultivated owing to the Vasalatippa drainage channel not

being repaired for 30 years as therein alleged. The neglect of repairs to drains by the D. P. W. has, in recent years, been the subject of loud complaint both in the Legislative Council and in the district conferences. Reference is solicited in this connection to resolution XIV, passed at the VIIth Godavary District Conference held at Rajahmundry in 1914, resolution 37 (a) passed at the Godavary District Conference held at Peddapur in 1915, resolution VII (3) passed at the Xth Godavary District Conference held at Ramachendrapur in 1916, and lastly to resolution XX passed at the XIth Godavary District Conference held at Amalapur in 1917.

Possibly the people affected by the silting up of the drainage channel in question have already submitted memorials to you also, direct, praying for relief being afforded to them in the manner indicated in the concluding portion of the petition. The petitioners' request seems to be that they be permitted to raise second crop this year without rigidly adhering to the programme of closure of channels already notified and this much favour they seem to deserve under the distressing conditions therein disclosed.

(Translation.)

To The Secretary, Godavary District Association, I Petition from the villagers of, Amalapur, Samarasa, Vannéchintalapudy, Tandayapalli, Bhimanapalli, Gopavaram, Gudala, Tadikona of Amalapur Taluk.

Our villages are served by the Vasalatippa drainage channel which runs from Amalapur to Komaragiripatnam, where it joins the Panchanadi drain. It has not been repaired during the last 30 years. No action has been taken in spite of our submitting in the meantime, innumerable petitions to the Revenue and the D. P. W. authorities for its repairs. Neither were endorsements issued nor orders passed thereon. There had been very heavy rainfall in the first week of June of this year. It was not, therefore, convenient to start agricultural operations. In the fields to be cultivated by us, there is now water to a depth of 3 to 4 feet. That water could not be discharged to begin cultivation. It has not receded although we hoped that it would. This is due to the Vasalatippa drainage channel not being repaired. The following are the details of the extent of land left waste in our villages this year.

Amalapur village	Ac	300
Perur do.		400
Samarasa do.		150
Vannéchintalapudy do.		600
Tandayapalli do.		400
Bhimanapalli do.		600
Gopavaram do.		600
Gudala do.		450
Tadikona do.		350
Total Ac.		3,850

Besides this extent, there are about 3,200 acres cultivated but submerged which may require remission. We and our lands are subjected to this loss and damage by neglecting the repairs of the Vasalatippa drainage channel. The inhabitants and cattle of Vannéchintalapudy, Tandayapalli and Tadikona are exposed to further troubles as those villages have been rendered uninhabitable. We the petitioners request the Association to bring our miserable condition to the notice of the Government in view to the drainage channel being ordered to be repaired soon and remission being granted to us. We also request that arrangements may be made to enable us to cultivate with black water in black water season without observing the turn system in our irrigation channels.

We remain etc. (Sd.) N. Bangararaju & 139 others.
3-8-17.

(2)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the Collector Godavary District, dated Cocanada 15-8-17 No. 178.

In continuation of letter No. 175 dated 10th instant from this Association, I have the honour to state that it has been ascertained from the petitioners that their specific prayer is not for permission to raise second crop, but for permission to raise seed beds and proceed with transplantation with black water immediately after the Amalapur canal is opened on 15th May 1918. They are low lying lands commanded by the Amalapur Garuvu channel, old weir channel, and Chendada Garuvu channel above the IV Reach Direct. Transplantation is to be generally completed on these lands before the Godavary receives freshes as otherwise they are liable to submersion during early rains owing to the neglected condition of the Vasalatippa drain. These lands are stated to be not ordinarily fit for second crop cultivation as there will be one or two feet of water on them for a greater part of the year. Ploughing and raising seed beds can be started by April. Under the existing arrangements, transplantation cannot be commenced in May although the channel is opened as the channels are worked by turns of 2 days in every ten days. The D. P. W. officers are stated to have informed the petitioners that the turns already fixed are unalterable. The petitioners therefore request that arrangements may be made by which they will be enabled to raise seeds and proceed with transplantation of the low lying lands with black water soon after the Amalapur canal is opened in 1918 as a special case.

Letter Ref. Pet. No. 2315 Rev. of 17 dated Cocanada 31-10-17 from H. H. Burdett Esq., I. C. S. Acting Collector, Godavari, To the Joint Secretary, Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

In reply to your letter No. 175 dated 10-8-1917 and No. 178 dated 15-8-1917, I have the honour to state that the improvements to the Vasalatippa drain form part of a very big scheme in respect of which Government have sanctioned the preparation of plans and estimates and that the work will be executed in due course.

Instructions have been issued to the Divisional Officer, Rajahmundry, for the timely inspection of all fields for purposes of remission.

The question of supplying water for the transplantation of the low lying lands before the 15th of June in future is still under consideration. I should, however, like to point out in this connection, the inconsistency between the recommendation now made by you and the line of argument followed in your letter No. 160 dated 12-8-1915.

(4)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector Godavary District dated Cocanada 27-11-17 No. 235.

Referring to para. 3 of your letter Ref. Pet. No. 2315 Rev. dated 31st ultimo, I have the honour to state that the Association never intended to go behind the line of argument adopted in its letter No. 160 dated 12-8-1915. In the present case, it felt bound to recommend a departure as a special case with regard to the fields of a few villages, whose deplorable state was due to continued neglect of repairs to drains for years together.

(J) K. M. J. CANAL

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association to the Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division dated Cocanada 31-8-17 No. 187.

I am directed to request you will be so good as to inform the Association when the Kovvur Manjair Junction canal may be expected to be opened for navigation. The construction of the two locks seems to have been completed.

Letter No 964 M. dated Dowlaiswaram 10-9-1917 from A. E. Ferns Esq., Executive Engineer, Godavary Eastern Division. To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

Reference :- Your letter No, 187 of 31-8-1917.

Subject :- K. M. J. Canal.

With reference to the above, I have the honour to inform you that through navigation in K. M. J. Canal cannot be restored till the diversion of Kurada drain is carried out as per Superintending Engineer's orders given in his No 337 C. E. of 12-4-1917 owing to the breach at 34/2 miles.

(2) The plans and estimates for the diversion of Kurada drain have been submitted to Government for sanction.

K-FIRST AND SECOND CROP SEASONS. It is well known to all the ryot proprietors in the District when their first crop is harvested and the second crop is sown. It is not therefore considered

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division, dated Cocanada 27-11-17 No. 233.

In enclosing translation of a letter dated 3rd instant received from certain ryot members of this Association, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to enlighten me on the points there in raised. There do not seem to be definite orders on the subject.

(Translation of the petition.)

A statement showing the list of channels to be kept open and closed for 2nd crop irrigation is published in the District Gazettee once in four years. The statement does not, however, contain information as to the exact date up to which each channel will be open for 1st crop and the date from which it will be closed, for 2nd crop irrigation. The dates of closure of main canals are published in the Gazettees some months in advance. It seems necessary that similar information should be published in advance with regard to irrigation channels also. Please enlighten us on this subject if this information is available in the Association, and if not please ascertain from the authorities concerned. Please also request them to kindly publish this information annually in the Gazettee.

(2) Will you please state whether a crop raised in November or December in a field assessed to consolidated wet rate, leaving it waste till then, will be treated as first crop or otherwise? If such fields are commanded by a channel notified as closed for 2nd crop, will water be supplied as a special case to the crops raised in December which is virtually a first crop, notwithstanding the notification to the contrary. Please answer these questions also and oblige.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Collector Godavary District, dated Cocanada 27-11-17 No. 234.

I am directed to solicit your instructions on the following question raised by certain ryot members of this Association in a letter dated 3rd instant.

(2) Will you please state whether a crop raised in November or December in a field assessed to consolidated wet rate, leaving it waste till then, will be treated as

first crop or otherwise? If such fields are commanded by a channel notified as closed for 2nd crop, will water be supplied as a special case to the crops raised in December which is virtually a first crop, notwithstanding the notification to the contrary. Please answer these questions also and oblige.

(3)

Letter No. 1344 M. dated 9-12-17 Dowlaiswaram from A. E. Ferns Esq., Executive Engineer Godavari Eastern Division, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Reference: Your letter No. 233 dated 27-11-17.

Subject: Second crop cultivation.

With reference to your letter quoted above, I have the honour to state as follows:

(1) The first crop season is considered to be from 15th May for the Central Delta and 1st June for the Eastern Delta till 15th December. The second crop season commences about January in the Central Delta and 15th February in the Eastern Delta. It is well known to all the ryot population in the Deltas when their first crop is harvested and when the 2nd crop season commences. It is not therefore, considered necessary to publish in the Gazettee the exact date up to which each channel will be open for the 1st crop and the date from which it will be closed for the second crop.

(2) Cultivation of crops between the close of the 1st crop season and beginning of the second crop (Dalwa) is being encouraged and water supplied as there is generally a large quantity of water to spare which otherwise runs to waste at that time. During this period of interval between the 1st and 2nd crops, water is also supplied as required for all garden crops up to the closing date for closed channels.

(3) For Duffasil crops also which extend over 2 crop seasons, water can be supplied if they mature before the channel is closed for 2nd crop and no special concession can be given even if they are crops raised on the land for the first time during the year. But water for planting young sugarcane under closed channels will be given when they are notified to be kept open in the second crop season as notified in the foot note to the list of channels published in the District Gazettee dated 2-8-1916.

(4) Letter D. Dis. 5436 Revs of 17 dated Cocanada 11-12-17 from P. S. P. Rice Esquire I. C. S. Collector, Godavari, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

In reply to your letter No. 234 dated 27-11-17, I have the honour to say that the answer to your first question is "yes".

(2) With regard to your second question, I am to say that I cannot undertake to supply water from a closed channel and the ryots must take the risk of losing the first crop. In rare and exceptional cases, some deviation from the programme of closure may be arranged, but this will only apply to cases in which the first crop has been post poned over a very considerable area for good and sufficient reasons.

L-SUPPLY OF BALLACUTS

AT CHEDUYADA

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Executive Engineer, Godavari Eastern Division, Dowlaiswaram, Through the Deputy Tahsildar Cominga Division dated Cocanada 23-3-17 No. 48.

In enclosing in original with an English translation, the petition dated 20th instant from the inhabitants of Cheduvada, Cocanada Taluq applying for the supply of a Ballacut to them to cross the Coringa canal for reasons given therein, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to consider their prayer favourably. They agree to engage a man to take care of the Ballacut if supplied by the P. W. D.

(2)

Letter dated Dowliswaram 2-5-17 from the Executive Engineer, Godavary Eastern Division, To the Executive Engineer Godavary Head Works Division.

I have the honour to request you will be good enough to furnish me with an estimate for a second class Iron Ferry Ballacut for Cheduvada crossing on Coringa canal as a ballacut is to be provided to this crossing.

Endorsement No. 461 M. dated 23-5-17 Copy also to the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association Cocanada with reference to his letter No. 48 dated 23-3-17 through the Deputy Tahsildar Coringa division for information.

B—AT BALABADRAPURAM.

Endorsement No. 112 E. P. dated 15 April 1917 from the Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division, Dowlaiswaram, To the petitioners through the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada with reference to his No. 62 dated 2-2-17.

Reference :- Petition presented by the inhabitants of Vedurupaka Rayavaram to the Executive Engineer through the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association Cocanada requesting to supply an iron ferry ballacut for Balabhadrapuram crossing till the proposed bridge over the Samalkot canal is constructed.

The Petitioners are informed that an estimate for constructing a first class iron ferry ballacut for Balabhadrapuram crossing has been sanctioned and that an order has been placed with the Executive Engineer Godavary Head Works Division for the supply as early as possible.

LOCAL FUNDS

A—AMENDMENT OF TALUK BOARD ELECTION RULES.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

(Local and Municipal Department.)

G. O. No. 1855 Ls. Misdated 29th December 1916

Read the following papers. From the Collector of Godavari D. Dis. No. 550. Dated 2nd December 1916.

ORDER

The Government are not satisfied as to the necessity for altering the rules for the election of members of Taluk Boards as proposed by the Collector.

True Extracts
R. A. GRAHAM,
Ag. Secy. to Government.

(True copy)

Communicated to the Divisional Officer Peddapnram with reference to his Dis. No. 2374 P, D. C. of 16 dated 20-10-16 and to the Divisional Officers Rajahmundry, Cocanada, and Polavaram with reference to their reports submitted in reply to this office R. C. No. 4166 Rev. of 16 dated 5-11-16.

(Sd.)

For Collector.

D. Dis. 99 H. D. C. of 17.

Communicated to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association for information with reference to his letter No. 194 dated 25-9-16.

(Sd.)

For Deputy Collector.

N. B.—For original letter See page 44 of the Selections of the Association for 1916 D. V. P.

B—FERRIES.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association to the President District Board, dated Cocanada 9-3-17 No. 99.

The ferry contractors at Kotipalli and Pasarlapudy do not keep sufficient number of boats on either side of the ferry for speedy transit of passengers across the river. In spite of the monopoly being in their hands, they do not realize their responsibility and afford adequate means of conveyance for crossing the river. The object of the control of the Board over the ferries is to prevent passengers from crossing the river to the opposite bank by boats plying for hire without license within the prescribed limits. Yet this is what actually takes place every day at those ferries unnoticed by the Revenue Department or the Taluk Boards. Passengers cannot be expected to wait for hours together till the ferry boat returns from the other side, firstly for want of shelter at the ferries, secondly, owing to the uncertainty of the ferry boats returning at fixed hours. The contractor's men remain at the Kotipalli ferry and the Pasarlapudy ferry and very often there is none on the other side to speak to or make any representation in the matter. In result, the passengers are obliged to hire for their convenience comfort and speedy transit, unlicensed boats in addition to their paying the prescribed tolls to the contractor. According to a decision of the Calcutta High Court, the ferry contractor has no authority to demand tolls from persons who are passengers in unlicensed boats, but he has to proceed against the person who plied the ferry boat without such license. It is out of a spirit of gratitude to the unlicensed boat owners that the passengers whose comforts the ferry contractors do not much care for, for want of sufficient supervision and effective control, pay tolls also in addition to the hire. This state of things will continue so long as the ferry contractors are sure of realization of their tolls whether they keep a sufficient number of boats or not, and by whatever arrangements the passengers cross the river. The Association submits that taking advantage of the law-abiding nature of passengers, the ferry contractors should not be allowed to think that they can be indifferent to their convenience. Very often, the ferry contractor will be found to advise the passengers to hire a separate nava if they are in a hurry to go, as the so called ferry boat would take a long time to return and even when it returns it must be kept for sometime till it is filled. This apparently well meant advice saves the ferry contractors from the trouble and expense of engaging more boats and boat men to meet the public demand without affecting their income and profits. People crossing the ferries often

hear from the unlicensed boat owners, that the ferry contractors take a monthly fee for this co-operating connivance, but when the matter comes up for regular enquiry, both parties, for obvious reasons, naturally deny it with vehemence.

The passengers have to pay 4 pies per head in nonflood season. They do not generally take pies with them, nor do the contractors ordinarily keep a stock of pies with them. The contractors cannot be expected to err on the side of leniency to passengers. Thus every passenger who has no pies with him, must pay 6 pies or if he is so particular about the balance due to him, must remain till pies are forthcoming. A ferry in this district is not an attractive place for one to remain a minute longer than necessary, and, in the end, the contractor is indirectly benefitted at the expense of the Board by the rate fixed by the District Board. As the two ferries in question are fetching a decent income to the Board, the Association begs to suggest that the maximum rate of toll to be charged from November to the end of June may be fixed at 3 pies for an adult and that the contractors be ordered to keep sufficient number of boats in readiness at each side of the ferry, to transport passengers without unreasonable delay and without compelling them to hire unlicensed navas at double the expense as at present.

(2)

Letter Ref. on cur. No. 448 D. B. of 1917 dated Cocanada 17-7-1917 from H. H. Burkitt Esq., I. C. S., President District Board, Godavary To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 29 dated 9-3-17 bringing to notice certain irregularities at the Kotipalli and Paserlapudi (Bodasakurru) ferries, I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to state the number of boats that are considered sufficient at each of the ferries in question for the speedy conveyance of passengers.

(3)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the President District Board Godavary dated Cocanada 25-7-17 No. 162.

Referring to your letter cur No. 448 D. B. dated 17th instant, I have the honour to state that 4 boats on each side of the Kotipalli ferry and 3 boats on each side of the Bodasakurru ferry with the requisite number of boat men excluding the ballacut for cattle and carts are considered to suffice for the requirements of the passenger traffic at these two ferries.

(4)

Proceedings of the President, District Board, Godavari. D. Dis. No. 1673 D. B. dated 19th October 1917.

Read the following papers.

(1) Letter No. 29 dated 9-3-17 of the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, bringing to notice certain irregularities at the Kotipally and the Bodasakurru ferries and suggesting certain measures for the efficient working of the ferries.

(2) Letter L. F. D. Dis. No. 184 R. T. dated 24-6-17 of the Tahsildar (Ramachandrapur and).

(3) Letters D. Dis. No. 199/L. F. of 17 dated 3-9-17 and D. Dis. 282/L. F. of 17 dated 3-10-17 of the Tahsildar Amalapur.

ORDER.

Two boats and three navas on each side of the Kotipally ferry and two boats on each side of the Bodasakurru ferry are considered sufficient for the speedy conveyance of passengers.

(2) The reduction of the fare is not called for and any cases of excess collection will be taken severe notice of.

(3) The Tahsildars of Ramachandrapur and Amalapur are requested to report when ever the renters of the aforesaid ferries fail to keep the sufficient number of boats as per para. 1, supra, and whenever they happen to collect excess rates from the passengers.

The renters of the Kotipally and Bodasakurru ferry through the Tahsildars of Ramachandrapur and Amalapur.

Ramachandrapuram and Amalapur.

Tahsildars Ramachandrapur and Amalapur Taluks.

Copy to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the District Medical and Sanitary Officer. Godavary, Cocanada, dated Cocanada 28-3-17

Referring to G. O. No. 68 dated 14-2-1917 commending to all District Boards for consideration and report a scheme for the extension of medical relief to rural areas by duplicating the staff of medical officers in hospitals and dispensaries, I have the honour to state that at its monthly meeting held on the 26th instant, the Cocanada Taluk Board passed the following resolution unanimously. "The Board approves of the scheme and resolves to duplicate the staff in the hospitals at Tuni and Coringa. The villages to be visited will correspond with the revenue division of the Deputy Tahsildars of Tuni and Coringa. The Board takes this opportunity of recommending to the District Board the abolition of the post of Sanitary Assistant to the District Medical and Sanitary Officer." 14 out of 18 members of the Board were present at the meeting. They were the Revenue Divisional Officer, the Sub Assistant Inspector of Schools, the Deputy Tahsildars of Tuni, Pittapur and Coringa, the President and the Vice President of the Taluk Board, 6 elected non official members and one nominated non official member.

Resolution XIII (8) passed at the X Godavari District conference held at Ramachandrapur in March 1916 runs thus: "that as the District has not been deriving the amount of good anticipated from the creation of the appointment of the Sanitary Assistant to the District Medical and Sanitary Officer, that post be abolished and Sanitary Inspectors who passed Minor Sanitary Engineering Test be appointed for each taluk."

There has thus been established a universal feeling against the continuance of the appointment of the Sanitary Assistant, from whom it can be stated without hesitation that the District has not derived the benefit commensurate to the cost incurred by the District Board annually. The inutility of the appointment was exposed in the discussions in the Legislative Council and in reports of the presidents of the District Boards which sanctioned the creation of the same in high expectations.

The Association understands that the question of further retention of the Sanitary Assistant in this district will come up for consideration of the Godavari District Board at its meeting on 31st instant. I have the honour to request that in

view of the public opinion and the latest opinion of the head quarters taluk board against the appointment, you will be so good as to lend your support to the proposal of terminating that post without delay by providing better arrangements instead.

D—BRIDGES IN RAMACHANDRAPUR TALUK.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, to the President District Board Godavary dated Cocanada 3-4-17 No. 64.

The Association understands that at the meeting of the District Board held on 31st ultimo, it was resolved to appoint a committee consisting of delta men and a few officials to draw up a proposal for extra bridges in the delta.

In G. O. No. 1177 L dated 3-7-1913, Presidents of District Boards were requested to forward to Government at an early date, any applications which their boards might desire to make for half grants towards the construction or reconstruction of bridges on important roads which they were unable to build entirely from their own resources. The District Board (Engineer) then submitted a list of 12 such bridges and it was admitted by the Board in its resolution No. 19 dated 28-2-1914. The following 9 bridges were proposed in the delta and the rest in the upland taluks and the agency tracts: (1) Bridge over the salt creek near Yanam at the tail end of the Cocanada-Neelapalli road at an approximate cost of Rs. 57000. (2) Bridge over the Samalkot canal at Balabhadrapuram at M. 6 ft 6-7 on Balabhadrapuram-Someswaram road cost Rs. 24000. (3) Bridge across Thulyabhaga drain on road from Mandapeta canal to Balabhadrapuram at M. 4 ft 3-4. The District Board then resolved that it would endeavour to contribute not more than one half of the cost in each case. With regard to the bridge over the salt creek at Yanam, the association is informed that the French Government was ready to pay its promised contribution of half the cost nearly 2 years ago. But none of these works has yet been commenced, nor does it appear that their construction has been sanctioned.

At the March 1917 meeting of the Legislative Council, the Hon'ble Mr. K. R. V. Krishna Row moved for the provision of Rs. 25,000 in the budget of this Presidency for the current year for the construction or re-construction of the bridges over navigable canals in this district and the answer of the Government amounted to saying that without estimates or application, from the board they could not see their way to accept the suggestion since the grants would remain locked up in unutilized balances.

Pending preparation of the complete list of bridges which the committee has been ordered to undertake, the District Board Engineer may be directed to get estimates ready for the bridges over Samalkot canal at Balabhadrapuram and over the Thulyabhaga drain, and the re-construction of bridges referred in your letter D. Dis. No. 1468 D. B. dated 25-10-1913. In the absence of the first two means of communication in that portion of the Ramachandrapur Taluk between the Bikkavolu-Ramachandrapur road and the Medapadu Ramachandrapur road which is the richest portion of the taluk and where sugarcane is now again being extensively cultivated, the ryots and traders are put to unnecessary but avoidable expense for transport of produce. If these two bridges are constructed as soon as possible, the produce of one-fourth of that taluk can be easily carted to the railway stations direct at Bikkavolu, Anaparty or Dwarapudy without the necessity of loading and unloading it in boats and carts over short distances.

The inhabitants of Vedurupaka and its hamlets have submitted a few days ago a memorial to the Executive Engineer Godavary Eastern Division through this Association, requesting that, an iron ballacut also may be supplied over the Samalkot canal

near Balabhadrapuram, for through transit of goods from villages between Someswaram and Balabhadrapuram. Only men can use the wooden ballacut now supplied. Bandies are not allowed over it. The people of those villages who pay thousands of Rupees of land revenue and cesses have been petitioning the District Board, the taluk board, and the District Board Engineer for years to establish through communication between Mandapeta and Samalkot canals by the construction of those two bridges.

I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to issue necessary orders on the subject in order that a longstanding grievance of the people of the most important portion of the Ramachandrapur taluk may be removed, and they be enabled thereby to enjoy the benefit of their labour along with others placed in better conditions by the construction of bridges and culverts where they were most needed.

Letter Ref. on cur No. 627 D. B. of 1917 dated Cocanada 24-4-17 from H. H. Burkitt Esq., I. C. S. President District Board Godavary, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 64 dated 3-4-17, I have the honour to inform you that the construction of bridges over the navigable canals and drainage channels has been engaging the attention of the Board.

E—TALUK BOARD ELECTION RULES.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Secretary to Government Local and Municipal Department Ootacamund dated Cocanada 18-4-17 No. 73.

Referring to notification No. 293 dated 1st ultimo published in the Fort St. George Gazette dated 13th idem, I have the honour to submit that it is laid down therein that objections or suggestions bearing on the draft alterations in the rules for the conduct of elections of members to Taluk Boards will be considered if received before 1st instant. The draft rules do not appear to have been circulated with the Godavary District Gazettee up to date. Consequently, even the English knowing section of the people of the district cannot be expected to offer any remarks thereon. I submit respectfully that the purpose of the notification would have been served better if the altered and renumbered rules had been published *in extenso* as was hitherto done on such occasions.

Under the existing rules, any person resident in the revenue taluk is eligible to offer himself as a candidate for election in any circle. The new rules while permitting a person residing in the revenue division to be registered as a candidate in the electoral roll, declare him ineligible to apply for a vacancy in the firka where he does not actually reside. This restriction is calculated to shut out along with others, capable men residing in other firkas although owning extensive properties in the firka where the vacancy actually arises. Further, the voters are compelled to elect a man at times quite against their wish on the mere ground that he is a resident in the firka. There seems to be no necessity for this innovation for election of members in taluk board areas, when it is found not necessary in case of municipalities. A candidate residing in any ward of a municipality can at once apply for a vacancy or vacancies in any one or more wards. If such a rule is considered desirable in municipalities where men of education experience and talent can be had in plenty, its necessity is greater in the case of revenue firkas for election of members for taluk boards.—Government may be pleased to give due consideration to this most essential aspect in the proposed alternations.

It is presumed that residents in municipal areas assessed to income-tax, can neither be voters nor candidates under the proposed alterations as otherwise the chances of success of candidates from rural areas in revenue taluks which include a municipal town are very remote if not impossible altogether, because the former completely out-number the voters in villages. This should be made clear.

The Association begs to reiterate its objections and other suggestions contained in its letter No. 74 dated 17-4-1915 on the draft rules published in the Fort St. George Gazette dated February 23rd 1915 Part I A.

(1)

F—THE MUKKAMALA BRIDGE.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the President District Board Godavary dated Cocanada 23-6-17 No. 142
 For some time past, the bridge over the Mukkamala Lock on the Amalapur canal has been closed by the D. P. W. for cart traffic as it needs reconstruction to bear the full weight of country and other carts passing over it. This action of the D. P. W. is being felt as a great inconvenience by traders, agriculturists, passengers and others as through communication on a number of L. F. Roads is interrupted thereby. This bridge is to be crossed by passengers from Mukteswaram, Anatavaram, Amalapur, Nedunur, Ambajipeta and Kothapeta etc. in their journey to and from. To give a clear idea of the importance of this bridge, it may be stated that the following roads meet or will meet at Mukkamala Lock from opposite directions: (1) The Gannavaram—Ambajipeta road; (2) Paliyela—Mukkamala road; (3) Mukteswaram—Nedunur—Mukkamala road (4) Anatavaram—Siripalli road joining the Nedunur road (5) Amalapur—Janupalli road which will be extended to Nedunur (6) Amalapur—Mukkamala road along the canal bank.

The reconstruction of such an important bridge cannot be put off in the interests of goods and passenger traffic. The D. P. W. does not feel the necessity of it, as it has no objection to the use of the bridge as it is by pedestrians. Even carts are allowed to be carried over heads of men but not yoked to animals. This is an impossible, though not an intolerable concession. The District Board will not be justified in assuming an attitude of indifference when through communication is interrupted without an alternative provision between portions of two important delta taluks. It would appear that the D. P. W. to whom the bridge belongs will undertake to reconstruct it according to the standard design if the District Board would make a suitable contribution therefor. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to order an early enquiry into the matter through the Tahsildar of Amalapur and the District Board Engineer with a view to address the Executive Engineer Godavary eastern division on the subject.

(2)

Letter Ref. on file No. H. H. D. B. of 1917 dated Cocanada 7-8-1917 from H. H. Burkill Esq. L. C. S. President, District Board, Godavary To the Superintending Engineer 1st circle Vizagapatam

I have the honour to state that it has been brought to my notice that the bridge over Mukkamala Lock on the Amalapur canal has been closed for cart traffic as it needs re-construction to bear the full weight of country and other carts passing over it. As a result, much inconvenience is being felt by traders, agriculturists, passengers etc. from Mukteswaram, Anatavaram, Amalapur, Nedunuru, Ambajipeta, Kothapeta etc. in their journeys to and from. The bridge is reported to be a most important one as many of the Local Fund roads meet at this bridge from opposite directions. The

construction of such an important one cannot be put off in the interests of the public traffic. I request you to be so good as to see that the bridge is reconstructed from irrigation funds under rule 15 of G.O. No. 2341 of 1908 dated 25-6-1908 as the construction of the canal interferred with the cart traffic that had been in existence.

Copy to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

G—VILLAGE ROAD TO DUPPALAPUDY.

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the District Board Engineer Cocanada, dated Cocanada 1-8-17 No. 166.

In enclosing copy of memorial dated 21st ultimo from the inhabitants of Duppalapudy in the Rajahmundry taluk for favourable consideration, I have the honour to state that the village is close to the Anaparthi railway station, and the means of communication are very deplorable even in summer season. It is a village where bangles are made as a home industry, with stone got from the North Arcot District, and they command sale in the markets of the neighbourhood. The portion of the land on which the road is to be made seems to lie partly within the jurisdiction of the Rajahmundry taluk board and partly of the Peddapur taluk Board. Even important villages in this district have been neglected owing to dual responsibility in local fund matters. I request you to be so good as to enquire into the necessity of the road and make your report to the District Board, as the Association feels sure that on enquiry you will be convinced that a road will materially help the agricultural population of the delta taluks as detailed in para 4 of the memorial.

Letter D. Dis. 1618 D. B. E. of 1917 dated Cocanada 8-10-17 from M. R. Ry. G. Nagarathnam Ayyar, A. B. E. District Board Engineer, Godavari To the President, Taluk Board, Peddapur.

Subject: Road from Anaparthi Railway Station to Duppalapudi village.

In continuation of this office No. Dis. dur. 1287 D. B. of 17 dated 11-9-17, I have the honour to state that the approximate cost of forming the road will be about Rs. 2,000.

Copy to Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, with reference to this No. 166 of 1-8-17.

H—A NON-OFFICIAL PRESIDENT FOR PEDDAPUR TALUK BOARD.

(1)

Letter dated Ramachandrapuram 16-10-1917 from M. R. Ry. V. Kamaraju Garu Chairman (Retired Police Inspector) public meeting, Ramachandrapuram Godavari, To the President, District Board, Godavari, Cocanada.

I have the honour to submit for favourable consideration enclosed extracts from the proceedings of a public meeting held in this town on Monday the 15th instant. The privilege of having a non-official President to the Taluk Board is esteemed highly, and its withdrawal would highly be a retrograde step. The people of this Taluk are of opinion that Ramachandrapuram and Peddapuram should alternately be the head quarters of the Taluk Board and a non-official president may be alternately nominated from the respective centres.

Sooner or later, and sooner than later, Ramachandrapuram by itself should be constituted into a separate Taluk Board. Till then, the suggestions made now will in some way meet the demands of the occasion.

Copy to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.
 Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Secretary to Government Local and Municipal Department Madras, dated Cocanada 19-10-17 No. 211.

The Association learns with deep regret that attempts are being made to withdraw the privilege of a non-official president to the Peddapur Taluk Board and solicits the attention of Government to the proceedings of a public meeting of the citizens of Ramachandrapuram held on the 15th instant to protest respectfully against the alleged measure of a purely retrograde character. So far as this Association is aware, the work of the Peddapur Taluk Board under a nominated non-official president and vice-president does not seem to have been adversely criticized by Government, nor was even a warning publicly conveyed to warrant the adoption of a severe measure of the kind alleged to have been contemplated.

I have therefore the honour to request that Government may be pleased not to withdraw the privilege without further trial, even if so recommended.

Letter D, Dis. No. 1765 of 1917 dated Cocanada 5-11-17 from M. R. Ry. Diwan Bahadur D. Seshagiri Rao Pantulu Garu B. A. B. L. President District Board, Godavari, To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Adverting to your letter No. 211 dated 19-10-17 addressed to Government, I have the honour to state that no such thing is contemplated and that a non-official president will be appointed soon to the Peddapur Taluk Board.

I—OLD TANK AT AMALAPURAM.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the President District Board Godavari dated 3-11-17 No. 215.

The President of the Taluk Association, Amalapur has sent the enclosed copy of the memorial which is being signed extensively by the inhabitants of that town requesting the District Board to get the tank situated to the east of the old taluk office, and south of the new taluk office building, filled up reclaimed and converted into building sites. This subject was discussed at length at the last Godavari District Conference held at Amalapur in April last. Please vide resolution XXXVI (A). The existence of this abandoned tank is a source of perpetual menace to the sanitation of an important portion of the Amalapur town. The Association therefore begs to request that the Board will be so good as to provide funds for its reclamation in the budget for the next year or make a special application for provincial grant. The amount spent can be realized in full by the sale of sites after reclamation of the tank bed.

Municipal.

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, To the Collector Godavari District Cocanada, dated Cocanada 3-3-17 No. 26.

In his elaborate and exhaustive report containing his views on the amendment of the Madras District Municipalities Act of 1884, Mr. A. R. Banerji C. I. E., M., At I. C. S. Collector of Cuddapah rightly remarked, among other things, that "at present the vice chairman of a municipality has no independent or original powers except when the chairmanship is vacant or when the Chairman is temporarily absent. The result is that there is a tendency on the part of an effete executive to divide or shirk responsibility at its will and pleasure to suit its own ends. There is no provision under which a Chairman is bound to put on record the periods of his temporary absence. It is difficult therefore to know who is the chief executive at any particular period."

(2) Individuals who manage to monopolize the honour of being Chairmen for a considerable number of years and whom in the expressive language of Mr. Banerji, any amount of opposition cannot dislodge from their stronghold till continued mismanagement brings down the wrath of Government on the municipal body as a whole are often found in several municipalities to delegate their duties to a vice chairman or to a councillor for prolonged periods, but take credit to themselves if everything went on well in the administration during their absence. Though this state of things does not prevail in this district, it seems desirable that the district authorities as well as the public should be aware of the exact periods of the year when the chief executive authority was exercised by different individuals, since municipal administration reports are also published in the District Gazettes in diglott. I have the honour to suggest for your favourable consideration that instructions may be issued to the chairmen of the municipal councils in this district that they may here-after note in their administration reports the periods of their temporary absence in order to enable the public to judge the amount of direct and active interest which they have taken in the administration of the municipality during the year under report. There seems to be no legal objection to the chairmen being asked to do so, and to their complying with the request.

MUNICIPAL MEETING PROCEEDINGS

Letter D. Dis. No. 2036 of 17 dated Cocanada 7-5-1917 from H. H. Burkit Esquire I. C. S. Collector of Godavary To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association Cocanada.

Adverting to your letter No. 26 dated 3rd March 1917. I have the honour to state that I have no power to issue instructions of the nature mentioned and I do not think the point is of sufficient importance to refer to Government.

(2) It is open to you to address the Municipal Chairmen direct or to make a reference yourself to Government.

MUNICIPAL MEETING PROCEEDINGS

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, To the Treasury Deputy Collector incharge of the Collectrate Press, Cocanada, dated Cocanada 26-12-1916 No. 254.

It does not appear that printed copies of the proceedings of the meetings of the Municipal Council Cocanada after 4-3-1916 were circulated with the district gazette I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to favour the Association with information as to cause of delay. At any rate, they have not been received with the monthly gazettes supplied to this association since June last.

Endorsement No. N. Dis. G. C. 383 Press of 16 dated Cocanada 3-1-1917 from the Deputy Collector in charge of the Collectrate Press, Cocanada.

Retransmitted to the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

2. It does not appear that printed copies of the proceedings of the meetings of the Cocanada Municipal Council after 4-3-1912, have been received in this office for publication with the monthly gazettes from July to December 1916.

3. He may therefore, address the Chairman, Cocanada Municipality on the subject if necessary.

N.B. The delay was brought to the notice of the Chairman accordingly and steps were taken by him to ensure regularity there after.

Registration

A—PARTIES SHED

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Inspector General of Registration, Madras, dated Cocanada 18-7-1917 No. 159.

I am directed to again bring to your notice the inconvenience to the parties attending the District Registrar's office at Cocanada for want of a separate shed for their use and to request that, out of pity and humane considerations, orders for its construction may not be deferred any longer.

Letter No 765 dated Madras the 6th August 1917 from G. M. Schmidt Esq. Inspector General of Registration, Madras To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 159 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to state that provision for the construction of a party's shed for the Registrar's office at Cocanada has been made in the proposals now before the Government for the construction of a new building for the Registrar's office.

B—SUB REGISTRAR MAGISTRATES.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association To the Inspector General of Registration, Madras, dated Cocanada/26-6-17 No. 144

In enclosing copy of Proceeding D. Dis. No. 20270 Magh 1916 dated 9-12-1916 issued by the District Magistrate Godavary, ordering that for reasons stated, the Sub Registrar Smalkot should not be reappointed to the Samalkot Union Panchayat at the end of the present term, I have the honour to state that the ends of justice require that the Sub Registrar should be asked to resign the membership at once as the anomaly of the situation pointed out cannot be supposed to come into existence after the expiry of the term of the present incumbent. I therefore request you to be so good as to advise the Sub Registrar in question to sever his connection with the said union as early as practicable.

Letter No. S. 1403 dated Madras 11th September 1917 from C. M. Schmidt Esq. Inspector General of Registration, Madras To the Joint Secretary to the Godavary District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your No. 144 dated the 26th June 1917 regarding the resignation by the Sub Registrar of Samalkot of his membership of the Union Panchayat at the station, I have the honour to state that the Divisional Magistrate, Godavari, who was consulted, is of opinion that such resignation is not necessary.

Railways.

A—ACCOMMODATION FOR III CLASS PASSENGERS.

(1)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Secretary Railway Board Delhi, dated Cocanada 27-1-1917 No. 144.

The Railway Administrations in the Madras Presidency have notified a reduction in the number of passenger trains with effect from 1st proximo. There will be an intolerable overcrowding in the 3rd class passenger carriages. I have the honour to request by direction that you will be so good as to advise the administrations that, in order to remove congestion as far as possible, the system of reserving compartments for special classes who pay the same amount of fare may be discontinued so long as the revised timetables will be in force.

(2)

Letter No. 15 dated 27-1-17. Similarly to the Secretary to Government of Madras (Railways etc.)

(3)

Letter No. 169 dated Simla the 22nd of February 1917, from the Assistant Secretary, Railway Board, to the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

With reference to your letter No. 14 dated 27th January 1917, I am directed to state that the Railway Board, after full consideration of the question, do not consider that the restriction of train services calls for any revision of the present practice in so far as reserved compartments for special classes is concerned.

(4)

Letter No. 103 R. M. dated Madras the 6th February 1917 from The Hon'ble Mr. S. B. Murray, Joint Secretary to the Government of Madras, to the Joint Secretary, Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 15 dated 27 January 1917 on the subject of the reservation of compartments for special classes on railways and to say that the Government do not propose to take the action suggested therein.

B—RAILWAY CESS LEVY.

Letter from the Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the President, Taluk Board Cocanada Peddapur and Rajahmundry, dated Cocanada, 20-4-17 No. 75.

By enclosing copy of resolution No. XIII passed unanimously at the 11th Godavari District Conference held at Amalapur on the 6th, 7th, and 8th instant

under the presidency of Mr. Peri Narayanamurthy Pantulu B. A. B. L., High Court Vakil Madras, I have the honour to request that, if convenient, you will be so good as to place it before your Board for an expression of its opinion on the question of postponement of the collection of railway cess in this district for reasons stated therein. The District Board has under section 63 of the Local Boards Act, power to order the collection of the cess being kept in abeyance and the Trichinopoly District Board ordered a few years ago the suspension of the levy of the railway cess till the route through which the proposed line in that district should pass was settled.

Owing to the conditions of war, the Tinnevely District Board was advised to sell the rails and other iron materials at a profit, and not to proceed with the construction of the Tinnevely-Triruchendur railway which was originally estimated to cost Rs. 18 lakhs, but whose revised estimates gradually rose to Rs. 24 lakhs and eventually to 39 lakhs. The Board had thus to suspend its operations for the present (vide report in the Madras Mail dated January 13th, 1917).

The Tirutrapundy-Vedaraniyam Railway constructed by the Tanjore District Board at a cost of Rs. 12 lakhs could not be worked for want of rolling stock. The railway administration is unable to run at least one train a day for want of rolling stock. They therefore provided Rs. 8000 for watching and maintaining the railway line during the time it could not be likely used. The Board is further contemplating to let out the railway buildings on that line to Government officials (vide report in the Hindu dated 18-4-17).

Your Board may be aware that during the current year, ryots of every taluk had to borrow at high rates of interest for payment of Government dues. Any the least relief that can be given in payment of taxes cannot but be welcome to them. The District Conference has not proposed or suggested the abolition of the railway cess but only requested its temporary suspension till normal conditions are restored.

A MEMORIAL.

Resolution XIII passed at the Eleventh Godavari District Conference held at Amalapuram in the first week of April 1917 runs as follows:— "This Conference resolves to request the Local Government and the Godavari District Board that as owing to the conditions of war now prevailing, there seems to be no prospect of the construction of the proposed District Board Railway from Cocanada to Kotipalli being undertaken for some years to come, the levy of the railway cess in this district be kept in abeyance for the present." In reference to this resolution a memorial had been drawn up in Telugu, was signed extensively in the villages of the ordinary tracts of this district in which the railway cess is being levied, for submission to Government for favourable consideration. A free translation of the memorial is given below:

(i) At its monthly meeting held on 28th August, 1915, the Godavari District Board resolved to levy the railway cess in this district with effect from 1st July 1915. At its meeting held on 26th February, 1916, the Board resolved that the proposed railway line should run from Cocanada to Kotipalli via Ramachandrapuram and that it be constructed on broad-gauge. It would appear that up till now, a sum of Rs. 1,18,878 was collected on account of this cess, of which Rs. 72,900 were invested in 4 per cent, and Rs. 45,978 in Rs. 5½ per cent War Loan bonds. This is a matter for gratification.

(ii) At the commencement of 1916, an engineer and some surveyors of the Madras and Southern Maharashtra Railway Company surveyed the line from Cocanada to Kotipalli but it is not known what orders have been passed on their report.

(iii) It does not seem possible to construct new railways cheaply for some years to come, owing to the conditions brought about by the war, and seeing the pressure brought to bear on the existing systems of railways. From reports in newspapers, it is gathered that all attempts to run at least one train a day over the Tiruturaipundi Vedaraniyam Railway having proved of no avail on account of stoppage of trains necessitated by the war, the Tanjore District Board has been contemplating to let out for rent to Government officials, the buildings constructed on that line for the accommodation of the railway staff. From the explanations given by the Agent of the Railway and the Collector at the time of the meeting of the Tinnevely District Board held in January last, it is ascertained that treble the amount of the original estimates is required to complete the construction of the railway undertaken by that Board. Under these circumstances, our District Board cannot hope to profitably proceed with the proposed railway without exceeding the cost of the original estimates, and at the same time it is undesirable to think of a costly railway now as it will entail heavy loss. There is no prospect of the required loan being obtained for the railway till some years after the termination of the war; even supposing that the required amount can be now borrowed, the materials required for the railways are not being imported from foreign countries owing to enormous increase of price of iron. Even railways whose construction has almost been completed, are getting into disrepair for want of some necessary materials required therefor. A reference is solicited to the report in the *Madras Mail* dated 13th January, 1917, in which it is stated that under advice of the Agent of the Railway, the Tinnevely District Board resolved to sell at a profit the iron materials purchased by them for the Tinnevely-Tiruchundur Railway, as they were unable to get the amount required according to revised and supplemental estimates. It seems that for somewhat similar reasons, the Trichinopoly District Board, suspended the levy of railway cess for some years in that district and are now levying it again as necessity has arisen therefor.

(iv) Taluk Officers are personally aware of the hardships we, the ryots, underwent in the Godavari Delta to pay the land revenue kists of February and March. The same difficulties are confronting us for payment of the second crop demand. Many an ordinary ryot paid his dues borrowing at rates varying from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 4 per cent per mensem and pledging at the same time his gold and silver ornaments. It is, therefore respectfully submitted that it would be fair if Government relieves us from the burden of taxation at least to some extent by the suspension of railway cess which is not required for immediate use. It is no doubt true that the District Board has been augmenting the railway cess collected from us by investments. But we feel the effects of fall in prices, of there being no demand for our produce, of stocks accumulating in each village, nay in each taluk, for want of railway waggons or coasting steamers for export of produce by land or water. Cost of living has increased threefold owing to dearness of articles required for our daily domestic purposes. There thus seems to be no necessity for the ryots paying the railway cess also now, borrowing it at rates of interest of Rs. 1-8-0, Rs. 2, Rs. 3 and Rs. 4 per cent per mensem. *"That the Railway cess should be abolished is not our prayer at all."* As unlike Land Revenue and Cesses, the railway cess can, at the pleasure of Government and taking the hardship of the people into account, be suspended temporarily, we request that this be done at present reviving it when it is ascertained that the line can be constructed cheaply. One lakh of rupees can be collected in this district annually on account of railway cess. The amount required for the Cocanada Kotipalli line can be borrowed at any time on its security. Seeing that the District Board cannot now borrow the required capital in the market, and giving due weight to the clear opinion of the railway authorities that the required material cannot be freely obtained for some years to come, we submit that it is not to our advantage that the cess should be collected from us and invested when we are obliged to borrow it at higher rates of interest else-where. Of the 70,000 pattadars of this district, as many as 52,000 are poor pattadars paying Rs. 30 and under. We shall be sincerely thankful for any the least relief given by Government in the matter of taxation. This railway cess does

not trouble the rich, the traders, and other capitalists. They need not pay it as they do not own lands, but their money will be circulating for interest. Since the Government and the District Board have power under the Local Board's Act to suspend the collection of this cess, we submit that we shall be grateful to Government if they be pleased to exercise that prerogative at this time of stress for landholders and instruct the District Board to do the same.

(v) It was resolved at the XIth Godavari District Conference held at Amalapuram on the 6th, 7th and 8th April by 800 delegates unanimously after full discussion of the subject at the request of the ryots of the delta taluks, that the Government and the District Board be requested to order the suspension of levy of railway-cess for sometime. We trust that the Government will be pleased to give due consideration to this the reasonable prayer of the people of this district.

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the President Rajahmundry Taluk Board dated Cocanada 10-5-17 No. 101.

Referring to your letter D. Dis. No. 624 R. T. B. dated 7th instant, I have the honour to invite your attention (1) to Resolution No. 1 passed at the meeting of the Godavari District Board at which it was decided to levy railway cess in this district at 10 pies in the rupee throughout the ordinary tracts of the district (excluding agency tracts) and (2) to Resolution No. 1 passed by the same Board agreeing to levy the railway-cess with effect from 1st July 1913. Taluk officers have been collecting railway cess ever since along with land cess and the District Board has already invested a sum of Rs. 1,18,878 in war loan bonds carrying interest at Rs. 4 and Rs. 5 1/2 per cent per annum. The ryots in the jurisdiction of the Rajahmundry Taluk Board are thus taxed to railway cess, under the Local Boards Act. A copy of the memorial drawn up with reference to the resolution passed at the XIth Godavari District Conference at Amalapur is enclosed for your perusal.

(4)

Letter from the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association To the Collector and President District Board Godavary, dated Cocanada 24-6-17 No. 14210

The Association understands that the question of suspending the collection of railway cess in this district as prayed for in resolution XPH passed at the last Godavari District Conference will be taken up for consideration at the meeting of the District Board to be held on the 30th instant. This is one of the most important questions to be represented to you by the deputation appointed by the conference to wait on you and which, you were pleased in your letter D. Dis No. 2417 Rev. dated 1st instant, to inform the Association on would meet after you became intimate with the conditions of the District. I have therefore the honour to request that the decision of this question may be kindly deferred till you meet the deputation and acquaint yourself first hand with the views of the representatives of the people of the District in conference assembled. A copy of the memorial which is being submitted to Government by the villagers of the several taluks in the plains, is enclosed for kind perusal.

(5)

Resolution No. 1 passed at the Godavari District Board Meeting held on 30th June, 1917;

Letter D. Dis. No. 504 C. T. B. of 17 dated 26-5-17 from the President, Taluk Board, Cocanada, forwarding copy of the Taluk Board Resolution No. 2 dated 26-5-17 requesting the District Board to address Government for suspending the levy of Railway-cess till normal conditions are restored after the war.

The Board is of opinion that there are no adequate grounds for suspending the levy of the cess.

Resolution No. X passed at the Special Godavari District Conference held at Ramachandrapuram on 18 November 1917 and sent to the President Godavari District Board with letter No. 225 dated 23rd item of the Godavari District Association.

This conference resolves that as owing to the conditions of war there is no likelihood of new railways being constructed for some time to come, the collection of railway-cess in this district be kept in abeyance and that the cess hitherto collected, be deposited, in the Co-operative credit society in order to relieve and help the people of the district, who are obliged to borrow at higher rates of interest.

C—INDIAN REFRESHMENT ROOMS

Letter No. Ry. 6 dated Waltair 30-11-1917 from the District Traffic Superintendent of M. & S. M. Railway Co., Waltair To the Joint Secretary to the Godavari District Association, Cocanada.

Re Native Refreshment Rooms

With reference to your letter dated the 23rd instant, I have the honour to inform you that arrangements have already been made to build a native Refreshment Room at Rajahmundry. With regards to Tuni I will let you hear later.

VILLAGE SERVANTS.

(1)

Letter No. 75 dated Rayakuduru 2nd November 1917, from the Secretary Village Association, Rayakuduru, Bheemavaram Taluk, To the Secretary District Association, Godavari.

I have the honour to request you to kindly do the needful after perusing the undermentioned subject. Section 3 of Act. III of 1895 states that it applies to village artisan offices provided that emoluments have been attached thereto and sec. 12 of the same Act, states that succession to village offices of this class devolves in accordance with the law or custom applicable thereto on the date the Act comes into force. There seems to be no special law relating to the succession of these offices. Both Acts II of 1894 and III of 1895 are silent as to the appointment, punishment, and removal of village servants and artisans forming class (4). Accordingly these are said to be outside the scope of these acts (vide B.S.O. 153 of 1907 edition). B.S.O. No. 157 says that when a village artisan makes default in respect of services, the revenue officers are not empowered to punish them, should it be customary for revenue officers in a particular tract or district to appoint and punish village artisans, there is no objection to the custom being followed so long as it works smoothly. On the plea of custom in this portion of the district, the village artisans are now being punished for neglect of duty by attaching the crops on the inams and giving the sale proceeds to the working incumbent if any—This procedure it appears, has no legal basis. There is a B.S.O. which deals about resumption of inams also—when there is persistent default in respect of prescribed services. It further states that the action

of the village community on the resumption of service inams to be noted while submitting a report to the Board of Revenue. The resumption of assessment on such inams proposed in the B. S. O. is bad in principle as it puts an end to the services altogether. If the service inam holders are sufficiently educated they will refuse to perform their services as their position will be bettered by the resumption of assessment and recognition of rights of occupancy in the land.

The artisan service inams were originally provided by the village people so as to attract the necessary staff of artisans by giving them lands, houses etc. in the village. They perform services for the residents, who will only provide or pay for the materials employed. Their labour is rewarded by regular annual remuneration of grain etc. paid at the harvest time. This system was necessitated by the circumstances of their position. No one could venture to set up business on speculation in a village unless it is a large one; nor could the village people go for all the simple but indispensable requirements to a distant town. The village people have still keenest interest in keeping in their villages the artisan and other officers with the emoluments attached to them and the resumption of such inams is unpopular.

These offices are the remnants of the village republics which existed in older times, in the control of which the community had a voice. I am strongly inclined to think, that for this reason, the present legislation for the control of these offices is silent. It looks as if this subject had been postponed carefully for a time when village community requires them and asks for their rights.

The Government have been endeavouring to reconstruct the village republics on their ruined foundations by the formation of formal and informal panchayets. The Village Panchayets Bill is now on the anvil of the legislative council; thereby it is hoped that more powers will be placed in the hands of the villagers for the disposal of litigation. By these reforms the village community will gradually realize their consciousness and assert their rights of control over the communal properties as they had that control in former times.

Sir Henry Maine in his book on "Village Communities" also notices the strong personal interest which the Village Community had over the village communal properties.

So I request you to kindly consider the whole question and bring to the notice of the Government the injustice done to the village communities by resumption of artisan inams (service). I further request you to see that these offices are placed under the supervision and control of the village associations or panchayets wherever they exist, by necessary amendment in the legislation.

In the old Krishna portion of this District, wherever the artisan inam-lars neglect their services, the inams are being resumed. The custom relating to these inams in the old Godavari portion of the District as I already stated is different. There is a tendency on the part of the executive to adopt the principles of the B. S. O. dealing about resumption. Hence I think a representation is necessary on this subject. Please kindly let me know your views in the matter.

(2)

In letter No. 236 dated 29-11-1917 from this Association, the Secretary was informed that the subject matter of the above letter would be attended to by the President of this Association in his capacity of the member of the Legislative Council

of **VILLAGE PANCHAYATS.**

Letter from the President of the Godavary District Association To the Head Quarters Deputy Collector Cocanada dated Cocanada 28-3-17 No. 59.

I have the honour to convey the thanks of the Association to you for having invited the secretaries of this association to co-operate with you in the formation of a voluntary Village Panchayat at Mallam on the 25th instant. It is hoped that they have been helpful to you in your attempt to start such an association in your division. I take this opportunity to inform you that this association will always be ready to co-operate with you in the formation of these village panchayats on a voluntary basis, in your division and the services of the secretaries or other members will be at your disposal on intimation.

(2)

Letter D. Dis. No. 537 H. D. C. of 1917 dated Cocanada 30th March 1917 from M. R. Ry. O. N. Ramaswami Ayyar Ayargal, M. A. Revenue Divisional officer, Cocanada, To the President District Association, Cocanada.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 28-3-17 and to state that the presence of the Secretaries of the District Association was of much help to me in the formation of the Panchayat at Mallam. The clear and impressive speech of M. R. Ry. Prakasa Rao was very telling on the ryots. I have no doubt that the Secretaries would be visiting Peddapudi, Hamsavaram and Mallam now and then putting people in the way of making the experiments a success.

APPENDIX.

SPECIAL GODAVARI DISTRICT CONFERENCE.

The following is a free translation of the address of Sri Rajah K. Ramachandra Raju Bahadur Garu, Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Special Godavari District Conference held at Ramachendrapuram on 18th. November 1917 under the presidency of Sri Ch. V. S. Narsimharaju Garu B. A., B. L., Vizagpatam.

Gentlemen and brother delegates:

On behalf of the Reception Committee, I have very great pleasure in offering you a hearty, sincere, and thankful welcome for kindly responding to the call at such short notice. I shall not take up your time by detailing either my short-comings or of the defects of the arrangements made for your reception. I would rather express my most sincere gratitude to those that have so kindly and so considerately given me an opportunity to express my humble thoughts as one that may claim a voice to represent this taluk people, and you will permit me to add this whole district. I feel specially interested in calling this distinguished gathering here to-day. You all know that the first meeting of certain non-Brahmin gentlemen who have been leading an Anti-Congress agitation under the guise of unifying the non-brahmins was held here in my residence, but without my presence. I thought that I might ignore any popular misconceptions regarding my own attitude toward this anti-brahmin movement in case the movement concerned itself in a genuine endeavour for the uplift of the backward ryots and the depressed classes. To my chagrin, all the aspirations of the new-born fraternal feelings of the various non-brahmin communities have merely ended in the Biccavole programme to which I shall have to make reference again. I wish to take this opportunity to inform the public that the scheme that emanated from Biccavole has not got the sanction of the real non-brahmin opinion of the district. Gentlemen, I trust you will allow me the liberty to say that I am entitled to speak on behalf of this taluk in particular with which the name and interests of my family have been associated for generations past. It is, therefore, I have with pride and joy accepted the honour conferred upon me to offer you our most sincere and hearty welcome.

The war is still dragging on its weary, tortuous, and horrible course. Our armies and those of our allies are crowning themselves with glory on the Western front and in East Africa, Mesopotamia and Syria, but unfortunate Russia is writhing in civil strife, while Italy has lost some ground. The situation is not by any means unsatisfactory. All the same, it is the duty of every patriotic citizen to do his level best to hasten the day of a decisive and complete triumph over Prussian militarism and barbarism. Towards this end, I enjoin that the best co-operation should be given to the Government in whatever shape our aid may be required. From one end of the world to the other, goes forth the prayer for the early victory of the noble allies, and I voice forth the same prayer on your behalf.

In this connection, gentlemen, I cannot resist the temptation of meeting an accusation now being frequently repeated that the demand for administrative reforms at this time is an agitation prejudicial to the proper conduct of the war. This cry was first raised by the opponents of Indian political advancement. It is now being repeated by their tools *ad nauseum*. Lest our less cultured brethren should believe this, we must expose its hollowness. All the allied countries and all the colonies of the British empire have been for the last two years making elaborate plans for post-war trade and commerce. Self-governing colonies demand a share in the administration of the empire as a whole. Commercial treaties are being drawn up, international and intercolonial preferential tariff arrangements are being considered. The British

Government have appointed several committees of inquiry for the development of the resources of the empire. The precise forms and methods and results of these labours are not and cannot be known. But it is certain that unless India also is provided with a system of administration that can safeguard Indian interests as against the interests of the other parts of the empire, she must for ever be content to be the Cinderella of the empire. The leaders of the Congress-Muslim League scheme demand fiscal autonomy to save India from being the eternal dumping ground of foreign merchants. They talk of Ghokale's last testament. It is a pitiful cant. If the Economic Conferences and the empire resources development schemes had come forth in Ghokale's time, would he have told the Indians, "I must preserve my reputation for moderation. Let all those who choose, exploit India. Do not demand fiscal autonomy. Be contented with Local Self-Government." What part of Ghokale's conduct merited such a foul suspicion of his patriotism? What did he subordinate Indian interests to other interests? Let this childish prattle cease. Mr. Gokhale would have endorsed every word of the Prime Minister's declaration, "There are times in history when this world spins so leisurely along its destined course that it seems for centuries to be at a standstill. There are also times when it rushes along at a giddy pace, covering the track of centuries in a year. These are such times."

Let us by all means make our representation to the Government honestly, fully, without reservation. Our doing so has nothing to do whatever with the conduct of the war. The work for the war is being carried on by those that can do that work. Let us not assume that by withholding our demands for reform, we are helping the course of the war. The credulity required to believe in this astounding complacency is wonderful. The Government itself has permitted us to submit our views, and the great Secretary of State, the Right Hon'ble Mr. E. S. Montague whose historic speech in the Mesopotamia debate is still ringing in our ears is now in our midst. Let us offer him our most hearty greetings. Mark his words, "You must give them (Indians) that bigger opportunity of controlling their own destinies, not merely by councils which cannot act, but by control, by growing control of the executive itself."

Why then should we hesitate to plead the cause of our land at the bar of the British democracy? I am fully satisfied with the part that India has played in the great war, in the service of our beloved emperor whose image is enshrined in the hearts of the peoples and princes of India alike. But gentlemen, I trust I am but expressing the unanimous sentiment of this large and representative audience that, if it could, India would be glad to multiply her aid a thousandfold. It is then with a sad heart that we contemplate our wide deep poverty. It is a painful sight to see that out of so many millions in this populous land, an abnormally large percentage of the people are physically unfit for military service. Unless we progress at an incredible rate, India shall be an unbearable burden to Great Britain in any Asiatic crisis. No loyal subject of the British empire can with equanimity contemplate the unthinkable problem of defending the effeminate masses of India. Do you gentlemen, recall to your minds a remarkable though unpremeditated warning that was given, I suppose, by Lord Crewe to Lord Hardinge, that the keeping of India was not so important as the safety of the British in Europe? We can never afford to let India remain in her present position. We must make her richer, stronger, and more efficient than she is, so that she may be able to defend herself against any possible attacks from her land as well as her sea frontiers.

It is in this spirit that the British Cabinet has deputed Mr. Montague to study the Indian problems at close quarters. What vast questions of statecraft that cannot be discussed even in confidential despatches, he may have to discuss with the men on the spot, official and non-official, we cannot speculate upon. One thing only we need note, and it is this, Any faint-heartedness in honestly making our legitimate representations is nothing short of treachery to our land, and treason to the empire. Make India strong and make the empire invincible.

Much capital is made of the terms Home-Rule, and elaborate arguments are brought forward to prove that Home-Rule cannot be granted now. The scheme formulated by the Congress and the Muslim League does not demand Home-Rule now, but only makes it an ideal. Having been drawn up by the best of our leaders, it conforms with remarkable aptness to the policy declared by the British Cabinet and the Secretary of State for India on the 20th of August last. Let the ill-informed read the scheme and understand *that we demand only an instalment of reform, though of a real character, and not complete Home-Rule now.* As for the perverse and interested opponents, we should ignore them.

As the aims and aspirations of the Congress have been constantly misrepresented in this province since recently as making for brahmin aggrandisement at the sacrifice of non-brahmin interests, I shall with your kind permission just enumerate some of the most important of the Congress demands so that the less-informed may know the falsehood of this absurd charge.

On Sunday last, Rao Bahadur Thyagaraya Chetty said at Bezwada, "who are they that ask for it (home-rule)? It is not the people that contribute men to the army, and it is not the people that gave money contributions. It is only the loud-mouthed few that neither helped with men nor with money, and it is plain that those few want to reap the benefit out of the work of others." It is not easy to guess whom he intended to insinuate thereby. Possibly he meant to refer to the educated classes and more especially the Brahmins. I am not an apologist for the Brahmins who have their own defects and shortcomings. Let us however see how far his accusations will stand the test of a critical examination. Is it true that the educated classes most of whom are Brahmins, are unwilling to fight for their emperor and their country? Will Mr. Thyagaraya Chetty have the fairness to tell his admirers and others the number of the non-brahmin educated, corresponding to Brahmins of similar qualifications, that have joined the ranks of sepoys, to justify his invidious mention of some other community? For thirty one years, the Congress has demanded that the Arms Act should be repealed, that Commissions in the Army should be granted to qualified Indians without distinctions of race, creed, colour, and caste, and that all facilities should be afforded to arrest the deplorable emasculation of the manhood of the intellectual classes, Brahmin or non-brahmin or any one else. The prevailing conditions permit only the poorest Indians to join the army as sepoys—only such classes as seek service as peons, menials, constables, and places of that sort. There have never been opportunities for the educated classes, Brahmin as well as non-brahmin to place their services at the disposal of their country. The taunt is absurd and senseless as it rebounds on the heads alike of the non-brahmins whose cause he presumes to represent, and does it so badly. Again, it comes with all grace from the present colleague of Dr. T. M. Nair who resigned his commission in a very short time, though as a medical man he was only a non-combatant. Again, pray, consider for a moment the responses made for a call to the Indian Defence Force. Out of about 1000 applications received by Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, nearly 700, if I remember right, were from the much maligned Brahmins. Are not the educated classes, Brahmins and others, joining the army, whenever and wherever they can do so? It is not a little curious that persons who charge the educated classes with inordinate ambitions, in the same breath stake their reputation for consistency, by denying to these educated classes the most glorious ambitions that any civilised men should covet in careers of the army and the navy.

The Congress has all these years been pleading for the expansion of local self-government, free and compulsory primary education, and various other reforms which are in the interests of the whole country. The Congress can never be identified with any one community. The cleavage that was for so many years been artificially kept up between the Mussalamans and other Indians has been finally removed. And it is our new misfortune that a new and unnatural partition between the Brahmins and some non-brahmins is being created. It is a matter for deep gratification that the most thoughtful and responsible leaders of the non-brahmins have been doing their best to counteract the regrettable situation. The vapourings of the Varnasrama Dharma need a strong check at this critical juncture.

It is incumbent on every patriotic Indian to make it clear to the people in the country that the Congress and its ideals have come to stay, and that it seeks only the best interests of the country, and that an opposition to it is an opposition to the interests of the people. It was because that they passed a resolution at Biccavole demanding the upsetting of the Congress demand, we have had to gather here to-day to make it perfectly clear that we shall not allow the Congress scheme to be so recklessly treated as they did at Biccavole. I have seen a post card signed by some men who, I hear, were the secretaries of that conference. It is a remarkable document coming from the leaders of that conference. It starts with a confession of ignorance of the aims of our special conference here to-day, and ends with attributing low and unworthy motives to us. It asserts that this conference is being held to frustrate the unification of the non-brahmins, and that it is our desire to stand in the way of the educational progress of the non-brahmins, and that we are adopting various devices to create a belief in the non-brahmin mind that this conference is also in the interests of the non-brahmins. Gentlemen, I do not think that I should notice the men that have brought themselves to sign this card, rather this canard. I must, however, say that only this conference, and not at all the Biccavole conference, is held in the interests of not merely the non-brahmins but of the meanest and the poorest, and the most voiceless of the millions of this land. Permit me to explain how it is so. After passing a number of resolutions, which if given effect to will doubtless promote the people's interests, and which we are also going to advocate with a strong will, the ruling spirit of Biccavole has laid down these astounding doctrines.

"This Conference does not consider it at all desirable that financial proposals relating to resources of income and items of expenditure be embodied in bills, and submitted to the vote of Legislative Councils, and this conference also does not approve of appointments by elections to the executive councils." (Again.)

"This conference is of opinion that the time is not ripe for making resolutions passed even in two separate sessions by a legislative council binding on the Government, especially because there is not the safe-guard of a second chamber as existing in other countries, and because the councils will be elected for a definite period without a provision for their dissolution during that period, and a consequent appeal to the electorates."

Let the followers of these leaders note what these mean. Though the legislative council should have a substantial majority of non-brahmins, they should not have the power either to reduce a tax that may press even on the poor ryots, nor should they have the power to insist on an item of expenditure that may be to their interest. Then, what are these councils for? What earthly advantage will you derive by paying sumptuous travelling allowances and daily allowances to one hundred members of the council, who are merely to sit there as ornamental puppets? Their business at the council board may be merely, as it has been, the delivery of certain speeches, which too on certain occasions, are taken as read. Mr. Montague himself has said and I shall repeat it once more, "You must give them (Indians) that bigger opportunity of controlling their own destinies not merely by councils which cannot act but by control of the executive itself." What fatuity is it that we should reject even what Mr. Montague says should be done?

If the Biccavole demand should have stopped here, it would have merely continued the present condition, without a reform for the better, except for the fact that a large number of non-brahmins shall be enabled to draw some large allowances for journeys to and from Madras or Otacamund. But they have gone a step further to make matters worse. Hitherto, the Madras Government has been controlled in its actions by the Government of India and the Secretary of State. The Biccavole leaders, if they be many, have demanded that there should be a kind of "autonomy." That is, the Madras Government should not be controlled from above, and, at the

same time, they should not be subject to the control of the legislative council. The Governor and the Executive Councillors, all told now four, in future five in number, should hereafter be the arbiters of our destinies. In other words, the Madras Presidency is to be placed under an absolute system of government, only the absolute authority instead of being one man shall consist of three European officials and two Indians selected by them.

Can such a scheme of government be acceptable to the enlightened non-brahmins? It must be remembered, that even when sympathetic officers of the Crown understand the real interests of the country, and take steps that are in our interest but opposed to the interests of the British merchants, they are put to odium by their opponents. Who has forgotten the debate raised in the Parliament by the merchants of Lancashire when our popular and sympathetic finance minister Sir William Mayer, with the aid of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford, abolished the cotton excise duties? No finance minister was ever so bold as Sir William Mayer in safeguarding the interests of the poor Indian tax-payers. But the European mercantile interests are far too strong to brook Sir William's theory of sparing the poor ryots and taxing the rich merchants. It appears that Sir William Mayer has come to the end of his tether, and has to find means of fresh taxation. An ominous expression had escaped his lips. He said recently that he thought that income from land was income after all, and might be liable to income-tax. Mr. N. Krishnaswami Aiyangar of Kumbakonam an ex-member of the legislative council, has given out that statistics are being collected for the land tax being raised by forty per cent. Putting things together, there is a possibility, I do not say certainty, of the land tax being raised. In the discussion of such a question, which kind of legislative council is your desideratum? A council that can control the Government as suggested by Mr. Montague, or a Government that may be even more irresponsible than at present, as suggested at Biccavole? I have already taken up more of your time than I intended. However, before concluding, I wish to refer to a frequent repetition of a fiction that, as things have been, non-brahmins have never had a chance against the Brahmans. By all means let them demand greater opportunities, larger control, a higher and a more influential life in the public work of their country to which they are eminently entitled. It shall rejoice me sincerely, and it shall rejoice every right-minded man. Only men of diseased mentality can oppose non-brahmin aspirations. Those that stand for the Congress ideals fight for the good of all India. Even as things have been, worthy non-brahmins have always come to their places. Under the system of Lord Cross's Act the Telugu districts were represented by the late Mr. Sabhapati Mudaliar of Bellary and Mr. Jumbulingam Mudaliar of Cuddapah. Under the existing system Mr. Kessva Pillai has represented the ceded districts. Our worthy president Mr. C. V. S. Narasimha Raju Garu was an honoured member of the council, and he has been succeeded by Mr. B. Venkatapathi Raju Garu. Even in Madras, the first honoured representative of the Madras Corporation was the late Mr. P. Rungiah Naidu of happy memory. Were not Dr. Nair and Mr. Thyagaraya Chetty returned to the council till they became impossible? Come nearer home, I shall enumerate how non-brahmins have been honoured even in this district. The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur K. Suryanaryan Murti Naidu garu has been elected for the Cocanada Municipal Chairmanship a second time. He has been a member of the Port Conservancy Board for a long time, and in an institution where there is a preponderating number of Brahmin B. A. s, and M. A. s, he, a matriculate, was elected as the president of the Literary Association. Mr. E. H. De Cruz has been the vice-chairman of the Cocanada Municipality for several years. The Municipal Chairmanship of Rajahmundry has been held by Messrs. M. Venkateswara Rau Naidu, G. Jayaramaswami Naidu Y. L. Narasimham, and Rao Saheb G. Narayanaswami Naidu. Mr. K. Venkata Reddy Naidu of Ellore has been the elected president of the Ellore taluk board. More instance may be cited. Where there is worth, it is sure to be recognised, and has been recognised.

Gentlemen, may I not pray that our brethren shall stop this fratricidal campaign, and place the interests of the country and the communities they represent before everything else? All the centuries past, India was subjected to foreign invasions and internal anarchy. Under the benign British Rule, we learnt to live in peace and concord. The Congress has been cementing the divers communities in to a self-respecting nation actuated by high and noble ideals. Are we to stop this onward march and sink in communal discords and mutual ruin?

Gentlemen, the fear of the Brahmins has completely paralysed the brains of the Anti-Congress men. Such a total obsession of the mind is unworthy of the great non-Brahmin community. I refuse to believe that among the many millions of this great community a sufficiently large number of men does not exist to equal and to surpass the Brahmins. Are all the Brahmins intellectuals and are all the non-Brahmins so very worthless? The Biccavole programme is nothing short of a libel on the intelligence and patriotism of the great majority of this population. I am glad to see that the men who ran the Biccavole show in the name of the non-Brahmins are already feeling the pangs of remorse. I am very glad to note that the leaders of the Pro-Congress non-Brahmin party have vindicated their common sense and self-respect by refusing to be scared out of their wits by fear of the Brahmins. Again Mr. K. Venkata Reddy Naidu of Ellore, the mouthpiece of the Brahman-phobes in the Anti-Congress Conference took elaborate pains to show on Sunday last at Bezawada that the Biccavole programme was only a slight modification of the Congress scheme, and in so doing, he had to take the inevitable course of telling an amused public that there was an esoteric side in the Biccavole programme, and that the Congress scheme would be realised in 25 or 30 years. I shall just content myself with one quotation from his speech. "As soon as the new councils containing members elected on a communal basis show unmistakable signs of an equality of representation without any undue preponderance of any one community, the non-officials will form a separate house by themselves, and a leading member will form a Cabinet of three or four members, and will carry on the administration of those departments, just like a responsible Government. If the Cabinet be defeated, on any important question, the leader of the opposition called for by His Excellency the Governor will form a Cabinet of his own and carry on the administration. There will thus be the beginning of gaining experience of a responsible Cabinet, and in five or six years, another group of departments will have to be handed over to the non-official members for complete management without the control or even the interference of the official members. Thus in the course of 25 or 30 years almost all the departments will have been brought under the control of Indian members responsible to the people of this country just as the British Cabinet and the House of Commons are."

Gentlemen, this long quotation must tell you that Mr. Venkata Reddy desperately tries to make it appear that the Biccavole programme implies the Congress scheme. But looking at the authorised version of the Biccavole resolutions, there is nothing to justify Mr. Venkata Reddy's reading of it. I never thought that the politics of the new faction has an esoteric side and that when they say one thing we have to understand something else. But the uninitiated may be pardoned if they cannot accept the amplifications of these political adepts. A manly course will be to recant the whole thing and frankly accept the Congress scheme.

Gentlemen, as in the affairs of men, so in the case of nations there is a tide which taken at the flood leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in bitterness. The advent of the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montague is the flood tide of our fortune. Let us rise superior to the occasion and cast aside all low and weak thoughts. Boldly and straightly demand your birth-rights, for which the Congress has fought so strenuously all these 31 years. The Congress has represented the best and the most enlightened intelligence of the whole of India. Do not presume to think higher than it has done. This conference stands wholly by the Congress scheme, and those who do not accept this principle have nothing to do with us. That scheme accepts the principle of communal representation. Stand firm by it and justify your good sense and patriotism.

I thank you for the patience with which you have listened to me. I once more thank the members of the Reception Committee for the honour conferred on me. Gentlemen, I now request you to elect your President.

II

Mr. C. V. S. NARASIMHA RAJU'S ADDRESS.

[Presidential address of Mr. C. V. S. Narasimharaju delivered at the Special Session of the Godavari District Conference held at Ramachandrapuram on 18th November, 1917.]

I feel very grateful to you for the honour you have done me in asking me to preside over the deliberations of the special session of your District Conference. The time is very auspicious. Mr. Montagu who belongs to the extreme wing of liberal party in England assumed charge of the Indian affairs as Secretary of State for India in Council and he is now in India on the invitation of the Viceroy and with the permission of the King-Emperor, to study the Indian conditions and political aspirations on the spot just on the morn of political reconstruction in India. Men who belong to the Liberal party in England naturally have good sympathy for the political reformers in India. Our watchwords are loyalty, retrenchment and reforms as they are of the liberal party in England. What we are now asking is to throw open to the unprivileged, many the advantages which are at present the monopoly of a privileged class. In the process of consolidation and conciliation in India, the British Government have introduced the western system of administration and the western system of education. Though the result of the former was at enormous cost, the latter created a genuine desire on the part of the Indians for the establishment of liberal institutions in this country for its administration. We are not conquered barbarians, but, on the other hand, we are the inheritors of an ancient civilisation and institutions. In the matter of Government, our ancestors reached a high order of efficiency unparalleled at that time in the annals of any other nations of the world. We are not lacking in martial spirit. The present War has given ample opportunity for the display of the martial spirit of the Indian race. Some of the best troops that are fighting the battles of the Empire to-day are drawn from the Indians themselves. It is India's good destiny that placed it under the British flag to raise it to its former proud position of greatness among the nations of the world. The British hold India as a trust to administer it in order to promote the best interest of the Indians themselves. If the Indians who possess ancient civilisation and good martial spirit were really governed in the past in the manner in which they ought to have been governed, certainly they would have been of greater use to the British in the present War. More than a century and a half has elapsed since the British have assumed charge of the Indian administration, but no adequate steps have been taken to insure material and moral advancement. Whatever be the interested official view regarding the material prosperity and moral progress, the confirmed Indian opinion is otherwise. Western education is thrown open to us with a full knowledge of the consequences. Lord Macaulay observed that it was inevitable that the people of India having been brought up in western knowledge would, in course of time, demand European institutions and he said: "Whether such a day will ever come I know not; but never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English History." The Indian Universities and other colleges were started in a liberal spirit with full knowledge of their legitimate consequences in the darkest period of British rule—the Great Indian Mutiny. The demand of educated Indian has been and is that ample opportunity should be given to them to work out their own salvation for the material and moral progress of the Indians and fully attain the colonial type of Government under the British Raj, so that they may remain within the Empire and hold a position worthy of their own ancient civilisation and a martial tradition. The Universities are turning out year after year, a steadily increasing class of men educated after the western method—a class qualified and anxious to take part in the political regeneration of the masses guided by feelings of national self-respect and

individual liberty. The high standard of morality attained by them and the selfless devotion with which they are working for the upheaval of the masses without distinction of caste or creed cannot but draw the admiration of any. When such a class has come into existence, it is the duty of the State to reconstruct the foundations of the British rule in India for the substantial employment of such men in the administration of the country. To meet this just demand it has been recently declared by the British Government that the goal of British rule in India is Self-Government and that steps will be taken for the larger employment of Indians in the administration and further enlargement of the Self-Governing institutions. The present existing form of Government in India has been pronounced by responsible British statement themselves to be in its practical working, responsible to none. The Secretary of State, not being personally acquainted with Indian conditions, is assisted by a Council which mostly consists of retired civil servants of India who naturally incline in favour of official regime. The Secretary of State, being a member of the Cabinet, can always count on a standing majority to support him, and the control of Parliament thus becomes purely nominal. The present Secretary of State, with full working knowledge of the Government of India as Under-Secretary, was rightly if I venture to say so, pleased to say in the Mesopotamia debate that it should be made responsible to the people of India. When the educated Indians with vested rights feel that the present existing form of Government, which is practically responsible to none, is despotic, and if we call it as despotic Bureaucracy, the interested Anglo-Indian journals may say that we are flashing ourselves into a fury, but the fact remains the same. The main question for consideration is how the India Government is to be made responsible to the people of India. The Congress League Scheme lays down that half the number of Executive Councillors should be elected Indians and the Legislature should have control over the executive. The object of our demand for elected members in the Executive Government is two fold. Firstly, there should be men in whom the people have got confidence, so that the Government may be carried out in the best interests of the Indians, and secondly the Executive Government is not required by the proposed constitution to resign whenever defeated by the legislature, as is done in the European countries, a step which should form our ultimate goal. The executive is to be made subordinate to the legislative, so that it may be made responsible to the people. The necessity of subordination of the executive to the legislature, at least in some departments of Provincial Government, is conceded by the other schools of thought. But how far this gives satisfaction requires serious consideration at our hands. The effect of the introduction of such compartmental system of Government would be the formation of an executive consisting of members who hold the portfolios of such departments and considers themselves fully responsible for their administration, resigning when they no longer commanded the confidence of the majority, giving place to a new ministry. As to the other departments, they ought to be administered as heretofore, the legislative body being only advisory in respect of them. Nowhere in the history of the world the devolution of responsible Government into the hands of the people by compartmental system is to be found.

Then why should such a large experiment in the first instance be made in India. The departments proposed to be made responsible to people are education, sanitation and Local Self-Government. These are the departments in which the Government is at present spending less than what it ought to have done. If we examine the resolutions in the Legislative Councils of India, we find that the representatives of the people have been advocating larger expenditure in these departments, and in most cases the Government stated that for want of funds they could not meet the demands. When such is the case, what would be the advantage derived by this compartmental system? Even if definite shares of elastic revenues are assigned for these purposes, I feel confident that nothing substantial could be done for progress in these departments. The present Provincial Governments are not able to do much in those departments even though they have got a moiety of the elastic revenues in their hands. As long as the revenues of India are controlled by authorities outside and the

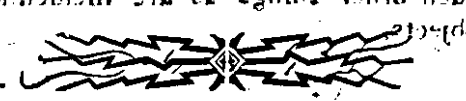
THE GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

financial control is not vested in the people, nothing can be attained in this direction. By the introduction of the compartmental system advocated, the energies of the best intellect of the country will only be utilised in making and unmaking of ministers of those departments. The Bureaucratic Government would continue to have its uncontrolled hold on the finances of the country, and there is no guarantee that its revenue will be utilised for the material and moral progress of the people. The compartmental system leads to much confusion and discontent in the working of legislative bodies as they will have a double function to control the executive over certain departments, to advise the executive regarding the other departments. It is advocated by some that devolution must be by steps. But what guarantee is there that the unwilling Bureaucracy will part with its powers at stated intervals? Many provisions of the Local Boards Act were not given effect to until very recently, though they were incorporated with a liberal spirit. We clearly see that the system advocated would result in complete failure for the reasons already stated, but it may be that the blame will be thrown on us by saying that we are not fit for any measure of Self Government. The leaders of Indian thought having foreseen all the difficulties have set forth a complete measure of responsible Government as a first step though not the ultimate one—more suitable to the Indian conditions in the Congress-League Scheme and it is the duty of every responsible Indian to stand by it and advocate it in its entirety.

It is advocated by some leaders that the last portfolio over which control is to be given is land revenue. Four-fifths of the population of India belong to the class of agriculturist, and most of the revenues are derived from land, and if the oppressiveness of the present form of Government is felt at all, severely, it is only by these. Sir Thomas Munro, while putting a stop to the permanent settlement of this Presidency with intermediate landholders, advocated the permanent settlement with individual holders of the land, the real owners of the soil, and the settlement was effected accordingly and the tenantry of this Presidency were for a long time under the impression that that settlement was a permanent settlement, but to the great detriment of the millions of agriculturists, the Bureaucratic Government undid the permanency of the first settlement and introduced the periodic settlements with periodic enhancements of land revenue. The State no longer considers that the land revenue is a tax and that it should be enhanced or decreased by the requirements of the State but considers itself to be the proprietor of the soil who are entitled to a share of the increasing incomes. For the well being of the masses and for the material prosperity of the country, the first reform that is needed is the control of the land revenue by the people. With these words, Gentlemen, I request you to proceed to the work of the day.

(c) to direct and control the working of the villages and tank associations now in existence, or which may hereafter come into existence in the District, having objects similar to those of this association, and which may be affiliated to this association as hereinafter provided;

(b) and to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.



THE GODAVARI DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

Established in 1895.

Registered under Act XXI of 1860.

Presidents : Messrs. (i) N. Subbarow Pantulu, B. A., B. L., (1895 to 1897) (ii) Ganjam Venkataratnam Pantulu (1897 to 1906) (iii) K. Perraju Pantulu (1906 to 1910) (iv) C. V. Perayya Sastri, B. A., (1911 to 1915.) (v) The Honourable K. R. V. Krishnarow Bahadur B. A., (1916. to.....)

Vice-Presidents : Messrs. (i) Dewan Bahadur D. Seshagirirow Pantulu, B. A., B. L., (1895 to 1897) (ii) Rao Bahadur B. Venkataratnam (1895 to 1901) (iii) V. Venkatrayudu Sastri (1897 to 1901) (iv) Rao Saheb D. Subrahmanyam (1901 to 1910) (v) M. Sobhanadrirow (1911) (vi) Hon'ble K. R. V. Krishnarow Bahadur, B. A., (1912 to 1915) (vii) N. Padmanabham (1916) (viii) Y. Kameswararow B. A. (1917 to...)

Secretaries : Messrs. (i) N. Padmanabham, B. A., (1895 to 1900 ; and 1910 to 1915.) (ii) Rao Saheb D. Subrahmanyam (1895 to 1900) (iii) D. L. Devalraju (1901 to 1905 ; 1908 to 1912). (iv) P. Srinivasarow, B. A., B. L., (1905) (v) Rao Bahadur K Venkatarreddi Naidu B. A., B. L., 1901 to 1905.) (vi) V. Ramarow Pantulu B. A., (1906 to 1908.) (vii) K. Kalyanaswami Naidu, B. A., B. L., (1908 to 1909). (viii) D. V. Prakasarow, B. A., (1913 to.....) (ix) V. Bhavanarayana B. A., (1916 to.....)

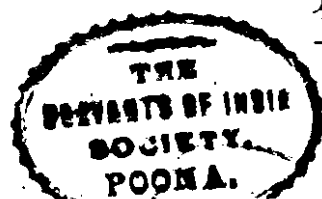
OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The objects of the Association are :—

- (a) To diffuse knowledge among the people : (1) by circulating pamphlets, leaflets, tracts or otherwise and (2) by providing for the delivery and holding of lectures, exhibitions, public meetings and conferences and thereby to foster among the people a healthy public opinion ;
- (b) to ascertain the actual wants and grievances of the district, and adopt constitutional and loyal measures in bringing them to the notice of the authorities concerned, and to co-operate with them in all matters calculated to promote the welfare of the people ;
- (c) to direct and control the working of the village and taluk associations now in existence, or which may hereafter come into existence in the District, having objects similar to those of this association, and which may be affiliated to this association as hereinafter provided ;
- (d) and to do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above objects.

Pamphlet

No. I.

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THE EIGHTEENTH BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE, BIJAPUR.

APRIL 25, 1918.

Presidential Address

OF

The Hon'ble Mr. Vithalbhai Jhaverbhai Patel,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

Member, Imperial Legislative Council.

Chairman of the Reception Committee and fellow-delegates,

I beg to tender my warmest thanks to you for the great honour you have done me by asking me to preside over the deliberations of this Conference. I sincerely wish, however, that this honour had been conferred by you on one who was far more fitted for it than I can claim to be. I say so, not in a vein of conventional modesty but in full consciousness of my own limitations. With this observation as to the choice you have been pleased to make, I shall now try, to the best of my ability, to discharge the duty you have cast on me. And in doing so, let me take stock, at the outset, of the losses we have sustained by the death of our eminent public men since the 17th Provincial Conference met at Nasik last year.

DADABHAI NAOROJI.

The whole country mourns the loss of the Grand Old Man, Dadabhai Naoroji, who served his mother-land for over half a century, with exemplary self-sacrifice and devotion. I need not dilate upon his private worth and public virtues. They are so well-known to you all. He laboured strenuously to do good to his country by an assiduous study of political and administrative problems and by persistent advocacy, more especially in England, of the measures of reform which justice to India imperatively called for. In his Presidential address at the Calcutta Congress of 1906, he gave to the country the cry of "Swarajya," or, as he was careful enough to explain "Self-Government like that of the Colonies or the United Kingdom" and he urged the Government to make a beginning towards the attainment of that ideal without delay. His name will ever be lovingly enshrined in the memories of the people of this land as the maker of New India.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN.

While speaking of the death of Dadabhai Naoroji I grieve to think of the great loss the country has sustained by the departure of one of his warm-hearted co-

workers in England, the late Sir William Wedderburn. He was a fearless champion of the rights of the people of India. During his long service he worked ceaselessly for the amelioration of the condition of the agricultural masses of this country, whose appalling poverty appealed to him as one of the most pressing problems of the day. I have said that he was a fearless champion of our rights. Perhaps many of you may not know that even when he was in service, he was not only not afraid to be present at the first session of the National Congress which was held in Bombay in 1885, but helped the leaders of the Congress in their deliberations by his advice. After retirement in 1887 upto the time of his death only three months ago, he, in and out of the House of Commons, laboured to further the cause of this country whose salt he had eaten. He was twice honoured by the people of India with the presidency of the Congress. As president of the British Congress Committee, he rendered valuable services to India by writings in the press, by issuing Congress Green-books, by correspondence and interviews with responsible authorities and influential members of Parliament and above all by great pecuniary sacrifice which he made for several years past for maintaining for our sake the British Committee and the Congress organ *India*. The debt which India owes to him is heavy and let me hope that we shall gratefully acknowledge it by a memorial worthy of that good old Scotchman, who fought for us with courage and wisdom in order that India may be raised to the position of a self-governing member of the British Empire.

RAO BAHADUR PATHAK

I take this opportunity of expressing my own as well as your sorrow at the death of Rao Bahadur V. N. Pathak of Satara, a retired educational officer of eminence who, after his retirement, rendered valuable services to the people of Satara and was well-known for his industry, ability and public spirit and quiet and steadfast work.

THE WAR AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.

Three years and nine months have passed since England unsheathed her sword in the cause of justice, freedom and righteousness. The moment this was done, India spontaneously and enthusiastically rallied to the great and glorious cause of the Empire. Her devotion to the Throne and the services of her Princes and people have been cordially acknowledged by British statesmen. India is confident that whatever the trials and vicissitudes of this unprecedented war, the Allies are bound in the end to triumph. At the same time one feels that the powers that be have not availed themselves of the vast military resources of this country by pursuing courageously a policy of trust and confidence. The German menace is moving Eastwards and the Prime Minister has sounded the bugle and called on the Government and the people of India to play their part and stem the threatened onrush. The Viceroy, in his reply to the Premier, has assured him that his trumpet call will not fall on deaf ears. So far as the people's leaders are concerned, they have been fully alive to this danger and if the country is to-day unprepared to meet it, the fault is not theirs but of the Government of India who should have long since taken the necessary steps to equip India for such a contingency. But whatever the lapses of the past, it is not yet too late to mend matters. Even now the authorities will do well to train the millions of India for, at any rate, the defence of their own hearths and homes. The prevalent doctrines of Indian military requirements and strategy have become hopelessly out of date. If there is trouble on the frontiers of India, brought about by German intrigue and penetration

into Asia rendered easier now by the Russian collapse—by no means a remote possibility now—how is the British Government going to protect the disarmed and emasculated people of India against the dire consequences of such a contingency? The old-military plan of pouring into India colonial and British soldiers to defend the frontiers against foreign aggression has, as is apparent, become impracticable. The idea of bringing regiments recruited from the North-West frontier tribes inside the country and distributing them over the different parts thereof for the purposes of preserving internal peace has also to be discarded under conditions which are likely to develop on account of German intrigue in Persia and Afghanistan. Under these circumstances, not only the people, but if I mistake not, the Princes and Chiefs of India, to whom the British Government have given a guarantee of protection from internal revolt and external aggression, are justified in asking whether the policy of not equipping and utilizing to the fullest extent the man-power of India is to continue any longer. The educated people have for many years past pressed upon the authorities the necessity of giving military training to the people and preparing them to defend their own country. But their cry has been a cry in the wilderness all these years. Let me hope that whatever the apparent justification for such a policy sixty years ago, the authorities will recognise that the needs of the hour dictate the wiser and the more statesmanlike policy of implicit trust in the loyalty of the people, of which they have given abundant proof in this great war.

I said implicit trust, which means that the measures to be taken to organise the man-power of India should not be, as in the case of the organization and equipment of the Indian section of the Indian Defence Force, half-hearted and calculated to create a feeling of bitterness on account of the arrangements being such as to place on Indians the stigma of inferiority as compared to their European fellow-subjects. Every one knows how the authorities bungled in connection with the Bombay University corps. The spirited young men who joined the corps were first called 'Privates' and then styled "Student Sepoys" and have recently again been given the title of "Privates" but are still denied the equipment and privileges of British "Privates". The dress given to them and the treatment meted out to them were such as to wound their feelings and to humiliate them.

I say, therefore, that the authorities should go in for a whole-hearted measure of organizing the whole country from a military point of view without introducing invidious and galling distinctions. The educated young men of the country are earnestly desirous of being given the necessary training which will enable them to be efficient fighters and officers. We want men of the type of the late General North to dictate the military policy of the Government of India at the present moment. Fifty-one years ago General North, speaking at a meeting of the East India Association in London in the course of a debate on a paper read by the late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, to which I shall refer later on, said that he had great opportunities of knowing the mind of the Native Army and observed that we should have "Native" troops "chiefly officered by contented and educated native officers". He continued:—"Gradually we should be able to get rid of the system of having 70,000 English troops in India to keep India in subjection by the sword." He said "it would be wise for the Government to take the first step; but there is the difficulty—patronage and interest are opposed to it". This was, as I said, spoken by a military officer of great repute fifty-one years ago, and yet even to-day the policy of Government in this respect seems open to the same reproach. How long is Government going to pursue the same policy? Let Government take courage in both hands and organize the immense man-power of India, with what-

ever safeguards that may be deemed necessary, in such a way as to provide for all the diverse branches of the Army and the Navy and the Air services being ungrudgingly and efficiently manned by the sons of the soil.

The Congress-League Scheme.

From this all-absorbing topic of great moment to the Princes and people of India, I now pass on to another, which has engaged, I might say engrossed, the attention of British India during the year, *viz.*, the demand of the Congress and the Muslim League for "a definite step towards self-government for India" within the Empire. As every one knows these two bodies have conjointly adopted what is known as the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms. It has been ably and exhaustively expounded by some of our ablest countrymen in the representations which they submitted to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State in November last. It is unnecessary, therefore, to cover the same ground and examine it here in detail. I propose to make only a few observations in order that the demand we have made therein may be duly appreciated in its correct perspective. And in doing so, I think it necessary at the outset to emphasise the fact that what the Congress and the Muslim League are now asking for is not a recent demand, as is fondly believed by some persons, much less is it a demand made since the War or on account of the War, as is supposed or represented in some quarters. In the closely reasoned representation which the Bombay Presidency Association submitted to His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State in November last, it has been clearly brought out that in 1852-53, that is to say, 65 years ago, the Bombay Association, out of which the Bombay Presidency Association has grown, sent a petition to Parliament on behalf of the inhabitants of Bombay in which they asked for a constitution to be promulgated in India in terms which practically outline the main features of the Congress-League Scheme. The leaders of the Congress movement, the "Old Guard" of the Congress, as I may call them, have always been fully alive to the need for liberalising the system of Government in India so as to make this country a self-governing member of the British Empire. They have consistently urged the introduction of representative government in India, so as to make the Government popular and efficient by its being made accountable and therefore more acceptable to the people.

W. C. BONNERJEE ON "RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT FOR INDIA."

The late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee was, as you know, the President of the first Congress, that was held in Bombay in 1885. Eighteen years before the first Congress was held, he read before the East India Association in London a paper on—I am quoting the title of his paper—"Representative and Responsible Government for India" in the course of which he urged on the attention of his distinguished audience the defects of the system of Government which prevailed before the Act of 1858 was passed, and showed that practically the same defects continued to exist even after that Act of 1858 was enacted and which, I may say, continue to exist till this day in spite of attempts that have since been made to introduce some constitutional reforms. The points he made against the system were that the present constitution of India "owes no responsibility to the people; in fact, it has no responsibility at all"; that the "Parliamentary responsibility is all a sham and a delusion"; that "the paternal despotism which now regulates the destinies of India is unsuited to the people"; that "no Government can possibly be successful which does not possess the active confidence of the people and their

sincere co-operation"; that "the people of India are capable of understanding representative government"; that "in introducing new institutions in a country we must follow the doctrine of 'trying it on'" and that "in the case of India if the ripeness is left to the determination of those who are resolved not to give it to her, our people will never be ripe enough." In that able paper Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee examined all the principal objections which are urged to-day against the Congress-League Scheme, and showed that the people of India in their then state (*i. e.* in 1867) did "answer all the conditions required by the writers on Representative Government" to entitle them to ask for this particular form of Government on their behalf. As you know one of the main objections urged against the Congress-League Scheme by its opponents is that the country being mostly illiterate, no representative Government, based as it must be on a wide franchise, is possible under present circumstances. Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee pointed out that if a few months before he read his paper in 1867 Mr. Disraeli thought the English people fitted for household suffrage pure and simple even though they were then, many of them, if not most of them, unlettered and uneducated, the people of India, applying the same test, were surely entitled to similar privileges in India. He showed that there was enough sense of responsibility on their part, that they had practical common-sense, that they understood what was "best for their own interests, not selfishly, but with due consideration for all about them," and that "if anybody could be trusted with a franchise surely these would be the men," meaning the men in general who though illiterate, were not, he contended, ignorant. But he developed his argument still further and observed:—"If these considerations are not sufficient,—I mean, if they do not prove that the people of India are *not* ignorant,—I am not afraid to take my stand on their very ignorance, and argue in the words of the greatest jurist of modern times in England, I mean the late Mr. Jabez Austin. He asks:—"In a political community, not duly instructed, is not popular Government with all its awkward complexness, less inconvenient than monarchy? And, unless the Government be popular, can the political community, not duly instructed, emerge from darkness to light? From the ignorance of political science, which is the principal cause of misrule, to the knowledge of political science, which were the best security against it"? "I see no reason whatever," continues Mr. Bonnerjee, "why the people of India are not capable of understanding and exercising the functions which naturally inhere in subjects possessing a representative Government". The scheme which Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee tentatively adumbrated in his paper was "that there ought to be a representative assembly and a senate sitting in India, with a power of veto to the Governor-General, but under the same restriction as exists in America, with perhaps an absolute power of veto to the Crown."

THE REFORM LONG OVERDUE.

It will be thus seen that the reform we are urging at present is long overdue. Self-government or Responsible Government for India within the Empire is not a new revelation by some modern prophet. It is the old gospel of the elders and the stalwarts of the Congress, who, with their characteristic political intuition and sagacity, foreshadowed more than fifty years ago the demand which we are now merely repeating with a vigour and insistence which the momentum of half a century has contributed to give to it. The broad outlines of our present demand are essentially the same; and the basic reason of our demand is also the same, namely, that an uncontrolled foreign bureaucracy and a migratory one to boot, however benevolent, cannot, in the very nature of things,

be so congenial and acceptable to the people as the Government of the people by the people themselves. Thoughtful Englishmen, who have tried to approach this subject in a spirit of detachment, have come years ago to conclusions which accord with this view of the leaders of the Congress movement. Seeley in his "Expansion of England", in summarising the value of the imperial work which Great Britain has undertaken in India makes the following observations :—

" At best we think of it as a good specimen of a bad political system. We are not disposed to be proud of our succession to the Grand Moghul. We doubt whether, with all the merits of our administration, the subjects of it are happy. We may even doubt whether our rule is preparing them for a happier condition, whether it may not be sinking them lower in misery; and we have our misgivings that perhaps a genuine Asiatic Government, and still more a national Government, springing up out of the Hindu population itself, might, in the long run, be more beneficial, because more congenial, though perhaps less civilized, than such a foreign, unsympathetic Government as our own".

The weak spot of the present system of Government lies in the fact that it is not accountable to the people. John Stuart Mill thus speaks of the absence of responsibility of the governors to the governed. "A governing class not accountable to the people are sure in the main to sacrifice the people to the pursuit of separate interests and inclinations of their own. Even their feelings of morality, even their ideas of excellence have reference not to the good of the people, but to their own good; their very virtues are class virtues, their noblest acts of patriotism and self-devotion are but the sacrifice of their private interests to the interests of their class".

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF 20TH AUGUST.

The Congress-League Scheme is designed to rectify the unquestionable defects and evils of the existing system of Government. That the system requires to be overhauled and refashioned goes without saying. Men of light and leading in India have been for over fifty years pointing out the way in which it could be done. The trend of the policy pursued by Government, however, made them apprehensive that the direction in which they desired the Government to move was not the direction in which 'the men on the spot' were, with their vested interests, inclined to direct the ship of the state. They therefore made a persistent demand that the authorities in England should make a declaration of policy announcing that it was the aim and object of British rule to grant self-government to India as an integral part of the British Empire. In this connection the services which the late Sir William Wedderburn rendered to us are invaluable. The justice and urgency of this demand appealed to the British Cabinet who, through the Secretary of State, made their famous announcement of 20th August last. India was delighted at that announcement. It was a wise and statesmanlike pronouncement. There is no going back upon it now, although a section of the Anglo-Indian opposition has evinced a desire to question its finality. It is futile for them to do so. They are surely not serving the cause of the Empire by taking up such an uncompromising attitude. The announcement of 20th August last definitely commits England to 'the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire' and promises that 'substantial steps in this direction' would be taken 'as soon as possible'. "As a preliminary to considering what these steps should be' Mr. Montagu came out to India to have "a free and informal exchange of opinion" between the Government of India and himself and "to receive the suggestions of representative bodies and others". Every one knows that he has done so and the result of it all is anxiously awaited by expectant.

India. Congressmen all over the country have upheld the Congress-League Scheme as constituting what in their opinion should be the immediate step of reform to lead up eventually to responsible Government in India. It is urged by some critics that the announcement referred to makes the Congress-League Scheme obsolete because the Congress never contemplated "responsible Government" as its ideal. This is an erroneous view. As you all know, Article I of the Congress Constitution says that the "the objects of the Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that prevailing in the self-governing members of the British Empire" and the same article further says that "these objects are to be achieved by constitutional means by a steady reform of the existing system of administration". Now, what is the system of Government prevailing in the self-governing members of the British Empire? Responsible Government. How is it to be attained? "By a steady reform of the existing system of administration", that is to say, the Congress asks for "progressive realization of responsible Government". The announcement of August 20th, therefore, is little else than a very happy paraphrase of Article I of the Congress Constitution. In framing their scheme the Congress and the League have deliberately proceeded on lines of least resistance. They have not formulated an ambitious scheme of "Responsible Government" at one bound. I need not explain that the expression "Responsible Government" means a system of Government in which the governed constitute, control and alter the Executive, which is made removable from office by a vote of want of confidence passed against it by a popularly elected Legislature. The leaders of the country have not gone the length of proposing real "responsible Government" in their scheme. They recognise that they have to build speedily no doubt, but none the less steadily, on existing foundations and with materials and resources available at hand. They will be satisfied if the moderate scheme they have outlined is put through and the country given a fair trial on the basis of it.

SAFEGUARDS IN THE SCHEME.

Properly understood the scheme does not deserve the adverse criticism which has been levelled against it by its opponents. I do not propose to consider here the frivolous objections of the Anglo-Indian community in general and the British mercantile interests in particular. These have been dealt with in the Note of the Hon. Sir Dinsha Wacha and nine others so fully that it is unnecessary for me to repeat the arguments advanced therein. I should like, however, to deal with one other objection which has since been put forward on behalf of the European mercantile interests. What will be their fate, it is urged by them, if with four-fifths of the elected majority they are left to the tender mercies of the proposed Legislative Councils? They say they would have to submit to heavy and unjust taxation levied upon them as a class by a Legislature antagonistic to them and in which they will be in a hopeless minority. The Congress-League Scheme contains enough safeguards to prevent any such abuse of authority on the part of the Legislature. If the industries represented by them have made or are making inordinate profits, there would be nothing wrong in their contributing proportionately to the exchequer. They would not have in that case any just grievance. But if they apprehend that they would be unfairly, invidiously and heavily taxed and would have to submit to such taxation without a remedy and without redress, their apprehensions are groundless. The scheme provides that "adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election" and it further provides that "no Bill or any clause thereof nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be

determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourths of the members of that community in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the Bill or any clause thereof or the resolution". Besides, clause 10 of Sec. I of the Scheme says ;—" All Bills passed by a Provincial Legislature shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law but may be vetoed by the Governor-General ". In regard to the Imperial Council, there is a similar provision to the effect that " all Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law " and by another clause the Crown has the power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by a Provincial Legislative Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council ". Besides these, there is, so far as the Provincial Legislative Councils are concerned, a safeguard of a far-reaching character provided in the scheme. It is to the effect that powers not specifically given to the Provincial Government shall be deemed to be vested in the Government of India. This leaves the Government of India in the possession of the residuary powers the extent and nature of which will naturally vary with the progress, the public spirit and the economic and other local conditions of the various provinces. When all these safeguards are carefully analysed and their full effect properly appreciated, most of the objections which are urged against the Congress-League Scheme lose their force.

But then it is urged that the acceptance of the Congress-League Scheme would make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Government to maintain law and order within the country. Those who say so forget that the Scheme leaves altogether untouched the present powers of the Government of India in regard to the " direction of military affairs and the foreign and other political relations of India including the declaration of War, the making of peace and the entering into treaties " as also " in respect of military charges for the defence of the country ; " that is to say, the scheme asks for popular control of the administration under proper safeguards in so far only as domestic matters are concerned. The power of the Government of India to preserve peace and order in the country remains intact and there need be no fear of any risk or peril to constituted authority, by the grant to the people of the right to raise and spend their monies for the purposes of internal administration only. It is interesting to note that the late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, in his paper already referred to, gave expression to the same view. Mr. Bonnerjee observed :—" With the power of veto and say, the military in their hands, the British Government would run no risk in India if they gave representative institutions to that country. On the contrary, by their gracious act they will have built a foundation for their power in the hearts of the people which will remain intact for ever. "

THE CURTIS SCHEME.

Since the announcement, however, there has been drawn a red herring across the trail by Mr. Lionel Curtis who has succeeded in inducing some Anglo-Indians and Indians in Calcutta to subscribe to a novel scheme of compartmental responsible government—a proposal without a precedent in the history of any country. The Scheme is at first sight likely to hoodwink the unwary. The more one examines it, the more apparent become its inherent dangers and pitfalls. One thing is certain that it will bring about deadlocks as a normal feature of the Legislature. The division of the finances into reserved departments and transferred ones is open to serious objections. It is wrong in principle and is bound to prove mischievous in practice. Let us

take a concrete instance. Suppose in this Presidency the main idea of the scheme proposed by Mr. Curtis is given effect to. The Indian Members of the Executive Council will get a certain portion of the Provincial revenues allotted to them for the purposes of the Departments under their control. It must be remembered that in the Executive Council, the Indian Members will not be in a majority. The Provincial Governor and two other European Members of his Council will ordinarily form the majority. Under such circumstances, while it may be allowed that due weight will be given to the views of the Indian Members inside the Cabinet, there is no certainty that the revenue allotted to them will be in accordance with their wishes or with the urgent needs of the people. With the revenue so allotted, they come before the Legislature with proposals for improving the condition of the people in regard to the Departments under their control. Let us assume that the Departments are not minor ones but such as to affect vitally the destinies of the masses of the people; say, for instance, Education, Sanitation, Agriculture or Industries. The moment the Indian Member in charge of the port-folio, say of Education, comes before the House with proposals to promote education in the Presidency, the House is likely to say to him that the proposals are not acceptable as they fall far below the urgent requirements of the Presidency and would decline to sanction them. He has no other course open but to ask the House to go in for fresh taxation. To that, the House will reply that as they have no control over the "Reserved Departments" in regard to which, in their opinion, there is, in some cases, extravagant expenditure going on, they would decline to sanction fresh taxation. The result will be, as I have said above, a deadlock between the Executive and the Legislature as a constant occurrence, instead of its being, as it would be, if at all, a rare contingency under the Congress-League Scheme on account of the safeguards already provided in it, with a few more, not inconsistent with it, added to it, if necessary, which are suggested by text-writers of great authority on "Politics," with a view to secure, in a unicameral legislature, the advantages without the drawbacks of a bicameral one. No Scheme, therefore, which does not give to the Legislature an effective voice in the apportionment of the whole of the revenue will in practice work satisfactorily and smoothly. As to the other features of the Curtis Scheme, it may be said that they are not essential, and so I do not propose to deal with them. As a rival scheme it compares very unfavourably with the carefully thought out and workable scheme of the Congress and the Muslim League. The verdict of the country may unquestionably be deemed to be in favour of the latter. If any other rival scheme is going to be put forward by the authorities as the result of the Montagu Mission, it will be subjected to careful scrutiny and if it lacks the essential features of the reforms embodied in the Congress-League Scheme, it will have to be discarded as the Curtis Scheme in its present form has been. The country has made it plain that anything which falls short of the fundamental principles of the Congress-League Scheme, will fail to satisfy the requirements of the situation and I hope and trust that nothing will be done to disappoint the people in this respect. A half-hearted, halting and timid measure of reform is bound to lead to regrettable results.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION.

Brother-delegates, while in our demands for reforms we are on the one hand being opposed by the vested interests of the bureaucracy—an opposition which was of course expected and which we must do our best to surmount—it would be impolitic to close our eyes to another and perhaps equally serious obstacle in our progress. Some of our own people are coming forward with demands which are, in my

humble opinion, calculated to imperil the progress of our country on sound lines. I am referring to claims now being put forward from numerous directions, not for adequately safeguarding the rights of important minorities by election, but for a separate communal representation of diverse communities as such. My mind is clear on the point. I regard communal representation in principle as detracting from the ideal of a united, undivided and solid India. The principle of separate representation for Mahomedans has been introduced here, as you are aware, against the wishes of Lord Morley, under peculiar circumstances and it is scarcely possible now to go back on it except with the consent of the Muslim League. But I leave it to you to consider whether we are going to make our future difficulties greater by allowing separate representation to every community that asks for it. To my mind politics has not very many points of contact with religious or sectarian differences. The aim of the real patriot should be to lessen the number of points as far as possible. Politics is no doubt often a compromise, but the politician has to judge when to compromise and when to stand firm.

In this connection I would venture to ask you to give serious thought to the subject of proportional representation which my friend the Hon. Mr. Paranjpye has been advocating in this country, and which is now a well known plank of reform in most countries. If there is any country where the conditions are peculiarly favourable for proportional representation, it is, I believe, India. If the object of representative institutions is to give every body of opinion or every reasonably large set of voters—working together for whatever reasons—a chance of getting their own representatives on the elected body, proportional representation with a single transferable vote is the best method to achieve that object. They may use that chance or they may not. The methods of proportional representation are simple enough so far as the voters are concerned. I would tell you that even to a non-mathematical person like myself they appear quite easy. The difficulty is mainly apparent in a long verbal description thereof and is, in any case, only for the expert returning officer. We in India supply competent accountants from the humble Talati to the Accountant-General of a province. I assure you that the work of the returning officer under this system is no harder than that of a postal sorter or a Talati. I would under the circumstances request you to give your careful consideration to the question.

Ladies and gentlemen, I now leave the subject of the Congress League Scheme and propose to deal with a few of the most important points in connection with the working of our Provincial Legislative Council since the inauguration of the Morley-Minto reform. In doing so, my main object is to show how the present system of government has failed and why the reforms advocated by our leaders are urgently called for.

Bombay Legislative Council.

Every one who has had anything to do with the working of our Legislative Council knows that the Morley-Minto Reform scheme under which it was constituted has failed in its purpose. The first object of that scheme was to give the representatives of the people ample opportunities of criticising the policy of the Government in its various departments in order that suitable modifications might be made in that policy in the light of the non-official view. In order to secure this end, the Reforms gave to non-official members of the Council the right to move resolutions on matters of general public interest. Unfortunately, however, it was left to

the authorities in India to make rules regulating the exercise of that right. The rules so made and the interpretation put upon them by the authorities have rendered the exercise of the right altogether nugatory and of no effect. These rules empower the President of the Council to disallow any resolution on the ground that it is not of general public interest, or that it cannot be moved consistently with public interest, or that it does not otherwise comply with certain conditions named in the rules. The number of resolutions of which notices were given in the year 1916 was 68. Of these, 24 were disallowed under these powers. From January to October 1917, the number, of which notices were given, was 72. Of these 31 were so disallowed. A good number of these were disallowed on the ground that they could not be moved consistently with public interest. I am tempted to cite a few of them here in order to enable you to understand what inconsistency with 'public interest' means from the Government point of view. Resolutions recommending the Governor-in-Council (1) to cancel the order passed by the Government under the Defence of India Act preventing Mrs. Besant from entering the limits of the Bombay Presidency, (2) to create District Councils to enable the people to have opportunities of associating themselves in the work of District Administration, (3) to take steps to improve indigenous systems of Medicine (4) to appoint a Committee to draw up a comprehensive scheme for the provision of better sanitation and more wide spread medical relief in rural areas (5) to discontinue the Government move to Mahableshwar (6) to declare that the order of the District Magistrate of Ahmedabad directing the executive Committee of the 16th Bombay Provincial Conference to admit the C. I. D. reporters and other police officers to that Conference pandal and offer no obstruction in the execution of their duties was illegal and should not have been made and (7) to recognize that at least one secretary to Government shall be an Indian—these were regarded such as could not be moved consistently with public interest. Remember, Ladies and gentlemen, that these are only a few of the many resolutions that have been disallowed in the past on the same ground.

PUBLIC INTEREST OR OTHER INTEREST.

Now I ask you to judge for yourselves whether the discussion of the subject matter of any of these resolutions in the Legislative Council would be against 'public interest' or against any other interest. If an elected non-official member gives notice of a resolution which Government regard as against 'public interest', it is, I think, due to the public that they should know of his misdeed, so that they may not return him again. One would, under the circumstances, naturally expect the Government to immediately publish for the information of the public all such undesirable resolutions. Strange to say, however, that not only the Government themselves do not publish such resolutions but they do not allow the non-official members to do so. There is, of course, no rule in the Legislative Council Manual empowering the Government or the President to require a non-official member not to publish disallowed questions and resolutions. The President, however, following the lead given in this respect by the President of the Punjab Council has ruled that the publication of disallowed questions and resolutions would be regarded by him as "Breach of Etiquette" and when he was asked by way of a supplementary question whether one non-official member was at liberty to pass on to other members questions and resolutions not admitted, the reply was that he was not prepared to answer the question any further. Ladies and gentlemen, last year a non-official member gave notice of a question asking Government to move the

President to reconsider his ruling. The question was not even admitted. The same member thereupon gave notice of a resolution on the subject but that, too, was disallowed. Similarly, an interpellation asking Government to publish disallowed questions and resolutions was also disallowed. This ruling, Ladies and gentlemen, keeps every non-official member ignorant of the disallowed questions and resolutions of all the other members, with the result that many of the ignorant members give notice of resolutions and questions once disallowed by the President on the notice given by other members. To remedy this, a non-official member gave notice of a motion for the amendment of Council Rules so as to provide that the Secretary of the Legislative Council should maintain a register of disallowed questions and resolutions and keep a copy of it in the "Members' Room." That motion was admitted for discussion but ruled out by the President on a point of order raised by one of the members of the Executive Council. Thereupon the same member gave notice of a resolution on the subject under the rules for discussion of matters of General Public Interest, but it was disallowed, as being 'not of public interest.' Ladies and gentlemen, the non-official members could bear these indignities no longer and have therefore, recently unanimously resolved in a meeting of the Indian Non-official Members' Association, to wait upon His Excellency in a deputation. An outsider, if he gets a chance to attend one of those meetings, could realise what the feelings of resentment of non-official members are on this question.

It may be asked why no attempts have so long been made by any non-official member to get the rules made by the authorities amended. My reply is that attempts were made but the public can not know them. The ruling regarding 'etiquette' referred to above comes in the way of non-official members in acquainting the public with them. It is sufficient for my present purposes to say that resolutions asking Government to take steps to have the rules amended were also disallowed.

RESOLUTIONS CARRIED THOUGH OPPOSED BY GOVERNMENT.

You would like to know, ladies and gentlemen, whether any and if so how many resolutions were passed by the Council in spite of the opposition of Government since 1910 when the reformed council came into existence and whether Government have given effect to the recommendations contained in any of them. I know a question was asked requesting Government to publish the information on this point and the member in reply was referred to the Council Proceedings, on the ground that, in the opinion of the Government, preparation of the answer would involve trouble to the Secretariat incommensurate with the gain. I am not, therefore, responsible if the information I give you is not quite correct. So far as I know, only five resolutions have been so passed; one, of the Hon. Mr. Rafuddin Ahmed; two of my friend the Hon. Mr. Paranjpye and two of myself. I am not prepared to say how far the recommendations of Mr. Ahmed and Mr. Paranjpye's resolutions have been given effect to. I know about mine. One of them recommended the Governor-in-Council to grant two-thirds elective majority to those Municipalities, which have the privilege of electing a President by a two-thirds majority. The resolution was carried by 23 against 18 in March 1917, but the recommendation has not yet been carried out. The other, passed at the last meeting, recommended that select municipalities should be given power to determine the number and location of liquor shops within their areas. It is to be seen whether Government are going to give effect to the recommendation of the Council in this matter.

While on this subject, I should like to say a few words on the delay in obtaining the decision of the President on the question of the admissibility of resolutions. According to the Council rules, the Secretary of the Legislative Council, on receipt of notice of a resolution from a member, has to submit it to the President whose function it is to determine the question of admissibility. For the first four or five years, these rules, according to my information, were adhered to and consequently a member, giving notice of a resolution, used to get the decision of the President regarding its admissibility in sufficient time to enable him to be prepared with the necessary facts and figures to support it. Latterly, however, the Secretary, on receipt of notice, is required to send the resolution to the Department concerned for notes. This procedure naturally leads to a good deal of delay. I have known instances where such delay extended to over 3 or 4 weeks. At times the member giving notice comes to know of the decision of the President from the agenda paper which he reads in the Council Hall on the day of the meeting. To remedy this state of things, a non-official member has given notice of a resolution recommending that the decision of the President should be communicated to the member giving notice of a resolution within seven days from its receipt by the Secretary. The resolution figures on the Council business from time to time since July last without any chance of reaching. This novel procedure, I believe, is to some extent also responsible for a large number of resolutions being disallowed. The Secretary of the Department concerned, probably puts up his notes after carefully considering whether Government have sufficient materials to meet the question raised by the resolution or not. The decision of the President on the question of admissibility would naturally be influenced by the notes. A resolution may be of sufficient importance but if the Government have no case, is it not likely that the President would refuse to admit it?

MORE MEETINGS OR LONGER SITTINGS.

Before I finish my observations on this subject, I should, with your permission, ladies and gentlemen, say a few words on the irreconcilable attitude of the Government in regard to the non-official demand for having longer sittings or more meetings of the council so as to enable it to put the business on the agenda paper through. Power to disallow questions and resolutions is freely exercised and yet the Government finds it difficult to allot a sufficient number of days for each council meeting to get through the resolutions admitted for discussion. Compare the agenda papers of the last 12 months and you will read on every one of them, a number of resolutions of the previous meeting carried forward. At the last March meeting of the Council, there were on its list as many as about 20 resolutions pending since July last. All these resolutions except two or three had again no chance and will probably reappear on the next July agenda. The Council on an average of the last 6 years meets 13 days annually and the number of meetings is 3 to 4. The Council has to enact laws for the whole Presidency. It has to get through a number of the interpellations, it has also to discuss and decide on resolutions on matters of general public interest affecting the whole Presidency. It is bound to consider resolutions on the revised financial statement and have discussion on the budget. Is it possible for the Council to discharge all these varied functions satisfactorily without more meetings or longer sittings? It is no wonder that the business of each meeting remains unfinished. And yet what is the attitude of the Government when they are asked to hold more meetings? Some time back a non-official member gave notice of motion to so amend the council rules as to provide that the Council shall meet at least six times in a year.

The motion was disallowed on the ground that it was the prerogative of the Governor to say how often the Council should meet. The same member thereupon gave notice of a resolution recommending that the Governor-in-Council may be pleased to advise the Governor to summon the Council to meet at least six times in a year. The resolution was fortunately admitted but unfortunately had to be postponed for want of time since July last. As a matter of fact, the Hon. Mr. Paranjpye at the very first opportunity requested the President to allow priority to that resolution. The President not only rejected the request but, in doing so, expressed himself strongly against the merits of the resolution.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

I now proceed, ladies and gentlemen, to consider another object of the Morley Minto Reform Scheme, and show how owing to the attitude of the Government all non-official attempts have failed in securing it. The authors of the Scheme intended that, without in any way affecting the ultimate control over the financial policy of the Government, the Legislative Council should be allowed full and free discussion of the annual Financial proposals and to make recommendations thereon to the government. A Finance Committee is annually appointed to discuss the proposals and any member of the Council may move resolutions at the time when the Revised Financial Statement is presented. Here too, it was left to the Government to make rules regarding the constitution of the Committee and other matters. Under the rules so made, the Committee consists of half the number of members nominated by the government and half elected by the non-official members of the Council and the Finance Member of the Government is the chairman. Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to narrate my own experience of the working of this Committee. I feel strongly that the administration of this Presidency is top-heavy, and ways and means must be found to remedy the evil. Therefore, when I was elected by the non-official members to the Finance Committee of 1916, I prepared several proposals after a good deal of thought, care and labour for the consideration of the Committee. They were, however, ruled out by the Chairman on the ground that it was not within the competence of the Finance Committee to consider proposals to reduce expenditure on existing schemes and establishments. I knew the Chairman was wrong in his ruling. Under Rule 5 read with rule 6 of the Financial Rules, the Finance Committee is not only entitled but is bound to consider such proposals. I then in my capacity as a member of the Committee asked for copies of the minutes recording the ruling. They were denied to me. Under the circumstances, when the revised Financial statement was presented to the Council, I moved under rule 7 of the rules for the conduct of Council Business that the business be adjourned. His Excellency the President ruled my motion out on the ground that the rules of the conduct of business did not apply to the business of the presentation of the Budget. I then gave notice of a resolution recommending to the Governor-in-Council to direct that the Chairman of the Finance Committee shall, in future, allow the Committee to discuss all proposals under rules 5 and 6 of the Financial rules. The resolution, I need hardly say, was disallowed.

TWO DAYS IN A YEAR.

A word now as to the procedure followed in the Finance Committee. Cut and dried printed proposals are placed before the Committee which never sits more than two days in a year. The members have no opportunity of examining all the proposals received by the Government from time to time from heads of departments

or other officers during the course of the year. They are asked to say whether the selection of items made by the Government is agreed upon or whether they have to make any new suggestions. You will agree with me, ladies and gentlemen, that it is not possible for them to do either of these two things without, in the first instance, looking into all the proposals from which Government have made the selection. A non-official member, therefore, gave notice of a resolution recommending that the members of the Finance Committee should be supplied with copies of all such proposals. The resolution was disallowed. It is to be noted again that the Finance Committee is not allowed an opportunity to discuss proposals on schemes under correspondence with the higher authorities and the resolution asking for such an opportunity, of which due notice was given by one of the non-official members, was also disallowed. I may be permitted to add further that proposals for reappropriation of items sanctioned in the budget are never placed for the consideration of the Finance Committee and a resolution recommending that Government should take steps to enable this to be done was not admitted.

Then again, ladies and gentlemen, the Chairman asks the Committee to meet on such day as suits his convenience without consulting the non-official members. For instance, the last Finance Committee was asked to meet on the 25th Jan. 1918 but as the day was subsequently found to be inconvenient to the chairman, intimation was sent round that the Committee would meet on the 28th following, with the result that three non-official members could not attend it. According to one of the Financial rules, the Finance Committee is bound to complete its proceedings on or before the 27th Jan. every year. A non-official member therefore took objection to the Committee meeting on the 28th Jan. and contended that the proceedings if held, would be ultra vires. The Chairman at once overruled the objection. The members respectfully asked the Chairman to state the reasons for the ruling. The reply of the Chairman was that he was not bound to give reasons. The member withdrew and the Committee commenced its business. The member thereupon at once gave notice of a resolution recommending the Governor-in-Council to rule that the Finance Committee shall in future complete its proceedings on or before the 27th Jan., every year. The resolution, I regret to say, was disallowed and the member was informed that the 27th Jan. 1918 was a Sunday and the proceedings held on the following day were good under the General Clauses Act.

BUDGET RESOLUTIONS.

I now turn to the question of budget resolutions. From the inquiries I made at the last Council meeting, I gathered that the non-official members had given notice of about—I cannot be exact, as disallowed resolutions are, as you know, not allowed to be published—40 resolutions of which only 26 were admitted. Suffice it to say that out of these 26, some were rejected, some withdrawn but none accepted. To give you an idea of the nature of disallowed resolutions, I quote three of them below:—

1. This council recommends that the provision made in the budget under the head 18, General Administration, be reduced by at least Rs. 1,00,000.
2. This Council recommends that a sum of Rs. 20,000 be provided in the budget for starting travelling dispensaries in this Presidency and that a corresponding reduction be made in the provision for General Administration or civil works.

3. This Council recommends that a provision of Rs. 50,000 be made in the budget for revision of pay of village officers and village servants in the Presidency Proper and that a corresponding reduction be made in the provision made for General Administration or civil works."

Here, ladies and gentlemen, pardon me a little digression while I refer to the non-official attempts to improve the miserable lot of the unfortunate village officers and village servants whose remuneration, in some cases in the Deccan and Kanara, is Rs. 10 and Rs. 6 per annum respectively. A few months ago, a non-official member sent up an interpellation to the Government requesting them to publish the actual pay of the various grades of revenue patils and inferior village servants in this Presidency but the reply was that the trouble involved in collecting the information would be out of all proportion to any purpose the information was likely to serve. Subsequently the same member gave notice of a general resolution recommending that the pay of these officers and servants be increased so as to provide them with at least a living wage. The resolution was disallowed on the ground that it was vague. On the one hand the Government would not supply statistics to enable non-official members to prepare and present a definite concrete scheme for their consideration, on the other, a resolution on the subject is disallowed on the ground of vagueness. The same member then gave notice of a budget resolution recommending that Rs. 50,000 be provided to increase the pay of village officers and servants with the result, as I have just mentioned, that that too was disallowed.

INTERPELLATIONS.

The right of interpellation was conceded in 1892. For over 20 years the number of questions disallowed were very few and the members always exercised the privilege of publishing disallowed questions without any hitch or hindrance. Latterly, the extent to which the Government have been exercising the power of disallowing, clipping, and mutilating questions has become intolerable and cannot be justified. No wonder, then, that the Government fights shy of their publication. The evasive character of replies, the reluctance to lay papers on the Council Table, the futility of asking supplementary questions are all matters, about which the less said the better.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Every Government Bill invariably passes into law unless the government chooses to drop it. No non-official Bill could be carried unless the Government is pleased to support it. Though theoretically every member, official or non-official, is on a footing of equality, so far as legislative functions of the Council are concerned, in practice we are looked upon as mere critics. No doubt, Bills stand or fall according to the vote of the Council but as I just now observed, that vote, under the present constitution of the Council, always goes in favour of the Government measure and against a non-official one, unless the latter has the support of the Government. Since 1913 there were to my knowledge, only 3 non-official Bills of which notices were given. The first was intended to empower mofussil Municipalities to make primary education free and compulsory within their limits. I propose to state, in another part of my speech, the difficulties that attended the passage of that Bill and therefore it is not necessary for me to refer to them here. The second was intended to empower the Bombay Municipal Corporation to make Primary Education free and compulsory within its limits. The Government returned the said

Bill to the member concerned intimating that one of the clauses purported to impose a charge on provincial revenues and therefore the previous sanction of the Governor was required under section 80, clause 2, of the Government of India Act, 1915, and further that a copy of such sanction should be attached to the notice. It was then pointed out to the Government that the Governor had no power to grant or refuse sanction until the lapse of two months from the date on which the Bill was communicated to the Government of India; therefore it was next to impossible for a member giving notice of such a Bill to attach a copy of the Governor's sanction to it and that under the circumstances, it was the duty of the local Government to communicate the Bill to the Government of India as soon as the notice was received. This contention was accepted and this Bill was submitted to the Government of India. According to my information, the reply of the Government of India was that they had no objection to the introduction of the said Bill in the Bombay Council. Unfortunately, however, the Governor refused the sanction and the Bill never saw the light of day. The third Bill was to further amend the Medical Registration Act, 1912. Its object principally was to have the term 'Infamous conduct in any professional respect' occurring in the Act defined, in order that the Medical Council may not hold any association by any registered Medical Practitioner with a Vaidya or a Hakim or any institution teaching the Ayurvedic or Unani system of medicine or with any hospital, dispensary etc, where any of these systems were practiced, guilty of "infamous conduct." The Bill was, in the usual course, communicated to the Government of India, who I understand, took no objection to its introduction in the Bombay Council. All the same, ladies and gentlemen, you are fully aware how strenuously the Bombay government opposed the first reading of the Bill with the result that it was defeated by 24 members voting against and 20 for it.

I have cited these instances to show to you that even in matters of Legislation, a private Bill has no chance whatever so long as the system of government remains what it is. His Excellency, Lord Willingdon, therefore, very rightly remarked as President of the Council at its last October meeting :—

"Does the Honourable Member imply that there is no difference at all in fact or in any other way between the Members of the Executive Council who are for the time being conducting the Government of Bombay and Additional Members of this Legislative Council whose privilege is generally to criticise? . . . Does he say that honourable members who are for the time being executive officers of Government carrying on the Government of Bombay are in no different position from that of any Additional Members who have got no responsibility for the Government of Bombay and who are probably generally merely critics?"

This was a query put to an additional member who maintained that whatever the difference in position and other matters between a Member of the Executive Council and an Additional Member in regard to resolutions, so far as the legislative functions are concerned, they are equal and ought to be treated alike.

SECRETARIAT ATTITUDE.

Ladies and gentlemen, so far as the Secretariat record office and library are concerned, a non-official member is hardly treated better than the man in the street by the Secretariat Officers. He has naturally to be exact in his statement of facts and figures regarding his resolutions and questions. He therefore stands in need of books and records to verify his statements. He writes to the Secretary of the Government concerned and after several days he gets a reply to

say ' that it is not the practice to furnish private individuals or bodies with copies of Government Orders which are not intended for general publication and that Government regret that they are unable to make an exception in your case ' or to say that ' government regret that they are unable to comply with your request, but that if you indicate the precise points on which you desire information, they will consider whether any information, in addition to that already published and supplied to you, can be furnished ' or to say that the ' rules of this Department do not permit of a Government Resolution being furnished to you ' or to say that ' it is contrary to practice to furnish copies of Government Orders except to their own officers ' or to say that ' the volume in question is not intended for the use of the public but as the question is only of historical interest, I enclose extracts which will give you the information you wish '. Now, ladies and gentlemen, non-official members dare not and do not claim to see ' Confidential ' papers or records but surely any other papers or records cannot and ought not, in fairness, be denied to them.

These are only a few of the many difficulties under which a non-official member labours and I am sure you will sympathise with his lot. If he is unable to do much, it is no fault of his. Disappointment, disgust and above all humiliation are the necessary attendants to the office of an elected non-official member under the present incumstances; but out of evil cometh good and it is no small consolation to him that he has successfully proved that the existing system of government has miserably failed.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I will now, with your permission, deal with some of the more important topics connected with the provincial administration with special reference to the attitude of the authorities towards them from time to time. The topic which demands your earnest consideration and which has engaged the attention of the public and the Local Government for over four months past is that of the agricultural situation in Kaira District.

THE KAIRA SITUATION.

I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, you will all sympathise with the unfortunate agriculturists of the Kaira District who after exhausting every available method to secure justice have resorted to Passive Resistance. The facts shortly are these. Owing to the excessive downpour of October rains in that District, the Kharif crops almost entirely failed. In the middle of November last, a number of petitions from the District were sent to Government praying for the suspension of land revenue, the collection of which was to begin from the 5th of December in some talukas and from the 5th of January in others. These petitions were sent back to the petitioners by the Government on the technical ground that they were not forwarded through the proper official channel. The raiyats thereupon, on the 8th December last, sent all those petitions to the Collector of the District. The number of petitions as far as I have been able to gather was 200 and the signatures thereto 20,000. Collection of revenue began as usual on the 5th of December and as no orders for suspension were passed, the agriculturists approached the Gujerat Sabha in Ahmedabad and their representatives on the Legislative Council. These representatives repaired to the District, visited about 20 villages, inspected such crops as were then standing, gave surprise visits to the houses of several agriculturists with a view to find out what their resources were to keep them going till the next harvest, attended three very largely attended public meetings in the

district, interviewed a number of agriculturists from all parts of the district, and took the statements of about 500 persons. As a result of this enquiry they came to the conclusion that the total yield of the crops in the district would not exceed 4 annas and submitted a representation on the 15th of December to the Collector praying, among other things, for full suspension of revenue in accordance with the rules in force. The Gujerat Sabha also came to the same conclusion as a result of their enquiry. As no orders were passed for any suspension and as the work of collection was going on in spite of the representation submitted to the Collector, the Gujerat Sabha sent a petition followed by a wire to Government and advised the inquiring agriculturists to await the final orders of Government before making payment. Government did not reply. The Sabha thereupon requested the Commissioner and the Revenue Member for interviews which were not granted. On the 16th January last, Government issued their now famous Press Note on the Kaira situation declaring suspension to the extent of 7 per cent. of the total revenue of the district and making unwarranted and unjustifiable attacks on the disinterested efforts of public bodies and particularly of the Gujerat Sabha on behalf of the poor and the distressed. The tone and temper of the Government Press Note was highly objectionable and provocative. Soon after the issue of the Press Note three members of the Servants of India Society went to the District to inquire into the situation. They were welcomed by the local officers, who were, I am informed, pleased to assist them. Probably the officials thought that they were their saviours. Their enquiry was confined to one out of seven talukas. They, too, recommended that 22 villages in that particular Taluka to which no suspensions at all were granted were entitled to at least half suspension. Whilst this enquiry was going on, the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association passed a resolution to hold a public meeting to protest against the Press Note and pray for public inquiry. It was, however, suggested that before any such meeting was held, His Excellency the Governor should be interviewed. Accordingly, Sir Dinshaw Wacha and Messrs. Parekh, Patel and Gandhi saw the Governor and asked for a public inquiry. This was refused with the result that Mr. Gandhi at the request of the Gujerat Sabha and other friends undertook to make an inquiry into the situation personally and submit his report to Government. Mr. Gandhi and his co-workers visited about 400 villages and his report is before the authorities. That report shows that the yield of crops in almost all the villages in the district is under 4 annas and that the agriculturists are entitled to full suspension of revenue. After submitting the report Mr. Gandhi interviewed the Collector and the Commissioner and finally negotiated with the Government. I regret to say, however, that the attitude of the authorities has remained as unbending as it was when the famous Press Note was issued. I may tell you for your information that Mr. Gandhi offered to meet Government half-way and proposed that he would be satisfied if only half suspensions were ordered though the people were entitled to full. He further proposed that he was prepared to advise well-to-do agriculturists to pay up Government dues in full in case the government were pleased to accept his request for half suspension. The authorities declined to accept the offer with the result that on the 22nd of March last a mass-meeting of the agriculturists was held at Nadiad and a large number of them took a vow not to pay government dues and to submit to consequences that might attend such refusal.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will thus see that the agriculturists of Kaira and their leaders have left no stone unturned to convince the authorities

of the true state of things and thus get their grievance redressed. There are, on the one hand, the inquiries by the Hon. Messrs. Parekh and Patel, by the three members of the Servants of India Society, by the Gujerat Sabha and above all by Mr. Gandhi and his co-workers which go to show that there has been a general failure of crops in the district, entitling the agriculturists to suspension of revenue, while there are, on the other hand, the reports of local Revenue Officials to the contrary. It is incumbent, under these circumstances, on any Government concerned with the well-being of the people committed to their charge to at least hold a public inquiry and satisfy themselves as to which version is correct, undeterred by any considerations of 'prestige'. Ladies and gentlemen, I make myself bold to say that the whole question, unfortunately for the agriculturists of that district, has been dealt with by Government in a most unsympathetic spirit. It is no fault, therefore, of the people if they stand on their rights and decline to pay land revenue which they think Government are not entitled to claim from them under the rules. It is to be noted that repeated requests were made to the authorities during these three months to postpone the collection of revenue, at any rate during the period of inquiry, but they remained unheeded. The work of collection has gone on as usual. The tale of the peoples' misery does not end here. Misfortunes do not come singly. Plague was busy throughout the district during the whole of the period referred to and the agriculturists had to leave their homes and live in temporary grass structures in the fields. Plague has decimated many a home and the condition of the people may be more easily imagined than described. There were 1500 prosecutions in the district last year under what is popularly known as the Mhowra legislation. The agriculturists did not find facilities for disposing of their Mhowra flowers before the expiry of what is called "the vacation period" in the Act and the Sarkar hauled them up as criminals. The non-official inquiries referred to above show that a number of valuable Mhowra trees have been and are being cut down and petitions and prayers were submitted with a view to induce Government to suspend the operation of the measure till the end of this year. Government have refused to do anything of the kind. This then is shortly the situation in the Kaira District and I hope and trust that you will not hesitate to extend your sympathy to the distressed Kaira agriculturists.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTION.

I now pass on to another topic of great importance, namely, Local-Self-Government. The British Government started Local-Self-government in this presidency by establishing Municipal Boards in urban areas in 1850 and rural Boards in rural areas in 1863. The number of rural boards, which since the Act of 1884 are termed Local Boards, is 241 and that of Municipal Boards, 157. Not a single Local Board has so far been regarded fit to elect its own President. Except the Municipal Board of Poona no other board in the Presidency was regarded fit to elect its president till the year 1916, when after very strenuous efforts by non-official members of the Legislative Council, Government were persuaded to extend the privilege to the City Municipalities, which number only 26. Till 1916 not a single local board had an elective majority. After repeated questions and resolutions on the subject in the Council, some of these boards have been recently granted a two-thirds majority. Of the 157 Municipalities as many as 35 consist entirely of nominated members. Only 26 have an elective majority and the remaining 96 consist of half elected and half nominated members. At a meeting of the Legislative Council in March last, a resolution recommending the grant of

2/3 elective majority to 67 out of these 96 municipalities was carried by 23 against 18. The Government thereafter issued Resolution No. 4915 G. D. dated the 17th July 1917 practically vetoing the recommendation of the Legislative Council. Such then is the wonderful progress that local self-government has made in respect of the constitution of the boards since they were established 55 years ago in rural areas and 68 years ago in urban areas. The needful reforms in this matter which are long overdue viz. (1) the wholly elective Boards and (2) non-official elected Presidents are in sight but the authorities in India will not grant them gracefully of their own accord.

FINANCES OF LOCAL BODIES.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a matter of common knowledge that the financial condition of the local bodies is anything but satisfactory, that the Central Government in this country retains a much greater portion of total taxation in its own hands than the central governments in Western countries do, that the people of this country contribute relatively to their resources in total taxation no less than the people of western countries, that the grants-in-aid to local bodies are not made with sufficient regularity and that they have not kept pace with the growing provincial revenues. In spite of all this, no serious attempt has ever been made, whether by the Government of India or the local government to solve this question in a satisfactory manner. Proposals have from time to time been made by non-officials in the Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils for the improvement of the finances of local bodies but without any successful result. In our own presidency, on the motion of a non-official member, a committee to consider the whole question of local self-government concerning rural areas was appointed in 1915 and that Committee made certain definite recommendations for the improvement of the resources of local bodies. Government, however, in their resolution of May 1916, expressed their entire disapproval of those recommendations and stated that they were based, in the main, on wrong premises. I may add, ladies and gentlemen, that Government have not so far thought fit to review those financial recommendations and say what the right premises, in their opinion, are and you will be surprised to learn that a resolution asking Government to do so is hanging fire since July last on the agenda of the Legislative Council. Government know very well that the whole fate of local self-government depends on the finances of local bodies and yet the question is not receiving the serious and urgent attention it deserves.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

It is essential to the development of healthy public spirit in local bodies and for the success of local self-government that these bodies should be absolutely independent of the control of district officers. For this purpose it has been repeatedly brought to the notice of Government that a Local Government Board, so constituted as to command public confidence and invested with powers of guidance, control and supervision should be forthwith created. Any one who has had the opportunity of taking an active interest in the working of a local body can easily understand how local self-government suffers under the present system of official control and supervision in a variety of ways. To important and urgent matters resolved upon by the board and referred to Government, no reply comes forth for months. Collectors and Commissioners indulge in undignified and adverse comments on the working of local bodies without giving them even an opportunity of explanation.

tion and Government accept those comments without enquiry. Sub-divisional and District officers who used to manage Municipal affairs as Ex-officio Presidents when reduced to the position of mere nominated Councillors or cut off from the Municipal administration, indulge in irritating comments in their capacity as controlling officers. The result is friction and waste of energy and time in useless wrangling. Local self-government must be completely freed from the incubus of official domination and placed on a sound footing, as in England, by the creation of a Local Government Board.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

There is again a great and urgent necessity of a self-contained local self-government service. There are many drawbacks in the present local board or municipal service and consequently the right sort of people do not care to join it. The service consists of a very limited cadre and is confined to only one local authority. There is no fixity of tenure and no uniform system of pension or provident fund. All these difficulties could be overcome by the creation of a provincial or divisional local government service. But this is not possible without Government co-operation, which unfortunately is not forthcoming.

A single local body cannot be expected to frame its rules of service, gratuity, pension and provident fund on an attractive scale owing to its limited resources. Experience gained in one local body is lost to others on account of break in service. Recruiting of Government officers and servants has two drawbacks—(1) want of trust in the new recruits and discontent among Municipal servants and (2) burden of leave and pension contribution which is now $\frac{1}{4}$ th of the British salary. All these difficulties and drawbacks will disappear if Government themselves initiate an independent local self-government service and request local bodies to constitute a Governing Representative Board with power to appoint and punish the officers of that service and to regulate their leave, gratuity, pension and provident fund claims. But no such steps are taken by Government and yet the working of the local bodies is considered as 'inefficient'!

DISTRICT COUNCILS AND VILLAGE PANCHAYATS.

There is again a need for the creation of District Advisory Councils with a view to secure greater association of the people with the district administration. A resolution on the subject was moved by the late Mr. Gokhale in 1912 in the Imperial Legislative Council but was negatived and a similar resolution of which notice was given by a non-official member of the Bombay Legislative Council last year was not even admitted on the ground that its discussion would be "inconsistent with public interest"! For years past the people of the Presidency are clamouring for the formation of village panchayats. A resolution on the subject which was discussed in the Legislative Council last year was lost by 18 against 27. We want Village Panchayats with some limited civil and criminal powers, as now proposed by the Bengal Government. But I am afraid, our Government is not yet alive to the necessity of moving in the matter earnestly and zealously.

ABKARI POLICY.

An examination of the Abkari policy of Government re-inforces our contention that a radical change in the constitution of the administrative machinery

is urgently called for. That machinery has signally failed in not responding to the healthy influence of non-official opinion both in and outside the Council Chamber as I will presently show. This inelastic nature in matters affecting the moral and material interests of the people has created a rigidity in the body politic which requires a remedy going to the root of the disease and not a mere soothing ointment. Government, under the garb of prevention of illicit manufacture of liquor, destroys the vitality and moral worth of the people, while deriving a revenue of enormous expansion by encouraging the consumption of "licit" liquor and increasing the facilities for obtaining it. This is not the place nor the occasion for describing the evil moral effects of that bad fiscal policy. The serious charge of spreading the vice of drunkenness is laid at the door of the Government not only by the people but also by some of their own officers. Mr. Nairne, an experienced Civil Servant, remarked some forty years ago :—

"It is unfortunately impossible to deny that the Government has by its removal of restrictions caused a great increase of drunkenness among the people of this country. * * * It has been left to our Government to bring, within the reach of all, intoxicating drinks, the use of which is said by Elphinstone to be so little of a natural propensity among the natives of this country that the absolute prohibition of spirits which used to exist in most Native States was sufficient to keep down drunkenness. The use of spirituous liquors was under the last Peshwas forbidden at Poona and discouraged everywhere else and the Abkari duties of the State did not yield above Rs. 10,000. Elphinstone recommended that the Abkari should be kept in its existing low state by prohibitions or by very heavy taxes, but it need scarcely be said that this advice has not been followed."

The policy of the Peshwas was partially adopted in G. R. No. 3459 dated the 17th September 1838 which laid down the following moral principles :—

"It cannot be too strongly urged upon the Collectors that the object which Government has in view is to restrain and if possible to correct and diminish the total actual consumption of spirituous liquor, whether clandestine or licensed, being fully persuaded that any amount of revenue that may be lost by the efficiency of the system for this end will be repaid a hundred-fold in the preservation and advancement of moral feelings and industrious habits among the people."

In spite of these noble principles of the early days of the British rule, what have the succeeding bureaucratic governments done in our province? Have they themselves moved in the direction of suppressing this vice by reducing facilities for drink, or have they increased the revenue by providing wider facilities for it?

The answers are clear. Those who move about in rural and urban areas in the Presidency with their eyes open are struck with the sight of liquor shops located at prominent places and in populous quarters and wonder why the Sarkar has made it so easy for people to get liquor day after day and hour after hour at their very door. Regarding the increase in revenue the following figures for the past fifteen years will speak for themselves :—

Year.	Excise Revenue.	
	Lacs	Actuals.
1904-5	139-67	
1905-6	142-68	„ „
1906-7	148-36	„ „
1907-8	163-87	„ „
1908-9	168-45	„ „
1909-10	175-47	„ „
1910-11	189-73	„ „
1911-12	202-94	„ „
1912-13	212-27	„ „
1913-14	222-59	„ „
1914-15	220-08	„ „
1915-16	227-91	„ „
1916-17	260-51	„ „
1917-18	304-00	„ Revised.
1918-19	315-00	„ Budget.

Besides the Budget estimate of 315 lacs for this year, Government have realised more than 60 lacs of Rupees as a result of the recent introduction of the auction system. This works out at very nearly Rs. 2 per head of the population of the Presidency, more than 40 p. c. of the total revenue, an increase of 168 p. c. in 14 years and exceeds the land revenue share of the Bombay Government, which hitherto occupied the first place on the receipt side of the Budget.

STAGES OF THE POLICY.

What are the successive stages through which this policy has passed? The British inherited the farming system, but they never tried the system of prohibition which the last Peshwas introduced in Poona. The vice went on increasing and the Government modified the old system. They introduced a licencing system both in point of manufacture and sale. It failed in reducing the vice. They adopted the system of increasing the duty. But the people, addicted to drink, did not realise that the step was taken for suppression of the vice, but they believed that just as prices for food-stuffs rose, liquor also rose in price.

In this Presidency the monopoly of both manufacture and sale used to be leased for given areas to contractors who used to pay a fixed duty on issuing liquor for sale at their shops. The monopolist was not a competitor at a public auction, but a contractor selected at the discretion of the Excise Commissioner and the local Government. He was required to guarantee a minimum return to government *i. e.*, he was required to pay a duty on a certain quantity of liquor whether he sold that quantity or not. This minimum guarantee system was invented to prevent the contractor from distilling illicitly outside the Central Distillery or from entering into collusion with the preventive establishment to pass liquor out of the distillery without payment of duty. In the absence of definite reliable data for a normal demand for liquor, the "minimum guarantee system" instead of achieving the above mentioned object, led to the spread of drink among the masses, for no contractor would like to pay still-head duty without trying to spread the sale of liquor.

Then came the Madras system of retail vend. The single shop-system was adopted, The evil effects of the combined monopoly of manufacture and sale were

apparent among the higher ranks of the Abkari Service; while the Madras Retail-vend system opened out a wide field of corruption to the lower ranks of that Service. The recent abnormal increase in Abkari Revenue by reverting to the public auction system has opened our eyes to the fact that the old sale figures were not reliable; that there was considerable corruption; and the vice of liquor had permeated deeper than what had hitherto been represented by official figures.

Thus the various devices of (1) licencing the manufacture and sale of liquor (2) increasing the duty (3) the monopoly system under a minimum guarantee and (4) separate shop-system without auction, have failed in reducing the vice; and yet Government would not accept the suggestion of a system of prohibition even in selected areas. The Hon. Mr. Raghunath Pandurang Karandikar in 1912 moved a very modest resolution recommending "prohibition of liquor in a selected area." The Government of the day opposed the resolution, although the efforts of Government for over 82 years had signally failed to reduce the evil. And what was the reason advanced? It was admitted that the "increase in the consumption should be checked as far as possible by Government but" it was contended that "to adopt the proposal would be an infringement of *public liberty*" as if freedom to drink was essential for the preservation of society and any infringement of such freedom spelt disaster to society! In March last, a resolution for enabling select municipalities to determine the number and location of liquor shops was opposed by Government, and although the Council carried it, it is a question whether it will remain as a mere expression of a pious hope by the Legislative Council or whether the Executive Government will be pleased to give effect to it. Ladies and gentlemen, it is this stiffness and rigidity of the present system of Government which gives rise to legitimate discontent. In fairness to the non-official view, Government ought to see whether the remedy suggested by the popular side stands the test of experiment. The dread of loss of revenue and the nightmare of the spread of illicit manufacture of liquor are the chief obstacles in making the Government change its present Abkari policy. They seem to be blind to the fact that vice-begotten revenue is a moral evil bound in the end to react on the State which indulges in it and that illicit manufacture of liquor can never be so large in quantity or make liquor so easily available to the public for consumption as "licit" manufacture and organised and open sale of it by a State interested in the revenue derived therefrom.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

Another instance of the rigidity of the present form of Government is to be found in the manner in which the non-official demand for reducing the top-heavy expenditure is treated by the Government. An attempt was made in the Legislative Council last year to appoint a Committee to inquire into the question of economy in public expenditure. But the motion was thrown out by Government by an appeal, not to reason but to sentiment, when His Excellency stated in his closing remarks that the resolution was equivalent to a 'vote of censure' on Government. An enquiry in public administration is not "a vote of censure." If such were the interpretation, all Commissions appointed by His Majesty to investigate public problems should be so regarded. The resolution for enquiry failed. Do Government accept amendments for reduction in expenditure at the time of the budget? No, they would not yield an inch in the proposed direction. They would not enquire into the grievances of the low-paid subordinates, in spite of the fact that some of the village officers and servants are getting 8 annas a month;

they would not admit consolidated memorials but would insist upon an individual petition from each subordinate, though the grounds of grievance be the same. They would increase the emoluments of a certain class of privileged officers to such an extent that the aggregate remuneration may exceed double the pay of the appointment. They would brush aside the proposals of the non-official members on various pleas, such as that they amount to a 'vote of censure' or that they are opposed to "public interest"; they would throw out amendments at the time of the budget for reduction in expenditure and appropriation elsewhere; and they would refuse to institute a general enquiry into public expenditure. What then is the remedy? Nothing but a radical change in the present form of Government.

PRIMARY EDUCATION.

It is our misfortune that after a century and a half of British administration in India, her vast population should have remained submerged in the darkness of ignorance. Who does not know that the only method by which illiteracy could be removed from any country is the introduction of free and compulsory education for the masses of that country? The authorities in India, for reasons which I leave you to imagine, are hostile to the adoption of this course. The late Mr. Gokhale knew very well that the Government of India would not accept the principle of state compulsion in the matter of primary education. He, therefore, struck a middle course which, he thought, might be acceptable to the authorities. He suggested that Government should undertake legislation permitting the local bodies to introduce free and compulsory education within their limits. We all know what tremendous efforts he made to induce the Government of India to accept his modest resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council. Of course, it goes without saying that any legislation for "optional compulsion" as proposed by Mr. Gokhale is no real solution of the problem of illiteracy in India. You are all aware, ladies and gentlemen, that even that very modest proposal of Mr. Gokhale was opposed by the Government of India and the resolution was lost. Mr. Gokhale did not allow the grass to grow under his feet. Within a year thereafter, he asked for leave to introduce a Bill on the subject. Motion for leave is always treated as a formal matter and it was therefore accepted. The first reading of the Bill was, however, opposed strenuously with the result that it was thrown out. The Hon. Sir Harcourt Butler, in opposing the Bill, stated on behalf of Government that the legislation of the kind proposed by Mr. Gokhale should more properly be undertaken by a Provincial Legislative Council. The efforts of Mr. Gokhale ended there. Four or five years later, in December 1916, a non-official member of the Bombay Legislative Council, acting on the suggestion of Sir Harcourt Butler, brought a resolution in the Bombay Council on the lines of Mr. Gokhale's resolution in the Imperial Council. The Government of Bombay took a very hostile attitude and opposed the resolution and His Excellency the Governor in summing up the debate stated that "it would be unfortunate if the Council were to endeavour to pass a resolution which went straight in the face of the confirmed and decided opinion of the Government of India and trusted that the Council would see its way to oppose the resolution and support the Government in rejecting it." It is difficult to understand why the Government of Bombay took such a hostile attitude. They ought to have known that Sir Harcourt Butler on behalf of the Government of India had made the statement just referred to. In any case, the Bombay Government should have consulted the Government of India before they decided to oppose the Resolution. However; that may be, the resolution, under the circum-

stances, was thrown out by 20 members voting for and 25 against it. The mover immediately afterwards prepared a Bill on the subject and gave the necessary notice of it to the Government. The standing instructions of the Government of India require that a Local Government shall communicate to the Government of India every Bill before it is introduced into the Local Legislative Council. The proposed Bill was accordingly so submitted and the Government of India, perhaps to the surprise of the Bombay Government, replied to the effect that they had no objection to the principle of "optional compulsion" as proposed in it. The Bombay Government thereupon favourably received the Bill, which, having been put through all its stages, passed into law in December last. Several Municipalities in the Presidency have, I understand, already resolved in favour of the introduction of compulsory primary education within their limits under the provision of the new Act. Other Provincial Legislative Councils are also on the move in the same direction *e. g.* the Punjab, Bengal, Madras and Bihar.

Following upon the passing of the Bill into law, the Hon. Mr. Harchandraj Vishindas, with a view, I believe, to lighten the task of the Municipalities desirous of introducing compulsory education, moved a resolution at the last March session of the Bombay Legislative Council recommending that Government should rule that, in future, the grant to municipalities for primary education shall not be less than two-thirds of their total expenditure on that head every year. It is a matter of great regret, however, that the Government opposed the proposal. In doing so, the new Member for Education took his stand on the relative claims of ratepayers and taxpayers on provincial revenues. The Hon. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla will, I hope, concede that Primary Education is a 'National Service' and not a 'Local' one. In England where the total revenue, both Imperial and Local, is more equitably distributed between the local bodies and the Central Government than in India, the share of Government in expenditure by local bodies on primary education will be, according to the recent proposals of Mr. Fisher, the Minister for Education, two-thirds and in some cases even more. It is difficult to understand, therefore, why in India where the Government retains a much larger proportion of the total revenue in its own hands, the proposal of Mr. Harchandraj should have been opposed.

One thing more on this subject before I pass on to another. The new Act, as you know, is restricted to Municipalities only. As a matter of fact, there is greater need for the diffusion of primary education in rural areas. I hope, therefore, some non-official member will take the earliest opportunity to prepare and introduce a similar Bill permitting Local Boards to make Primary Education compulsory within their areas. It is no use relying on Government in this matter. We shall be thankful to them if they do not oppose the measure. I should, however, like to emphasise, that however thankful we may feel for these small mercies, the fact remains that these permissive measures are merely a half-way house. The only effective way to obliterate illiteracy in the country is to introduce 'compulsory compulsion' and not 'optional compulsion' in regard to primary education.

TRIAL BY JURY.

The system of trial by jury was introduced into this country by the Code of Criminal Procedure passed in 1861. The Code left it entirely to the discretion of each Local Government, with the sanction of the Government of India, to extend

the system to such localities under its jurisdiction as it may deem fit. I need hardly tell you, ladies and gentlemen, that the attitude of almost all the local governments in India towards this question is not less unsympathetic and illiberal than their attitude towards the question of local self-government. The Government of Bengal introduced the system into 7 districts in the year 1863. Twenty-nine years later, *i. e.*, in the year 1897, the system was extended to four other districts. The Bengal Presidency has 23 districts. No further extension having been made by the Bengal Government since 1897, a non-official member brought a resolution in the Legislative Council in 1916 recommending the extension of the system to all the remaining districts. The Government, of course, opposed it. The Council, however, carried it. The Government in its turn has recently refused to carry the Council's recommendation into effect. The U. P. Government for the first time in 1884 introduced the system in three out of 48 Districts. No further advance having been made since then, the Legislative Council of those Provinces carried in 1916 a resolution for the extension of the system to nine other districts in spite of Government opposition. The Government, however, have decided not to accept the recommendation. We have in our Presidency 28 districts. The system was introduced first in the Poona district in 1867. Later on, during Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, it was extended to the districts of Ahmedabad, Surat, Thana, Belgaum and the city of Karachi. The total number of cases tried by jury in Belgaum, Poona, Thana, Surat and Ahmedabad from the 1st January 1885 to 31st December 1914 was 4,331, the Judge agreeing with the verdict of the Jury in 4,032 cases *i. e.*, in 93 per cent of cases. In only 299 cases, the Judge differed from the Jury and made a reference to the High Court. The High Court accepted the verdict of the Jury in 99 and rejected it in 200 cases. What better testimony, ladies and gentlemen, could be adduced to show that the system has proved a great success in this Presidency and the fears entertained in some quarters regarding the fitness and capacity of Jurors are entirely unfounded? And yet when a resolution recommending further extension of the system to the remaining districts of the Presidency was discussed in the Legislative Council last December, the Government took a very uncompromising attitude. The mover was, in Council and out of it, asked to withdraw his resolution on a promise of inquiry and when he declined the offer, His Excellency the President, in putting the resolution to vote, remarked that "no Government in its senses could possibly accept a resolution of this sort without the very fullest inquiry as to the merits or demerits of the course proposed and we must decline to accept the resolution in any form." The resolution was thus lost. The system is deemed good for Europeans in India and is extended to all offences committed by them. But when after 56 years' experiment, in a few districts of the Presidency, in the trial of offences committed by Indians, it is proposed to extend it further, the Bombay Government think that it is time to make further inquiry into the whole matter and say that the proposal of the mover is an 'impatient suggestion' and that they cannot allow themselves to be carried away by it.

CONCLUSION.

Ladies and gentlemen, if I had time, I should have very much liked to discuss such questions as the separation of Judicial and Executive functions, encouragement of Indigenous systems of Medicine, working of the Defence of India and the Press Acts, Forest Administration, Police Expenditure and the like with a view to show how even cultured public opinion is flouted by the authorities in this country.

I feel, however, that I am not justified in detaining you any longer. Those of you who care and have time to study the published Proceedings of the Reformed Legislative Council will find ample material to justify a condemnation of the present system of government. Ladies and gentlemen, I need hardly mention that my quarrel is not with individual officers of Government but with the system as such. I have taxed your patience so long by detailed argument and concrete instances of non-official helplessness in the present Legislature with a view to show how and why the governmental machinery set up in India has failed. In theory, the British people, through their Parliament, have the control of our destinies. Parliament has no time to devote to Indian affairs. An alien bureaucracy, uncontrolled in practice by the people of either country, is really the master of the situation. The whole system is anomalous. Nothing short of a radical change is needed so as to make the people of India feel that they can now advance on their own lines in accordance with their own wishes. Let me hope and trust that such a constitutional change will be soon effectuated to the benefit and glory of England and India alike.

I should have stopped here if I had been addressing you on the 25th of April as originally arranged. An event of supreme importance, however has occurred since, of which I feel bound to take note in this address. I mean the Imperial War Conference recently held at Delhi.

CONSTITUTION.

Immediately following the Premier's trump call and the reply of His Excellency the Viceroy thereto, a conference of some of the leading representatives of the Princes and people as well as of the Local Governments in India met at Delhi under the Presidentship of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford on the 27th and 29th April. The Meeting could have been made more representative of the Indian people had the local Governments to whom the task of selecting the leaders of "all shades of opinion" from their respective provinces had been entrusted by the Government of India, had wisely carried out the mandate. As you are all aware, ladies and gentlemen, such recognized and prominent public leaders as Ms. Tilak and Mrs. Besant, Sir Subramania Iyer and Babu Motilal Ghose were not invited. Attempts were made at Delhi by some non-official gentlemen to persuade the authorities to send invitations to Mr. Tilak and Mrs. Besant but without any result. It was generally believed that in order to make the Conference really representative, the Government of India should have also asked the Provincial Congress Committee and the two Home Rule Leagues in India to select their own representatives, as was done in connection with the Deputations received by His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Montagu in November and December last.

OBJECT OF THE CONFERENCE.

The objects of the Conference were as announced by the Government of India, to secure the co-operation of all classes (1) in sinking domestic differences and in bringing about the cessation of political propaganda during the present crisis (2) in the measures necessary for the prosecution of the War with special reference to man-power and the development of India's resources; and (3) in cheerfully bearing the sacrifices which may be necessary to achieve victory. I may say at once that the idea of bringing about the cessation of political propaganda was wisely given up for obvious reasons. The question was not even mooted either before any

of the Committees or the Conference. So long as the question of constitutional reforms hangs in the balance, it is not at all possible to stop political propaganda. It was on that account, I believe, that no attempt was made in the direction of securing the first object of the Conference. With regard to objects (2) and (3) it will be remembered that immediately after the announcement of the Conference some of our public leaders addressed a manifesto to the Government and the Parliament of Great Britain and the Government of India stating clearly how that co-operation could be best secured. In that manifesto they say:—

“ Let full responsible Government be established in India within a definite period to be fixed by statute with the Congress League Scheme as a first stage, and a Bill to that effect be introduced into the Parliament at once. Let the Indian leaders be taken into confidence now and treated as recognized sharers in the perils and triumphs of the struggle. Let us all feel that we are one heart and aim, that we are not servants fighting for their masters but freemen fighting beside free men for the common heritage of freedom ”.

Public meetings were also held all over the country at which resolutions were adopted asking non-official representatives attending the conference to make it clear to the authorities that the only effective way to secure complete and cheerful co-operation was for the Government to take immediate steps to enable the people to feel that they were fighting for the freedom of their mother-land.

Accordingly, when the Committee on man-power met, this view was strenuously pressed by several non-official representatives on the attention of the Committee and a written motion in that behalf was submitted to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, the Chairman of the meeting. The motion was in the following terms:—

“ This Conference recommends that in order to evoke whole-hearted and real enthusiasm amongst the people of India and successfully to mobilize man-power, material and money, the Government in England should without delay introduce a Bill in Parliament meeting the demands of the people to establish Responsible Government in India within a reasonable period to be specified in the Statute. We feel confident that the inauguration of this measure will make our people feel they are fighting for the Motherland, for the freedom and defence of their own rights in the Empire in which they possess the same status as the other members thereof. We are further sure that if the imagination of our country is captured and its enthusiasm encouraged, it can easily equip itself to be in the language of the Premier, ‘ the bulwark which will save Asia from the tide of oppression and disorder.’ This Conference recommends that all racial distinctions should be removed forthwith and Indians and Europeans should be treated as the King’s equal subjects in all departments of public affairs.”

The Chairman however, ruled the motion out. It was there upon intimated to him there and then that the question would be raised at the Conference by way of amendment. You are aware, ladies and gentlemen, that the Hon’ble Mr. Khaparde accordingly gave due notice to His Excellency the Viceroy of his intention to move that amendment with the result that it was again ruled out. You will thus see that all possible attempts were made by the non-official delegates to the Conference to put the people’s point of view before the authorities but it was said that the Conference was exclusively a war conference and the question raised by the amendment was out of place. I may further point out that in the Committee on man-power questions regarding modification of the Arms Act, general amnesty to political prisoners, and the creation of a militia in India were raised but disallowed on similar grounds. The question of throwing open to Indians all kinds

of services in the Army, the Navy and the air-craft was allowed to be discussed but ultimately not put to vote. These questions were of course not raised again at the Conference. As a matter of fact, non-official representatives were determined so far as I know, for reasons mentioned hereafter, to allow the resolutions settled at the joint meeting of the two Committees to pass unanimously at the Conference even if the amendment of Mr. Khaparde were overruled by His Excellency. The main resolution recommended by the joint meeting of the Committees and adopted at the Conference runs as follows:—

“That this Conference authorises and requests His Excellency the Viceroy to convey to His Excellency the King Emperor the expression of India's dutiful and loyal response to His Gracious Message and an assurance of her determination to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire is passing”.

The country has by this resolution assured His Majesty the King Emperor that every Indian, high or low, rich or poor, will continue to do his duty to his utmost capacity to help the Empire in this great crisis. Our duty now is clear. I have no doubt India will strain every nerve to make that assurance good. At the same time it is the duty of the authorities in India as well as in England to facilitate our path. We have as a matter of simple duty responded to the call of the Imperial Government without making any conditions and in a spirit of cheerfulness. We fully recognize that in this hour of danger we must give ungrudging assistance to the Empire of which we hope in the near future to be members in the sense that the great Dominions overseas are. Stated frankly, our response is due to the confident hope that the reforms under contemplation will embody in the main the Congress League Scheme and that full responsible Government within a definite period will be guaranteed to India by a Parliamentary statute which we hope and trust will be passed without delay. It is that faith and that faith alone that has enabled us to tender our whole hearted co-operation to the Government.

Government must at once recognize that it is not human nature that people would take up arms cheerfully unless they are fully trusted and their loyalty is held above suspicion. It is imperatively necessary, therefore, that the Arms Act should be immediately modified in material particulars so as to enable the people of this country to hold arms on the conditions that Englishmen hold them in England. Atmosphere of trust must replace that of distrust. Press Act must disappear at once. Every day's delay in discharging the internees means obstacle to recruiting. There are immense possibilities in this country in the matter of securing soldiers if only the imagination of the people is captured. It can be so captured only by a spirit of confidence in and respect for the people of India, showing itself in immediate reforms which will enable us to feel that we are neither Russians nor Germans driven to fight by and for a despotic beauracracy, but free, equal and self respecting citizens in a common-wealth of democracy. If, however, as has been too often the case hitherto, our expectations, though modest, are foiled by our adversaries in India and in England, and Great Britain once more listens to the reactionary forces of Anglo-Indian vested interests ready like Ulster to sacrifice the Empire to their own narrow cause, then the inevitable result in India will be a corresponding reaction which I for one, fear to contemplate. Faith in Great Britain will hardly survive. Our appeals to our countrymen to help with men and with money will fall on deaf ears nay, may be

received with sullenness if not with ridicule and we shall be asked if India is to be duped also by her own representatives. Again a great opportunity will have been lost to India, to England, to the Empire and to the great cause of liberty and democracy. I say this in no spirit of unreasoning pessimism but to make it clear that the responsibility for such a result will lie not upon India or her representatives but upon the forces of reaction whether open or disguising themselves under the veil of cautious statemanship and administration or masquerading as the friends of peace and order or as trustees of the Indian people.

Let me, therefore, conclude, ladies and gentlemen, with an earnest prayer to God that He may grant unto our rulers sufficient wisdom and foresight to rise to the occasion and do what the situation urgently calls for,

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THE
THIRTY-FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Lucknow, December, 1916.

THE THIRTY-FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

Lucknow, December, 1916.

Brother & Sister Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It was Lord Curzon who on a memorable occasion said that it was not given to "an Indian corporal to carry the Field Marshal's baton in his knapsack", but here an Indian private, recruited somewhere in the seventies who after a few years' training joined his colours but never rose above the rank of a subaltern, has to-day after nearly 35 years of active service found that baton thrust into his hand which, however, he neither deserved nor dreamt of in all his life. I use no language of mere convention when I say, that trying and momentous as the present situation is I sincerely wished that at this turning point in the history of the national movement, the presidential chair of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress had been offered to a more capable person who might have not only inspired greater confidence, but by his superior tact and judgment safely steered it clear of all shoals and bars that still lie before it and successfully led it into port after a perilous voyage extending over thirty years: I wished it had been permitted to me to stand aside and gratify the wishes of a section of my countrymen with whose ardent hopes and sanguine expectations for the rapid advancement of the country I am in the fullest sympathy. But it ought to be remembered that the chosen spokesman of a great representative assembly like the Congress is merely an accredited agent whose individuality is more or less merged in the body politic and whose freedom of action is largely controlled by that body. Even his voice, as I understand it, is bound not to reflect his personal *ipse dixit*, but echo the reasoned feelings and sentiments of those whom he seeks to represent. In every organised movement the individual counts for nothing and the voice of the majority cannot but be respected under a constitutional fiction as the voice of the whole. In a case like the present, one is often precluded even from giving due consideration to his fitness or unfitness for the great task which is thrust upon him. It was the country's mandate in the country's cause which demanded unquestioning submission. The decision as well as the responsibility rested with the country, the duty resting on me. I am neither so vain, nor so foolish as to imagine for a moment, that the great honour bestowed upon me is intended for a personal distinction. I am under no such delusion. I am fully conscious that it is the democratic spirit of this National Organisation which has in its natural evolution sought to vindicate itself by drawing out an old servant of the cause from his retirement in an obscure corner of the country to fill the presidential chair in the dim twilight of the evening of his life. Gentlemen, if I have

not begun by offering you the customary thanks, it is because thanks presuppose some claim to receive a gift, and I frankly confess that I have not sufficient confidence in myself to thank you for the very difficult and delicate position in which you have placed me. However, lest you or anybody else should think that I am "poor even in thanks" I thank you with all the warmth and fervour of a devoted heart for the great honour—the greatest in the gift of the country—which you have conferred on me by calling me to preside over the deliberations of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress at Lucknow, the historic capital of Oudh which played such an important part in the early history of British rule in India—Lucknow, the *Koshala* of the ancients, the city built by Asoof-ud-Dowlah, and adorned by his successors with magnificent mosques, mausoleums and imambaras and crowned with gilded towers, minarets and cupolas—Lucknow, the centre of the great tornado which swept over India in 1857 in which the brave Lawrence and Nicholson fell and where the gallant Havelock sleeps embalmed in the thrilling memories of a Historic siege. Gentlemen, I think I have one indisputable claim to your just and generous consideration : If you have in your choice placed me in this responsible position you are in common fairness bound to extend to me a reasonable amount of support and indulgence so as to enable me to discharge my duties with some measure of success.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while most people count their gains, we have to count our losses at the end of every year. How sad it is to contemplate that scarcely a year passes away without leaving us the poorer in the ranks of our public men ! How fast are the dear old familiar faces on this Congress platform vanishing into the void ! Not to speak of the serious losses which the country sustained in her earlier breavements, only last year we lost three of our tried veterans, the brilliant, the versatile, the indomitable Pherozechah Mancharjee Mehta, the saintly and devoted Gopal Krishna Gokhale and that silent and steadfast worker who was one of the brave 72 who inaugurated the Congress at Bombay in 1885—Ganga Prasad Varma. And before this old, rickety globe of ours could complete another revolution, that "fell sergeant strict in his arrest" has snatched away three of our brave comrades whose loyalty to the country was equalled only by their spirit of self-sacrifice, and whose devotion to duty was surpassed only by their extraordinary capacity for work. G. Subramania Iyer, the founder of the *Hindu*, the organiser of the *Mahajan Sabha*, the editor of the *Swadesh-Mitram*, who was the first to lead the plough and turn the first sod on the Congress soil by moving the first resolution of the First Indian National Congress, may well be called the maker of Modern Madras ; while Daji Abaji Khare, who was for about eight years loyally and devotedly associated with our esteemed friend and veteran leader, the Hon'ble Mr. D. E. Wacha, as a Joint General Secretary to the Congress, was a man of whom any community might be justly proud and whose untimely death is an irreparable loss to the country and the congress. Lastly, it is with feelings of profound grief which has not yet been touched by the healing hand of Time that I must mention the passing of our gifted and distinguished countryman, one of

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my predecessors in the chair to which you have called me to-day, Pandit Bishan Narain Dar. Brother delegates, as the first citizen of Lucknow and the Chairman of the Reception Committee, his voice should have been the first to be heard in this *pandal* this afternoon in eloquent welcome extended to us all, but it was not to be, and his voice has been hushed in the great Silence, and the duty remains with us of offering our respectful tribute to his departed worth. Yet another eminent Indian has recently passed away, who, though not *in* the Congress was *with* the Congress all his life. Mr. B. L. Gupta belonged to that distinguished triumvirate who formed the vanguard of the Indian Civil Service in this country and it was he who was the originator, if not the author, of the Ilbert Bill. Two of this triumvirate have passed away, while, thank God, the third who having consecrated his life to the service of the motherland, still retains the command which he has held for the last 30 years. May Surendra Nath Banerjee be long spared to lead us and serve the country. We have had very few friends in England and how fast is their rank thinning away ! Sir Henry Cotton who, both in and out of Parliament, was one of the bravest and truest champions of the Indian people and who had cheerfully sacrificed his own interests for those of India, passed away last year amidst the universal lamentations of a grateful people who had most need of such a man at the present juncture ; while shortly afterwards the Great Labour-leader, Mr. Keir Herdie, who made India's cause his own and like Hamden with dauntless breast fought for suffering humanity, went to his eternal rest, creating a void in the ranks of our friends which is not likely to be soon filled up. We are, however, grateful to kind Providence that the Saint of Versova and the Sage of Meridith are still spared to us to guide us and cheer us with occasional messages of hope and confidence. How the brave and the mighty have fallen and how many more have yet to fall in the weary march through the desert before we can reach even the threshold of the Promised Land. But dead or alive, they cannot be completely lost to us if we can only realise that their mighty spirits are ever hovering over us and in their unerring vision silently guiding us in the onward march, encouraging us in our success and comforting us in the hours of our despair and despondency.

Gentlemen, even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver lining, and in this vale of sorrow, there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and a negative side. If the United Re-united Congress. Congress was buried in the *debris* of the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born to-day in the Kaiser Bag of Lucknow, the garden of the gorgeous King Wajed Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of mis-understandings and the mazes of unpleasant controversies, each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist party have come to realise the fact that united they stand. but divided they

patriotic good sense of the belligerents on both sides who having realised their true position and responsibility have at a psychological moment so wisely buried their hatchets and closed their ranks. There are occasional differences even in the best regulated families and how much wider must be the scope of differences in the vast political field of a country like ours where the people have so little of the power of initiation in their hands and where the causes of mis-understanding and consequent vexation and disappointment are so numerous and so irritating. Nothing succeeds like success and nothing so much disturbs the equanimity of the public mind and embitters public feelings as failure and in a common cause the failure of one method easily gives a handle to exaggerate the importance of an opposite view, though, if the position were reversed, the result might have been still worse. But if there be honesty of motive and singleness of purpose, the widest divergence of opinion need neither frighten nor irritate any reasonable mind. Action and reaction is the law of nature's evolution. Struggle represents animation as stillness indicates stagnation, and thus even the muddy water of a rushing stream is ever more wholesome than the transparent water of a stagnant pool. In politics healthy opposition indicates the vitality of national life and the disturbances and disruptions that occasionally take place in the life of a nation serve only to clear and purify the atmosphere it breathes and rarify the ether it inhales. In the British constitution there are the contending forces which at times seem so menacing but serve in reality only to cement and strengthen it. The real strength of a nation does not lie in mere smooth work, but in solidarity and compactness when the national interests demand them, and in sinking all personal differences as soon as the trumpet-call of duty is sounded to rally round a common cause. It would be most foolish to persist in prejudices in the name of principles and to lose sight of the real issue involved in a case. Nothing is more common in a game than for the players to quarrel over a false move and to take no notice of an impending checkmate. I do not endorse the opinion that a subject race has no politics, but I do maintain that the principles of a subject people must be somewhat elastic to suit the exigencies of their situation, and when a common cause demands unity of action a practical people cannot afford to quarrel over means but must be prepared to make sacrifices on both sides for the common end which must be placed above every other consideration. In the sphere of organised activities for the benefit of a corporate body there is nothing more disastrous than want of mutual respect, trust and confidence among its members. Where the end is the same the diverse means and methods to attain that end should not betray either parties or individuals into a course of action which defeats that end. A principle divorced from practice is apt to degenerate into a morbid sentiment and for all practical purposes even the noblest of sentiments must at times bend itself to the stern necessities of circumstance and be regulated by a spirit of mutual confidence, toleration, forbearance and even sacrifice. The misfortune is that in the heat of a controversy we often lose sight of the end and missing the real issue substitute the means for the end. A shade of difference in opinion, viewed in an atmosphere of prejudice and passion, is often magnified into a

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wide divergence of principle, and the most trusted of comrades easily find themselves ranged on opposite sides, while mis-understanding widens the breach, recriminations embitter the mind and misrepresentations serve to fan the fire into a flame. It was thus that we separated in 1907 and having grown wiser by our experience we have, I presume, learnt to know each other better. Let us now no longer disparage the old nor despise the young. If youthful zeal and enthusiasm are invaluable assets, the judgment and experience as also the caution and sobriety of the old are no less useful and indispensable. It is no doubt the brave soldier that fights and wins the battle, but even a *Narayani Sena* of old, the invincibles in the *Mahabharata*, would be scattered to the winds without a veteran general to command them from behind. Remember it is the "Old Congressmen" who have built this organisation, given a shape and form to it, worked out its details and inspired the people with the very ideal which is swaying their minds and surging in their thoughts from one end of the country to the other. Believing, as I do, in the evolution of a national life in perpetual succession, I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a limit also to caution, wisdom and sobriety beyond which they cannot be exercised without their forfeiting the characteristics of these virtues and without their degenerating into pusillanimity and moral turpitude. There is as much danger in rashness as in imbecility and the one may serve as a cloak for inaction as the other may contribute to wreck the most useful institutions. It should be fairly acknowledged that if the "Old Congressmen" have so far failed to run faster than they have done, they have at least done one thing, in that they have walked steadily and never stumbled. Men run before they learn to walk and if walking is a slower process running is not certainly a surer method to avoid a fall. It is surely not wisdom to call our elders fools, for there are those coming after us who, following our precedent, may return the compliment with accumulated interest. Let us, therefore, give up all cant and like practical men firmly and resolutely, yet soberly and discreetly look the situation in the face, and with heart within and God overhead loyally follow the leaders who, if they have not won the battle, yet have neither fallen back nor betrayed their trust. I most cordially welcome Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mr. Matlal Ghose and other brave comrades who separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all "of us" and "with us" and let us hope never never to part again.

Gentlemen, you naturally expect every year your President to make a clear and emphatic pronouncement, but you cannot expect your presidents —no, not even the tallest among them—to work **Presidential Pronouncement.** miracles for you in a three days' session. The *ideal* of the Congress has long been well-defined and no new ideas are needed either to amplify or illustrate it, nor are fresh ideas as abundant as blackberries so that whoever passes by may pick up any number of them. The country has a number of grievances and the Congress has made certain demands to remove them. It has also decided that it shall use none but constitutional methods for the fulfilment of its demands. Your presidents can only perform the function of the air-man by taking a survey

of the hostile positions, marking the points of relative strength and weakness and signalling the lines of attack ; but, after all, you are the gunners who have to fix your batteries, take your aim and actively work at the machines. Your president's pronouncement even at its best can only be a faithful echo of the prevailing sentiments of the country. Lord Morley complained that he could not give us the moon, but we were never so moon-struck as to ask for the moon and his Lordship need have no fears that he has given us something more substantial than mere moon-shine. Gentlemen, it will be my most earnest endeavour to throw some little light on some of the phases of the present situation, and if I cannot present to you even the faint light of the *Aurora borealis*, I shall certainly not presume to allure you by raising to your minds' eye the treacherously dancing flashes of the *Will-o'-the-wisp*. Gentlemen, if you have this time gone a little out of your way in choosing your president, that president may be permitted to go a little out of the way of all past precedents in addressing you on the present occasion. I propose to confine myself mainly to one question which is the all-absorbing topic of the day—the question of Self-Government for India. It is an all-embracing problem to the solution of which all other subsidiary questions are mere corollaries. If this one problem could be solved, the other problems would solve themselves. But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must have a clear idea of the form of Government under which we are placed, the defects of that form of Government, the disabilities which we suffer therefrom, the system of Government that we want as a substitute for it and our capacity to receive such a substitute.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT WE LIVE IN.

It is now a matter of history that when a company of merchants introduced British rule in India in the middle of the 18th century, it was an absolutely despotic form of Government that was established in the country. Having regard to the unsettled state of the country and the internal dissensions and disputes not only among the different communities, but also among the people of the same community, any other form of Government would perhaps have been impossible at that time. A despotic form of Government is not necessarily synonymous with a bad government, but a beneficent despotism is of the exception and not of the rule. It is not every age or every country that can produce a Rama or a Harun-ul-Rashid, a Charlemagne or an Akbar. The Government of the East India Company over which the British Parliament exercised little or no control, and the so-called Board of Control, very little supervision except for their own interest, was marked by nepotism and at its later stage by corruption. In spite of repeated warnings of Parliament, education was neglected, justice was perfunctorily administered and the strong were permitted with impunity to oppress the weak. The Company which had developed small factories into vast territories naturally regarded their unprecedented acquisition as a huge commercial enterprise and considered the sovereign administration of the country as of lesser importance than the development of their trade and the increase of their profits. They

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viewed their own interest more than the interest of the people. It is a wonder that such a system of Government could have lasted so long and surely it lasted long enough to meet with a violent end.

After a hundred years of mis-rule it was at last overthrown by a military rising which transferred the Government of the country from the Company to the Crown. From this time a system of Benevolent Despotism. Government was established in the country which gave altogether a new complexion to the administration. This Government was designated a "benevolent despotism"—an expression which though not exactly a contradiction in terms, was sufficient to indicate that the form of Government was still essentially a despotism, though tempered by generous and benevolent considerations. It was this Government which actuated by its benevolent intentions introduced, by slow degrees, various reforms and changes which gradually broadened and liberalised the administration and widened the views and deepened the loyalty of the people. It fostered liberal education, established justice, created public confidence in the integrity of the administration and restored peace and order throughout the country. In its gradual development it introduced, though in a limited form, Self-Government in the local concerns of the people, admitted the children of the soil to a limited extent into the administration of the country and reformed the Councils by introducing an appreciable element of representation in them. It has annihilated time and space by the construction of railways and the establishment of telegraphic communication throughout the country. It has established a form of administration which in its integrity and purity can well vie with any other civilised country in the world, while the security of life and property which it conferred was until recently a boon of which any people may justly be proud. All this a "benevolent despotism" has accomplished.

But here it stopped and after having exhausted all the resources which a personal benevolence could supply, it has slowly and imperceptibly yielded to the infirmities of its nature, and by a process of natural evolution has resolved itself into a system of barren and sterilizing bureaucracy. Despotism has done in this country what despotism has done elsewhere, and if it has failed to do more, it is because its nature could not have permitted it to do more. In the exercise of its beneficent influence it reached a stage and attained a height beyond which it was not possible for despotism to ascend. The bureaucracy which now rules the country is despotism condensed and crystallised. In it the Service is so firmly and indissolubly combined with the State that for all practical purposes the one may be said to be completely merged in the other—a combination which is infinitely more dangerous than the combination of the Judicial and the Executive functions of which we have heard so much. It is certainly not accountable to the people and the service and the state being one and the same it is responsible only to itself. It is essentially conservative in its temperament and thoroughly unprogressive in its character. Its efficiency is indisputable, its honesty and integrity beyond all question ; but it is bound hand and foot to form a precedent lacking in life and soul. It can contract but it cannot expand.

It holds all the threads of the administration within the hollow of its palm and can ill afford either to release or to relax any one of them. It is extremely jealous of its powers and intolerant of criticism. It sincerely wishes to see the people happy and contented, only it cannot allow them to grow. It has its idea of beauty and its Chinese shoe to give effect to it, however painful to its subject the operation may be. Like Narcissus of old it is so much entranced with the loveliness of its own shadow that it has neither the leisure nor the inclination to contemplate beauty in others.

But the people have completely outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. Call it visionary, call it impatient idealism,

The New Spirit. call it intoxication if you choose, that spirit is the manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to new order of things. Under the pressure of this irresistible force time-honoured kingdoms and constitutions are crumbling to pieces and giving place to new ones, and hereditary monarchs of ancient and even celestial origin are quietly taking their exit, as on a stage, without shedding a tear or a drop of blood. Portugal, Turkey, Persia and China all have felt the breath of this force. It is agitating Egypt and is pulsating the life of India. In India it has fortunately been of normal growth. This new spirit may be impulsive, but it is perfectly genuine and intensely patriotic. If sympathetically treated it may be directed in a proper channel, but it would be unwise either to ignore or try to repress it. Old ideas are changing faster than one can realize and it is no fault of the Indian people if they are unable to reconcile themselves to a patriarchal or a paternal form of Government. The present form of Government, whatever its claims for the maintenance of an orderly administration may be, is more or less an anachronism. Sir Henry Cotton, who recalls with just pride that for three generations his family has been associated with the bureaucratic service in India, said that "the Indian Civil Service, as at present constituted, is doomed." While still in service he formulated a scheme of reconstruction which the Indian Public Service Commission of 1887 considered as "visionary". Now that another Royal Commission has been appointed to enquire into the Indian Public Services, Sir Henry Cotton has again returned to the charge. Writing in the *Contemporary Review* and commenting on the terms of reference to the Commission, which apparently assume the existing constitution as the permanent basis of Indian administration, Sir Henry Cotton says,— "But what is wanted now is no scheme for bolstering up the decaying fabric of a service adapted only to obsolete conditions which have passed away and never can return."

In a despotic form of Government everything is done *for* the people and nothing *by* the people. Its greatest drawback is that it makes the people whom it governs impotent to help themselves. It may make a people perfectly happy but it cannot make them resourceful nor even contented, self-reliant and manly in their life and conduct. Such a people must always be a burden to the State, and the "white man's burden" of which we hear so much is the creation of this despotic form of Government, and those who complain of India being a "*nuisance of the Empire*".

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ought to remember that it is the accumulated errors of this form of Government during the last hundred and fifty years and more. Even in a benevolent despotism there is but one patriot and that patriot is either the despot or the close bureaucracy in which the Government is vested. As in a patriarchal family, the subjects of a despotic Government are of a stunted growth and are all more or less like spoiled children incapable of either helping themselves or helping the *Pater familia*.

But to its credit it must be recorded that this benevolent despotism has done one thing—it has prepared its own coffin and has written on it **Bureaucracy nearing its end.** Despotism was wholly repugnant to the British instinct and entirely foreign to the British Constitution, and what it did, therefore, was to prepare a curious admixture of two incongruous substances, a bureaucratic constitution leavened with democratic ideas, which can never coalesce but can serve only to neutralize each other. Paradoxical as it may seem and strange as it may sound, this despotism has throughout consciously or unconsciously and perhaps in fits of absent-mindedness, worked up to its own subversion, and like the fabulous Phoenix, in anticipation of its allotted cycle of years, prepared its own nest of spices, set fire to it and flapped that fire into a flame with its own wings singing its melodious song to consume itself into ashes out of which to rise again in a glorious re-birth. From the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 down to Lord Morley's Reform of 1909, the British Parliament has not taken a single step which was not calculated finally to overthrow this despotic form of Government. The education given to the people, the system of local self-government introduced into the country and the elective principle recognised in the higher Councils of the Empire have all tended to undermine the old system of Government which it would be a vain attempt now either to rebuild or to repair.

The bureaucracy have, however, discovered the mistakes of their predecessors. But it is not as easy to rectify as to discover mistakes. We too may have discovered many a mistake of our grand-
A chapter of mistakes. fathers. But what avails it to cry over spilt milk? It is more than vaguely suggested that it was a mistake to have opened the eyes of the Indian people. I fully admit that from the point of view of these critics it was a great mistake—the greatest indeed ever committed by a despotic Government, benevolent or otherwise. It was a great mistake to have issued the Education Despatch of 1854, and it was a great blunder to have confirmed that mistake by the establishment of Universities at Calcutta in 1857, at Bombay and Madras in 1858, at Lahore in 1882 and at Allahabad in 1887. It was a mistake to have granted liberty to the press and freedom of speech throughout the country: it was a mistake to have introduced local self-government in 1884, and it was a greater mistake to have reformed the Councils in 1903 and again in 1910. It is a chapter, nay a whole volume, of mistakes which have been committed by successive parliaments and administrations which, I am afraid, it is too late either to amend or to rectify. It is the instinct of the British people and the spirit of the British constitution which led the British Parliament

to this long series of mistakes. But there has always been a counteracting force in India, and, for aught we know, but for these mistakes both India and England might have met with greater difficulties. In recent years there has always been a tendency to cry "halt" and every step forced upon the bureaucracy in the forward march by the irresistible current of events has been followed by a paroxysm of regret, and all that the Government has been able to do to retain its ancient character and at the same time to keep pace with the pressing demands of the ceaseless march of time has invariably presented the appearance of the texture of the faithful Penelope unravelling by night what is woven by day. Vain attempts are these. The tide has set in and it will not roll back under any human command. You may and have to adjust and re-adjust your wind-mill occasionally, but you cannot turn back the course of the river. The best and only remedy therefore now is not to go back but to press forward, not to cling to an obsolete and worn out institution which is no longer suited to the present condition of the country, but firmly and cautiously adapt the constitution to the requirements of the time and adjust it to the growing demands of the people. Every declaration made by the Government, every report of commissions and committees having a bearing upon the present unrest and every legislative measure passed to cope with the disturbed state of the country bear testimony to the fact that there is a struggle going on between a benevolent despotism and an overgrown people who with all their defects and short-comings are no longer satisfied with the present system. On the one hand there is manifested in almost every direction a marked tendency in the people to break through the leading strings by which they have been held so long and assert their constitutional rights and privileges as citizens of the British Empire, and on the other hand, there is an equally persistent attempt on the part of the bureaucracy to maintain its prestige and authority.

A CONFLICT.

It is a case of clear conflict between the forces of an old constitution and the new spirit, and as the inevitable result of such a conflict a state of things has arisen for which neither may be wholly responsible, but from which both have equally to suffer, although the presumption in such a case is always in favour of the people according to all political philosophers. "I am not one of those," says Burke, "who think that the people are never wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people." In quoting this dictum of Burke with approbation Lord Morley who has recently dealt more with India than any other living British statesman, adds—"Nay experience perhaps justifies him in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent, something has generally been found amiss in the constitution or the administration." And truly does Burke observe. "The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong, it is their error and not their crime." Then the great political philosopher continues in the words of Sully which his biographer passionately enjoins that "both practical politicians and political students should bind about their necks, and write

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upon the tables of their hearts."—"The revolutions that come to pass in great states are not the result of chance, nor of popular caprice. * * * *
 As for the populace it is never from a passion that it rebels but from impatience of sufferings." It is in the nature of a bureaucratic administration to have absolute confidence in its own judgment and little respect for the opinions of others. The British Government, as established in India at the present day, has no doubt long ceased to be an absolute despotism, nor can it be described as a popular Government. A cursory examination of its policies and its practices will disclose the nature of this conflict and the stage at which it has arrived due as much to the process of natural evolution as to the legitimate sequence of events to which that policy has so largely contributed. Gentlemen, be it understood that we are here to criticise Government and not to sing its praises. If, therefore, we have more to refer to its defects and short-comings it is not to be presumed that we are wholly insensible to its many good points or are unable to appreciate them. Nor do I feel pressed to enter upon any vindication of our loyalty to the Throne as it is above all cavil or criticism.

EDUCATION.

To take up the question of education first, as it is the foremost problem in the evolution of a nation. Ever since the Crown took up the reins of government it was actuated by a bold and liberal policy of educating the people and elevating them in the scale of nations. Worried and wearied with the evasive policy of the East India Company, the Board of Control under the guidance of a far-sighted statesman, Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, issued the memorable Despatch of 1854 which is now known as the great charter of Education in India. In pursuance to this Despatch a University was established in 1857 in the then Capital of the Empire.

But the mutiny having broken out almost simultaneously a pretext was easily found to propose a change of policy. Sir Frederick Halliday, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, came to the rescue and in a letter to Lord Ellenborough, who was then the President of the Board of Control, neatly disposed of the objections raised. Sir Frederick wrote :—
 "On the question of the connection between education and the rebellion, our wisdom, no less than our duty, is to persevere in what we have begun and not to turn our backs upon Behar or any other parts of our territory, because there is difficulty or danger in the path of improvement. It is certain, however, that both the difficulty and the danger are exaggerated and look imposing only to those who keep at a distance from them and view them through the delusive mist of prejudice and mis-information. As to difficulty, the progress of Bengal, within the memory of living witnesses, is a proof of the aptitude of the people and of their plastic docility. And though it is not uncommon in these days to attribute the recent mutinies to our educational operations, and even to propose to

draw back from them for fear of similar consequences in future, the error of this opinion is like that of a man who after unwisely and incautiously exposing a barrel of gun-powder to all kinds of dangerous influences and having by good luck, and in spite of bad management, long escaped without an accident, should at last, when the fatal and inevitable explosion takes place, blame neither the gun-powder nor his own rashness and indiscretion, but rather lay the whole mischief to account of some one of the many little sparks flying about, and talk of limiting the use of fire and candle in future to prevent similar occurrences." No more statesman-like view of the situation, or a more crushing reply, could have been advanced, and the Government of Lord Canning made a firm stand against the hysteric cry of an alarmist crowd. I have purposely quoted this long extract, for it will be seen that the same cry has again been raised in recent years and has contributed not a little to the shaping of the present educational policy of the Government, with this difference that there is neither a Halliday nor a Canning to take a dispassionate perspective of the situation and boldly adhere to the noble policy of 1854. In 1858 two more Universities were established in Bombay and Madras, and in the following year another Despatch was issued under the authority of the crown re-affirming the great Despatch of 1854 and laying down in clear and emphatic terms that greater impetus should be given to education in the future than had been done in the past, that more colleges and schools should be established throughout the country, that more systematic and sustained efforts should be made for the education of the masses, and that an unstinted measure of encouragement should be extended to private enterprise towards the furtherance of education by state-grants and scholarships. It has to be noticed that having regard to the aptitude of the people and to the extraordinary zeal and eagerness evinced by them for the spread of education, it was further laid down, that *Government should be reluctant to open Government institutions whenever private institutions could be expected or encouraged to do the work.* Under the inspiring influence of this noble policy a great impetus was given to the cause of education and colleges and schools rapidly increased throughout the country. This policy continued in its uninterrupted course till 1882 when under the Government of Lord Ripon another Education Commission was appointed for the further development of the educational system. Lord Ripon considering the inadequate number of Universities, conceived the idea of adding two more Universities, one of which he himself established at Lahore in 1882, and the other was established by his successor at Allahabad in 1887.

But here dropped the curtain over the educational progress of India. The growing clamour of the people for increased rights and privileges and their incessant demand for participation in the administration of the country led a nervous bureaucracy to regard education in the same light as it was regarded in 1857. The people having their minds and ideas expanded by Western education were aspiring to Western institutions. It was indeed the dawning of "the proudest day of England" which Macaulay in his prophetic

fortunately for India and England with the advent of Lord Curzon the educational policy of the Government underwent a marked transformation.

Lord Curzon came in 1899 with twelve problems in his pocket for the execution of which he obtained unfortunately for himself as well as for India a further extension of his office during which the "brilliant Viceroy" in the name of efficiency, set back the hand of progress in almost every direction, education receiving his foremost attention. It was a veritable Pandora's Box that he carried which let loose all the forces of unrest, dislocating the existing order of things, reversing past policies and filling the minds of the people with concern and anxiety, hope alone remaining. Here were sown the seeds of that discontent which a Milton might well have invoked his muse to sing and from which both the Government and the country have been reaping so abundantly. His educational policy of 1902 culminating in the Indian Universities Act of 1904 dealt a death-blow to the further expansion of education and by its stringent rules and regulations sapped all indigenous enterprise for its further development. It was argued that the previous policy had served to extend the surface at the sacrifice of depth, and that a shearing process was necessary to check all superfluous growth. Pruning is undoubtedly good, but the use of the pruning knife on a growing plant before it has put forth abundant leaves and branches is an operation which is calculated more to destroy than to improve. These rules and regulations would have been unobjectionable if only equal care had been taken for the proper accommodation of the ever increasing influx of boys pressing every year for admission into the existing institutions. Hundreds of young men are debarred from the colleges and thousands of boys are thrown out of schools and turned adrift aimless and unequipped into this world to fight out the battle of life. It is an undeniable fact that within the narrow scope of the present regulations some improvements have been effected and larger grants have in recent years been made for education; but it cannot be overlooked that nearly 40 per cent of these grants are absorbed in supervision and superintendence while general education as well as the lower educational services are being practically starved. Depth may be preferred to surface, but a "top heavy" construction is always unsafe to any structure even with the deepest foundation which human ingenuity may devise. In a country which, with the exception of Russia, is larger than the continent of Europe, there are now no more than 150 Colleges of all sorts and a little over 1300 High Schools and 1,27,000 Primary Schools for the education of the masses for a population of over 255 Millions, and yielding a percentage of barely 7 literate men out of this vast population. It may be noted here that two-thirds of these Colleges and three-fourths of the High Schools are private Institutions. This is the sum-total of educational progress made under a benevolent despotism during a period of 160 years and imagination fails to pierce into the dim and distant future when even half the population of this vast continent shall be so far advanced as to be able to read and write their names. That is how education stands in the country after more than one and half a century of British rule, and yet a modest Bill introduced by a Congressman for Elementary Education was thrown out with a few com-

plementary platitudes. The people demand a general diffusion of elementary education for the mass as preferable to no education, while Government insists upon better education for a few rather than wide-spread light for the many. No one can reasonably object to the quality of education for the few being improved, but a belief has gained ground in the public mind, not without some show of reason, that Government has begun to view the educational problem with suspicion and distrust and to reverse the engine for a backward motion. There is, however, no room for doubt that under the plea for creating a "serene atmosphere of education" political considerations have been largely introduced in the department of Education. In driving out the wooden chip the iron nail has been thrust in. Teachers have turned into spies and not in few cases are Superintendents suspected of having assumed the role of C. I. D. officers. The sanctity of the temples of learning has been violated and our boys and youngmen are brought up in the unhealthy atmosphere of what may be called insecure jails. This the people sorely resent and here the first conflict has taken place between a sensitive subject race and an autocratic Government, each believing the other to be in the wrong and neither trusting the other either for mutual understanding or for a rational settlement of the question.

THE ADMINISTRATION.

The next point of conflict lies in the administration itself. It is a preposterous attempt to compel a child to lisp when he is able to speak and force him to crawl on his knees when he is able to walk on his legs. It is no rebellion in the adult members of a family to exercise their discretion and judgment and even to interfere, to some extent, in the management of its affairs, and a reasonable *Pater familia* ought cheerfully to accept a change which is calculated only to relieve and not to dethrone him. What is true of a family is also true of a paternal government. A government must always conform itself to its changing environments and adapt itself to the ideas and requirements of the community which it is called upon to govern. The highest claim of British rule in India is not founded upon its military strength but upon its moral grandeur. Security of life and property is no doubt one of the highest attributes of a settled government, but this attribute is more or less to be found among backward, uncivilised governments anxious for their own existence. A pure form of administration of justice is the bed-rock of a civilised Government and it is this administration of justice which more than anything else has led broad and deep the foundations of British rule in India resting upon the affection and confidence of the people. Anything which tends to undermine that foundation is therefore fraught with danger to the superstructure. As men are born free they naturally value their life and liberty infinitely more than their property. For property is a man's accident, while liberty is his birth-right. In every country, therefore, the administration of criminal justice which affects life and liberty is viewed with much greater interest than the administration of civil justice and that is why even in this country lawyers find the criminal branch of their profession more lucrative than the civil one. In fact the administration of criminal justice in any country is more a political question than a mere

settlement of private disputes. The greatest defect in the administration of criminal justice in this country lies in the fusion and combination of the judicial and the executive functions—a system in which the prosecutor and the judge, the man who works up a charge and the man who sits in judgment over that charge are rolled into one. For thirty years the Congress has cried hoarse for the separation of this unholy combination, hundreds of cases from unimpeachable and unchallenged records have been cited from year to year to illustrate the baneful results of the system which is calculated more than anything else, to shake the confidence of the people in the integrity of the administration of justice. Cases have occurred—and they are not few and far between—where racial considerations have outweighed the demands of justice, and the life of an Indian has not received greater considerations than that of a crab or a tortoise. There are of course men who are strong enough to challenge and drive discontent underground, but no one has the power to see underground and watch the secret progress which such discontent silently works in its subterranean course. One complete generation has passed away since the Indian National Congress first drew the attention of Government to the danger underlying this inequitable system. One Viceroy considered his duty discharged by calling the proposal of the congress a “Counsel of perfection” : two successive Secretaries of State vied with each other in their pious wish to inaugurate this reform ; while at least one Indian administrator denounced the existing system as being unworthy of “rational beings.” But the system still continues and seems to possess a charmed life which defies both a natural and a violent death. Sir Harvey Adamson was reported to have actually gone so far as to submit a scheme for the proposed reform in 1908 and all sorts of speculations have been afloat in recent years ; but no body knows where the proposal sticks and where it now rests,—whether on the dusty upper shelves of the Indian Secretariat at Simla or in the archives of the Indian Office at White Hall. Wherever it may lie its fate has so far been determined by the spirit of bureaucratic rule nervous to part with the narrowest shred of authority. If this one reform had been carried out one half of the causes of the present discontent would have vanished, and it is just possible that the ugly developments with which the Government is at present confronted might never have appeared.

The next point of conflict between the bureaucracy and the people has reference to the Liberty of the Press. The press is entirely a Western

The Press Act and the Liberty of the Press. institution so firmly ingrafted with Western education and incorporated with Western methods of administration, that it is now impossible to retain the one and remove the other. In every civilised country the Press has played the double role of the educator of the public and the interpreter to the Government. In India the Press, with all its defects and lapses, as well as its numerous difficulties and disabilities, has played an important part in the evolution of National life, and its chequered history is no mean evidence of the firm hold it has over the public mind and the sustaining energies of a growing people. It is not necessary to pursue that history. Suffice it to say that since the repeal of Lord Lytton's Gagging Act of 1878 the Indian Press steadily grew into a power which with a little more sympathetic treatment might easily

have been converted into a useful adjunct of the administration. Unfortunately, however, the Anglo-Indian Press began to be jealous of its formidable rival and the bureaucracy grew nervous of its strength. An ugly development for which the Indian Press was no more responsible than for the collision which took place at this time between the *Campertown* and the *Victoria* in the Atlantic, furnished an excuse and afforded an opportunity for again muzzling the Press in a way unprecedented in the history of any civilised country where a public Press exists. The Press Act of 1910, conceived in a spirit of repression, has reduced the Indian Press from its position as an independent critic of the Government to that of an institution entirely dependent upon sufferance. Within this short period of less than seven years there has been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers have been suppressed, printing presses confiscated and their securities forfeited to an extent which has bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists. According to a statement furnished by Sir Reginald Craddock in February last there were no less than six press prosecutions and in no less than five cases securities of newspapers were enhanced and no less than two hundred and twenty newspapers, both English and vernacular, ceased publication since the outbreak of the war and up to that date. The liberty of the Indian Press is practically gone and the highest tribunals in the land have declared themselves powerless to protect it. When the Act was passed the extreme rigour of the measure was admitted, but an assurance was given that it would be administered with care and consideration. Whether that assurance has been honoured more in its breach than in its observance may be left to the judgment of the public. And last, not least, an extraordinary woman, Irish by birth, English by marriage and Indian by adoption, has been caught in the meshes of this Act, and the provisions of the Defence Act are set in operation to coerce and restrain her. One Government has under cover of the latter, interdicted Mrs. Besant from profaning its sacred territories with the touch of her feet, while another Government, acting under the former, not content with forfeiting the security of an old press, has demanded an exorbitant security for her paper which threatens it with extinction. Gentlemen, how fast doth contagion spread! Before I could finish writing these pages another Government has issued orders prohibiting her at the eleventh hour not to attend a religious conference held within its territories. I should not be surprised if the British public were to doubt the accuracy of this statement. The lame excuse offered by the C. P. Government for its extraordinary action has however, failed to satisfy the Indian public. Mrs. Besant is as yet free—I use the word subject to correction—to live in British India and to travel over British India, but not to cross the Vindhya Chains and touch the sacred soil of Bombay and the Central Provinces. Are Bombay and the Central Provinces outside British India? She is charged by the Madras Government with matter seditious printed at her press. The Madras High Court has distinctly found that there was nothing seditious in her writing. Two High Courts have concurrently held that there may be illegal forfeitures under this Act and yet they were powerless to grant any relief. The appellate powers of the High Courts under the Act are a delusion and a snare. Yet there seems to be no disposition on the part of

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the Government either to withdraw or to modify this retrograde measure, although where a necessity for the bureaucracy arises a Bill may be passed at one sitting of the council and a Validating Act rushed through to legalise its illegal proceedings. So much for the Law Member's assurances and promises upon the strength of which the Indian members of the Council were led to vote for this dangerous enactment in their desire to help the Government at a critical moment. We may not see eye to eye with Mrs. Besant in many matters, but our hearts go forth to her in her trials and tribulations which not only affect her personal interests but are also a standing menace to the liberties of the Indian subjects of His Majesty. What is Mrs. Besant's offence? Is it that she loves India as she loves her own native land? What is her offence? Is it that her womanly instinct has led her to raise her manly voice in defence of the rights and liberties of a subject race, whose present condition, as contrasted with its ancient civilisation and departed glories, has found a place in her sympathies and got a hold upon her imagination, to which many people of her race are either blind or impervious? The days of chivalry are gone and even womanhood is no protection against bureaucratic insensibilities. If she is seditious, why not try her for sedition in an open court where, if convicted, she will cease to be idolised as a martyr? I hope the matter will not rest here, but will be carried beyond the seas and heard in a free country and by a free people before whose tribunal even an heir-apparent to the Throne bows as low as the humblest subject of the realm to receive his judgment. The shrieks of a dying press, which have been so far drowned in the tumults of a devastating war, will not then go altogether unheeded. Laws may be enacted here to stifle the voice of public opinion, but a great nation nurtured on the lap of freedom cannot long tolerate a method of administration which is so entirely repugnant to its instinct and tradition. It only requires to be correctly informed and duly impressed. It may be difficult to move it; but once in motion even the omnipotent power of the bureaucracy will not avail to arrest its onward march towards the establishment of freedom in this land.

The sufferings of Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak are well-known to the public. I am here neither to defend nor to denounce him. The latest proceedings which were instituted against him at Poona have, however, raised a grave issue which cannot be passed over. I cannot persuade myself to believe that in initiating these proceedings the authorities were actuated by any unworthy motive. But I deeply regret that Government was ill-advised in taking them at a time and under circumstances where its action was liable to be misconstrued. In disposing of this case, Sir Stanley Batchelor has enunciated a law, the correctness of which seems to be open to grave doubts. He says that the condemnation of the Civil Service *en bloc* is tantamount to a condemnation of the Sovereign authority, as the service is an agent of that authority. Carried to its legitimate consequences, this dictum would be a bar to any criticism against any of the services. The Criminal Intelligence Department is at present in closer touch with the Government than even the Civil Service and may be

regarded, as such, a more accredited agent of the Government. And what is there to prevent the principle here enunciated from being applied to that department, or to the Police in general, and for the matter of that to the village chowkidars? The law of Agency cannot apply to the relation between the Crown and its servants. Some years back, this question was pointedly raised when Sir George Campbell who was not inaptly called the Tiberius of the Indian Civil Service charged the *Hindu Patriot* with "ill-will towards Government" for its strong criticism of the Civil Service. The late Kristodas Pal most forcibly and faithfully drew this distinction between the state and the service. He said :—"The words 'ill-will to Government' are not however explicit. Is the word Government in the phrase intended to mean the Queen's government or the Local Administration?—the ruling power or the executive agency?—the Sovereign mistress of the Empire, or her officers in the country? None is better aware than His Honour that the Supreme Power and the administrative authority are quite distinct; and nowhere is this distinction made so broadly and clearly as in England. When for instance, Mr. Disraeli denounced the other day the present Government of Her Majesty as 'blundering and plundering,' it would be a gross perversion of language to interpret this imputation into 'ill-will to Government,' that is, the Sovereign authority, the Queen herself. * * * It would be impertinent in me to remark that if criticisms of public men and measures be construed into 'ill-will to Government' there is not a single journal in this country, with the slightest pretence to independence, which would not be open to this charge." In our own times, the fulminations of Sir Edward Carson inciting the Ulstermen to stand against the established government in England are still fresh in the minds of the public and yet this leader of the Orangemen was not considered unworthy of receiving an invitation to a conference from the King himself. In India by a strange irony of fate even the long-established principles of law easily yield to much wider interpretation and judges are not wanting who hold that a sharp criticism of even a member of the ruling race is equivalent to a contempt of the Government itself. Gentlemen, the ill-starred definition of *disaffection* has died out; but here arises another alarming dictum which should engage your serious attention.

The Indian Arms Act is another source of irritation which has estranged the feeling between the people and the governing class. Apart from the invidious and irritating character of this measure it has emasculated a whole nation, degraded them not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of other races not in any way superior to them, and reduced them to a condition of absolute helplessness. It has stunted the growth of a people, dwarfed its mental stature and debased its moral character, by depriving it of its sense of national self-respect. It has reduced it to the position of political *pariahs* smarting under disgrace and without any sense of responsibility. Maharajah Jabbar Jung Bahadur may not carry a single revolver for his own protection; but his driver Jones may have any number of them for his pastime, for purpose of illicit sale, and for shooting not only pheas-

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sants but also sometimes a poor Indian peasant whom he may easily mistake for a pig. But all bad measures are like the devil's engine which must at one time or other recoil back on him who uses it, and this is what has happened. It is as easy to govern a country by disarming its entire population as to convert a whole country into a jail. Anarchism has reared its head and there has been a recrudescence of lawlessness in some part of the country. Dastardly assassinations are committed in crowded cities in broad daylight and daring robberies are committed like candle-light performances in an Opera House. The reply to all this, which has so far been vouchsafed, is that the people are cowards and are unable to help themselves. But whose fault is it if the people are cowards and unable to help themselves? Is it of the people who have been made cowards and helpless, or of those who have made them so? It is quite refreshing to hear of people seriously advised to arm themselves with brickbats and bamboo *lathies* to face an armed band of robbers and assassins equipped with Martini rifles and Mauser revolvers. Example is said to be better than precept, and those who indulge in ludicrous advice of this sort would do infinitely better to set an example themselves before they can persuade others to follow them. Even Hercules did not venture to challenge the Larnian Hydra without his club. The Arms Act has been practically reduced to a dead letter, for the lawless few are never in want of any firearms, but it is the law-abiding many that have been deprived of the use of them. A great empire and a little mind are said to go ill together. And where the spirit of confidence is wanting in an administration its means and measures must be weak and self-contradictory and thus ultimately defeating its own end.

And now, where other repressive measures have failed to restore peace and order in the country, a deadlier instrument has been put into **The Defence of India Act and Internments.** A desperate situation no doubt calls for a drastic remedy and no one has a right to complain if Government is obliged to take an extreme precautionary measure in view of a conflagration which is now devastating all the five continents of the world. The Defence of India Act like the Defence of the Realm Act in England was no doubt necessitated by the exigencies of the situation, but the purposes to which it is being used appear to be entirely foreign to the spirit and outside the scope of this extraordinary enactment, while the safeguards provided in the home-measure have been wholly dispensed with in its operation in this country. Again when the Act was passed an assurance was not wanting that it would be administered with great care and consideration. It was undoubtedly an emergency Act necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances which suspended the ordinary course of law and vested the administration of justice in certain cases entirely in the executive Government of the country.

Gentlemen, the sting of every repressive measure, is in its tail. There is a small clause in these enactments which passes without any debate in the legislative council authorising the executive Government to frame rules to give effect to the operation of such a measure. These rules, hatched in secret beyond the ken of the established legislature and beyond the scope of public criticism, suddenly emanate full panoplied like Minerva.

springing out of Jupiter's head. These rules sometimes thrice the size and volume of the Act itself, govern the proceedings. In the case of the Defence of India Act, Section 2 provides this brief little authority which is now deciding the fate not only of so many young men but also of some of the public men in the country without a trial and without a hearing. The Act provides the slender safeguards of a special tribunal final in its decision, but the rules have taken away even this safeguard in cases of internments and interdictions provided by clause (f) of section 2 of the enactment. A man may invoke the aid of the tribunal if he violates the rules but not when the rules are enforced against him. It may be no injustice done to characterise it as "Jedburgh Justice." The Defence of India Act is essentially a war-measure and although the expression "Safety of India" is introduced in its preamble it clearly indicates such safety as may be jeopardised only by the war-conditions with the enemy. It never could have been intended to cover public peace and tranquility in the internal administration of the country for which ample provisions already exist in the adjective law of the land. Is there any evidence that the assassinations, dastardly as they are, which are perpetrated mostly against Indian police officers, and some of which took place even before the Serajevo-outrage, have any connection with German intrigue, or is there anything to show that the property plundered in course of armed brigandage find their way or are even intended to find their way to the German Exchequer? The assassination of Earl Mayo and Chief Justice Norman and even the more recent murders of Rand and Ayerst and of Judge Jackson did not necessitate such a measure. It is clear therefore, that the Defence of India Act was never intended for internal administration at home, but only to govern external relations with the enemy countries abroad. But how sad it is to contemplate that it has been so widely diverted from its legitimate scope, and how are its provisions being applied in India! A secret murder perpetrated and burglary committed, and, in fact, every piece of a diabolical crime, whether committed before or after the outbreak of hostilities, where the criminals cannot be detected and punished under the ordinary law of the land, are made the occasion for the use of this lawless law. Where an accused person is tried and acquitted by a court of justice he is good for a capture under the provisions of this Act. In one province alone nearly 600 young men have up to this time been arrested, a considerable number of whom have already been domiciled in different parts of the country, while others are passing through their purgatory in the gloomy cells of Dallanda House preparatory to the receipt of their judgment. These proceedings are generally believed to be based upon the informations supplied by the spies whose occupation would be gone if their activities could not be maintained. We are told that the final judgment in these cases is vested in an officer who is "fit to be a High Court Judge". Yes, but the misfortune is that after all he *is not* a High Court Judge and that makes a world-wide difference. He does not breathe the atmosphere of a High Court, he is not swayed by the considerations of a High Court and he has not the means and materials of a High Court Judge, and it is no consolation to the people to learn that he is fit to be a High Court Judge.

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Then it would be something if this would-be High Court Judge were allowed to dispose of these cases in the presence of the accused persons sitting even *in camera*. Even Rogers Casement charged with the blackest of crimes—the charge of high treason and conspiracy with the enemy of the King—had an open trial and a right of appeal. Are the detainees under the Defence of India Act guilty of more heinous crimes and misdemeanour? Even the certificate of a District Officer or of a Divisional Commissioner affords no protection against the report of spies. Anarchism is the common enemy of mankind throughout the world. In every country and every age civilised humanity has refused to recognise the brotherhood of the secret murderer and the dastardly assassin, and none but an anarchist need defend or support an anarchist. But a general crusade against a community in the name of anarchism is justified neither by reason, nor logic, nor considerations of expediency. The rats are a recognised nuisance and for aught we know they may be also responsible for the plague and the pestilence. But if the rats are so sly as to elude our grasp and so subtle as not to come into the cage laid for them, no man in his senses and even under the greatest provocation should so far forget himself as to be induced to set fire to the house to get rid of these pests.

An almost insurmountable colour bar has been drawn up that runs through almost every department of the state which the children of the soil are forbidden to cross. The entire administration is divided into two compartments, one Imperial and the other Provincial. The boxes are all reserved and it is only the pit which is open to the people. In the Civil Service, in the Educational Service and in the Medical Service everywhere there is a sharp racial distinction irrespective of qualification and competency, which is as arbitrary as it is galling to the feelings and sentiments of the people. Competition, the most effective test of merit, has been superseded by nomination, and offices are largely distributed as mere patronage. The services are visibly deteriorating and strange as it may sound a Government which finds in the caste system of the people such a serious obstacle to their national advancement is sedulously building up an official caste almost as rigid and as exclusive as the Brahmanical hierarchy ever was. The officials have generally lost all touch with the people and there is now no greater passport to public employment than a hereditary claim which grows by what it feeds on. Fusion is the first principle of national growth, but disintegration is the policy of a bureaucracy to counteract that growth.

IMMIGRATION.

Gentlemen, it is with a sense of pain, shame and humiliation that I approach the question of immigration and indentured labour. India, the granary of the world, is unable to maintain her surplus population and thousands of her children, like her raw materials, are sent away to other countries for employment for the bare necessities of life. The immigrants, so absolutely necessary for the development of the resources of South Africa, Australia and Canada, are treated there as helots and India is

regarded to-day throughout the civilised world as the recruiting ground for *coolies* necessary for manual labour. I do not hesitate to denounce this degrading system as the last relic of slavery within the British Empire. The question is said to be not free from difficulties, but all these difficulties are due more in the relation of Great Britain in regard to her self-governing colonies than to the condition of India herself. Mr. Gandhi's heroic struggles in South Africa are fresh in the minds of our people and Lord Hardinge's effort to ameliorate the condition of the Indian settlers in the British Colonies evoked more sharp criticism than active sympathy in the United Kingdom. It is galling that peoples of yesterday who have scarcely a tradition of their own should be permitted to treat as slaves people whose civilisation goes back to the morning of this world. Lord Gladstone in opening the Parliament of the South African Union only a few years ago reminded them of this fact and bore striking testimony to the worth of the Indian people. He said,—“I have made special study of the Indian history and have later visited India. I wish more South Africans could go there and by so doing rise to the highest appreciation of what the Indians were. They would then think less of India as a country which sends its coolies to the South African Coast. In fact India has developed perhaps far above the line attained by some parts of the British Empire in its civilisation and efforts to rise to a higher life.” But what avails such testimony? Slaves at home can never be treated as free men abroad. I use the word in the sense in which Mill has used it. “They are slaves,” says Mill “who cannot help themselves.” Complete Reciprocity and Retaliation are the only remedies for this degrading humiliation inflicted upon our people, and Home Rule alone can furnish the necessary prescription. So long as the Canadian, the South African and the Australian are free to settle in India and also to find their way to the public services of the country, no tinkering measure, no controlling wages will solve the question.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Gentlemen, if the ill-fated Swadeshi Movement had been directed in its proper channel and not checked as an unhealthy growth, the question of the industrial development of India, which has now attracted the anxious attention of Government, might have admitted of a much easier solution. The war has disclosed that in 1905 the Indian Nationalists declared hostilities not against Great Britain, but against Germany and Austria, and that if the Authorities in India had taken a more dispassionate and far-sighted view of the situation, German and Austrian trade in India would have died ten years ago and without a naval blockade. The fault, however, did not lie wholly with the Government, but the people had also to bear a share of the responsibility. However that may be, the question of rebuilding Indian industries out of their ashes is not free from serious difficulties, and unless Government is prepared honestly and resolutely to come forward to make atonement for its past sins of commission and omission, it may never be solved. Much is said about the phenomenal progress of Japan and Sir Thomas Holland has recently thrown a flood of light upon her industrial development. But what is the secret of her success? Amidst all the

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disquisitions and speculations which have gathered round the question there looms large one fact which can neither be overlooked nor disputed. Japan possesses a National Government which India does not. In Japan there is no clashing of interest between the people and the State, but in India although the interests of the Government may not collide with those of the people, its industrial policy is to a large extent controlled by considerations independent of the interest of India. Gentlemen, I pause here for a moment to thank the Government of the United Provinces which is the only administration that has as yet taken any practical interest in the development of some of our industries.

If however, for any reason the Government finds itself handicapped in the way of building up new industries on its own account, as in Japan, it can at any rate do much to help and encourage such industries. It can add a port-folio of industries to the member in charge of Commerce and carry on an investigation through experts as to which industry is best suited to what part of the country, regard being had to the production of raw materials, facilities of communication and labour. Then as Indian capital starts any business on a sound and substantial basis, the Government may come forward to purchase a portion of its shares in order to secure both an effective control over it and an abiding interest in its success. And, above all, it may guarantee to such a concern a certain rate of profit or dividend for a period sufficient to enable it to stand on its own legs, while it may render no inconsiderable help by becoming its customer for its own purposes. It may also remove all unjustifiable excise duties and grant railway concessions. If the Government will do all this, it will discharge its function as a benevolent state and remove the shyness of Indian Capital in an unequal competition with its formidable foreign rivals. If this cannot be done the Government will be well advised not to waste its money over academic conferences and commissions to serve no other purpose than that of raising false hopes and aggravating public discontent.

In this connection I would make a passing reference to an important question in regard to which the opinions of public bodies and associations are being sought, but which, as far as I can see, has not excited much public interest ;—I mean the proposal to transfer the railways to private Companies. It is a great economic question and ought not to be as lightly treated as it appears to have been done in certain unexpected quarters. The Railways are one of the most important state concerns whose earnings constitute by no means an inconsiderable portion of the State revenues. The great highways of trade and commerce are public domain and belong to the State. To transfer them to any private individual or individuals or to allow them to manage them may be an act amounting to a serious infringement of public rights and an abdication of a State function. We are looking forward to a time when the Government will become national if not in its *personnel* at least in its aims and purposes and the railways owned by the State and controlled by the state will then be conducted upon national lines and will be the hand-maid of the national industries by offering facilities for their growth and development. The time has come for the definite acceptance of this policy.

A NATIONAL MILITIA.

Gentlemen, no people can be either self-respecting or respected by others unless they are able to defend themselves. A people always dependent upon Government for the safety of their life and property must be an intolerable burden on the state and a source of weakness to it. A vast empire like British India, without a National army, protected by a nominal force of 70 thousand European soldiers and 140 thousand Indian troops may be a wonderful feat; but it is a most dangerous experiment. If the Indians were trained but as volunteers only five years ago, although the Congress has been demanding the privilege for the last twenty-five years, the humiliating spectacle of Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George and Lord Derby alternately coaxing and threatening the British people for raising an army of two millions might easily have been avoided, and at all events a general conscription, so distasteful to British tradition, might not have to-day become such an imperative necessity. India, with her teeming millions properly trained and equipped, standing behind England can present an invincible front against any power in the world. The question is not one of men and materials, but of trust and confidence. But has not India given sufficient proof of her fidelity and devotion to the British connection? If not, England must stand self-condemned before the eyes of the civilised world.

Such is the situation. Bureaucracy has accomplished its work. It has established order and tranquility. But it has outgrown itself. Its continued existence is fraught with mischief and unable to cope with the rising forces of popular opinion and with the demands created with the new spirit, it has had recourse to a policy which has excited grave public discontent. What then is to be the remedy? That remedy is what has been so effectively applied in other countries similarly circumstanced; and the remedy which suggests itself to the Indian mind, as it occurred to John Stuart Mill and to Edmund Burke, lies in the grant of

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

Call it Home Rule, call it Self-Rule, call it *Swaraj*, call it Self-Government, it is all one and the same thing—it is Representative Government. The idea is not a new one, nor is it the revelation of any evangelist. As far as I am aware, the idea dawned upon the people in 1882 when the agitation on the Ilbert Bill first revealed to the people the helplessness of their situation. A *National League* was then formed and a burning pamphlet called the *Star in the East* was issued which was written in a style and language which if employed at the present day would have surely stranded the writer in serious difficulties. Lord Ripon fully anticipated the demand when in his famous Resolution of January 1882 he told the people that "local self-government must precede national self-government". Although the first Indian National Congress passed no resolution directly bearing on the question, the notification under which it was called into existence clearly stated that one of the objects of the future assembly was "indirectly to form the germ of an Indian Parliament which, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the

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assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institution". And Mrs. Annie Besant in her admirable book, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, has pointedly referred to the utterance of the Grand Old Man of India which clearly foreshadowed the coming demand of the Indian people for self-government. Ever since then the idea worked and matured itself when in the brilliant session of the Congress in 1906, it found an emphatic and unequivocal pronouncement from the very same patriarch of the Indian political world in his trumpet call for *Swaraj* which has since then stirred the Indian mind to its utmost depth to find the true remedy which it had so far sought in vain. A generation has passed away, but a generation has risen whose sole and wholehearted demand is nothing short of self-government as the sovereign remedy for the present unsatisfactory situation. A cry has however, been raised that we are not yet fit for self-government. Procrastination is the proverbial thief of time. It is also the orthodox plea of a frame of mind which, unable to cope with an untenable position, only asks for an adjournment to seek for a compromise on the most favourable terms.

But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must first divest ourselves of the dogmatism which prevails with equal force, though not with equal authority, on both sides, and try to understand the question in the light of the unanswerable logic of facts. Let us see what are the requisites of self-government and how far the Indian people possess these requisites to reasonably demand self-government.

John Stuart Mill in his book on Representative Government lays down three conditions for self-government which are now universally accepted by all writers on political philosophy. These conditions are :—1st, that the people for whom the form of government is intended should be willing to accept it ; 2nd, that they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing ; and 3rd, that they must be willing and able to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purposes. To these three tests I will add a fourth, by way of a rider, directly to meet the argument of our critics,—have the people given satisfactory evidence of their capacity for Self-Government ?

It will be noticed that Mill nowhere lays down Education as a separate and independent test for Self-Government and this is for a very good reason. Education no doubt sharpens and stimulates the other tests ; but it cannot be the sole or even the main test for a National Government. The Hindus in the 13th century and the Mussalmans of India in the 18th century were the masters of no inconsiderable share of unprofitable learning ; but it neither developed their national solidarity, nor strengthened their national character, and both in their turn fell an easy prey to a superior force. The Mahomedan historian admits that India was conquered not by superior education, but by superior Islamic national solidarity and strength. On the other hand the Slave Republic of Liberia was established by an uneducated mass of emigrants from America upon their liberation towards the beginning of the 19th Century. Then take the case of Europe. There also education has not played a very important

part in determining the form of government suited to each country. According to the latest statistics available Norway and Sweden carry the largest percentage of educated population, it being 97, England has a percentage of 87, France 78, Germany 91 and Portugal 56. If education had been the determining factor, Norway and Sweden would not have been practically an absolute Monarchy and France or Portugal a Republic, while Germany would have long ceased to be a military despotism where a subaltern can with impunity punish judges and magistrates for the grave offence of not being deferential to his uniform and the theory of the *Superman* sways the minds of 80 millions of human beings of the highest culture and erudition in the world. What was the education of England during the reign of Charles I, and was not the Magna Charta wrested from a despotic king by a band of uneducated barons who could sign their names only by scrolls and marks ?

In 1821 there were nearly 18,500 schools with 650,000 scholars in Great Britain. In the year 1858 the number of schools rose to 122,000 and the scholars to over 3,000,000. We have it on the authority of the Education Commission of 1882 that prior to 1854 when the first Educational Despatch of Sir Charles Wood was issued there were merely a million of students in British India receiving elementary education in the various indigenous institutions. The statement of the member of Education in 1914 shows that there are at present 127,000 schools with over 5,000,000 scholars receiving such education. It would thus appear that the number and the percentage of literates in Great Britain in the reign of George IV were not higher than those of India in the reign of His Gracious Majesty George V, and that the number, though not the percentage, of literates in India in 1914 does not compare very unfavourably with that of Great Britain in 1858. And yet what *was* the constitution of Great Britain in 1821 and what *is* the constitution of British India in 1916 ! Education therefore, though it may help and promote Self-Government, is not an indispensable condition or a condition precedent to Self-Government.

The first condition needs not much elaboration, as the willingness of the people for self-government is not only admitted, but is said to be premature and somewhat extravagant. The press and the plat-

First condition. form even in their present muzzled condition are ringing with the cry for self-government and on every occasion whether in the heated Council Chambers or in the serene atmosphere of literary discussions there is an insistent demand for self-government as the only remedy for the present situation.

The second and the third conditions may be considered together. India, self-contained and contented, with its natural defences and internal resources presents a bulwark against all foreign aggression. Its danger is not from without but from within. During the last sixty years since the Crown has assumed the reins of government it must be admitted that there has not been even the ripple of a disturbance and the people, educated or uneducated, despite all their vexations and disappointments, their hardships, their grie-

Second and Third conditions.

vances and the irritating measures which have so often provoked their patience, have throughout stood fast by the Crown. They have protested, but have nowhere resisted the measures of the Government. Since the outbreak of the war, India has been practically denuded of soldiers and it has been possible for Government to maintain peace and order throughout the vast country with only the help of the police as it exists in India. Those who recklessly cry "the wolf" ought to know that if the wolf had really been anywhere in the field, it would not have been possible long to indulge in this foolish trick. It ought to be fairly conceded that the credit of this remarkable achievement is evenly divided between the Government and the people,—the confidence of the people in the Government and the trust of the Government in the people; and that any attempt on the part of either to appropriate it to itself the whole credit is an absurd pretension. The spirit of co-operation and self-help infused into the minds of our people mainly by the inspiring breath of the Congress, and the numberless societies, missions and associations which have sprung up throughout the country with philanthropic and other aims and objects, are sufficiently indicative of the quickening of a national life, and the courage and endurance displayed by our young men in every public cause, are all unmistakable evidence of the readiness of the people to support the administration. In flood and famine, in fires and fams and in other positions of dangers, difficulties and distress there are thousands of youngmen who eagerly rush forward to help the administration without waiting for recognition or expecting any reward and despite police surveillance to which they are subjected. The Hospital Ships furnished by Bombay and Madras, the Ambulance Corps and the Double Company provided by Bengal and the various war funds raised throughout the country are no mean evidence of the willingness and readiness of the people to co-operate with the administration. All these, in my opinion, afford striking evidence of the devotion and the capacity for self-sacrifice which our countrymen are prepared to incur in the public interests and which constitute the most valuable qualification for self-rule. This shows that our people are willing and able to make the Government stand and are ready to make the necessary sacrifices for the establishment of National Government. Lapses no doubt there are, but do they not occur even among people invested with full measure of self-government? A National Government would shift the burden as well as its odium and unpopularity from the state to the people and would necessarily make them still more alive to their responsibilities. It is power which creates responsibility. Responsibility without power is a debt without security which cannot be enforced if left undischarged.

It was George Yule who, twenty years ago, speaking at the first Congress held in the United Provinces, said that all political agitations have to pass through three stages—that of Ridicule, Opposition and Concession. We have long passed the stage of Ridicule and almost passed the second stage and we are now practically on the debatable ground between Opposition and Concession standing more on the firm soil of the latter than on the slippery ground of the former.

There are however those who say "not yet". Not yet! Then

'when' ?—asks the Indian Nationalist. But here the Oracle is dumb and Echo only answers—'when' ! Edwin Bevan's parable of "the Patient and the Steelframe" is cited and the people are strictly enjoined to lie in peace and possess their souls in patience until their political *Nirvana* is accomplished. Similies and metaphors are not safe guides in practical life, for all fables are but fallacies clothed in equivocal language which captivates the imagination and deludes the reason. For even the patient in the "steel frame" requires a gradual relaxation and occasional readjustment of his splints and bandages and, above all, a steady, substantial improvement in his dietary arrangements, as after all it is the food and nourishment and not the splints and bandages, that are calculated to give him strength and cure him of his injuries. You cannot indefinitely keep him on milk and sago to help either the "knitting of the bones" or the "granulation of the flesh". Our critics however would enjoin "perfect quiet and repose" without prescribing any kind of diet until the people shall have in their spirit of quiescence fully recovered themselves in their steel frame. If any illustration were actually needed, one might fairly suggest that the case of either the swimmer or the rider would probably furnish a more apposite object lesson. You cannot expect the one to be an expert jockey without training him on the back of a horse, as you cannot expect the other to be an expert swimmer without allowing him to go into water. There must be repeated falls and duckings before any efficiency can be attained by either. Admitting for argument's sake—and there can be no prejudice in such an admission—that the Indians are not yet as fit for self-government as the Europeans are, does it follow that they must only patiently contemplate in their steel frame without a stir till the day of their release ? If that be so the day of their redemption will, in all probability, maintain its ever receding distance and the vision of the patient never realised. There is a school for the lawyer, the physician, the educationist and the engineer where he can obtain his passport and begin his profession ; but is there any school or college where an aspirant can be admitted to his degree for Self-Government ? It is through Self-Government that the art of Self-Government can be either taught or acquired. One must be drilled in the art of administration before he can acquire the steady use of his faculties in the work of practical administration. In the words of Mr. Gladstone, it is the institution of Self-Government which constitutes the best training ground for Self-Government. It is through failure that success can be achieved in practical politics. Such failure was fully anticipated by Lord Ripon in his famous Resolution of 1882, and it is through such failures that the British people have obtained the constitution of which they are so justly proud. In the reigns of James I, Charles I and his successors, what was the British constitution and the status of the British people when Parliament could be summoned or dismissed at the pleasure of a despotic sovereign and titles and offices were freely bought and sold without any regard to public interest ? The mass of the people were steeped in ignorance, while the highest officers in the State were not sometimes free from intrigue and corruption. Yet the British people fought for their rights.

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and liberties and obtained them in the midst of these unfavourable conditions. If they had ever allowed themselves to be kept in a steel frame until "nature resumed her active process," where would have been the splendid fabric of British constitutional freedom to-day? Nature never helps those who do not help themselves.

Now let us turn to a discussion of the rider which was started at the beginning of this question. Gentlemen, our critics have already begun

Are Indians fit for Self-Government? sorting our politicians. I do not pretend to be a politician; but even if I were one, I would far rather go with the "politicians of the baser sort" than agree to rise one degree higher, or one degree lower as you may choose to call it, in the estimation of our critics, while as to the superlative degree I would ungrudgingly have it reserved for those who have so far forgotten the traditions of their own race as to completely divest themselves of the instincts of a free and liberty-loving people to which they ethnologically belong. The question to be answered is,—Have the Indian people given fair proof of their capacity for self-government? I do not like to indulge in theories: Let facts answer.

India possesses an area of 1,800,000 square miles with a population of 316 millions, of which over 700,000 square miles, or more than one-third of this area, with a population of over 70 millions, or close upon one-fourth, belong to the independent Native States. Now these States are entirely managed by Indian administrators, and it has to be admitted that some of them are marching ahead of British India in certain directions, particularly in respect of education, judicial reforms and industrial development which are the most sacred functions of a constitutional government. It must be borne in mind that not a few of these distinguished administrators who have achieved such brilliant results in the administration of these states are sometimes drawn from His Majesty's subjects in British India. Men like Sir Salar Jung, Sir Dinkar Rao, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Rao Bahadur Sirdar Sansar Chandra Sen, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, Sir Sashiah Shastri, Mr. Ranga Charlu, Mr. Gouri Shankar Ojha, Mr. Seshadri Aiyer, Mr. B. L. Gupta, Mr. Nilambar Mukherjee and Mr. A. R. Banejee who have governed various Native States with such consummate ability and conspicuous success, have indisputably vindicated the capacity of their countrymen for the highest administrative offices. They have shown that if commanded by their Sovereign they were fit to hold any port-folio in the Government of India. If these distinguished administrators had their lot cast solely in British India many of them would have in all probability ended their careers as deputy-magistrates, a few as district officers and fewer still as officiating commissioners of divisions.

Then, have not Indians in British India given practical proof of their administrative capacity to qualify themselves for Self-Government? Have they not in the charge of districts both as judicial and executive officers, and have they not in charge of divisions or of a board of revenue, or in the intricate department of

audit and account given sufficient evidence of their ability and capacity for efficient administration? Have they not been tried in the humbler stages of local self-government as well as in the higher legislative assemblies? They have been tried in the inner circles of the Provincial as well as the Imperial administration and they have been also tried at the real seat of authority in Whitehall. True, Sir S. P. Sinha might never have aspired to the chair occupied by Maine and Macaulay; but has England sent any more Maines and Macaulays to fill that chair? Or was Sir S. P. Sinha or Sir Syed Ali Imam an altogether unworthy successor of Sir James Stephen or Sir C. P. Ilbert? In the great department of administration of justice they have been tried in the highest tribunals of the land where they have acted and are acting as Chief Justices with as much credit and distinction as any brought out from England, while in the domain of Education they have as Vice-Chancellors managed important universities in a way which has extorted the admiration, if not the envy, of the most captious critics. They have also managed with remarkable success the affairs of one of the foremost, if not the foremost, corporations in the country. All these they have done, and if they have not done more, it is their misfortune and not their fault.

Self-control, strength of mind and fidelity are among the highest virtues of an administrator, and judged by these tests, have not Indians

Other qualifications. acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of the best traditions of any service in the world? Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha's resignation of his seat in the Executive Council is still a mystery to the public. But whatever may be its solution, it is an open secret that at a critical time he withdrew the resignation that he had tendered and stood loyally by the Government. Has any body ever heard the faintest whisper of this incident from the lips of Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha? Then take another case. The Partition of Bengal had stirred the people of Bengal to a state of feverish excitement unprecedented in their history. Petitions and protests to Viceroys and Ministers were of no avail and after seven years of persistent agitation the people were awaiting in breathless suspense the decision of His Majesty. A despatch from the Governor-General in Council recommended a modification of the partition in August 1911 and Sir Syed Ali Imam was one of the signatories to this eventful document. Yet on the 12th December the Royal Proclamation came as a complete surprise both upon the local Governments as well as upon the people. The Partition was said to have been effected in the interest of the Mahomedans. But did Sir Syed Ali Imam either in his quivering lips or tell-tale eyes betray in the slightest degree the dead secret of the prison house within this anxious period of five months?

THE OBJECTIONS.

The most orthodox argument, in fact the only argument, now advanced against this natural and legitimate demand is, that the mass are silent and have not joined in the cry. This is an ingenuous

An inarticulate mass and the educated community a bug-bear.

argument; for an inarticulate mass will never speak and the reforms will not come. But have the mass at any time and in any country spoken out before any reform has been

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granted? The hydra-headed mass speak only in times of rebellion or revolution and even then under the inspiration of their leaders who rise out of the educated minority, but their voice is not heard amid a process of silent evolution in the benefits of which they are bound to participate. Did the mass in England cry for the *Magna Charta* or the Petition of Rights or the Reform Bill? The educated few have everywhere represented the ignorant many and history tells us that they have always been their unaccredited spokesmen. And then whose fault is it that the masses in India are dumb and illiterate? The Congress has cried and Congressmen have tried their utmost for the spread of elementary education and they have been told that the time has not yet arrived for universal compulsory education for the masses. We do not know if the Astrological Almanac is being consulted for an auspicious day for such an undertaking. It all looks like the trite old, yet never hackneyed, game of "head I win, tail you lose."

Then as a corollary to the above a further argument is advanced that there are so many communities and sub-divisions in this caste-ridden country that if Self-Government were conceded King Stork Solicitude for the poor, caste system. would one by one swallow up all the frogs and a Babel of disorder would follow in which men would run at one another's throats and render settled government impossible. Such keen solicitude for the poor and the weak is no doubt highly creditable to an enlightened administration; but in a country where more than two-fifths of the population live on insufficient food; where in 42 years there were 22 famines carrying away millions of human beings; a country which is admittedly the poorest and yet the most heavily taxed as well as burdened with the costliest of administrations; where the average earnings of the free citizen are almost half of what the prisoner in the jail gets for his food and raiment; where floods devastate and Malaria decimates without any remedy or redress, while piles of reports and recommendations of Commissions and Committees cover the archives of the Secretariats; where the poor have often to drink muddy liquids to appease their thirst; and where five out of every six children even in moderately decent families of the poor are allowed to grow up in ignorance—I say in a country like that men may not be wanting who might consider such paternal solicitude as too much of a protestation. I do not at all suggest that the Government of the country is solely or even primarily responsible for everyone of these untoward circumstances; but what I do maintain is that the apprehensions of the Government and its organs are ill-founded and unjustified. No doubt there is the baneful caste system, but there is also the counter-balancing distribution of labour and profession. The caste imposes only social restrictions and no political disabilities. Caste system in one shape or other and to some extent obtains in almost every society, but has nowhere stood as an insurmountable bar in the way of its political or economic development. Then is there no redeeming feature of the Indian social system with all its defects? Is there any country where every home is an asylum for the poor, and where the poor and the destitute are fed and clothed by their richer countrymen so generously? Is there any other people among whom the prevailing religions enjoin public charity without distinction of caste, colour or creed to such an extent that it has led

the advocates of modern civilisation to characterise it as encouraging "professional mendicancy"? Government no doubt honestly tries to mitigate the sufferings of the poor in the hour of their distress; but is any notice taken of the millions who are silently succoured by the well-to-do Hindus and Mahomedans out of their own pocket in accordance with the injunctions of their religions? Then, has not the Congress cried for 30 years for the amelioration of the condition of the masses as persistently as for political rights and privileges? If such be the case, where is the ground and where the evidence for the apprehension so keenly felt and so persistently echoed and re-echoed? The Labour Party in the British Parliament is only of yesterday's growth and were Parliamentary institutions deferred till the grant of a nominal representation of its vast working population? And was it Cobden or Kier Hardie that organised the Anti-corn Law League or improved the wages of the labouring classes of Great Britain? And Cobden did not belong to any labouring class. And then are not caste prejudices fast dying out under the inexorable pressure of our environments and are not men of talents rising out of the ranks of the so-called depressed classes who are receiving the ungrudging homage of the Brahmans and other superior castes? Lastly, would not there always be the paramount authority of the Government to correct abuses and remedy injustice wherever committed? Blood is always thicker than water and people are not therefore wanting amongst us who honestly regard the question of the strong and the weak only as a plausible pretext and not as a serious argument.

Another difficulty put forward is the eternal question of the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans of India. But the game has been nearly played out, and the Hindus and the Mahomedans **Hindu-Moslem question.** have practically solved the question. It is more than five years ago that some of us dreamt a dream which appears now not to have been all a dream. The Congress and the League have come to meet at the same place and the day may not be far distant when inspite of the Siren-song which has so far diverted their course they will come to meet in the same pavilion and at the same time. The Hindus and Mahomedans are rapidly converging towards each other and indeed it would be a miracle if they did not so converge and if they continued to fly off at a tangent despite the irresistible attraction of the great centripetal force which is drawing them towards their common centre. The stock argument based upon occasional differences and disturbances between Hindus and Mussalmans cannot have much force. These are confined mostly to lower classes of people on either side. It is neither fair nor judicious to exaggerate their importance. There are Hindus and Mahomedans side by side in every Native State. In the Mahomedan State of Hyderabad with a Hindu population of nearly 70 per cent and the Hindu State of Kashmeré with 60 per cent Mahomedan subjects we do not hear of any cow-killing riots or Mohurrum disturbances or of any ill-feeling between the two communities. And one wonders why a different state of things should prevail in British territories. A nationality is now no longer either a religious or a social federation, but a political unit. Diverse races professing different forms of religion and following distinct varieties of manners, customs and traditions easily submit to a common political

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faith to work out their common destiny. The Picts and the Scots, the Saxons and the Normans, the Protestants and the Catholics are now all welded into the great British nation. The Teutons and the Slavs, the Prussians and the Poles have formed one of the mightiest empires which has lit up a world-wide conflagration ; while in that curious Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary the Magyars, the Hungarians, Czecks, the Poles, the Slavs, the Serbs, the Croates and the Rumanians have formed themselves into a national federation of no ordinary solidarity and strength. The Hindus and Mussalmans are both of common Aryan stock, while Hindu anthropology traces them to a common descent within the legendary period of their ancient history. Neither the Parsis nor the Mahomedans of India owe any temporal allegiance either to the Shah of Persia or the Sultan of Turkey. They are now Indians as much as the Hindus. But why indulge in speculations against a settled fact ? I think I break no secret when I announce to you that the Hindu-Moslem question has been settled and the Hindus and Mussalmans have agreed to make a united demand for Self-Government. The All-India Congress Committee and the representatives of the Moslem League who recently met in conference at Calcutta have after two days' deliberations in one voice resolved to make a joint demand for a Representative Government in India. There are little differences on one or two minor points of detail, but they count for nothing. The vital issue has been solved and the main point has been gained. The report of the Conference will shortly be placed before you and I need not enter into details. We have many historic days, but I believe the 17th November will rank among the brightest and the most notable of them all. I would now appeal to both the communities to sink all their minor domestic differences and present a solid united front for the realisation of their common destiny within the Empire. Only the seeds having been sown, the seedlings have just sprouted and for God's sake let us not quarrel over the division of the crop which still demands our combined labour and attention before the harvest comes. What are special electorates and communal representations when there is really no electorate and no representation among a people ? What matters it if Dinshaw Edulji Wacha or Surendra Nath Banerjee or Muzurul Huque were to represent us in our National Assembly ? They are three in one and one in three. Remember what the great *Yudhishthira* said addressing the *Kauravas* and the *Pandavas* :—

“वयं पञ्च वयं पञ्च धार्तराष्ट्राः शतं तथा ।
परेषु प्रतिपन्नेषु पञ्चोत्तरशतं वयम् ॥”

Making a different application of this noble saying of the wise and saintly *Yudhishthira* we may say that we may be five brothers on one side and a hundred brothers on the other, but in a common cause we are a hundred and five brothers undivided and indivisible.

Gentlemen, an ounce of fact is said to be worth a ton of theories and while we here are quarrelling over the first principles of the problem, the Americans have quietly and speedily solved it in the Philippines.

THE PHILIPPINES.

The Philippine islands from their discovery by Lopez de Villalobos in the reign of Philip of Spain were under a form of despotic government compared to which the despotism of John Company was an unmixed blessing. The archipelago is inhabited by a congeries of people speaking different languages and observing different forms of religion of the most primitive type. The Negritoes, the Negroes, the Panayas, the Mindanos, a dark woolly people, Indonassians, the Malayans, the Chinese, the Spaniards and a number of non-descripts inhabit the islands. Of ancient civilisation and tradition these people have none, while as to their enlightenment and culture the world has heard nothing. The Americans conquered the islands in 1898 and the only claim of the people to the consideration of their liberators was that they had at first formed themselves into a band of insurgents under the leadership of an ambitious man named Aguinaldo who afterwards aspired to expel their benefactors. A provisional Government was however soon established by the Americans and peace restored in the country. Quite recently a proposal was brought forward in the House of Representatives of the United States for the granting of Home Rule to the Philippines and in the discussion which followed some maintained that it should be accomplished in two years, some in four years, while others held that there should be no time limit; but all agreed that the islanders must be given their freedom and the archipelago should not form a permanent appenage to the United States which since the Civil War had positively refused to go in for territorial aggrandisement even in the face of the splendid opportunities which the New World presented to them. The last resolution was carried; and the American Governor in addressing the Philipinos on the occasion of granting them a substantial majority in the Legislative Assemblies in 1913 said:—"We regard ourselves as trustees, acting not for the advantage of the United States, but for the benefit of the people of the Philippines. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the independence of the islands and as a preparation for that independence. The administration will take one step at once. It will give to the native citizens of the islands a majority in the Commission and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature..... We place within your reach the instruments of redemption. The door of opportunity stands open, and the event, under Providence is in your hands. The triumph is as great for us as it is for you". Noble words these and nobly have the Americans come forward to fulfil them. As a result of this announcement the following measures have been introduced.

The Central Government in the Philippines is composed of the Governor-General, who is the chief executive and president of the Philippine Commission, and eight Commissioners, three Americans and five Philipinos. The Philippine Commission constitutes the Upper House and the elective Philippine Assembly the Lower House of the Legislative body. The members of the Assembly hold office for four years, and the Legislature elects two Resident Commissioners to the United States, who hold office for the same term. These are members of the United States' House of Representatives with a

voice, but not a vote. The islands are divided into 36 provinces of which 31 are regular and the rest special. The Government of each of the regular provinces is vested in a provincial board composed of a Governor and two *vocals*. The Governor is the chief executive of the province and presiding officer of the board. He and the *vocals* of the board are all elected by popular vote. The Government of towns is practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the municipalities and serving for four years. The Jones' Bill of Independence introduced in the United States Legislature proposed to confer complete independence on the Philipinos not later than four years from the passing of the bill. In place of the present Philippine Commission, which is abolished, the Philipinos are to elect a Senate. The house is already elected by the people, and with the election of the Senate, the electorate is to be increased by about 600,000. As about 200,000 Philipinos vote now the new law will grant voting rights to about 800,000. The office of Governor-General is retained and there is to be a Vice-Governor, an American whose duties are to be fixed by the Governor-General. The functions of the Legislature are limited so as to provide that the coinage currency, and immigration laws shall not be made without the approval of the President of the United States. Finally, all Americans residing in the Islands who desire to vote must become citizens of the Islands. *The Republican* points out also that the preamble of the bill fixes no specific date for the granting of independence, but simply state that it has always been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognise their independence as soon as a suitable government can be established therein. Therefore, as justly pointed out by the *Indian Patriot* "enlarged powers of self-government are granted in order that by the use and exercise of popular franchise and governmental powers, they may the better be prepared fully to assume the responsibilities and enjoy all the privileges of complete independence."

Thus a complete autonomous federal government has already been established in the islands in which the Philipinos largely preponderate over the Americans and in which the actual administration has been substantially transferred to them. There is no bureaucracy in the Philippines, nor a Jingo press there. No, there is no ruler and ruled, no sedition and no internments. Self-Government has established a reign of peace and contentment. Every Philippino is now a free citizen unemasculated by the operation of any Arms Act and unfettered by any Press Law. Are the arm-chair critics who so lavishly indulge in abusing the Indian Nationalists for their "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" prepared to give any explanation of this phenomenal progress of the Philippines under the suzerainty of America? What is the difference between the Union Jack and the Star and the Stripes? Let Sir William Wedderburn, who was as distinguished a member of the Indian Civil Service as his views have always commanded respect for their sobriety, soundness and moderation, answer. Sir William commenting on the question of Self-Government as viewed on a reference to the Philippines pertinently asks,—“ Can anybody show valid cause why this good example (of America)

should not be followed by the British Government with regard to India? Are the Philipinos in any respect superior to the people of India? Or, is it that the British people are inferior to the Americans in love of principle and moral courage?" We pause for a reply as to which of the alternatives is correct. Sir William then adds,—“the problem in India is much simpler, for India does not ask for a termination of the British connection, but I can say with certainty that among our best friends in India there exists grave disquiet, produced by the silence of the Government regarding their future policy, accompanied by irritating retrogressive legislation in Parliament and fresh activity of police repression in India.” If the Philipinos have developed an instinct for Self-Government within 18 years no amount of reasoning or argument can satisfy the Indian mind that the Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsis and the Christians of India have not made even a near approach to it within 160 years; and if they are not yet fit for self-government, I despair of a time when they may be so.

There is yet another question which ought to be clearly understood in connection with our demand for Self-Government. Is it any appreciable **Amendment of Constitution.** increase in our share in the administration that we demand on the permanent basis of the present system of government? Or is it a thorough change in the constitution irrespective of all considerations of larger employment of the children of the soil in the public services? To be more explicit, let us put the question in its naked form. Supposing the Public Service Commission, whose report is still a sealed book to the people of this country, have recommended that no less than one-half or even two-thirds of the appointments in the different civil services should be filled up by Indians, but that the present bureaucracy must always continue to be in power, would such a recommendation, even if accepted by the Government, satisfy Indian aspirations? I know the answer will be in the negative. Such an arrangement will only serve to add a number of Indian bureaucrats without adding a bit to the powers and privileges of the people, and there would not be much to choose between the present bureaucracy and its proposed substitute. It is the system and not the *personnel* of the administration from which the people suffer. It is the rotten soil that breeds rank weeds. It is only a radical change in the form and constitution of the Government however slow or tentative in its character, but steady and continuous in its development, that can satisfy the growing spirit of the Indian people and remove their grievances. If the British Parliament were after the war to hold in one hand a very high percentage of the public employments and a small modicum of real Self-Government in the other and to ask India to choose between the two, I am sure, she would unhesitatingly grasp the one and let go the other.

Gentlemen, the new spirit to which I have already referred frankly refuses to believe in the liberalisation of a bureaucratic administration. The **Anarchy and Repression.** spirit is common both to the young and the old with this difference only that, while the old would proceed cautiously and steadily, the young are moved by the enthusiastic ardour natural to their age. If the Congress has so far persistently advanced the claims of the people to a larger share in the various public services, it

has done so more from an economic point of view than for the satisfaction of its demands for a national government. Irresponsible critics who denounce the new spirit ought to remember that it is not a sudden and abnormal growth in the Indian mind. It has appeared in Egypt, in Turkey, in Persia and in China and in fact in every country where autocratic rule has prevailed. All these countries have undergone the hammering process and everywhere hammering has served only to beat soft metals into hard ones. Anarchism and lawlessness have in all these countries followed in the wake of misrule.

The appearance of anarchism in the land has been a source of the deepest concern to the Government and the people alike. Both are interested in its eradication, alike for the ends of peaceful government and the progressive development of the country on constitutional lines. But we must know what the disease is before we can apply the remedy. Anarchism has its roots deep in economic and political conditions. One asks how is that free countries like England and France or America are free from this taint. There the blessings of freedom, of industrial progress and of peace and contentment which follow in their train reign over the land. Let those great blessings be ours and anarchism will disappear. It is of western origin. It is an excrescence which ought to disappear with healing measures calculated to defuse broadcast the blessings of political contentment and of material prosperity. By all means punish evil-doers and iniquitous breakers of the law who commit wanton assaults on the lives and properties of their fellow-countrymen. But repression is not the true remedy. Repression when unwisely enforced and against the sober sense and judgment of the community must aggravate the situation and strengthen those forces of discontent which are the breeding ground of anarchism. "The sovereign remedy for public distempers," says Burke, "is conciliation and not coercion, for though coercion may succeed for a time it always leaves room for coercing again." A sufficient trial has been given to the orthodox method of the bureaucracy and the Congress urges that the other method should now be tried.

THE ASSURANCES.

Gentlemen, we are roundly charged with revelling in "extravagant hopes" and indulging in "unrealisable demands." But we have long refused to profit by the very friendly and eminently practical suggestions of those whose only claim to be regarded as *Statesman* or *Englishman* consists in the proud names which they have like the "bogus medical degrees" assumed for themselves. We do not judge the great British nation by specimens of this kind who do no honour to the English name. If we had done that the Congress would have long ago wound up its business and gone into voluntary liquidation. The descendants of Howard and Wilberforce, of Burke and Bright, of Macaulay and Maine, and of Canning and Ripon are not yet extinct. It is a nation of giants who refuse to tolerate injustice and perpetuate servdom wherever they may exist, if only they are satisfied of their existence, and who possess a responsive heart to the call of freedom. It has been truly said that it is not Britain's

heart, but Britain's ear, that has been so long deaf to the wail that has been raised in this country. But the din of war has risen above all and the thrilling demonstrations of India's fidelity to the British connection have disabused many a robust mind in England of the hobgoblin stories to which they have been so lavishly treated in the past; and liberals and conservatives have, therefore, with equal emphasis come to recognise as rational what has been denounced as "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" of the Indian people. Let us recall to-day only a few of the many assurances that have been given to India by some of the responsible ministers and men who are now guiding the destinies of the Empire.

The *Times*, the leading organ of conservative opinion in England, has been struck with the unexpected demonstration in India and frankly admitted that the Indian problem must be henceforth looked at from a different point of view. "On our part," says the great journal, "when we have settled account with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample place in the councils of the Empire." Both Mr. Montagu and Mr. Roberts, as Under-Secretary for India, have from time to time expressed themselves in no uncertain voice as to the correct lines upon which the Indian administration requires to be revised and modified. Mr. Montagu's honest interpretation of Lord Hardinge's Despatch of August 1911 is well-known, while Mr. Roberts speaking from his place in the House of Commons has frankly acknowledged that with the intellectual classes in India this outburst of loyalty is a "reasoned sentiment based upon considerations of enlightened self-interest," and has at the same time asked the British public to alter "the angle of vision" in their perspective of the Indian problem. Following the *Times*, the *Review of Reviews* has, in one of its latest numbers, fairly admitted that "India to-day occupies a higher place in the Empire than ever before and has materially advanced her claims towards Self-Government, and it is inevitable that, after the war, her outstanding demands should receive the most sympathetic considerations." "We have," the *Review* adds, "made promises of Self-Government to Egypt, and it is inconceivable that we should deny the same privileges to India. At present India is not pressing her claim, but patiently awaits her just due, not as a reward, but as a right which her conduct has shown her worthy of possessing." Lord Haldane who till recently occupied a commanding position in the cabinet said:—"The Indian soldiers were fighting for the liberties of humanity, as much as we ourselves. India had given her lives and treasures in humanity's great cause, hence things could not be left as they were. We had been thrown together in the mighty struggle and had been made to realise our oneness, so producing relations between India and England which did not exist before. Our victory would be victory for the Empire as a whole and could not fail to raise it to a higher level". Then at a recent meeting held at Guildhall at the instance of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Asquith the premier and Mr. Bonar Law the erstwhile leader of the opposition and both now united in coalition ministry, have given a joint pledge for the readjustment of India's position in the councils of the Empire after the war is over. But, to quote the words of Mr. Bonar

Law, why the thing should not be done "while the metal was still glowing red-hot from the furnace of the war" and the promised rewards of India's comradeship and co-operation should be all relegated to the indefinite future and not one of them even shadowed forth in the present programme of the Imperial Government, seems to be inexplicable. Quite recently Lord Chelmsford is reported to have said that "the war by giving India an opportunity to show its practical importance to the Empire had stirred Indian aspirations for developments politically and economically. It would be his endeavour to secure a practical response to this new desire for progress". His Lordship is said to have added :—"My task is to guard India from cramping influences of undue conservatism equally with unpractical revolutionary tendencies."

Now, are these men of less authority, foresight and responsibility than the members of the Indian bureaucracy or its exponents in the Anglo-Indian Press who are ever so loud and positive in denouncing our claims? Or, are these assurances all a hoax intended to delude the Indian mind? We positively refuse to accept any such view which would be a gross calumny on the great British nation. We have much greater confidence in British statesmanship which may have blundered in many places but has failed nowhere. Gentlemen, we indulge in no gloomy anticipations; but we shudder to contemplate the serious effect which the non-fulfilment of these pledges is likely to produce in the minds of the Indian public. The Partition of Bengal which was after all a provincial question brought in its trail an outburst of discontent which like wild fire spread throughout the whole country and necessitated a full brigade of repressive measures to put it down, although its mouldering sparks are not yet fully extinct. And how wide-spread and far-reaching must be the unrest which is sure to follow a light-hearted treatment of these solemn pledges and assurances upon which the people have so firmly and so confidently built their future hopes of advancement? God forbid that such a calamity should befall India. As loyal subjects of His Majesty we of the Congress deem it our duty to tell all whom it may concern not to treat the Indian problem after the war as lightly as some irresponsible and mischievous critics are evidently disposed to do. Already a subdued note of the "scrap of paper" has been raised in certain quarters. The Charter Act of 1833, the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and the two gracious messages of King Edward VII and George V still remain unredeemed, and it would be no wise statesmanship to add to the burden of unredeemed pledges. England has been drawn into the vortex of a titanic struggle for the deliverance of Belgium and Servia. God grant, she may come out with her brave allies completely triumphant in her heroic efforts. She has however a much greater stake in India and India has a much greater claim to her consideration. Let us hope she will not fail to be at least as just as she is generous. After the war is over a complete readjustment of the Empire will have to be made; all its component parts will have to be co-ordinated and harmonised with one another and with the parent state. India alone cannot be left out of this programme. She must be admitted into common and equal partnership with the colonies on terms of equal

rights and obligations of the Empire, enjoying equal laws and equal rights of British citizenship throughout that Empire. The collar of a Dependency should be removed from her neck and the coronet of an autonomous, self-governing state placed upon her head. What a glorious federation it would then be, more glorious than that of the Roman Empire or of any that the world has yet seen. England would do well to remember in her own interest that she cannot maintain a condition of perpetual pupillage anywhere within her world-wide possessions without slowly and imperceptibly innoculating herself with its poison in her own home. Demoralisation in one part of a body however remote must inevitably result, if not remedied, in the ultimate deterioration of the whole system. Present experience has shown that for greater cohesion and solidarity of the Empire its component parts must be brought into closer touch and more intimate relations between one another and the mother country. India alone cannot be excluded from equal consideration in the coming readjustment, for if she were to be so excluded India's position is sure to be worse than even at present. If the colonies are allowed a representation in the federal council of the Empire they will undoubtedly have a voice in the administration of India and, for aught we know, their representatives may sometimes find a place in the cabinet and also become the Secretary of State for India. If India is denied such representation she will be further degraded as being subject also to the colonies. There is a serious danger in admitting the colonies to a participation in determining the policy that is to be followed in relation to India, for the colonial mind is saturated with the colour prejudice which would thus be reflected in the Government of India. Such a change in the "angle-vision" it would be dreadful to contemplate. If the equilibrium of the Empire is to be maintained India must also be thrown into the scale: She must be freely admitted into the partnership and given a free constitution like that of the self-governing dominions and a fair representation in the federal council along with the colonies.

OUR DEMANDS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now propose as a summary to the foregoing discussions to submit a few "daring and impertinent" proposals for the consideration of the Government both in England as well as in India. A memorandum presented by nineteen members of the Supreme Legislative Council has met with the criticisms of both sides. Some have regarded it as premature and falling short of our demands, while others have denounced it as extravagant. The circumstances which brought about the submission of this memorandum have already been explained to the public; while, as I read it, this memorandum represents neither the irreducible minimum nor the unenhancible maximum of our demands; nor do I understand the signatories to it to mean that their proposals are to be carried out on the morning following the day on which the Treaty of Berlin may be signed. The signatories to the memorandum have, however, done me one great service. They have borne the brunt of the fusilade and made my passage less difficult, so as to enable me to press forward unnoticed under cover

of their fire. As to the other side of the shield our misfortune is that we are unable to see where the extravagance comes in. We have no superfluities in any direction and for such a people as ourselves to indulge in extravagance seems to be out of the question. Extravagance may seize the minds of those who have got enough and to spare. However that may be, here are our demands which God willing are bound to be fulfilled at no distant date.

1. India must cease to be a dependency and be raised to the status of a self-governing state as an equal partner with equal rights and responsibilities as an independent unit of the Empire.

2. In any scheme of readjustment after the war, India should have a fair representation in the Federal Council like the colonies of the Empire.

3. India must be governed from Delhi and Simla, and not from Whitehall or Downing Street. The Council of the Secretary of State should be either abolished or its constitution so modified as to admit of substantial Indian representation on it. Of the two Under-Secretaries of State for India one should be an Indian and the salaries of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates, as in the case of the Secretary for the Colonies. The Secretary of State for India should, however, have no more powers over the Government of India than those exercised by the Secretary for the Colonies in the case of the dominions. India must have complete autonomy financial, legislative as well as administrative.

4. The Government of India is the most vital point in the proposed reforms. It is the fountain head of all the local administrations and unless we can ensure its progressive character any effective reform of the local governments would be impossible. For this the Services must be completely separated from the State and no member of any service should be a member of the Government. The knowledge and experience of competent members of a service may be utilised in the departments, but they should not be allowed to be members of the Executive Council or the Cabinet of the Government itself.

5. The Executive Government of India should vest in the Governor-General with a number of ministers not less than one-half of whom should be Indians elected by the elected non-official Indian members of the Supreme Legislative Council. These members should hold office for five years. Thus this ministry of the Viceroy will possess the composite character of a parliamentary and non-parliamentary cabinet.

6. The Upper House of Representatives in Canada is composed of 90 members. The Supreme Legislative Council in India should consist of at least 150 members. These members should be all elected. But for the transitory period one-fifth may be appointed by the cabinet, not more than one-fourth of whom may be officials.

7. The annual budget should be introduced into the Legislative Council like money Bills, and except the military estimates the entire Budget should be subject to the vote of the Council.

8. The Provincial Governments should be perfectly autonomous, each Province developing and enjoying its own resources, subject only to a contribution towards the maintenance of the Supreme Government.

9. A Provincial administration should be vested, as in the case of the Supreme Government, in a Governor with a cabinet not less than one-half of whom should be Indians, elected by the non-official elected Indian members of its Legislative Council.

10. The Provincial Legislative Council should in the case of a major province consist of 100 members and in the case of a minor province 75 members all of whom should be elected by the people and each district must have at least one representative of its own. For the transitory period there should of course be the same conditions and restrictions as in the case of the Supreme Legislative Council.

11. As the executive and the legislative functions are to be separated, so there must be complete separation of the judicial from the executive functions of the State. The judicial administration, whether civil or criminal, should be wholly vested in the High Courts both as regards control as well as the pay, prospect and promotion of its officers. The High Courts should be subordinate only to the Supreme Government.

12. The Arms Act should be repealed or so modified as to place the Indians exactly on the same footing with the Europeans and Eurasians. The Press Act should be removed from the Statute Book and all the repressive measures withdrawn.

13. India should have a national militia to which all the races should be eligible under proper safe guards and they should be allowed to volunteer themselves under such conditions as may be found necessary for the maintenance of efficiency and discipline. The Commissioned ranks in the army should be thrown open to His Majesty's Indian Subjects.

14. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted throughout the country, and the corporations of the Presidency towns the District and the Taluk boards and the district municipal corporations should be made perfectly self-governing bodies with elected members and elected chairmen of their own. They should be freed from all official control except such as may be legally exercised by the Government direct.

15. Mass education should be made free and compulsory. Suitable provisions should also be made for the development and encouragement of indigenous industries.

The above is a summary of our demands. We do not fix any time-limit, for the duration of the war is uncertain and there must be a transitory period through which the process must pass. But if we fix no time-limit, we agree to no indefinite postponement either. Some of these proposals can and ought to be immediately carried out and there is no reason why they should wait for the termination of the war ; while there are others which cannot of course be settled until the time for the readjustment of the Empire arrives ; but we must be distinctly understood to maintain that this period should not be treated as a further extension granted to the present system of administration and its methods. There must be henceforth a distinct tendency visible in every branch of the administration to conciliate the people and inspire trust and confidence in the future policy of the Government. As words without thoughts never to heaven go, so promises without performance and sympathy without action can never touch the hearts of a people. Patience has often

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been prescribed as the sovereign remedy for all distempers ; but it cannot be denied that when the most skilful physician is unable for a long time to show any sign of improvement and on the contrary there are continued symptoms of aggravation, a suspicion naturally may arise in the mind of the patient as to the skill of the physician or the efficacy of his methods. On our part, gentlemen, we must be content to ascend

STEP BY STEP.

It is no argument to say that you have long acquired the capacity to make the ascent. You might have ten years before safely tried the experiment ; but it does not follow that you can therefore cover ten steps or even two steps at a time. Whenever you have to ascend you must begin from the base and rise steadily and cautiously upwards. Of course it would be no progress if you gain one step and lose two. Doubtless we ought carefully to see that we lose no ground and then even if our progress be slow we may be sure of reaching our destined goal.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Gentlemen, one word about our British agency in London. It is perfectly superfluous for me to point out that no business concern can be successfully carried on without a well-equipped and efficient agency at its principal place of business. In England is the real seat of power and the battle of India must be fought on the British soil. Though it is we who must fight it out, we must have the British public as our ally. That public must be informed and influenced so as to enable it to come to a correct judgment of our case. There is an erroneous impression in certain quarters that as our grievances are so numerous and so palpable they must be known to the British people also. But who is there to carry your message to England? You certainly cannot expect *Reuter* to do it. You certainly do not believe that retired Anglo-Indians will proclaim their own defects and shortcomings. On the contrary there are the standing official reports always to present a roseate view of the administration taking credit for whatever is good, throwing the entire blame for all that is bad on your shoulders and justifying all sorts of repressive measures. The British public in their ignorance easily swallow all these *ex parte* cock-and-bull stories and consider the Indian administration to be a perfect Utopia. So you must have a counsel of your own to represent your case before the great tribunal of public opinion in Great Britain if you do not wish judgment to go against you by default. Sir William Wedderburn is performing this function at no small sacrifice to himself. India cannot repay the deep debt which she owes to him and his colleagues on the British Committee and the poet's words are her only satisfaction that a grateful mind by owing owes not, but always remains indebted and discharged. Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, the worthy son of a worthy father, following in the footsteps of his illustrious parent has been doing yeoman's service to India. The British Committee and its sole organ *India* must be maintained at all costs if we are to carry on our operations at the vital front. It has always seemed to me of the utmost importance to associate with the British Com-

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P. 16

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

THENNATTUPULI NALLAKUTTI

Sivasubramania Theerthapathy,

Zemindar of Singampatti,

CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE

OF THE

Fourteenth Madras Provincial Conference

Held at Tinnevely on the 20th, 21st and 22nd June, 1906.

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EVER LOYAL



**Thennattupuli Nallakutti Sivasubramonia Theerthapathi, Zemindar of Singampatt,
South India.**

**President of the Reception Committee of The XIV. Madras Provincial Conference,
20th, 21st & 22nd June 1906.**

The Tinnevelly Provincial Conference.

WELCOME ADDRESS.

FELLOW DELEGATES AND GENTLEMEN :—

IN the name of the Tinnevelly District and as the Spokesman of its large and representative Reception Committee, I rise to greet the Fourteenth Madras Provincial Conference with a most cordial and enthusiastic welcome to this town.

2. When the office of Chairman of that Committee was offered to me, I considerably hesitated to accept it. I know only too well that the intellectual aristocracy of my district owns leaders abler to bear the responsibility and worthier of the honour of the position that it is now my privilege to occupy. But when the very class to whose claims I for one would defer as to those of pioneers in the field of patriotic work gracefully invited the Zemindar community and in the circumstances in which the choice fell on me among the several members of that community, I felt that the call was a call to duty and should be obeyed, however ill-equipped I felt myself to be for the high task of to-day. It was urged upon me that the duty of leadership lay upon my class and I cheerfully admit that with the wealth, family prestige and influence that still belong to that class, it has a moral duty to devote its leisure, talents and resources for the political, industrial and social advancement of the country. I am aware that there is room for improvement in the standard of modern education hitherto attained by my class, but if, as I think, it is our duty actively to participate in useful public movements, it is desirable that we should early undertake the responsibilities upon ourselves, in order that we may be rendered fit to bear them by having to bear them.

3. Gentlemen, at this time of the day, no discourse is necessary on my part to justify the great movement to which I am proud to accord my support in this public manner. Standing aloof I have neither kept my sympathies away from it, nor failed to watch its career from its struggling infancy to the healthy sturdiness of its age of majority. Last year the great Indian National Congress made an auspicious celebration of its 21st birthday in the holy city of Benares, and I read in that celebration a triumphant proclamation to the world that the sentiment of national unity that has been throbbing in the veins of our people is hereafter to be reckoned with as a consolidated and living force, and that no human agency, Governmental or popular, can seek to work out the legitimate destiny of this country except in harmonious co-operation with that force. Already, Gentlemen, the Congress movement of which the Provincial Conferences are such powerful limbs, has made achievements within the period of its minority which I must characterise as really Herculean. As for the future, I hope and trust that this prodigy of a movement with its constitutional and bloodless methods, is destined

to secure for India and the Indian Nation, those political privileges and reform which, in other ages and countries, were won much more tardily and sometimes with violence. For my part, Gentlemen, I am not surprised at the achievements or promises of the movement. In the midst of a variety of languages, creeds and interests, the administration of this vast Empire by a handful of aliens can never attain that efficiency that results from intimate acquaintance with the people, their wants and their grievances. I believe that no European can ever manage his business in this country without the aid of a trustworthy interpreter, and I equally hold that that small body of Englishmen who have to manage the great business concern of ruling this country can never successfully do that task without largely indenting on and profiting by the advice of such patriotic interpreters of the wants and wishes of the country as the Indian National Congress and its auxiliary institutions. If the movement is necessary and reasonable, its safety is equally assured under a constitutional Government like ours. Here and there administrators advanced to greatness rather for their docility to a reactionary régime than for their courage of conviction may, in sudden and difficult situations, show greater zeal than discretion and employ rough and ready methods against the movement, but such unwise aberrations of individuals however high in rank, can only serve to elicit from the great English nation and its accredited leaders, declarations of policy in disapproval of such methods, such as would prove of useful guidance for the future. Such is the view that I take of the great movement from a study of its career in the past and standing in your inspiring presence to-day to welcome the Conference, I feel a spirit of comradeship coming over me which God willing, is bound to carry me far in my devotion to our National and holy cause.

4. Though a new comer among the workers, I ask your leave to suggest with regard to the organisation and working of the Conference that it is high time to effect improvement in both. It appears to have been repeatedly pointed out during some years past that the working is spasmodic and temporary year after year, and I wish to join my voice of protest against any further continuance of that practice. I wish further to add that for continuing the work throughout the year and bringing the whole province and all its remote parts under the influence of such work, it is necessary that our central organisation the Maha Jana Sabha should be rendered more representative of the various districts and be helped by a wide ramification of District and Rural Associations. These latter may chiefly mind their local concerns but may also be made to look for such guidance and inspiration as may be necessary from time to time to the parent institution. It would further, I believe, be necessary at once to provide the Central and District Associations, if not also the rural ones, with adequate funded capital, as such equipment is likely to guarantee their stability more than anything else, and facilitate the effective performance of their duties. To strangers who read the published reports of our Conferences it may seem surprising that such a network of associations is not already in existence, and I am unwilling to believe that, with the growing enthusiasm of the people, it could be difficult for the leading lights of this Conference to provide within another year every District in the Presidency with a well-endowed and firmly established Association. With such a strong parent stock of associations we shall soon find the family growing numerous and spread over every

part of the province, and then the question of an organisation for enlightening the authorities and educating the people will have become solved.

5. Gentlemen, this District, I am sorry to say, has unduly delayed its invitation to the Conference and even now we feel the same diffidence that we have all along entertained regarding our capacity to arrange for a successful session. However, recognising that any further delay would be neither excusable nor desirable, my honourable colleague the Vice-President took counsel of other leaders here and boldly issued an invitation when the Conference was assembled last at Bellary. The great enthusiasm that has prevailed in this District in view of your advent and the stimulus to public activity that it has contributed to create, are so valuable that I must characterise the invitation as a very wise and timely step. Under the blessing of Providence and the forbearance of delegates when they are inconvenienced by our shortcomings, I hope it will become possible for us all to say that the Tinnevely Session also has been a success.

6. Gentlemen, following the example of those who have filled this chair before me, I take this opportunity of placing on record my humble views on a few questions of vital importance to the welfare of this country. To one like me who is not already steeped in the crowded details of Indian problems, the most superficial observation discloses that the administration of this country is carried on without due regard to the claims of the natives of the soil and at a scale of cost out of all proportion to the taxpaying capacity of the people. The Native States of India which are governed on the British Indian Model present object lessons of efficient administration with much less cost defrayed out of more indulgent taxation and leaving behind year after year comfortable surpluses to fall back upon in times of scarcity and for extraordinary works of public utility. The cost of the defence of the Indian Empire, in so far as it is contributed to by Native States in the shape of tribute and otherwise, does not perhaps press so heavily on those States as on the British Indian Government, but I believe the comparison even when confined to the cost of the Civil Services discloses the same undue disparity. I think that a much larger employment of Indians can alone promote to the much needed economy. I do not plead for any undue supplanting of Europeans, for I hold that both in the interests of England and of India an irreducible minimum of European Agency in the higher strata of the Civil Services will long remain essential. The view, however, that I emphasise is that the claim of Indians to a far larger share of the higher appointments is based on grounds of economy and efficiency, no less than of the highest justice. We do not sound the note of all India for Indians; we only seek a fair and equitable share of the higher offices after giving undoubted proofs of fitness therefor, which is no more than what legislative enactments and Royal Proclamations have repeatedly promised to us, under circumstances guaranteeing their absolute good faith. For some time past, a growing tendency has been manifesting itself to allot the higher and more responsible grades of offices in all departments to what is spoken of as the ruling class, but I rest my faith in Divine Providence, and hope that all departures from the basic principles of Indian Administration already laid down by Royal Grace and high statesmanship are sure to be checked sooner or later in their career. Gentlemen, I see gleams of hope already in

the noble words of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who has appealed to the English Nation for "justice and integrity in its rule" over us, for a "wider element of sympathy" in its relationship with us, and for "still fuller measures of trust and confidence" in its "desire and efforts to promote the well-being and to further the best interests of every class."

7. Turning next to Military service and Government's policy with references thereto, I find that the cost of the army in India is admittedly far in excess of its resources and that many an obvious duty of Government must remain unfulfilled until considerable economy in this direction is effected. Several methods of retrenchment have been suggested and are apparently possible. That England should bear its own share of the burden in view of the usefulness of the Indian Army for Imperial purposes is already a counsel of perfection though still it somehow remains beyond the pale of practical politics. The suggestion that there is considerable room for curtailing the strength of the army without any risk to the Empire has been often made by official and non-official politicians by amateurs and experts, but the opponents of this view take us so far into frontier Central Asian, and European politics that I must desist on this occasion from going into so much depth. But the surest method of effecting economy lies in curtailing the British soldiery, increasing the native troops if necessary, and introducing into the Commissioned ranks a large admixture of the Indian element. This, I venture to say, is not merely the surest but also the wisest solution of the problem, and yet the British Statesmanship appears to be as nervous about it and is as far from it as ever before it was. Ministers and Viceroy, politicians, and publicists have all joined time after time in attesting the loyalty of Indians to British Sovereignty but when it comes to acting on it for serious purposes, Government has always shown a mysterious reluctance. But, recently, the Boer in South Africa crossed swords with the Britisher and to-day the first concern of His Majesty's Government is to expedite the grant of a liberal measure of Self-Government to the Transvaal. As for the self-governing Colonies they are so assertive and independent that, for the sake of the name and prestige of an United Empire, the British Government is known now-a-days to use all its wit and diplomacy to cajole them into formal subordination. The Indian alone is cordially and studiously loyal, desiring the British connection for the sake of India, and he alone is treated as an inferior and with suspicion. The native troops may go to China to fight the yellow Boxers, and into Africa to fight the indigenous races, but into the Boer land and against the whites they may do every other service but fighting. The Indian that cares merely for his pay may be a sepoy but none that can feel the impulse of patriotism may dream of being admitted to play his legitimate part in the defence of his country. The frontier raider of yesterday is preferred and coaxed as a mercenary into the army, the cool-headed enduring and faithful Madrased who served before to lay the first foundations of the British Empire in India and who has his stake in and traditional attachment to his country is no longer a favoured recruit. Starved, shapeless, nameless, pigmies may serve as volunteers and line the streets of Madras during the progress in procession of Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, but stalwart races known for their valour and chivalry, the bold chieftains and Poliagars, the sturdy landholders and intelligent artisans of this country are not to be trusted into

the volunteer corps. Many who are not Indians may bear arms in India, but they alone in their own soil must forget the use of all weapons except the quill and be trained from generation to generation to dread the use and even the sight of arms. Gentlemen, these deliberate differences may lead to an impression that our rulers yield where there is fear of force, but that in response to genuine loyalty they do not attain to the sense of justice or height of statesmanship required to inaugurate a measure of trust and confidence. Gentlemen, I must ask, how long is this illiberal policy to continue. Is it desirable to emasculate the whole nation of 300 millions and drive it for all time to depend for the defence of its vast continent on the valour of an alien force and the services of mercenaries? Does history show any parallel to the huge experiment that England is making of enfeebling and demartialising a whole race and guarding a whole Empire by a borrowed army? Such a policy is ruinous to the future of this country and I am emphatically convinced that so long as England's mission is parental and conceived for the purpose of raising us in the scale of nations, its present method must be considered unwise and unspeakably absurd. I say that this country is worth keeping to England either as the Hon. Mr. Gokhale put it by a *courageous reliance on the loyalty of the people or not at all*. For suspicion and contempt can only induce secret hostility, but sympathy and confidence must give rise to abundant good faith and cordiality.

8. There is one problem which, though of local importance, I would deal with here in connection with this subject, namely, the problem of the Maravars of Tinnevely and Kallars of Madura. Both these classes undoubtedly require to be curbed in their career of depredation, but a good deal depends on the method adopted. Individual men and gangs are taken on hand and dealt with by the combined efforts of the Police and the Magistracy under the security chapter of the Criminal Procedure Code. I conceive, however, that another and more effective method of prevention would be to constitute Marava and Kalla regiments and persuade those castes into military service, so that they may be withdrawn from crime in course of time. I have heard it said that they do not come in willingly for such service but caste regiments as in the case of Moplas and some initial indulgence to them as to the place of service are alone needed to attract these classes into what they will soon learn to be an honourable career.

9. On the important question of our Legislative Councils I have one word to submit and one word only. Government has uniformly been nominating a member to represent the Zamindars of this Province, but though the nominations made hitherto have been very excellent and all that could be desired, yet on principle the seat may well, I think, be allowed to be filled by election. If the franchise is not given to a wider electorate, I earnestly submit that at least those whose estates are scheduled in Impartible Estates Act may be admitted to it. Surely, there is no Zamindar therein referred to who will not be able to exercise this franchise with discretion and credit.

10. Gentlemen, holding its session in Tinnevely, the Conference will not fail to record its views and recommendations on that important question

that now agitates the whole District, namely, its revenue re-settlement and is not fit that I should omit to make any reference to it. Apart from questions of policy common to the whole country, all these special representations that are necessary for this District have been carefully elaborated and moderately advanced in the memorial sent in its behalf and they are already known to the public. Equally, publicly and very ably has the cause for the District been pleaded in its behalf by my honourable friend the Vice-President in the Council Chamber, and I do not feel that I need take up your time by advancing any further argument on the subject. I own enough ryotwary property to be acquainted with its resources and prospects though not to be much interested in the re-settlement, and I must say that the plea of this district to be let alone without enhancement of assessment is thoroughly well founded and reasonable. I find that Settlement Commissioner to whom the thanks of the district are due for his patient and courteous discussions with its leaders has been at some pains in the last meeting of our Legislative Council to justify enhancement by reason of a rise in prices but, in my mind, his failure to reply to the main argument of the people based on the heavy cost of cultivation here leaves the claim for enhancement as indefensible as before. Gentlemen, I commend this question whose importance is of the very first magnitude to your earnest consideration and hope that you will think fit to lay the impress of your approval on the representation made in its behalf.

11. Gentlemen, I will not detain you longer but must at once call on you to begin the proceedings of the Conference. You are, I am happy to say, to be guided in your deliberations by a gentleman whose high position, wide culture and abundant patriotism merit the honour that you are going to confer on him as but the first step in a career of brilliant promise.

12. I invoke the blessings of God Almighty on your labours and wish you that success that the justice of your cause so richly deserves.

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THE
THIRTY-FIRST INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

Lucknow, December, 1916.

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Brother & Sister Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It was Lord Curzon who on a memorable occasion said that it was not given to "an Indian corporal to carry the Field Marshal's baton in his knapsack", but here an Indian private, recruited somewhere in the seventies who after a few years' training joined his colours but never rose above the rank of a subaltern, has to-day after nearly 35 years of active service found that baton thrust into his hand which, however, he neither deserved nor dreamt of in all his life. I use no language of mere convention when I say, that trying and momentous as the present situation is I sincerely wished that at this turning point in the history of the national movement, the presidential chair of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress had been offered to a more capable person who might have not only inspired greater confidence, but by his superior tact and judgment safely steered it clear of all shoals and bars that still lie before it and successfully led it into port after a perilous voyage extending over thirty years: I wished it had been permitted to me to stand aside and gratify the wishes of a section of my countrymen with whose ardent hopes and sanguine expectations for the rapid advancement of the country I am in the fullest sympathy. But it ought to be remembered that the chosen spokesman of a great representative assembly like the Congress is merely an accredited agent whose individuality is more or less merged in the body politic and whose freedom of action is largely controlled by that body. Even his voice, as I understand it, is bound not to reflect his personal *ipse dixit*, but echo the reasoned feelings and sentiments of those whom he seeks to represent. In every organised movement the individual counts for nothing and the voice of the majority cannot but be respected under a constitutional fiction as the voice of the whole. In a case like the present, one is often precluded even from giving due consideration to his fitness or unfitness for the great task which is thrust upon him. It was the country's mandate in the country's cause which demanded unquestioning submission. The decision as well as the responsibility rested with the country, the duty resting on me. I am neither so vain, nor so foolish as to imagine for a moment, that the great honour bestowed upon me is intended for a personal distinction. I am under no such delusion. I am fully conscious that it is the democratic spirit of this National Organisation which has in its natural evolution sought to vindicate itself by drawing out an old servant of the cause from his retirement in an obscure corner of the country to fill the presidential chair in the dim twilight of the evening of his life. Gentlemen, if I have

not begun by offering you the customary thanks, it is because thanks presuppose some claim to receive a gift, and I frankly confess that I have not sufficient confidence in myself to thank you for the very difficult and delicate position in which you have placed me. However, lest you or anybody else should think that I am "poor even in thanks" I thank you with all the warmth and fervour of a devoted heart for the great honour—the greatest in the gift of the country—which you have conferred on me by calling me to preside over the deliberations of the Thirty-first Indian National Congress at Lucknow, the historic capital of Oudh which played such an important part in the early history of British rule in India—Lucknow, the *Koshala* of the ancients, the city built by Asoof-ud-Dowlah, and adorned by his successors with magnificent mosques, mausoleums and imambaras and crowned with gilded towers, minarets and cupolas—Lucknow, the centre of the great tornado which swept over India in 1857 in which the brave Lawrence and Nicholson fell and where the gallant Havelock sleeps embalmed in the thrilling memories of a Historic siege. Gentlemen, I think I have one indisputable claim to your just and generous consideration : If you have in your choice placed me in this responsible position you are in common fairness bound to extend to me a reasonable amount of support and indulgence so as to enable me to discharge my duties with some measure of success.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while most people count their gains, we have to count our losses at the end of every year. How sad it is to contemplate that scarcely a year passes away without leaving us the poorer in the ranks of our public men ! How fast are the dear old familiar faces on this Congress platform vanishing into the void ! Not to speak of the serious losses which the country sustained in her earlier breavements, only last year we lost three of our tried veterans, the brilliant, the versatile, the indomitable Pherozechah Mancharjee Mehta, the saintly and devoted Gopal Krishna Gokhale and that silent and steadfast worker who was one of the brave 72 who inaugurated the Congress at Bombay in 1885—Ganga Prasad Varma. And before this old, rickety globe of ours could complete another revolution, that "fell sergeant strict in his arrest" has snatched away three of our brave comrades whose loyalty to the country was equalled only by their spirit of self-sacrifice, and whose devotion to duty was surpassed only by their extraordinary capacity for work. G. Subramania Iyer, the founder of the *Hindu*, the organiser of the *Mahajan Sabha*, the editor of the *Swadesh-Mitram*, who was the first to lead the plough and turn the first sod on the Congress soil by moving the first resolution of the First Indian National Congress, may well be called the maker of Modern Madras ; while Daji Abaji Khare, who was for about eight years loyally and devotedly associated with our esteemed friend and veteran leader, the Hon'ble Mr. D. E. Wacha, as a Joint General Secretary to the Congress, was a man of whom any community might be justly proud and whose untimely death is an irreparable loss to the country and the congress. Lastly, it is with feelings of profound grief which has not yet been touched by the healing hand of Time that I must mention the passing of our gifted and distinguished countryman, one of

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my predecessors in the chair to which you have called me to-day, Pandit Bishan Narain Dar. Brother delegates, as the first citizen of Lucknow and the Chairman of the Reception Committee, his voice should have been the first to be heard in this *pandal* this afternoon in eloquent welcome extended to us all, but it was not to be, and his voice has been hushed in the great Silence, and the duty remains with us of offering our respectful tribute to his departed worth. Yet another eminent Indian has recently passed away, who, though not *in* the Congress was *with* the Congress all his life. Mr. B. L. Gupta belonged to that distinguished triumvirate who formed the vanguard of the Indian Civil Service in this country and it was he who was the originator, if not the author, of the Ilbert Bill. Two of this triumvirate have passed away, while, thank God, the third who having consecrated his life to the service of the motherland, still retains the command which he has held for the last 30 years. May Surendra Nath Banerjee be long spared to lead us and serve the country. We have had very few friends in England and how fast is their rank thinning away! Sir Henry Cotton who, both in and out of Parliament, was one of the bravest and truest champions of the Indian people and who had cheerfully sacrificed his own interests for those of India, passed away last year amidst the universal lamentations of a grateful people who had most need of such a man at the present juncture; while shortly afterwards the Great Labour-leader, Mr. Keir Herdie, who made India's cause his own and like Hamden with dauntless breast fought for suffering humanity, went to his eternal rest, creating a void in the ranks of our friends which is not likely to be soon filled up. We are, however, grateful to kind Providence that the Saint of Versova and the Sage of Meridith are still spared to us to guide us and cheer us with occasional messages of hope and confidence. How the brave and the mighty have fallen and how many more have yet to fall in the weary march through the desert before we can reach even the threshold of the Promised Land. But dead or alive, they cannot be completely lost to us if we can only realise that their mighty spirits are ever hovering over us and in their unerring vision silently guiding us in the onward march, encouraging us in our success and comforting us in the hours of our despair and despondency.

Gentlemen, even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver lining, and in this vale of sorrow, there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and a negative side. If the United Re-united Congress. Congress was buried in the *debris* of the old French Garden at Surat, it is re-born to-day in the Kaiser Bag of Lucknow, the garden of the gorgeous King Wajed Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of mis-understandings and the mazes of unpleasant controversies, each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation, both the wings of the Indian Nationalist party have come to realise the fact that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers have at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour, peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation. Blessed are the peace-makers. Honour, all honour to those who in this suicidal civil war held the olive branch of peace, and glory to the

patriotic good sense of the belligerents on both sides who having realised their true position and responsibility have at a psychological moment so wisely buried their hatchets and closed their ranks. There are occasional differences even in the best regulated families and how much wider must be the scope of differences in the vast political field of a country like ours where the people have so little of the power of initiation in their hands and where the causes of mis-understanding and consequent vexation and disappointment are so numerous and so irritating. Nothing succeeds like success and nothing so much disturbs the equanimity of the public mind and embitters public feelings as failure and in a common cause the failure of one method easily gives a handle to exaggerate the importance of an opposite view, though, if the position were reversed, the result might have been still worse. But if there be honesty of motive and singleness of purpose, the widest divergence of opinion need neither frighten nor irritate any reasonable mind. Action and reaction is the law of nature's evolution. Struggle represents animation as stillness indicates stagnation, and thus even the muddy water of a rushing stream is ever more wholesome than the transparent water of a stagnant pool. In politics healthy opposition indicates the vitality of national life and the disturbances and disruptions that occasionally take place in the life of a nation serve only to clear and purify the atmosphere it breathes and rarify the ether it inhales. In the British constitution there are the contending forces which at times seem so menacing but serve in reality only to cement and strengthen it. The real strength of a nation does not lie in mere smooth work, but in solidarity and compactness when the national interests demand them, and in sinking all personal differences as soon as the trumpet-call of duty is sounded to rally round a common cause. It would be most foolish to persist in prejudices in the name of principles and to lose sight of the real issue involved in a case. Nothing is more common in a game than for the players to quarrel over a false move and to take no notice of an impending checkmate. I do not endorse the opinion that a subject race has no politics, but I do maintain that the principles of a subject people must be somewhat elastic to suit the exigencies of their situation, and when a common cause demands unity of action a practical people cannot afford to quarrel over means but must be prepared to make sacrifices on both sides for the common end which must be placed above every other consideration. In the sphere of organised activities for the benefit of a corporate body there is nothing more disastrous than want of mutual respect, trust and confidence among its members. Where the end is the same the diverse means and methods to attain that end should not betray either parties or individuals into a course of action which defeats that end. A principle divorced from practice is apt to degenerate into a morbid sentiment and for all practical purposes even the noblest of sentiments must at times bend itself to the stern necessities of circumstance and be regulated by a spirit of mutual confidence, toleration, forbearance and even sacrifice. The misfortune is that in the heat of a controversy we often lose sight of the end and missing the real issue substitute the means for the end. A shade of difference in opinion, viewed in an atmosphere of prejudice and passion, is often magnified into a

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wide divergence of principle, and the most trusted of comrades easily find themselves ranged on opposite sides, while mis-understanding widens the breach, recriminations embitter the mind and misrepresentations serve to fan the fire into a flame. It was thus that we separated in 1907 and having grown wiser by our experience we have, I presume, learnt to know each other better. Let us now no longer disparage the old nor despise the young. If youthful zeal and enthusiasm are invaluable assets, the judgment and experience as also the caution and sobriety of the old are no less useful and indispensable. It is no doubt the brave soldier that fights and wins the battle, but even a *Narayani Sena* of old, the invincibles in the *Mahabharata*, would be scattered to the winds without a veteran general to command them from behind. Remember it is the "Old Congressmen" who have built this organisation, given a shape and form to it, worked out its details and inspired the people with the very ideal which is swaying their minds and surging in their thoughts from one end of the country to the other. Believing, as I do, in the evolution of a national life in perpetual succession, I have no difficulty in admitting that there is a limit also to caution, wisdom and sobriety beyond which they cannot be exercised without their forfeiting the characteristics of these virtues and without their degenerating into pusillanimity and moral turpitude. There is as much danger in rashness as in imbecility and the one may serve as a cloak for inaction as the other may contribute to wreck the most useful institutions. It should be fairly acknowledged that if the "Old Congressmen" have so far failed to run faster than they have done, they have at least done one thing, in that they have walked steadily and never stumbled. Men run before they learn to walk and if walking is a slower process running is not certainly a surer method to avoid a fall. It is surely not wisdom to call our elders fools, for there are those coming after us who, following our precedent, may return the compliment with accumulated interest. Let us, therefore; give up all cants and like practical men firmly and resolutely, yet soberly and discreetly look the situation in the face, and with heart within and God overhead loyally follow the leaders who, if they have not won the battle, yet have neither fallen back nor betrayed their trust. I most cordially welcome Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mr. Matilal Ghose and other brave comrades who separated from us at Surat and have been happily restored to us at Lucknow. I rejoice to find that they are after all "of us" and "with us" and let us hope never never to part again.

Gentlemen, you naturally expect every year your President to make a clear and emphatic pronouncement, but you cannot expect your presidents —no, not even the tallest among them—to work
 Presidential Pronouncement. miracles for you in a three days' session. The *ideal* of the Congress has long been well-defined and no new ideas are needed either to amplify or illustrate it, nor are fresh ideas as abundant as blackberries so that whoever passes by may pick up any number of them. The country has a number of grievances and the Congress has made certain demands to remove them. It has also decided that it shall use none but constitutional methods for the fulfilment of its demands. Your presidents can only perform the function of the air-man by taking a survey

of the hostile positions, marking the points of relative strength and weakness and signalling the lines of attack ; but, after all, you are the gunners who have to fix your batteries, take your aim and actively work at the machines. Your president's pronouncement even at its best can only be a faithful echo of the prevailing sentiments of the country. Lord Morley complained that he could not give us the moon, but we were never so moon-struck as to ask for the moon and his Lordship need have no fears that he has given us something more substantial than mere moon-shine. Gentlemen, it will be my most earnest endeavour to throw some little light on some of the phases of the present situation, and if I cannot present to you even the faint light of the *Aurora borealis*, I shall certainly not presume to allure you by raising to your minds' eye the treacherously dancing flashes of the *Will-o'-the-wisp*. Gentlemen, if you have this-time gone a little out of your way in choosing your president, that president may be permitted to go a little out of the way of all past precedents in addressing you on the present occasion. I propose to confine myself mainly to one question which is the all-absorbing topic of the day—the question of Self-Government for India. It is an all-embracing problem to the solution of which all other subsidiary questions are mere corollaries. If this one problem could be solved, the other problems would solve themselves. But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must have a clear idea of the form of Government under which we are placed, the defects of that form of Government, the disabilities which we suffer therefrom, the system of Government that we want as a substitute for it and our capacity to receive such a substitute.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT WE LIVE IN.

It is now a matter of history that when a company of merchants introduced British rule in India in the middle of the 18th century, it was an absolutely despotic form of Government that was established in the country. Having regard to the unsettled state of the country and the internal dissensions and disputes not only among the different communities, but also among the people of the same community, any other form of Government would perhaps have been impossible at that time. A despotic form of Government is not necessarily synonymous with a bad government, but a beneficent despotism is of the exception and not of the rule. It is not every age or every country that can produce a Rama or a Harun-ul-Rashid, a Charlemagne or an Akbar. The Government of the East India Company over which the British Parliament exercised little or no control, and the so-called Board of Control, very little supervision except for their own interest, was marked by nepotism and at its later stage by corruption. In spite of repeated warnings of Parliament, education was neglected, justice was perfunctorily administered and the strong were permitted with impunity to oppress the weak. The Company which had developed small factories into vast territories naturally regarded their unprecedented acquisition as a huge commercial enterprise and considered the sovereign administration of the country as of lesser importance than the development of their trade and the increase of their profits. They

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viewed their own interest more than the interest of the people. It is a wonder that such a system of Government could have lasted so long and surely it lasted long enough to meet with a violent end.

After a hundred years of mis-rule it was at last overthrown by a military rising which transferred the Government of the country from the Company to the Crown. From this time a system of **Benevolent Despotism.** Government was established in the country which gave altogether a new complexion to the administration. This Government was designated a "benevolent despotism"—an expression which though not exactly a contradiction in terms, was sufficient to indicate that the form of Government was still essentially a despotism, though tempered by generous and benevolent considerations. It was this Government which actuated by its benevolent intentions introduced, by slow degrees, various reforms and changes which gradually broadened and liberalised the administration and widened the views and deepened the loyalty of the people. It fostered liberal education, established justice, created public confidence in the integrity of the administration and restored peace and order throughout the country. In its gradual development it introduced, though in a limited form, Self-Government in the local concerns of the people, admitted the children of the soil to a limited extent into the administration of the country and reformed the Councils by introducing an appreciable element of representation in them. It has annihilated time and space by the construction of railways and the establishment of telegraphic communication throughout the country. It has established a form of administration which in its integrity and purity can well vie with any other civilised country in the world, while the security of life and property which it conferred was until recently a boon of which any people may justly be proud. All this a "benevolent despotism" has accomplished.

But here it stopped and after having exhausted all the resources which a personal benevolence could supply, it has slowly and imperceptibly yielded to the infirmities of its nature, and by a process of natural evolution has resolved itself into a system of barren and sterilizing **Bureaucracy.** Despotism has done in this country what despotism has done elsewhere, and if it has failed to do more, it is because its nature could not have permitted it to do more. In the exercise of its beneficent influence it reached a stage and attained a height beyond which it was not possible for despotism to ascend. The bureaucracy which now rules the country is despotism condensed and crystallised. In it the Service is so firmly and indissolubly combined with the State that for all practical purposes the one may be said to be completely merged in the other—a combination which is infinitely more dangerous than the combination of the Judicial and the Executive functions of which we have heard so much. It is certainly not accountable to the people and the service and the state being one and the same it is responsible only to itself. It is essentially conservative in its temperament and thoroughly unprogressive in its character. Its efficiency is indisputable, its honesty and integrity beyond all question; but it is bound hand and foot to form a precedent lacking in life and soul. It can contract but it cannot expand.

It holds all the threads of the administration within the hollow of its palm and can ill afford either to release or to relax any one of them. It is extremely jealous of its powers and intolerant of criticism. It sincerely wishes to see the people happy and contented, only it cannot allow them to grow. It has its idea of beauty and its Chinese shoe to give effect to it, however painful to its subject the operation may be. Like Narcissus of old it is so much entranced with the loveliness of its own shadow that it has neither the leisure nor the inclination to contemplate beauty in others.

But the people have completely outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. Call it visionary, call it impatient idealism, call it intoxication if you choose, that spirit is the

The New Spirit. manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to new order of things. Under the pressure of this irresistible force time-honoured kingdoms and constitutions are crumbling to pieces and giving place to new ones, and hereditary monarchs of ancient and even celestial origin are quietly taking their exit, as on a stage, without shedding a tear or a drop of blood. Portugal, Turkey, Persia and China all have felt the breath of this force. It is agitating Egypt and is pulsating the life of India. In India it has fortunately been of normal growth. This new spirit may be impulsive, but it is perfectly genuine and intensely patriotic. If sympathetically treated it may be directed in a proper channel, but it would be unwise either to ignore or try to repress it. Old ideas are changing faster than one can realize and it is no fault of the Indian people if they are unable to reconcile themselves to a patriarchal or a paternal form of Government. The present form of Government, whatever its claims for the maintenance of an orderly administration may be, is more or less an anachronism. Sir Henry Cotton, who recalls with just pride that for three generations his family has been associated with the bureaucratic service in India, said that "the Indian Civil Service, as at present constituted, is doomed." While still in service he formulated a scheme of reconstruction which the Indian Public Service Commission of 1887 considered as "visionary". Now that another Royal Commission has been appointed to enquire into the Indian Public Services, Sir Henry Cotton has again returned to the charge. Writing in the *Contemporary Review* and commenting on the terms of reference to the Commission, which apparently assume the existing constitution as the permanent basis of Indian administration, Sir Henry Cotton says,— "But what is wanted now is no scheme for bolstering up the decaying fabric of a service adapted only to obsolete conditions which have passed away and never can return."

In a despotic form of Government everything is done *for* the people and nothing *by* the people. Its greatest drawback is that it makes the people whom it governs impotent to help themselves. It may make a people perfectly happy but it cannot make them resourceful nor even contented, self-reliant and manly in their life and conduct. Such a people must always be a burden to the State, and the "white man's burden" of which we hear so much is the creation of this despotic form of Government, and those who complain of India being a "*nuisance of the Empire*"

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ought to remember that it is the accumulated errors of this form of Government during the last hundred and fifty years and more. Even in a benevolent despotism there is but one patriot and that patriot is either the despot or the close bureaucracy in which the Government is vested. As in a patriarchal family, the subjects of a despotic Government are of a stunted growth and are all more or less like spoiled children incapable of either helping themselves or helping the *Pater familia*.

But to its credit it must be recorded that this benevolent despotism has done one thing—it has prepared its own coffin and has written on it
 Bureaucracy nearing its end. its own epitaph with its own hand. Despotism was wholly repugnant to the British instinct and entirely foreign to the British Constitution, and what it did, therefore, was to prepare a curious admixture of two incongruous substances, a bureaucratic constitution leavened with democratic ideas, which can never coalesce but can serve only to neutralize each other. Paradoxical as it may seem and strange as it may sound, this despotism has throughout consciously or unconsciously and perhaps in fits of absent-mindedness, worked up to its own subversion, and like the fabulous Phoenix, in anticipation of its allotted cycle of years, prepared its own nest of spices, set fire to it and flapped that fire into a flame with its own wings singing its melodious song to consume itself into ashes out of which to rise again in a glorious re-birth. From the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 down to Lord Morley's Reform of 1909, the British Parliament has not taken a single step which was not calculated finally to overthrow this despotic form of Government. The education given to the people, the system of local self-government introduced into the country and the elective principle recognised in the higher Councils of the Empire have all tended to undermine the old system of Government which it would be a vain attempt now either to rebuild or to repair.

The bureaucracy have, however, discovered the mistakes of their predecessors. But it is not as easy to rectify as to discover mistakes. We too may have discovered many a mistake of our grand-
 A chapter of mistakes. fathers. But what avails it to cry over spilt milk? It is more than vaguely suggested that it was a mistake to have opened the eyes of the Indian people. I fully admit that from the point of view of these critics it was a great mistake—the greatest indeed ever committed by a despotic Government, benevolent or otherwise. It was a great mistake to have issued the Education Despatch of 1854, and it was a great blunder to have confirmed that mistake by the establishment of Universities at Calcutta in 1857, at Bombay and Madras in 1858, at Lahore in 1882 and at Allahabad in 1887. It was a mistake to have granted liberty to the press and freedom of speech throughout the country: it was a mistake to have introduced local self-government in 1884, and it was a greater mistake to have reformed the Councils in 1903 and again in 1910. It is a chapter, nay a whole volume, of mistakes which have been committed by successive parliaments and administrations which, I am afraid, it is too late either to amend or to rectify. It is the instinct of the British people and the spirit of the British constitution which led the British Parliament

to this long series of mistakes. But there has always been a counteracting force in India, and, for aught we know, but for these mistakes both India and England might have met with greater difficulties. In recent years there has always been a tendency to cry "halt" and every step forced upon the bureaucracy in the forward march by the irresistible current of events has been followed by a paroxysm of regret, and all that the Government has been able to do to retain its ancient character and at the same time to keep pace with the pressing demands of the ceaseless march of time has invariably presented the appearance of the texture of the faithful Penelope unravelling by night what is woven by day. Vain attempts are these. The tide has set in and it will not roll back under any human command. You may and have to adjust and re-adjust your wind-mill occasionally, but you cannot turn back the course of the river. The best and only remedy therefore now is not to go back but to press forward, not to cling to an obsolete and worn out institution which is no longer suited to the present condition of the country, but firmly and cautiously adapt the constitution to the requirements of the time and adjust it to the growing demands of the people. Every declaration made by the Government, every report of commissions and committees having a bearing upon the present unrest and every legislative measure passed to cope with the disturbed state of the country bear testimony to the fact that there is a struggle going on between a benevolent despotism and an overgrown people who with all their defects and short-comings are no longer satisfied with the present system. On the one hand there is manifested in almost every direction a marked tendency in the people to break through the leading strings by which they have been held so long and assert their constitutional rights and privileges as citizens of the British Empire, and on the other hand, there is an equally persistent attempt on the part of the bureaucracy to maintain its prestige and authority.

A CONFLICT.

It is a case of clear conflict between the forces of an old constitution and the new spirit, and as the inevitable result of such a conflict a state of things has arisen for which neither may be wholly responsible, but from which both have equally to suffer, although the presumption in such a case is always in favour of the people according to all political philosophers. "I am not one of those," says Burke, "who think that the people are never wrong. They have been so, frequently and outrageously, both in other countries and in this. But I do say that in all disputes between them and their rulers, the presumption is at least upon a par in favour of the people." In quoting this dictum of Burke with approbation Lord Morley who has recently dealt more with India than any other living British statesman, adds—"Nay experience perhaps justifies him in going further. When popular discontents are prevalent, something has generally been found amiss in the constitution or the administration." And truly does Burke observe. "The people have no interest in disorder. When they go wrong, it is their error and not their crime." Then the great political philosopher continues in the words of Sully which his biographer passionately enjoins that "both practical politicians and political students should bind about their necks, and write

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upon the tables of their hearts."—"The revolutions that come to pass in great states are not the result of chance, nor of popular caprice. * * * *
 As for the populace it is never from a passion that it rebels but from impatience of sufferings." It is in the nature of a bureaucratic administration to have absolute confidence in its own judgment and little respect for the opinions of others. The British Government, as established in India at the present day, has no doubt long ceased to be an absolute despotism, nor can it be described as a popular Government. A cursory examination of its policies and its practices will disclose the nature of this conflict and the stage at which it has arrived due as much to the process of natural evolution as to the legitimate sequence of events to which that policy has so largely contributed. Gentlemen, be it understood that we are here to criticise Government and not to sing its praises. If, therefore, we have more to refer to its defects and short-comings it is not to be presumed that we are wholly insensible to its many good points or are unable to appreciate them. Nor do I feel pressed to enter upon any vindication of our loyalty to the Throne as it is above all cavil or criticism.

EDUCATION.

To take up the question of education first, as it is the foremost problem in the evolution of a nation. Ever since the Crown took up the reins of government it was actuated by a board and liberal policy of educating the people and elevating them in the scale of nations. Worried and wearied with the evasive policy of the East India Company, the Board of Control under the guidance of a far-sighted statesman, Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, issued the memorable Despatch of 1854 which is now known as the great charter of Education in India. In pursuance to this Despatch a University was established in 1857 in the then Capital of the Empire.

But the mutiny having broken out almost simultaneously a pretext was easily found to propose a change of policy. Sir Frederick Halliday, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, came to the rescue and in a letter to Lord Ellenborough, who was then the President of the Board of Control, neatly disposed of the objections raised. Sir Frederick wrote:—
 "On the question of the connection between education and the rebellion, our wisdom, no less than our duty, is to persevere in what we have begun and not to turn our backs upon Behar or any other parts of our territory, because there is difficulty or danger in the path of improvement. It is certain, however, that both the difficulty and the danger are exaggerated and look imposing only to those who keep at a distance from them and view them through the delusive mist of prejudice and mis-information. As to difficulty, the progress of Bengal, within the memory of living witnesses, is a proof of the aptitude of the people and of their plastic docility. And though it is not uncommon in these days to attribute the recent mutinies to our educational operations, and even to propose to

draw back from them for fear of similar consequences in future, the error of this opinion is like that of a man who after unwisely and incautiously exposing a barrel of gun-powder to all kinds of dangerous influences and having by good luck, and in spite of bad management, long escaped without an accident, should at last, when the fatal and inevitable explosion takes place, blame neither the gun-powder nor his own rashness and indiscretion, but rather lay the whole mischief to account of some one of the many little sparks flying about, and talk of limiting the use of fire and candle in future to prevent similar occurrences." No more statesman-like view of the situation, or a more crushing reply, could have been advanced, and the Government of Lord Canning made a firm stand against the hysteric cry of an alarmist crowd. I have purposely quoted this long extract, for it will be seen that the same cry has again been raised in recent years and has contributed not a little to the shaping of the present educational policy of the Government, with this difference that there is neither a Halliday nor a Canning to take a dispassionate perspective of the situation and boldly adhere to the noble policy of 1854. In 1858 two more Universities were established in Bombay and Madras, and in the following year another Despatch was issued under the authority of the crown re-affirming the great Despatch of 1854 and laying down in clear and emphatic terms that greater impetus should be given to education in the future than had been done in the past, that more colleges and schools should be established throughout the country, that more systematic and sustained efforts should be made for the education of the masses, and that an unstinted measure of encouragement should be extended to private enterprise towards the furtherance of education by state-grants and scholarships. It has to be noticed that having regard to the aptitude of the people and to the extraordinary zeal and eagerness evinced by them for the spread of education, it was further laid down, that *Government should be reluctant to open Government institutions whenever private institutions could be expected or encouraged to do the work.* Under the inspiring influence of this noble policy a great impetus was given to the cause of education and colleges and schools rapidly increased throughout the country. This policy continued in its uninterrupted course till 1882 when under the Government of Lord Ripon another Education Commission was appointed for the further development of the educational system. Lord Ripon considering the inadequate number of Universities, conceived the idea of adding two more Universities, one of which he himself established at Lahore in 1882, and the other was established by his successor at Allahabad in 1887.

But here dropped the curtain over the educational progress of India. The growing clamour of the people for increased rights and privileges and their incessant demand for participation in the administration of the country led a nervous bureaucracy to regard education in the same light as it was regarded in 1857. The people having their minds and ideas expanded by Western education were aspiring to Western institutions. It was indeed the dawning of "the proudest day of England" which Macaulay in his prophetic vision had foreseen and anticipated nearly seventy years before. But un-

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fortunately for India and England with the advent of Lord Curzon the educational policy of the Government underwent a marked transformation.

Lord Curzon came in 1899 with twelve problems in his pocket for the execution of which he obtained unfortunately for himself as well as for India a further extension of his office during which the "brilliant Viceroy" in the name of efficiency, set back the hand of progress in almost every direction, education receiving his foremost attention. It was a veritable Pandora's Box that he carried which let loose all the forces of unrest, dislocating the existing order of things, reversing past policies and filling the minds of the people with concern and anxiety, hope alone remaining. Here were sown the seeds of that discontent which a Milton might well have invoked his muse to sing and from which both the Government and the country have been reaping so abundantly. His educational policy of 1902 culminating in the Indian Universities Act of 1904 dealt a death-blow to the further expansion of education and by its stringent rules and regulations sapped all indigenous enterprise for its further development. It was argued that the previous policy had served to extend the surface at the sacrifice of depth, and that a shearing process was necessary to check all superfluous growth. Pruning is undoubtedly good, but the use of the pruning knife on a growing plant before it has put forth abundant leaves and branches is an operation which is calculated more to destroy than to improve. These rules and regulations would have been unobjectionable if only equal care had been taken for the proper accommodation of the ever increasing influx of boys pressing every year for admission into the existing institutions. Hundreds of young men are debarred from the colleges and thousands of boys are thrown out of schools and turned adrift aimless and unequipped into this world to fight out the battle of life. It is an undeniable fact that within the narrow scope of the present regulations some improvements have been effected and larger grants have in recent years been made for education; but it cannot be overlooked that nearly 40 per cent of these grants are absorbed in supervision and superintendence while general education as well as the lower educational services are being practically starved. Depth may be preferred to surface, but a "top heavy" construction is always unsafe to any structure even with the deepest foundation which human ingenuity may devise. In a country which, with the exception of Russia, is larger than the continent of Europe, there are now no more than 150 Colleges of all sorts and a little over 1300 High Schools and 1,27,000 Primary Schools for the education of the masses for a population of over 255 Millions, and yielding a percentage of barely 7 literate men out of this vast population. It may be noted here that two-thirds of these Colleges and three-fourths of the High Schools are private Institutions. This is the sum-total of educational progress made under a benevolent despotism during a period of 160 years and imagination fails to pierce into the dim and distant future when even half the population of this vast continent shall be so far advanced as to be able to read and write their names. That is how education stands in the country after more than one and half a century of British rule, and yet a modest Bill introduced by a Congressman for Elementary Education was thrown out with a few com-

plimentary platitudes. The people demand a general diffusion of elementary education for the mass as preferable to no education, while Government insists upon better education for a few rather than wide-spread light for the many. No one can reasonably object to the quality of education for the few being improved, but a belief has gained ground in the public mind, not without some show of reason, that Government has begun to view the educational problem with suspicion and distrust and to reverse the engine for a backward motion. There is, however, no room for doubt that under the plea for creating a "serene atmosphere of education" political considerations have been largely introduced in the department of Education. In driving out the wooden chip the iron nail has been thrust in. Teachers have turned into spies and not in few cases are Superintendents suspected of having assumed the role of C. I. D. officers. The sanctity of the temples of learning has been violated and our boys and youngmen are brought up in the unhealthy atmosphere of what may be called insecure jails. This the people sorely resent and here the first conflict has taken place between a sensitive subject race and an autocratic Government, each believing the other to be in the wrong and neither trusting the other either for mutual understanding or for a rational settlement of the question.

THE ADMINISTRATION.

The next point of conflict lies in the administration itself. It is a preposterous attempt to compel a child to lisp when he is able to speak and force him to crawl on his knees when he is able to walk on his legs. It is no rebellion in the adult members of a family to exercise their discretion and judgment and even to interfere, to some extent, in the management of its affairs, and a reasonable *Pater familia* ought cheerfully to accept a change which is calculated only to relieve and not to dethrone him. What is true of a family is also true of a paternal government. A government must always conform itself to its changing environments and adapt itself to the ideas and requirements of the community which it is called upon to govern. The highest claim of British rule in India is not founded upon its military strength but upon its moral grandeur. Security of life and property is no doubt one of the highest attributes of a settled government, but this attribute is more or less to be found among backward, uncivilised governments anxious for their own existence. A pure form of administration of justice is the bed-rock of a civilised Government and it is this administration of justice which more than anything else has led broad and deep the foundations of British rule in India resting upon the affection and confidence of the people. Anything which tends to undermine that foundation is therefore fraught with danger to the superstructure. As men are born free they naturally value their life and liberty infinitely more than their property. For property is a man's accident, while liberty is his birth-right. In every country, therefore, the administration of criminal justice which affects life and liberty is viewed with much greater interest than the administration of civil justice and that is why even in this country lawyers find the criminal branch of their profession more lucrative than the civil one. In fact the administration of criminal justice in any country is more a political question than a mere

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settlement of private disputes. The greatest defect in the administration of criminal justice in this country lies in the fusion and combination of the judicial and the executive functions—a system in which the prosecutor and the judge, the man who works up a charge and the man who sits in judgment over that charge are rolled into one. For thirty years the Congress has cried hoarse for the separation of this unholy combination, hundreds of cases from unimpeachable and unchallenged records have been cited from year to year to illustrate the baneful results of the system which is calculated more than anything else, to shake the confidence of the people in the integrity of the administration of justice. Cases have occurred—and they are not few and far between—where racial considerations have outweighed the demands of justice, and the life of an Indian has not received greater considerations than that of a crab or a tortoise. There are of course men who are strong enough to challenge and drive discontent underground, but no one has the power to see underground and watch the secret progress which such discontent silently works in its subterranean course. One complete generation has passed away since the Indian National Congress first drew the attention of Government to the danger underlying this inequitable system. One Viceroy considered his duty discharged by calling the proposal of the congress a “Counsel of perfection” ; two successive Secretaries of State vied with each other in their pious wish to inaugurate this reform ; while at least one Indian administrator denounced the existing system as being unworthy of “rational beings.” But the system still continues and seems to possess a charmed life which defies both a natural and a violent death. Sir Harvey Adamson was reported to have actually gone so far as to submit a scheme for the proposed reform in 1908 and all sorts of speculations have been afloat in recent years ; but no body knows where the proposal sticks and where it now rests,—whether on the dusty upper shelves of the Indian Secretariat at Simla or in the archives of the Indian Office at White Hall. Wherever it may lie its fate has so far been determined by the spirit of bureaucratic rule nervous to part with the narrowest shred of authority. If this one reform had been carried out one half of the causes of the present discontent would have vanished, and it is just possible that the ugly developments with which the Government is at present confronted might never have appeared.

The next point of conflict between the bureaucracy and the people has reference to the Liberty of the Press. The press is entirely a Western institution so firmly ingrafted with Western education and incorporated with Western methods of administration, that it is now impossible to retain the one and remove the other. In every civilised country the Press has played the double role of the educator of the public and the interpreter to the Government. In India the Press, with all its defects and lapses, as well as its numerous difficulties and disabilities, has played an important part in the evolution of National life, and its chequered history is no mean evidence of the firm hold it has over the public mind and the sustaining energies of a growing people. It is not necessary to pursue that history. Suffice it to say that since the repeal of Lord Lytton's Gagging Act of 1878 the Indian Press steadily grew into a power which with a little more sympathetic treatment might easily

The Press Act and the Liberty of the Press.

have been converted into a useful adjunct of the administration. Unfortunately, however, the Anglo-Indian Press began to be jealous of its formidable rival and the bureaucracy grew nervous of its strength. An ugly development for which the Indian Press was no more responsible than for the collision which took place at this time between the *Campertown* and the *Victoria* in the Atlantic, furnished an excuse and afforded an opportunity for again muzzling the Press in a way unprecedented in the history of any civilised country where a public Press exists. The Press Act of 1910, conceived in a spirit of repression, has reduced the Indian Press from its position as an independent critic of the Government to that of an institution entirely dependent upon sufferance. Within this short period of less than seven years there has been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers have been suppressed, printing presses confiscated and their securities forfeited to an extent which has bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists. According to a statement furnished by Sir Reginald Craddock in February last there were no less than six press prosecutions and in no less than five cases securities of newspapers were enhanced and no less than two hundred and twenty newspapers, both English and vernacular, ceased publication since the outbreak of the war and up to that date. The liberty of the Indian Press is practically gone and the highest tribunals in the land have declared themselves powerless to protect it. When the Act was passed the extreme rigour of the measure was admitted, but an assurance was given that it would be administered with care and consideration. Whether that assurance has been honoured more in its breach than in its observance may be left to the judgment of the public. And last, not least, an extraordinary woman, Irish by birth, English by marriage and Indian by adoption, has been caught in the meshes of this Act, and the provisions of the Defence Act are set in operation to coerce and restrain her. One Government has under cover of the latter, interdicted Mrs. Besant from profaning its sacred territories with the touch of her feet, while another Government, acting under the former, not content with forfeiting the security of an old press, has demanded an exorbitant security for her paper which threatens it with extinction. Gentlemen, how fast doth contagion spread! Before I could finish writing these pages another Government has issued orders prohibiting her at the eleventh hour not to attend a religious conference held within its territories. I should not be surprised if the British public were to doubt the accuracy of this statement. The lame excuse offered by the C. P. Government for its extraordinary action has however, failed to satisfy the Indian public. Mrs. Besant is as yet free—I use the word subject to correction—to live in British India and to travel over British India, but not to cross the Vindhya Chains and touch the sacred soil of Bombay and the Central Provinces. Are Bombay and the Central Provinces outside British India? She is charged by the Madras Government with matter seditious printed at her press. The Madras High Court has distinctly found that there was nothing seditious in her writing. Two High Courts have concurrently held that there may be illegal forfeitures under this Act and yet they were powerless to grant any relief. The appellate powers of the High Courts under the Act are a delusion and a snare. Yet there seems to be no disposition on the part of

the Government either to withdraw or to modify this retrograde measure, although where a necessity for the bureaucracy arises a Bill may be passed at one sitting of the council and a Validating Act rushed through to legalise its illegal proceedings. So much for the Law Member's assurances and promises upon the strength of which the Indian members of the Council were led to vote for this dangerous enactment in their desire to help the Government at a critical moment. We may not see eye to eye with Mrs. Besant in many matters, but our hearts go forth to her in her trials and tribulations which not only affect her personal interests but are also a standing menace to the liberties of the Indian subjects of His Majesty. What is Mrs. Besant's offence? Is it that she loves India as she loves her own native land? What is her offence? Is it that her womanly instinct has led her to raise her manly voice in defence of the rights and liberties of a subject race, whose present condition, as contrasted with its ancient civilisation and departed glories, has found a place in her sympathies and got a hold upon her imagination, to which many people of her race are either blind or impervious? The days of chivalry are gone and even womanhood is no protection against bureaucratic insensibilities. If she is seditious, why not try her for sedition in an open court where, if convicted, she will cease to be idolised as a martyr? I hope the matter will not rest here, but will be carried beyond the seas and heard in a free country and by a free people before whose tribunal even an heir-apparent to the Throne bows as low as the humblest subject of the realm to receive his judgment. The shrieks of a dying press, which have been so far drowned in the tumults of a devastating war, will not then go altogether unheeded. Laws may be enacted here to stifle the voice of public opinion, but a great nation nurtured on the lap of freedom cannot long tolerate a method of administration which is so entirely repugnant to its instinct and tradition. It only requires to be correctly informed and duly impressed. It may be difficult to move it; but once in motion even the omnipotent power of the bureaucracy will not avail to arrest its onward march towards the establishment of freedom in this land.

The sufferings of Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak are well-known to the public. I am here neither to defend nor to denounce him. The latest proceedings which were instituted against him at Poona have, however, raised a grave issue which cannot be passed over. I cannot persuade myself to believe that in initiating these proceedings the authorities were actuated by any unworthy motive. But I deeply regret that Government was ill-advised in taking them at a time and under circumstances where its action was liable to be misconstrued. In disposing of this case, Sir Stanley Batchelor has enunciated a law, the correctness of which seems to be open to grave doubts. He says that the condemnation of the Civil Service *en bloc* is tantamount to a condemnation of the Sovereign authority, as the service is an agent of that authority. Carried to its legitimate consequences, this dictum would be a bar to any criticism against any of the services. The Criminal Intelligence Department is at present in closer touch with the Government than even the Civil Service and may be

regarded, as such, a more accredited agent of the Government. And what is there to prevent the principle here enunciated from being applied to that department, or to the Police in general, and for the matter of that to the village chowkidars? The law of Agency cannot apply to the relation between the Crown and its servants. Some years back, this question was pointedly raised when Sir George Campbell who was not inaptly called the Tiberius of the Indian Civil Service charged the *Hindu Patriot* with "ill-will towards Government" for its strong criticism of the Civil Service. The late Kristodas Pal most forcibly and faithfully drew this distinction between the state and the service. He said :—"The words 'ill-will to Government' are not however explicit. Is the word Government in the phrase intended to mean the Queen's government or the Local Administration?—the ruling power or the executive agency?—the Sovereign mistress of the Empire, or her officers in the country? None is better aware than His Honour that the Supreme Power and the administrative authority are quite distinct; and nowhere is this distinction made so broadly and clearly as in England. When for instance, Mr. Disraeli denounced the other day the present Government of Her Majesty as 'blundering and plundering,' it would be a gross perversion of language to interpret this imputation into 'ill-will to Government,' that is, the Sovereign authority, the Queen herself. * * * It would be impertinent in me to remark that if criticisms of public men and measures be construed into 'ill-will to Government' there is not a single journal in this country, with the slightest pretence to independence, which would not be open to this charge." In our own times, the fulminations of Sir Edward Carson inciting the Ulstermen to stand against the established government in England are still fresh in the minds of the public and yet this leader of the Orangemen was not considered unworthy of receiving an invitation to a conference from the King himself. In India by a strange irony of fate even the long-established principles of law easily yield to much wider interpretation and judges are not wanting who hold that a sharp criticism of even a member of the ruling race is equivalent to a contempt of the Government itself. Gentlemen, the ill-starred definition of *disaffection* has died out; but here arises another alarming dictum which should engage your serious attention.

The Indian Arms Act is another source of irritation which has estranged the feeling between the people and the governing class. Apart from the invidious and irritating character of this measure it has emasculated a whole nation, degraded them not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of other races not in any way superior to them, and reduced them to a condition of absolute helplessness. It has stunted the growth of a people, dwarfed its mental stature and debased its moral character, by depriving it of its sense of national self-respect. It has reduced it to the position of political *pariahs* smarting under disgrace and without any sense of responsibility. Maharajah Jabbar Jung Bahadur may not carry a single revolver for his own protection; but his driver Jones may have any number of them for his pastime, for purpose of illicit sale, and for shooting not only pheas-

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sants but also sometimes a poor Indian peasant whom he may easily mistake for a pig. But all bad measures are like the devil's engine which must at one time or other recoil back on him who uses it, and this is what has happened. It is as easy to govern a country by disarming its entire population as to convert a whole country into a jail. Anarchism has reared its head and there has been a recrudescence of lawlessness in some part of the country. Dastardly assassinations are committed in crowded cities in broad daylight and daring robberies are committed like candle-light performances in an Opera House. The reply to all this, which has so far been vouchsafed, is that the people are cowards and are unable to help themselves. But whose fault is it if the people are cowards and unable to help themselves? Is it of the people who have been made cowards and helpless, or of those who have made them so? It is quite refreshing to hear of people seriously advised to arm themselves with brickbats and bamboo *lathies* to face an armed band of robbers and assassins equipped with Martini rifles and Mauser revolvers. Example is said to be better than precept, and those who indulge in ludicrous advice of this sort would do infinitely better to set an example themselves before they can persuade others to follow them. Even Hercules did not venture to challenge the Larnian Hydra without his club. The Arms Act has been practically reduced to a dead letter, for the lawless few are never in want of any firearms, but it is the law-abiding many that have been deprived of the use of them. A great empire and a little mind are said to go ill together. And where the spirit of confidence is wanting in an administration its means and measures must be weak and self-contradictory and thus ultimately defeating its own end.

And now, where other repressive measures have failed to restore peace and order in the country, a deadlier instrument has been put into requisition. A desperate situation no doubt calls for a drastic remedy and no one has a right to complain if Government is obliged to take an extreme precautionary measure in view of a conflagration which is now devastating all the five continents of the world. The Defence of India Act like the Defence of the Realm Act in England was no doubt necessitated by the exigencies of the situation, but the purposes to which it is being used appear to be entirely foreign to the spirit and outside the scope of this extraordinary enactment, while the safeguards provided in the home-measure have been wholly dispensed with in its operation in this country. Again when the Act was passed an assurance was not wanting that it would be administered with great care and consideration. It was undoubtedly an emergency Act necessitated by the extraordinary circumstances which suspended the ordinary course of law and vested the administration of justice in certain cases entirely in the executive Government of the country.

Gentlemen, the sting of every repressive measure, is in its tail. There is a small clause in these enactments which passes without any debate in the legislative council authorising the executive Government to frame rules to give effect to the operation of such a measure. These rules, hatched in secret beyond the ken of the established legislature and beyond the scope of public criticism, suddenly emanate full panoplied like Minerva

springing out of Jupiter's head. These rules sometimes thrice the size and volume of the Act itself, govern the proceedings. In the case of the Defence of India Act, Section 2 provides this brief little authority which is now deciding the fate not only of so many young men but also of some of the public men in the country without a trial and without a hearing. The Act provides the slender safeguards of a special tribunal final in its decision, but the rules have taken away even this safeguard in cases of internments and interdictions provided by clause (f) of section 2 of the enactment. A man may invoke the aid of the tribunal if he violates the rules but not when the rules are enforced against him. It may be no injustice done to characterise it as "Jedburgh Justice." The Defence of India Act is essentially a war-measure and although the expression "Safety of India" is introduced in its preamble it clearly indicates such safety as may be jeopardised only by the war-conditions with the enemy. It never could have been intended to cover public peace and tranquility in the internal administration of the country for which ample provisions already exist in the adjective law of the land. Is there any evidence that the assassinations, dastardly as they are, which are perpetrated mostly against Indian police-officers, and some of which took place even before the Serajevo-outrage, have any connection with German intrigue, or is there anything to show that the property plundered in course of armed brigandage find their way or are even intended to find their way to the German Exchequer? The assassination of Earl Mayo and Chief Justice Norman and even the more recent murders of Rand and Ayerst and of Judge Jackson did not necessitate such a measure. It is clear therefore, that the Defence of India Act was never intended for internal administration at home, but only to govern external relations with the enemy countries abroad. But how sad it is to contemplate that it has been so widely diverted from its legitimate scope, and how are its provisions being applied in India! A secret murder perpetrated and burglary committed, and, in fact, every piece of a diabolical crime, whether committed before or after the outbreak of hostilities, where the criminals cannot be detected and punished under the ordinary law of the land, are made the occasion for the use of this lawless law. Where an accused person is tried and acquitted by a court of justice he is good for a capture under the provisions of this Act. In one province alone nearly 600 young men have up to this time been arrested, a considerable number of whom have already been domiciled in different parts of the country, while others are passing through their purgatory in the gloomy cells of Dallanda House preparatory to the receipt of their judgment. These proceedings are generally believed to be based upon the informations supplied by the spies whose occupation would be gone if their activities could not be maintained. We are told that the final judgment in these cases is vested in an officer who is "fit to be a High Court Judge". Yes, but the misfortune is that after all he *is not* a High Court Judge and that makes a world-wide difference. He does not breathe the atmosphere of a High Court, he is not swayed by the considerations of a High Court and he has not the means and materials of a High Court Judge, and it is no consolation to the people to learn that he is fit to be a High Court Judge.

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Then it would be something if this would-be High Court Judge were allowed to dispose of these cases in the presence of the accused persons sitting even *in camera*. Even Rogers Casement charged with the blackest of crimes—the charge of high treason and conspiracy with the enemy of the King—had an open trial and a right of appeal. Are the detainees under the Defence of India Act guilty of more heinous crimes and misdemeanour? Even the certificate of a District Officer or of a Divisional Commissioner affords no protection against the report of spies. Anarchism is the common enemy of mankind throughout the world. In every country and every age civilised humanity has refused to recognise the brotherhood of the secret murderer and the dastardly assassin, and none but an anarchist need defend or support an anarchist. But a general crusade against a community in the name of anarchism is justified neither by reason, nor logic, nor considerations of expediency. The rats are a recognised nuisance and for aught we know they may be also responsible for the plague and the pestilence. But if the rats are so sly as to elude our grasp and so subtle as not to come into the cage laid for them, no man in his senses and even under the greatest provocation should so far forget himself as to be induced to set fire to the house to get rid of these pests.

An almost insurmountable colour bar has been drawn up that runs through almost every department of the state which the children of the soil are forbidden to cross. The entire administration is divided into two compartments, one Imperial and the other Provincial. The boxes are all reserved and it is only the pit which is open to the people. In the Civil Service, in the Educational Service and in the Medical Service everywhere there is a sharp racial distinction irrespective of qualification and competency, which is as arbitrary as it is galling to the feelings and sentiments of the people. Competition, the most effective test of merit, has been superseded by nomination, and offices are largely distributed as mere patronage. The services are visibly deteriorating and strange as it may sound a Government which finds in the caste system of the people such a serious obstacle to their national advancement is sedulously building up an official caste almost as rigid and as exclusive as the Brahmanical hierarchy ever was. The officials have generally lost all touch with the people and there is now no greater passport to public employment than a hereditary claim which grows by what it feeds on. Fusion is the first principle of national growth, but disintegration is the policy of a bureaucracy to counteract that growth.

IMMIGRATION.

Gentlemen, it is with a sense of pain, shame and humiliation that I approach the question of immigration and indentured labour. India, the granary of the world, is unable to maintain her surplus population and thousands of her children, like her raw materials, are sent away to other countries for employment for the bare necessities of life. The immigrants, so absolutely necessary for the development of the resources of South Africa, Australia and Canada, are treated there as helots and India is

regarded to-day throughout the civilised world as the recruiting ground for *coolies* necessary for manual labour. I do not hesitate to denounce this degrading system as the last relic of slavery within the British Empire. The question is said to be not free from difficulties, but all these difficulties are due more in the relation of Great Britain in regard to her self-governing colonies than to the condition of India herself. Mr. Gandhi's heroic struggles in South Africa are fresh in the minds of our people and Lord Hardinge's effort to ameliorate the condition of the Indian settlers in the British Colonies evoked more sharp criticism than active sympathy in the United Kingdom. It is galling that peoples of yesterday who have scarcely a tradition of their own should be permitted to treat as slaves people whose civilisation goes back to the morning of this world. Lord Gladstone in opening the Parliament of the South African Union only a few years ago reminded them of this fact and bore striking testimony to the worth of the Indian people. He said,—“I have made special study of the Indian history and have later visited India. I wish more South Africans could go there and by so doing rise to the highest appreciation of what the Indians were. They would then think less of India as a country which sends its coolies to the South African Coast. In fact India has developed perhaps far above the line attained by some parts of the British Empire in its civilisation and efforts to rise to a higher life.” But what avails such testimony? Slaves at home can never be treated as free men abroad. I use the word in the sense in which Mill has used it. “They are slaves,” says Mill “who cannot help themselves.” Complete Reciprocity and Retaliation are the only remedies for this degrading humiliation inflicted upon our people, and Home Rule alone can furnish the necessary prescription. So long as the Canadian, the South African and the Australian are free to settle in India and also to find their way to the public services of the country, no tinkering measure, no controlling wages will solve the question.

THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

Gentlemen, if the ill-fated Swadeshi Movement had been directed in its proper channel and not checked as an unhealthy growth, the question of the industrial development of India, which has now attracted the anxious attention of Government, might have admitted of a much easier solution. The war has disclosed that in 1905 the Indian Nationalists declared hostilities not against Great Britain, but against Germany and Austria, and that if the Authorities in India had taken a more dispassionate and far-sighted view of the situation, German and Austrian trade in India would have died ten years ago and without a naval blockade. The fault, however, did not lie wholly with the Government, but the people had also to bear a share of the responsibility. However that may be, the question of rebuilding Indian industries out of their ashes is not free from serious difficulties, and unless Government is prepared honestly and resolutely to come forward to make atonement for its past sins of commission and omission, it may never be solved. Much is said about the phenomenal progress of Japan and Sir Thomas Holland has recently thrown a flood of light upon her industrial development. But what is the secret of her success? Amidst all the

disquisitions and speculations which have gathered round the question there looms large one fact which can neither be overlooked nor disputed. Japan possesses a National Government which India does not. In Japan there is no clashing of interest between the people and the State, but in India although the interests of the Government may not collide with those of the people, its industrial policy is to a large extent controlled by considerations independent of the interest of India. Gentlemen, I pause here for a moment to thank the Government of the United Provinces which is the only administration that has as yet taken any practical interest in the development of some of our industries.

If however, for any reason the Government finds itself handicapped in the way of building up new industries on its own account, as in Japan, it can at any rate do much to help and encourage such industries. It can add a portfolio of industries to the member in charge of Commerce and carry on an investigation through experts as to which industry is best suited to what part of the country, regard being had to the production of raw materials, facilities of communication and labour. Then as Indian capital starts any business on a sound and substantial basis, the Government may come forward to purchase a portion of its shares in order to secure both an effective control over it and an abiding interest in its success. And, above all, it may guarantee to such a concern a certain rate of profit or dividend for a period sufficient to enable it to stand on its own legs, while it may render no inconsiderable help by becoming its customer for its own purposes. It may also remove all unjustifiable excise duties and grant railway concessions. If the Government will do all this, it will discharge its function as a benevolent state and remove the shyness of Indian Capital in an unequal competition with its formidable foreign rivals. If this cannot be done the Government will be well advised not to waste its money over academic conferences and commissions to serve no other purpose than that of raising false hopes and aggravating public discontent.

In this connection I would make a passing reference to an important question in regard to which the opinions of public bodies and associations are being sought, but which, as far as I can see, has not excited much public interest ;—I mean the proposal to transfer the railways to private Companies. It is a great economic question and ought not to be as lightly treated as it appears to have been done in certain unexpected quarters. The Railways are one of the most important state concerns whose earnings constitute by no means an inconsiderable portion of the State revenues. The great highways of trade and commerce are public domain and belong to the State. To transfer them to any private individual or individuals or to allow them to manage them may be an act amounting to a serious infringement of public rights and an abdication of a State function. We are looking forward to a time when the Government will become national if not in its *personnel* at least in its aims and purposes and the railways owned by the State and controlled by the state will then be conducted upon national lines and will be the hand-maid of the national industries by offering facilities for their growth and development. The time has come for the definite acceptance of this policy.

A NATIONAL MILITIA.

Gentlemen, no people can be either self-respecting or respected by others unless they are able to defend themselves. A people always dependent upon Government for the safety of their life and property must be an intolerable burden on the state and a source of weakness to it. A vast empire like British India, without a National army, protected by a nominal force of 70 thousand European soldiers and 140 thousand Indian troops may be a wonderful feat; but it is a most dangerous experiment. If the Indians were trained but as volunteers only five years ago, although the Congress has been demanding the privilege for the last twenty-five years, the humiliating spectacle of Lord Kitchener, Lloyd George and Lord Derby alternately coaxing and threatening the British people for raising an army of two millions might easily have been avoided and at all events a general conscription, so distasteful to British tradition, might not have to-day become such an imperative necessity. India, with her teeming millions properly trained and equipped, standing behind England can present an invincible front against any power in the world. The question is not one of men and materials, but of trust and confidence. But has not India given sufficient proof of her fidelity and devotion to the British connection? If not, England must stand self-condemned before the eyes of the civilised world.

Such is the situation. Bureaucracy has accomplished its work. It has established order and tranquility. But it has outgrown itself. Its continued existence is fraught with mischief and unable to cope with the rising forces of popular opinion and with the demands created with the new spirit, it has had recourse to a policy which has excited grave public discontent. What then is to be the remedy? That remedy is what has been so effectively applied in other countries similarly circumstanced; and the remedy which suggests itself to the Indian mind, as it occurred to John Stuart Mill and to Edmund Burke, lies in the grant of

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

Call it Home Rule, call it Self-Rule, call it *Swaraj*, call it Self-Government, it is all one and the same thing—it is Representative Government. The idea is not a new one, nor is it the revelation of any evangelist. As far as I am aware, the idea dawned upon the people in 1882 when the agitation on the Ilbert Bill first revealed to the people the helplessness of their situation. A *National League* was then formed and a burning pamphlet called the *Star in the East* was issued which was written in a style and language which if employed at the present day would have surely stranded the writer in serious difficulties. Lord Ripon fully anticipated the demand when in his famous Resolution of January 1882 he told the people that "local self-government must precede national self-government". Although the first Indian National Congress passed no resolution directly bearing on the question, the notification under which it was called into existence clearly stated that one of the objects of the future assembly was "indirectly to form the germ of an Indian Parliament which, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the

assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institution". And Mrs. Annie Besant in her admirable book, *How India Wrought for Freedom*, has pointedly referred to the utterance of the Grand Old Man of India which clearly foreshadowed the coming demand of the Indian people for self-government. Ever since then the idea worked and matured itself when in the brilliant session of the Congress in 1906, it found an emphatic and unequivocal pronouncement from the very same patriarch of the Indian political world in his trumpet call for *Swaraj* which has since then stirred the Indian mind to its utmost depth to find the true remedy which it had so far sought in vain. A generation has passed away, but a generation has risen whose sole and wholehearted demand is nothing short of self-government as the sovereign remedy for the present unsatisfactory situation. A cry has however, been raised that we are not yet fit for self-government. Procrastination is the proverbial thief of time. It is also the orthodox plea of a frame of mind which, unable to cope with an untenable position, only asks for an adjournment to seek for a compromise on the most favourable terms.

But before we proceed to discuss this question, we must first divest ourselves of the dogmatism which prevails with equal force, though not with equal authority, on both sides, and try to understand the question in the light of the unanswerable logic of facts. Let us see what are the requisites of self-government and how far the Indian people possess these requisites to reasonably demand self-government.

John Stuart Mill in his book on Representative Government lays down three conditions for self-government which are now universally accepted by all writers on political philosophy. These conditions are:—1st, that the people for whom the form of government is intended should be willing to accept it; 2nd, that they must be willing and able to do what is necessary to keep it standing; and 3rd, that they must be willing and able to do what it requires of them to enable it to fulfil its purposes. To these three tests I will add a fourth, by way of a rider, directly to meet the argument of our critics,—have the people given satisfactory evidence of their capacity for Self-Government?

It will be noticed that Mill nowhere lays down Education as a separate and independent test for Self-Government and this is for a very good reason. Education no doubt sharpens and stimulates the other tests; but it cannot be the sole or even the main test for a National Government. The Hindus in the 13th century and the Mussalmans of India in the 18th century were the masters of no inconsiderable share of unprofitable learning; but it neither developed their national solidarity, nor strengthened their national character, and both in their turn fell an easy prey to a superior force. The Mahomedan historian admits that India was conquered not by superior education, but by superior Islamic national solidarity and strength. On the other hand the Slave Republic of Liberia was established by an uneducated mass of emigrants from America upon their liberation towards the beginning of the 19th Century. Then take the case of Europe. There also education has not played a very important

part in determining the form of government suited to each country. According to the latest statistics available Norway and Sweden carry the largest percentage of educated population, it being 97, England has a percentage of 87, France 78, Germany 91 and Portugal 56. If education had been the determining factor, Norway and Sweden would not have been practically an absolute Monarchy and France or Portugal a Republic, while Germany would have long ceased to be a military despotism where a subaltern can with impunity punish judges and magistrates for the grave offence of not being deferential to his uniform and the theory of the *Superman* sways the minds of 80 millions of human beings of the highest culture and erudition in the world. What was the education of England during the reign of Charles I, and was not the Magna Charta wrested from a despotic king by a band of uneducated barons who could sign their names only by scrolls and marks ?

In 1821 there were nearly 18,500 schools with 650,000 scholars in Great Britain. In the year 1858 the number of schools rose to 122,000 and the scholars to over 3,000,000. We have it on the authority of the Education Commission of 1882 that prior to 1854 when the first Educational Despatch of Sir Charles Wood was issued there were merely a million of students in British India receiving elementary education in the various indigenous institutions. The statement of the member of Education in 1914 shows that there are at present 127,000 schools with over 5,000,000 scholars receiving such education. It would thus appear that the number and the percentage of literates in Great Britain in the reign of George IV were not higher than those of India in the reign of His Gracious Majesty George V, and that the number, though not the percentage, of literates in India in 1914 does not compare very unfavourably with that of Great Britain in 1858. And yet what *was* the constitution of Great Britain in 1821 and what *is* the constitution of British India in 1916! Education therefore, though it may help and promote Self-Government, is not an indispensable condition or a condition precedent to Self-Government.

The first condition needs not much elaboration, as the willingness of the people for self-government is not only admitted, but is said to be premature and somewhat extravagant. The press and the platform even in their present muzzled condition are ringing with the cry for self-government and on every occasion whether in the heated Council Chambers or in the serene atmosphere of literary discussions there is an insistent demand for self-government as the only remedy for the present situation.

The second and the third conditions may be considered together. India, self-contained and contented, with its natural defences and internal resources presents a bulwark against all foreign aggression. Its danger is not from without but from within. During the last sixty years since the Crown has assumed the reins of government it must be admitted that there has not been even the ripple of a disturbance and the people, educated or uneducated, despite all their vexations and disappointments, their hardships, their grie-

First condition.

Second and Third conditions.

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vances and the irritating measures which have so often provoked their patience, have throughout stood fast by the Crown. They have protested, but have nowhere resisted the measures of the Government. Since the outbreak of the war, India has been practically denuded of soldiers and it has been possible for Government to maintain peace and order throughout the vast country with only the help of the police as it exists in India. Those who recklessly cry "the wolf" ought to know that if the wolf had really been anywhere in the field, it would not have been possible long to indulge in this foolish trick. It ought to be fairly conceded that the credit of this remarkable achievement is evenly divided between the Government and the people,—the confidence of the people in the Government and the trust of the Government in the people; and that any attempt on the part of either to appropriate it to itself the whole credit is an absurd pretension. The spirit of co-operation and self-help infused into the minds of our people mainly by the inspiring breath of the Congress, and the numberless societies, missions and associations which have sprung up throughout the country with philanthropic and other aims and objects, are sufficiently indicative of the quickening of a national life, and the courage and endurance displayed by our young men in every public cause, are all unmistakable evidence of the readiness of the people to support the administration. In flood and famine, in fires and fams and in other positions of dangers, difficulties and distress there are thousands of youngmen who eagerly rush forward to help the administration without waiting for recognition or expecting any reward and despite police surveillance to which they are subjected. The Hospital Ships furnished by Bombay and Madras, the Ambulance Corps and the Double Company provided by Bengal and the various war funds raised throughout the country are no mean evidence of the willingness and readiness of the people to co-operate with the administration. All these, in my opinion, afford striking evidence of the devotion and the capacity for self-sacrifice which our countrymen are prepared to incur in the public interests and which constitute the most valuable qualification for self-rule. This shows that our people are willing and able to make the Government stand and are ready to make the necessary sacrifices for the establishment of National Government. Lapses no doubt there are, but do they not occur even among people invested with full measure of self-government? A National Government would shift the burden as well as its odium and unpopularity from the state to the people and would necessarily make them still more alive to their responsibilities. It is power which creates responsibility. Responsibility without power is a debt without security which cannot be enforced if left undischarged.

It was George Yule who, twenty years ago, speaking at the first Congress held in the United Provinces, said that all political agitations have to pass through three stages—that of Ridicule, Opposition and Concession. We have long passed the stage of Ridicule and almost passed the second stage and we are now practically on the debatable ground between Opposition and Concession standing more on the firm soil of the latter than on the slippery ground of the former.

There are however those who say "not yet". Not yet! Then

‘when’?—asks the Indian Nationalist. But here the Oracle is dumb and Echo only answers—‘when’! Edwin Bevan’s parable of “the Patient and the Steelframe” is cited and the people are strictly enjoined to lie in peace and possess their souls in patience until their political *Nirvana* is accomplished. Similies and metaphors are not safe guides in practical life, for all fables are but fallacies clothed in equivocal language which captivates the imagination and deludes the reason. For even the patient in the “steel frame” requires a gradual relaxation and occasional readjustment of his splints and bandages and, above all, a steady, substantial improvement in his dietary arrangements, as after all it is the food and nourishment and not the splints and bandages, that are calculated to give him strength and cure him of his injuries. You cannot indefinitely keep him on milk and sago to help either the “knitting of the bones” or the “granulation of the flesh”. Our critics however would enjoin “perfect quiet and repose” without prescribing any kind of diet until the people shall have in their spirit of quiescence fully recovered themselves in their steel frame. If any illustration were actually needed, one might fairly suggest that the case of either the swimmer or the rider would probably furnish a more apposite object lesson. You cannot expect the one to be an expert jockey without training him on the back of a horse, as you cannot expect the other to be an expert swimmer without allowing him to go into water. There must be repeated falls and duckings before any efficiency can be attained by either. Admitting for argument’s sake—and there can be no prejudice in such an admission—that the Indians are not yet as fit for self-government as the Europeans are, does it follow that they must only patiently contemplate in their steel frame without a stir till the day of their release? If that be so the day of their redemption will, in all probability, maintain its ever receding distance and the vision of the patient never realised. There is a school for the lawyer, the physician, the educationist and the engineer where he can obtain his passport and begin his profession; but is there any school or college where an aspirant can be admitted to his degree for Self-Government? It is through Self-Government that the art of Self-Government can be either taught or acquired. One must be drilled in the art of administration before he can acquire the steady use of his faculties in the work of practical administration. In the words of Mr. Gladstone, it is the institution of Self-Government which constitutes the best training ground for Self-Government. It is through failure that success can be achieved in practical politics. Such failure was fully anticipated by Lord Ripon in his famous Resolution of 1882, and it is through such failures that the British people have obtained the constitution of which they are so justly proud. In the reigns of James I, Charles I and his successors, what was the British constitution and the status of the British people when Parliament could be summoned or dismissed at the pleasure of a despotic sovereign and titles and offices were freely bought and sold without any regard to public interest? The mass of the people were steeped in ignorance, while the highest officers in the State were not sometimes free from intrigue and corruption. Yet the British people fought for their rights.

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and liberties and obtained them in the midst of these unfavourable condition. If they had ever allowed themselves to be kept in a steel frame until "nature resumed her active process," where would have been the splendid fabric of British constitutional freedom to-day? Nature never helps those who do not help themselves.

Now let us turn to a discussion of the rider which was started at the beginning of this question. Gentlemen, our critics have already begun sorting our politicians. I do not pretend to be a politician; but even if I were one, I would far rather go with the "politicians of the baser sort" than agree to rise one degree higher, or one degree lower as you may choose to call it, in the estimation of our critics, while as to the superlative degree I would ungrudgingly have it reserved for those who have so far forgotten the traditions of their own race as to completely divest themselves of the instincts of a free and liberty-loving people to which they ethnologically belong. The question to be answered is,—Have the Indian people given fair proof of their capacity for self-government? I do not like to indulge in theories: Let facts answer.

India possesses an area of 1,800,000 square miles with a population of 316 millions, of which over 700,000 square miles, or more than one-third of this area, with a population of over 70 millions, or close upon one-fourth, belong to the independent Native States. Now these States are entirely managed by Indian administrators, and it has to be admitted that some of them are marching ahead of British India in certain directions, particularly in respect of education, judicial reforms and industrial development which are the most sacred functions of a constitutional government. It must be borne in mind that not a few of these distinguished administrators who have achieved such brilliant results in the administration of these states are sometimes drawn from His Majesty's subjects in British India. Men like Sir Salar Jung, Sir Dinkar Rao, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Rao Bahadur Sirdar Sansar Chandra Sen, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt, Sir Sashiah Shastri, Mr. Ranga Charlu, Mr. Gouri Shankar Ojha, Mr. Seshadri Aiyer, Mr. B. L. Gupta, Mr. Nilambar Mukherjee and Mr. A. R. Banejee who have governed various Native States with such consummate ability and conspicuous success, have indisputably vindicated the capacity of their countrymen for the highest administrative offices. They have shown that if commanded by their Sovereign they were fit to hold any port-folio in the Government of India. If these distinguished administrators had their lot cast solely in British India many of them would have in all probability ended their careers as deputy-magistrates, a few as district officers and fewer still as officiating commissioners of divisions.

Then, have not Indians in British India given practical proof of their administrative capacity to qualify themselves for Self-Government? Have they not in the charge of districts both as judicial and executive officers, and have they not in charge of divisions or of a board of revenue, or in the intricate department of

audit and account given sufficient evidence of their ability and capacity for efficient administration? Have they not been tried in the humbler stages of local self-government as well as in the higher legislative assemblies? They have been tried in the inner circles of the Provincial as well as the Imperial administration and they have been also tried at the real seat of authority in Whitehall. True, Sir S. P. Sinha might never have aspired to the chair occupied by Maine and Macaulay; but has England sent any more Maines and Macaulays to fill that chair? Or was Sir S. P. Sinha or Sir Syed Ali Imam an altogether unworthy successor of Sir James Stephen or Sir C. P. Ilbert? In the great department of administration of justice they have been tried in the highest tribunals of the land where they have acted and are acting as Chief Justices with as much credit and distinction as any brought out from England, while in the domain of Education they have as Vice-Chancellors managed important universities in a way which has extorted the admiration, if not the envy, of the most captious critics. They have also managed with remarkable success the affairs of one of the foremost, if not the foremost, corporations in the country. All these they have done, and if they have not done more, it is their misfortune and not their fault.

Self-control, strength of mind and fidelity are among the highest virtues of an administrator, and judged by these tests, have not Indians

Other qualifications. acquitted themselves in a manner worthy of the best traditions of any service in the world? Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha's resignation of his seat in the Executive Council is still a mystery to the public. But whatever may be its solution, it is an open secret that at a critical time he withdrew the resignation that he had tendered and stood loyally by the Government. Has any body ever heard the faintest whisper of this incident from the lips of Sir Satyendra Prasanna Sinha? Then take another case. The Partition of Bengal had stirred the people of Bengal to a state of feverish excitement unprecedented in their history. Petitions and protests to Viceroy and Ministers were of no avail and after seven years of persistent agitation the people were awaiting in breathless suspense the decision of His Majesty. A despatch from the Governor-General in Council recommended a modification of the partition in August 1911 and Sir Syed Ali Imam was one of the signatories to this eventful document. Yet on the 12th December the Royal Proclamation came as a complete surprise both upon the local Governments as well as upon the people. The Partition was said to have been effected in the interest of the Mahomedans. But did Sir Syed Ali Imam either in his quivering lips or tell-tale eyes betray in the slightest degree the dead secret of the prison house within this anxious period of five months?

THE OBJECTIONS.

The most orthodox argument, in fact the only argument, now advanced against this natural and legitimate demand is, that the mass are silent and have not joined in the cry. This is an ingenuous argument; for an inarticulate mass will never speak and the reforms will not come. But have the mass at any time and in any country spoken out before any reform has been

An inarticulate mass and the educated community a bug-bear.

granted? The hydra-headed mass speak only in times of rebellion or revolution and even then under the inspiration of their leaders who rise out of the educated minority, but their voice is not heard amid a process of silent evolution in the benefits of which they are bound to participate. Did the mass in England cry for the *Magna Charta* or the Petition of Rights or the Reform Bill? The educated few have everywhere represented the ignorant many and history tells us that they have always been their unaccredited spokesmen. And then whose fault is it that the masses in India are dumb and illiterate? The Congress has cried and Congressmen have tried their utmost for the spread of elementary education and they have been told that the time has not yet arrived for universal compulsory education for the masses. We do not know if the Astrological Almanac is being consulted for an auspicious day for such an undertaking. It all looks like the trite old, yet never hackneyed, game of "head I win, tail you lose."

Then as a corollary to the above a further argument is advanced that there are so many communities and sub-divisions in this caste-ridden country that if Self-Government were conceded King Stork **Solicitude for the poor, caste system.** would one by one swallow up all the frogs and a Babel of disorder would follow in which men would run at one another's throats and render settled government impossible. Such keen solicitude for the poor and the weak is no doubt highly creditable to an enlightened administration; but in a country where more than two-fifths of the population live on insufficient food; where in 42 years there were 22 famines carrying away millions of human beings; a country which is admittedly the poorest and yet the most heavily taxed as well as burdened with the costliest of administrations; where the average earnings of the free citizen are almost half of what the prisoner in the jail gets for his food and raiment; where floods devastate and Malaria decimates without any remedy or redress, while piles of reports and recommendations of Commissions and Committees cover the archives of the Secretariats; where the poor have often to drink muddy liquids to appease their thirst; and where five out of every six children even in moderately decent families of the poor are allowed to grow up in ignorance—I say in a country like that men may not be wanting who might consider such paternal solicitude as too much of a protestation. I do not at all suggest that the Government of the country is solely or even primarily responsible for everyone of these untoward circumstances; but what I do maintain is that the apprehensions of the Government and its organs are ill-founded and unjustified. No doubt there is the baneful caste system, but there is also the counter-balancing distribution of labour and profession. The caste imposes only social restrictions and no political disabilities. Caste system in one shape or other and to some extent obtains in almost every society, but has nowhere stood as an insurmountable bar in the way of its political or economic development. Then is there no redeeming feature of the Indian social system with all its defects? Is there any country where every home is an asylum for the poor, and where the poor and the destitute are fed and clothed by their richer countrymen so generously? Is there any other people among whom the prevailing religions enjoin public charity without distinction of caste, colour or creed to such an extent that it has led

the advocates of modern civilisation to characterise it as encouraging "professional mendicancy"? Government no doubt honestly tries to mitigate the sufferings of the poor in the hour of their distress; but is any notice taken of the millions who are silently succoured by the well-to-do Hindus and Mahomedans out of their own pocket in accordance with the injunctions of their religions? Then, has not the Congress cried for 30 years for the amelioration of the condition of the masses as persistently as for political rights and privileges? If such be the case, where is the ground and where the evidence for the apprehension so keenly felt and so persistently echoed and re-echoed? The Labour Party in the British Parliament is only of yesterday's growth and were Parliamentary institutions deferred till the grant of a nominal representation of its vast working population? And was it Cobden or Kier Hardie that organised the Anti-corn Law League or improved the wages of the labouring classes of Great Britain? And Cobden did not belong to any labouring class. And then are not caste prejudices fast dying out under the inexorable pressure of our environments and are not men of talents rising out of the ranks of the so-called depressed classes who are receiving the ungrudging homage of the Brahmans and other superior castes? Lastly, would not there always be the paramount authority of the Government to correct abuses and remedy injustice wherever committed? Blood is always thicker than water and people are not therefore wanting amongst us who honestly regard the question of the strong and the weak only as a plausible pretext and not as a serious argument.

Another difficulty put forward is the eternal question of the differences between the Hindus and the Mahomedans of India. But the game has been **Hindu-Moslem question.** nearly played out, and the Hindus and the Mahomedans have practically solved the question. It is more than five years ago that some of us dreamt a dream which appears now not to have been all a dream. The Congress and the League have come to meet at the same place and the day may not be far distant when in spite of the Siren-song which has so far diverted their course they will come to meet in the same pavilion and at the same time. The Hindus and Mahomedans are rapidly converging towards each other and indeed it would be a miracle if they did not so converge and if they continued to fly off at a tangent despite the irresistible attraction of the great centripetal force which is drawing them towards their common centre. The stock argument based upon occasional differences and disturbances between Hindus and Mussalmans cannot have much force. These are confined mostly to lower classes of people on either side. It is neither fair nor judicious to exaggerate their importance. There are Hindus and Mahomedans side by side in every Native State. In the Mahomedan State of Hyderabad with a Hindu population of nearly 70 per cent and the Hindu State of Kashmere with 60 per cent Mahomedan subjects we do not hear of any cow-killing riots or Mohurrum disturbances or of any ill-feeling between the two communities. And one wonders why a different state of things should prevail in British territories. A nationality is now no longer either a religious or a social federation, but a political unit. Diverse races professing different forms of religion and following distinct varieties of manners, customs and traditions easily submit to a common political

faith to work out their common destiny: The Picts and the Scots, the Saxons and the Normans, the Protestants and the Catholics are now all welded into the great British nation. The Teutons and the Slavs, the Prussians and the Poles have formed one of the mightiest empires which has lit up a world-wide conflagration ; while in that curious Dual Monarchy of Austro-Hungary the Magyars, the Hungarians, Czecks, the Poles, the Slavs, the Serbs, the Croates and the Rumanians have formed themselves into a national federation of no ordinary solidarity and strength. The Hindus and Mussalmans are both of common Aryan stock, while Hindu anthropology traces them to a common descent within the legendary period of their ancient history. Neither the Parsis nor the Mahomedans of India owe any temporal allegiance either to the Shah of Persia or the Sultan of Turkey. They are now Indians as much as the Hindus. But why indulge in speculations against a settled fact? I think I break no secret when I announce to you that the Hindu-Moslem question has been settled and the Hindus and Mussalmans have agreed to make a united demand for Self-Government. The All-India Congress Committee and the representatives of the Moslem League who recently met in conference at Calcutta have after two days' deliberations in one voice resolved to make a joint demand for a Representative Government in India. There are little differences on one or two minor points of detail, but they count for nothing. The vital issue has been solved and the main point has been gained. The report of the Conference will shortly be placed before you and I need not enter into details. We have many historic days, but I believe the 17th November will rank among the brightest and the most notable of them all. I would now appeal to both the communities to sink all their minor domestic differences and present a solid united front for the realisation of their common destiny within the Empire. Only the seeds having been sown, the seedlings have just sprouted and for God's sake let us not quarrel over the division of the crop which still demands our combined labour and attention before the harvest comes. What are special electorates and communal representations when there is really no electorate and no representation among a people? What matters it if Dinshaw Edulji Wacha or Surendra Nath Banerjee or Muzurul Huque were to represent us in our National Assembly? They are three in one and one in three. Remember what the great *Yudhishthira* said addressing the *Kauravas* and the *Pandavas* :—

“वयं पञ्च वयं पञ्च भारतराजाः शतं तथा ।

परेषु प्रतिपन्नेषु पञ्चोत्तरशतं वयम् ॥”

Making a different application of this noble saying of the wise and saintly *Yudhishthira* we may say that we may be five brothers on one side and a hundred brothers on the other, but in a common cause we are a hundred and five brothers undivided and indivisible.

Gentlemen, an ounce of fact is said to be worth a ton of theories and while we here are quarrelling over the first principles of the problem, the Americans have quietly and speedily solved it in the Philippines.

THE PHILIPPINES.

The Philippine islands from their discovery by Lopez de Villalobos in the reign of Philip of Spain were under a form of despotic government compared to which the despotism of John Company was an unmixed blessing. The archipelago is inhabited by a congeries of people speaking different languages and observing different forms of religion of the most primitive type. The Negritos, the Negroes, the Panayas, the Mindanos, a dark woolly people, Indonassians, the Malayans, the Chinese, the Spaniards and a number of non-descripts inhabit the islands. Of ancient civilisation and tradition these people have none, while as to their enlightenment and culture the world has heard nothing. The Americans conquered the islands in 1898 and the only claim of the people to the consideration of their liberators was that they had at first formed themselves into a band of insurgents under the leadership of an ambitious man named Aguinaldo who afterwards aspired to expel their benefactors. A provisional Government was however soon established by the Americans and peace restored in the country. Quite recently a proposal was brought forward in the House of Representatives of the United States for the granting of Home Rule to the Philippines and in the discussion which followed some maintained that it should be accomplished in two years, some in four years, while others held that there should be no time limit; but all agreed that the islanders must be given their freedom and the archipelago should not form a permanent appenage to the United States which since the Civil War had positively refused to go in for territorial aggrandisement even in the face of the splendid opportunities which the New World presented to them. The last resolution was carried; and the American Governor in addressing the Philipinos on the occasion of granting them a substantial majority in the Legislative Assemblies in 1913 said:—"We regard ourselves as trustees, acting not for the advantage of the United States, but for the benefit of the people of the Philippines. Every step we take will be taken with a view to the independence of the islands and as a preparation for that independence. The administration will take one step at once. It will give to the native citizens of the islands a majority in the Commission and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature..... We place within your reach the instruments of redemption. The door of opportunity stands open, and the event, under Providence is in your hands. The triumph is as great for us as it is for you". Noble words these and nobly have the Americans come forward to fulfil them. As a result of this announcement the following measures have been introduced.

The Central Government in the Philippines is composed of the Governor-General, who is the chief executive and president of the Philippine Commission, and eight Commissioners, three Americans and five Philipinos. The Philippine Commission constitutes the Upper House and the elective Philippine Assembly the Lower House of the Legislative body. The members of the Assembly hold office for four years, and the Legislature elects two Resident Commissioners to the United States, who hold office for the same term. These are members of the United States' House of Representatives with a

voice, but not a vote. The islands are divided into 36 provinces of which 31 are regular and the rest special. The Government of each of the regular provinces is vested in a provincial board composed of a Governor and two *vocals*. The Governor is the chief executive of the province and presiding officer of the board. He and the *vocals* of the board are all elected by popular vote. The Government of towns is practically autonomous, the officials being elected by the qualified voters of the municipalities and serving for four years. The Jones' Bill of Independence introduced in the United States Legislature proposed to confer complete independence on the Philipinos not later than four years from the passing of the bill. In place of the present Philippine Commission, which is abolished, the Philipinos are to elect a Senate. The house is already elected by the people, and with the election of the Senate, the electorate is to be increased by about 600,000. As about 200,000 Philipinos vote now the new law will grant voting rights to about 800,000. The office of Governor-General is retained and there is to be a Vice-Governor, an American whose duties are to be fixed by the Governor-General. The functions of the Legislature are limited so as to provide that the coinage currency, and immigration laws shall not be made without the approval of the President of the United States. Finally, all Americans residing in the Islands who desire to vote must become citizens of the Islands. *The Republican* points out also that the preamble of the bill fixes no specific date for the granting of independence, but simply state that it has always been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognise their independence as soon as a suitable government can be established therein. Therefore, as justly pointed out by the *Indian Patriot* "enlarged powers of self-government are granted in order that by the use and exercise of popular franchise and governmental powers, they may the better be prepared fully to assume the responsibilities and enjoy all the privileges of complete independence."

Thus a complete autonomous federal government has already been established in the islands in which the Philipinos largely preponderate over the Americans and in which the actual administration has been substantially transferred to them. There is no bureaucracy in the Philippines, nor a Jingo press there. No, there is no ruler and ruled, no sedition and no internments. Self-Government has established a reign of peace and contentment. Every Philippino is now a free citizen unemasculated by the operation of any Arms Act and unfettered by any Press Law. Are the arm-chair critics who so lavishly indulge in abusing the Indian Nationalists for their "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" prepared to give any explanation of this phenomenal progress of the Philippines under the suzerainty of America? What is the difference between the Union Jack and the Star and the Stripes? Let Sir William Wedderburn, who was as distinguished a member of the Indian Civil Service as his views have always commanded respect for their sobriety, soundness and moderation, answer. Sir William commenting on the question of Self-Government as viewed on a reference to the Philippines pertinently asks,—“Can anybody show valid cause why this good example (of America)

should not be followed by the British Government with regard to India? Are the Philipinos in any respect superior to the people of India? Or, is it that the British people are inferior to the Americans in love of principle and moral courage?" We pause for a reply as to which of the alternatives is correct. Sir William then adds,—“the problem in India is much simpler, for India does not ask for a termination of the British connection, but I can say with certainty that among our best friends in India there exists grave disquiet, produced by the silence of the Government regarding their future policy, accompanied by irritating retrogressive legislation in Parliament and fresh activity of police repression in India.” If the Philipinos have developed an instinct for Self-Government within 18 years no amount of reasoning or argument can satisfy the Indian mind that the Hindus, the Mahomedans, the Parsis and the Christians of India have not made even a near approach to it within 160 years; and if they are not yet fit for self-government, I despair of a time when they may be so.

There is yet another question which ought to be clearly understood in connection with our demand for Self-Government. Is it any appreciable **Amendment of Constitution.** increase in our share in the administration that we demand on the permanent basis of the present system of government? Or is it a thorough change in the constitution irrespective of all considerations of larger employment of the children of the soil in the public services? To be more explicit, let us put the question in its naked form. Supposing the Public Service Commission, whose report is still a sealed book to the people of this country, have recommended that no less than one-half or even two-thirds of the appointments in the different civil services should be filled up by Indians, but that the present bureaucracy must always continue to be in power, would such a recommendation, even if accepted by the Government, satisfy Indian aspirations? I know the answer will be in the negative. Such an arrangement will only serve to add a number of Indian bureaucrats without adding a bit to the powers and privileges of the people, and there would not be much to choose between the present bureaucracy and its proposed substitute. It is the system and not the *personnel* of the administration from which the people suffer. It is the rotten soil that breeds rank weeds. It is only a radical change in the form and constitution of the Government however slow or tentative in its character, but steady and continuous in its development, that can satisfy the growing spirit of the Indian people and remove their grievances. If the British Parliament were after the war to hold in one hand a very high percentage of the public employments and a small modicum of real Self-Government in the other and to ask India to choose between the two, I am sure, she would unhesitatingly grasp the one and let go the other.

Gentlemen, the new spirit to which I have already referred frankly refuses to believe in the liberalisation of a bureaucratic administration. The **Anarchy and Repression.** spirit is common both to the young and the old with this difference only that, while the old would proceed cautiously and steadily, the young are moved by the enthusiastic ardour natural to their age. If the Congress has so far persistently advanced the claims of the people to a larger share in the various public services, it

has done so more from an economic point of view than for the satisfaction of its demands for a national government. Irresponsible critics who denounce the new spirit ought to remember that it is not a sudden and abnormal growth in the Indian mind. It has appeared in Egypt, in Turkey, in Persia and in China and in fact in every country where autocratic rule has prevailed. All these countries have undergone the hammering process and everywhere hammering has served only to beat soft metals into hard ones. Anarchism and lawlessness have in all these countries followed in the wake of misrule.

The appearance of anarchism in the land has been a source of the deepest concern to the Government and the people alike. Both are interested in its irradiation, alike for the ends of peaceful government and the progressive development of the country on constitutional lines. But we must know what the disease is before we can apply the remedy. Anarchism has its roots deep in economic and political conditions. One asks how is that free countries like England and France or America are free from this taint. There the blessings of freedom, of industrial progress and of peace and contentment which follow in their train reign over the land. Let those great blessings be ours and anarchism will disappear. It is of western origin. It is an excrescence which ought to disappear with healing measures calculated to defuse broadcast the blessings of political contentment and of material prosperity. By all means punish evil-doers and iniquitous breakers of the law who commit wanton assaults on the lives and properties of their fellow-countrymen. But repression is not the true remedy. Repression when unwisely enforced and against the sober sense and judgment of the community must aggravate the situation and strengthen those forces of discontent which are the breeding ground of anarchism. "The sovereign remedy for public distempers," says Burke, "is conciliation and not coercion, for though coercion may succeed for a time it always leaves room for coercing again." A sufficient trial has been given to the orthodox method of the bureaucracy and the Congress urges that the other method should now be tried.

THE ASSURANCES.

Gentlemen, we are roundly charged with revelling in "extravagant hopes" and indulging in "unrealisable demands." But we have long refused to profit by the very friendly and eminently practical suggestions of those whose only claim to be regarded as *Statesman* or *Englishman* consists in the proud names which they have like the "bogus medical degrees" assumed for themselves. We do not judge the great British nation by specimens of this kind who do no honour to the English name. If we had done that the Congress would have long ago wound up its business and gone into voluntary liquidation. The descendants of Howard and Wilberforce, of Burke and Bright, of Macaulay and Maine, and of Canning and Ripon are not yet extinct. It is a nation of giants who refuse to tolerate injustice and perpetuate servdom wherever they may exist, if only they are satisfied of their existence, and who possess a responsive heart to the call of freedom. It has been truly said that it is not Britain's

heart, but Britain's ear, that has been so long deaf to the wail that has been raised in this country. But the din of war has risen above all and the thrilling demonstrations of India's fidelity to the British connection have disabused many a robust mind in England of the hobgoblin stories to which they have been so lavishly treated in the past; and liberals and conservatives have, therefore, with equal emphasis come to recognise as rational what has been denounced as "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands" of the Indian people. Let us recall to-day only a few of the many assurances that have been given to India by some of the responsible ministers and men who are now guiding the destinies of the Empire.

The *Times*, the leading organ of conservative opinion in England, has been struck with the unexpected demonstration in India and frankly admitted that the Indian problem must be henceforth looked at from a different point of view. "On our part," says the great journal, "when we have settled account with the enemy, India must be allowed a more ample place in the councils of the Empire." Both Mr. Montagu and Mr. Roberts, as Under-Secretary for India, have from time to time expressed themselves in no uncertain voice as to the correct lines upon which the Indian administration requires to be revised and modified. Mr. Montagu's honest interpretation of Lord Hardinge's Despatch of August 1911 is well-known, while Mr. Roberts speaking from his place in the House of Commons has frankly acknowledged that with the intellectual classes in India this outburst of loyalty is a "reasoned sentiment based upon considerations of enlightened self-interest;" and has at the same time asked the British public to alter "the angle of vision" in their perspective of the Indian problem. Following the *Times*, the *Review of Reviews* has, in one of its latest numbers, fairly admitted that "India to-day occupies a higher place in the Empire than ever before and has materially advanced her claims towards Self-Government, and it is inevitable that, after the war, her outstanding demands should receive the most sympathetic considerations." "We have," the *Review* adds, "made promises of Self-Government to Egypt, and it is inconceivable that we should deny the same privileges to India. At present India is not pressing her claim, but patiently awaits her just due, not as a reward, but as a right which her conduct has shown her worthy of possessing." Lord Haldane who till recently occupied a commanding position in the cabinet said:—"The Indian soldiers were fighting for the liberties of humanity, as much as we ourselves. India had given her lives and treasures in humanity's great cause, hence things could not be left as they were. We had been thrown together in the mighty struggle and had been made to realise our oneness, so producing relations between India and England which did not exist before. Our victory would be victory for the Empire as a whole and could not fail to raise it to a higher level". Then at a recent meeting held at Guildhall at the instance of the Lord Mayor, Mr. Asquith the premier and Mr. Bonar Law the erstwhile leader of the opposition and both now united in coalition ministry, have given a joint pledge for the readjustment of India's position in the councils of the Empire after the war is over. But, to quote the words of Mr. Bonar

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Law, why the thing should not be done "while the metal was still glowing red-hot from the furnace of the war" and the promised rewards of India's comradeship and co-operation should be all relegated to the indefinite future and not one of them even shadowed forth in the present programme of the Imperial Government, seems to be inexplicable. Quite recently Lord Chelmsford is reported to have said that "the war by giving India an opportunity to show its practical importance to the Empire had stirred Indian aspirations for developments politically and economically. It would be his endeavour to secure a practical response to this new desire for progress". His Lordship is said to have added:—"My task is to guard India from cramping influences of undue conservatism equally with unpractical revolutionary tendencies."

Now, are these men of less authority, foresight and responsibility than the members of the Indian bureaucracy or its exponents in the Anglo-Indian Press who are ever so loud and positive in denouncing our claims? Or, are these assurances all a hoax intended to delude the Indian mind? We positively refuse to accept any such view which would be a gross calumny on the great British nation. We have much greater confidence in British statesmanship which may have blundered in many places but has failed nowhere. Gentlemen, we indulge in no gloomy anticipations; but we shudder to contemplate the serious effect which the non-fulfilment of these pledges is likely to produce in the minds of the Indian public. The Partition of Bengal which was after all a provincial question brought in its trail an outburst of discontent which like wild fire spread throughout the whole country and necessitated a full brigade of repressive measures to put it down, although its mouldering sparks are not yet fully extinct. And how wide-spread and far-reaching must be the unrest which is sure to follow a light-hearted treatment of these solemn pledges and assurances upon which the people have so firmly and so confidently built their future hopes of advancement? God forbid that such a calamity should befall India. As loyal subjects of His Majesty we of the Congress deem it our duty to tell all whom it may concern not to treat the Indian problem after the war as lightly as some irresponsible and mischievous critics are evidently disposed to do. Already a subdued note of the "scrap of paper" has been raised in certain quarters. The Charter Act of 1833, the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 and the two gracious messages of King Edward VII and George V still remain unredeemed, and it would be no wise statesmanship to add to the burden of unredeemed pledges. England has been drawn into the vortex of a titanic struggle for the deliverance of Belgium and Servia. God grant, she may come out with her brave allies completely triumphant in her heroic efforts. She has however a much greater stake in India and India has a much greater claim to her consideration. Let us hope she will not fail to be at least as just as she is generous. After the war is over a complete readjustment of the Empire will have to be made; all its component parts will have to be co-ordinated and harmonised with one another and with the parent state. India alone cannot be left out of this programme. She must be admitted into common and equal partnership with the colonies on terms of equal

rights and obligations of the Empire, enjoying equal laws and equal rights of British citizenship throughout that Empire. The collar of a Dependency should be removed from her neck and the coronet of an autonomous, self-governing state placed upon her head. What a glorious federation it would then be, more glorious than that of the Roman Empire or of any that the world has yet seen. England would do well to remember in her own interest that she cannot maintain a condition of perpetual pupilage anywhere within her world-wide possessions without slowly and imperceptibly inculcating herself with its poison in her own home. Demoralisation in one part of a body however remote must inevitably result, if not remedied, in the ultimate deterioration of the whole system. Present experience has shown that for greater cohesion and solidarity of the Empire its component parts must be brought into closer touch and more intimate relations between one another and the mother country. India alone cannot be excluded from equal consideration in the coming readjustment, for if she were to be so excluded India's position is sure to be worse than even at present. If the colonies are allowed a representation in the federal council of the Empire they will undoubtedly have a voice in the administration of India and, for aught we know, their representatives may sometimes find a place in the cabinet and also become the Secretary of State for India. If India is denied such representation she will be further degraded as being subject also to the colonies. There is a serious danger in admitting the colonies to a participation in determining the policy that is to be followed in relation to India, for the colonial mind is saturated with the colour prejudice which would thus be reflected in the Government of India. Such a change in the "angle-vision" it would be dreadful to contemplate. If the equilibrium of the Empire is to be maintained India must also be thrown into the scale: She must be freely admitted into the partnership and given a free constitution like that of the self-governing dominions and a fair representation in the federal council along with the colonies.

OUR DEMANDS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I now propose as a summary to the foregoing discussions to submit a few "daring and impertinent" proposals for the consideration of the Government both in England as well as in India. A memorandum presented by nineteen members of the Supreme Legislative Council has met with the criticisms of both sides. Some have regarded it as premature and falling short of our demands, while others have denounced it as extravagant. The circumstances which brought about the submission of this memorandum have already been explained to the public; while, as I read it, this memorandum represents neither the irreducible minimum nor the unenhancible maximum of our demands; nor do I understand the signatories to it to mean that their proposals are to be carried out on the morning following the day on which the Treaty of Berlin may be signed. The signatories to the memorandum have, however, done me one great service. They have borne the brunt of the fusillade and made my passage less difficult, so as to enable me to press forward unnoticed under cover

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f their fire. As to the other side of the shield our misfortune is that we are unable to see where the extravagance comes in. We have no superfluities in any direction and for such a people as ourselves to indulge in extravagance seems to be out of the question. Extravagance may seize the minds of those who have got enough and to spare. However that may be, here are our demands which God willing are bound to be fulfilled at no distant date.

1. India must cease to be a dependency and be raised to the status of a self-governing state as an equal partner with equal rights and responsibilities as an independent unit of the Empire.

2. In any scheme of readjustment after the war, India should have a fair representation in the Federal Council like the colonies of the Empire.

3. India must be governed from Delhi and Simla, and not from Whitehall or Downing Street. The Council of the Secretary of State should be either abolished or its constitution so modified as to admit of substantial Indian representation on it. Of the two Under-Secretaries of State for India one should be an Indian and the salaries of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates as in the case of the Secretary for the Colonies. The Secretary of State for India should, however, have no more powers over the Government of India than those exercised by the Secretary for the Colonies in the case of the dominions. India must have complete autonomy financial, legislative as well as administrative.

4. The Government of India is the most vital point in the proposed reforms. It is the fountain head of all the local administrations and unless we can ensure its progressive character any effective reform of the local governments would be impossible. For this the Services must be completely separated from the State and no member of any service should be a member of the Government. The knowledge and experience of competent members of a service may be utilised in the departments, but they should not be allowed to be members of the Executive Council or the Cabinet of the Government itself.

5. The Executive Government of India should vest in the Governor-General with a number of ministers not less than one-half of whom should be Indians elected by the elected non-official Indian members of the Supreme Legislative Council. These members should hold office for five years. Thus this ministry of the Viceroy will possess the composite character of a parliamentary and non-parliamentary cabinet.

6. The Upper House of Representatives in Canada is composed of 90 members. The Supreme Legislative Council in India should consist of at least 150 members. These members should be all elected. But for the transitory period one-fifth may be appointed by the cabinet, not more than one-fourth of whom may be officials.

7. The annual budget should be introduced into the Legislative Council like money Bills, and except the military estimates the entire Budget should be subject to the vote of the Council.

8. The Provincial Governments should be perfectly autonomous each Province developing and enjoying its own resources, subject only to a contribution towards the maintenance of the Supreme Government.

9. A Provincial administration should be vested, as in the case of the Supreme Government, in a Governor with a cabinet not less than one-half of whom should be Indians elected by the non-official elected Indian members of its Legislative Council.

10. The Provincial Legislative Council should in the case of a major province consist of 100 members and in the case of a minor province 75 members all of whom should be elected by the people and each district must have at least one representative of its own. For the transitory period there should of course be the same conditions and restrictions as in the case of the Supreme Legislative Council.

11. As the executive and the legislative functions are to be separated, so there must be complete separation of the judicial from the executive functions of the State. The judicial administration, whether civil or criminal, should be wholly vested in the High Courts both as regards control as well as the pay, prospect and promotion of its officers. The High Courts should be subordinate only to the Supreme Government.

12. The Arms Act should be repealed or so modified as to place the Indians exactly on the same footing with the Europeans and Eurasians. The Press Act should be removed from the Statute Book and all the repressive measures withdrawn.

13. India should have a national militia to which all the races should be eligible under proper safe guards and they should be allowed to volunteer themselves under such conditions as may be found necessary for the maintenance of efficiency and discipline. The Commissioned ranks in the army should be thrown open to His Majesty's Indian Subjects.

14. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted throughout the country, and the corporations of the Presidency towns the District and the Taluk boards and the district municipal corporations should be made perfectly self-governing bodies with elected members and elected chairmen of their own. They should be freed from all official control except such as may be legally exercised by the Government direct.

15. Mass education should be made free and compulsory. Suitable provisions should also be made for the development and encouragement of indigenous industries.

The above is a summary of our demands. We do not fix any time-limit, for the duration of the war is uncertain and there must be a transitory period through which the process must pass. But if we fix no time-limit, we agree to no indefinite postponement either. Some of these proposals can and ought to be immediately carried out and there is no reason why they should wait for the termination of the war ; while there are others which cannot of course be settled until the time for the readjustment of the Empire arrives but we must be distinctly understood to maintain that this period should not be treated as a further extension granted to the present system of administration and its methods. There must be henceforth a distinct tendency visible in every branch of the administration to conciliate the people and inspire trust and confidence in the future policy of the Government. As words without thoughts never to heaven go, so promises without performance and sympathy without action can never touch the hearts of a people. Patience has often

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been prescribed as the sovereign remedy for all distempers ; but it cannot be denied that when the most skilful physican is unable for a long time to show any sign of improvement and on the contrary there are continued symptoms of aggravation, a suspicion naturally may arise in the mind of the patient as to the skill of the physician or the efficacy of his methods. On our part, gentlemen, we must be content to ascend

STEP BY STEP.

It is no argument to say that you have long acquired the capacity to make the ascent. You might have ten years before safely tried the experiment ; but it does not follow that you can therefore cover ten steps or even two steps at a time. Whenever you have to ascend you must begin from the base and rise steadily and cautiously upwards. Of course it would be no progress if you gain one step and lose two. Doubtless we ought carefully to see that we lose no ground and then even if our progress be slow we may be sure of reaching our destined goal.

THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Gentlemen, one word about our British agency in London. It is perfectly superfluous for me to point out that no business concern can be successfully carried on without a well-equipped and efficient agency at its principal place of business. In England is the real seat of power and the battle of India must be fought on the British soil. Though it is we who must fight it out, we must have the British public as our ally. That public must be informed and influenced so as to enable it to come to a correct judgment of our case. There is an erroneous impression in certain quarters that as our grievances are so numerous and so palpable they must be known to the British people also. But who is there to carry your message to England? You certainly cannot expect *Reuter* to do it. You certainly do not believe that retired Anglo-Indians will proclaim their own defects and shortcomings. On the contrary there are the standing official reports always to present a roseate view of the administration taking credit for whatever is good, throwing the entire blame for all that is bad on your shoulders and justifying all sorts of repressive measures. The British public in their ignorance easily swallow all these *ex parte* cock-and-bull stories and consider the Indian administration to be a perfect Utopia. So you must have a counsel of your own to represent your case before the great tribunal of public opinion in Great Britain if you do not wish judgment to go against you by default. Sir William Wedderburn is performing this function at no small sacrifice to himself. India cannot repay the deep debt which she owes to him and his colleagues on the British Committee and the poet's words are her only satisfaction that a grateful mind by owing owes not, but always remains indebted and discharged. Mr. H. E. A. Cotton, the worthy son of a worthy father, following in the footsteps of his illustrious parent has been doing yeoman's service to India. The British Committee and its sole organ *India* must be maintained at all costs if we are to carry on our operations at the vital front. It has always seemed to me of the utmost importance to associate with the British Com-

mittee at least one competent Indian permanently located in England. The great services rendered there some years back by the late Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee and recently by our distinguished countryman Sir Krishna Govinda Gupta ought to be an object lesson to us. But for all these a permanent Congress Fund is an imperative necessity. The granting of small doles by the Congress every year which are always larger in their arrears than in their payments and the undignified spectacle of one of the leaders every year extending his beggarly Brahmanical hand for such pittance is not the way of practical men engaged in practical business. There is no dearth of men who are rolling in the superfluities of their unearned heritages. Large sums of money are still spent throughout the country in mere shows and ceremonies of the most temporary interest ; and if we cannot even raise so much as twice a couple of *lakhs* of rupees for the uplifting of the nation, then are we rightly treated by our rulers as an inferior race and twitted by our critics as mere men of words indulging in "extravagant hopes" and "unrealisable demands".

CONCLUSION.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I have exhausted your patience although I have failed to exhaust my theme. My last words are to those bright young faces whom I see before me. My dear young friends and country-men, you are our hostages to posterity. Every generation has a perpetual devolution and succession of rights and responsibilities : The acquisition of one generation becomes the heritage of the next, and it is the duty of each generation not only to enjoy what it receives from its predecessor, but also to transmit its heritage consolidated, augmented and improved to the one coming after it. Many of those who preceded you in this national struggle have been gathered to their fathers, while those who are still in the field belong to a fast vanishing generation. You ought now to press forward to take their place and hold aloft the banner which is drooping from their sinking hand. Like the mother of the Grachii India, poor India, shorn of her prestine grandeur and glory has only to boast of *you* as her "precious jewels." Remember of what great nation you are born. It was for you that in the early morning of the world the *Vedas* were revealed and in a later period democratic Islam came with the *Koran* and the practical Parsi with the *Zend Avesta*. Yours is the heritage of three of the most ancient civilisations of the world which have formed as it were a glorious confluence of three streams in this sacred land of yours ; while to these in the dispensation of an inscrutable Providence a fourth has recently been added to constitute a *Sāgara-Sangama* for the deliverance of your race. It was for you that *Vyāsa* wrote and *Vālmīki* sung and it was for you that *Patanjali* evolved the loftiest of philosophies and the *Geetā* expounded the sublime mysteries of life. It was here that more than two thousand years ago *Buddha Gautama*, the truest and greatest benefactor of mankind, first taught the doctrine of universal brotherhood of men, which now sways the minds of one-fifth of the population of this habitable globe ; and it was here that five hundred years ago *Sree Chaitanya* preached the gospel of love, fraternity and equality from the banks of the

Ganges to the banks of the Narbbudda ; and now modern civilisation is prostituting science, filling the air, land and water with deadly engines for the destruction of God's creation. But let us not be great only in the worship of a great past. A mighty wave of changes is surging throughout this world and India is passing through a momentous transition. Her future is in your hands : You can either make or mar that future. If I were asked, what was the first demand of the Motherland upon her children at this juncture, I would unhesitatingly answer that it is Patriotism. And the second ?—Patriotism. And the third ?—Patriotism. I do not mean that morbid sentiment which rises like a rocket and falls like a stone ; not that sentiment which takes a man off his feet and lands him in disasters ; not that sentiment which panders to passion and does not appeal to reason ; but I mean that supreme virtue which enlightens the head and ennobles the heart, and under the heavenly inspiration of which a man forgets his self and merges his individuality, like a drop in an ocean, in the vast all-absorbing interest of his country, feeding only on self-sacrifice and ever growing on what it feeds. To the Indian Nationalists their country must be their religion "taught by no priests but by the beating hearts" and *her* welfare their common faith "which makes the many one". Hushed be the whispers of jealousy and spite and silenced be the discordant notes of rancorous dissensions amongst you. Sink all your differences in a supreme common cause. Unite and stand solidly shoulder to shoulder resolved either to conquer or to die. Or, what is life worth if we cannot live like men? Firm and resolute in your purpose, be always manly and dignified in your attitude and sober and cautious in your steps. Be loyal to your king and devoted to your country. Difficult as your task is, constitutional must be your method : There is no royal road to freedom. Reverses there must be, but reverses should only stiffen your backs. Do not despair, for despair is the keynote of failure. The pendulum may be swinging forward and backward ; but look up and see the hand of invisible Time is perpetually marking its progress on the dial of the destiny of your country. Above all, remember that nations are not born but made. They must grow from within but cannot be made to grow from without. You must stand on your own legs and be prepared to fight it out with heart within and God over head. *Dieu-et-Mon-Droit* is the motto emblazoned on the British Coat of Arms and as citizens of the British Empire 'God and My Right' ought to be your watch-word and battle-cry in the bloodless revolution which is taking place in this country. Be ambitious but not proud ; be humble but aspire to a nobler, manlier and healthier life. What have you to boast of but your vanished glories ! You are Uitlanders in your own country. In the burning words of the Father of the Congress—

" What avail your wealth, your learning,
Empty titles, sordid trade ?
True Self-rule were worth them all !
Nations by themselves are made."

Bande Mataram.

P. I.

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All-India .

Moslem .

League .

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SPECIAL SESSIONS, BOMBAY.

August 31st and September 1st 1918.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

OF

THE HON. RAJA SIR MOHAMMED ALI MOHAMMED KHAN
BAHADUR, K. C. I. E., OF MAHMUDABAD.

PRESIDENT OF

THE ALL-INDIA MOSLEM LEAGUE.

GENTLEMEN,

The present extraordinary session of the All-India-Moslem League is invested with an importance the full significance of which will unfold itself when India will have entered on the era, which is being ushered in through the efforts of her great patriots—all honour to them and to the memory of those who alas! are no longer amongst us.

* They laboured incessantly and with a single-mindedness of purpose and loftiness of aim which should be a priceless heritage to us. They worked for a goal which their eye of faith and of hope discerned even when it was obscured and enshrouded by race antagonism, national egotism, and class interests and hatreds.

We are on the threshold of that era; we are not in it, nor indeed near it; for we have been unceremoniously told that though the world has shrunk and progression is at a giddy pace, we must continue to derive what comfort we can from the encouraging observation "Hanoz Dilli cun ast." Will it continue to be out of reach so indefinitely as to make the wayfarer hopeless?

I, for one, gentlemen, am not of that mind. I have not lost faith. I think that once we start on the right road, we will reach the goal sooner than our opponents wish. I said that through the efforts of her great patriots India was to enter a new era. That era was opening out to her, we must remember, through the co-operation of British Statesmen whose foresight and wisdom combined with their enthusiasm for a just cause are as creditable to them as they are essential for the stability and the permanence of the great, the marvellous, almost superhuman organisation, known as the British Empire.

At this juncture in the affairs of our country and of the Empire, the steps we take, the decisions we arrive at, are bound to set in motion reactions which will reverberate for a considerable period in the vaults of time; and believe me I do not use the language of hyperbole when I say that they will affect the destinies of generations yet unborn.

That at this momentous gathering, I should be entrusted with the task of guiding its deliberations is one of the ironies of the situation. I have no qualification—none whatever save that of ambition to serve,—for the position, which, in an indulgent mood you have, in my capacity of permanent President of your organisation, called upon me to fill. Not that I am insensible of the great, almost unique, honour which your selection bestows on me. I am overwhelmed with it. Yet the ripeness of experience is not in me, nor the mellowness of age spent in service, nor scholarship. Your mandate alone brings me here.

What has called us here together is, as you know, the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms which His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Honourable E. S. Montagu have presented to His Majesty's Government and on which criticism is invited, and as the recognised conduit of progressive Mohammedan opinion it is the duty of the All India-Moslem League to give expression to its considered judgment on it.

Now, gentlemen, at the very outset let me say that the Report and the memorable announcement of British policy of the 20th August, 1917, with regard to India, as a corollary of which the Report is published, have not come a minute too soon.

The world-forces which are changing the mental and moral outlook of the human race, have not left India untouched or unaffected. It is not a mere idle fancy to say that unfathomed depths of Indian thought and feeling have been stirred ; what is seen is not merely ripples on the surface. That more than a million sons of this ancient land have gone voluntarily to the shambles of Flanders, France, and the other theatres of war, to fight the battles of England, is due to the realization by India that the British Empire has not entered this grim struggle lightly or with an ambition to seize territory and subjugate people but to vindicate right and justice and freedom. She saw that England drew her sword to defend the right of small nations to determine their own fate, and to live their lives unmolested by stronger and unscrupulous neighbours. I do not say that every man who has enlisted in India since the war broke out has done so after a severe process of reasoning respecting the rights and wrongs of the war. No, manifestly not. But the national mind of India has instinctively felt the justice of England's cause. The Indian's homage to moral grandeur, wherever and whenever he finds it, is immeasurable. Service, complete and unstinted, to spiritual ideals is his creed from time immemorial, and he has lived up to it. Self-mortification, nay, self-immolation, is his willing offering at that altar.

And it was thus that there was a stir in the placid life of this country, hoary with age : stir, not to take advantage of the troubles in which England found herself but to run to her side ; and render whatever help India was capable of.

An uninterrupted stream of men—increasing as the years of war have rolled on—of all classes, from the prince to the peasant, has found its way to where the principles for which England had taken up arms are being fought out, not to watch the struggle in a spirit of unconcerned detachment, but to take part in it, and if need be, give up their lives for those principles.

But at the same time the question was as irresistible as it was natural, as to whether the principles in defence of which and on account of the violation of which the Empire was draining its life-blood, were or were not being applied nearer home ; and whether it was a fact that in certain portions of the Empire, the right of the people themselves to manage the affairs of their country was not yet conceded.

It was not the War which brought this reflection to them. For years past that section of the people of India which the Report calls the "intelligentsia" has been crying itself hoarse over the denial of what it considers the primary and inalienable right of every people, most of all of people who belong to that commonwealth of nations called the British Empire,—*viz.*, to have a predominant voice and share in the Government of their own country.

The utmost that can be said is that the war and the justification of our participation in it gave point to India's National demand ; "it came with the accumulated force of years' discontent'.

What would have been the result of further delay in grappling with the grave problem of Indian discontent, it is not pleasant to think of, but the conditions of 1906 and 1907 which no lover of India wishes to see revived, threatened to make their appearance again, only in a form which because it was constitutional was not less formidable than the other.

What I mean is that the party of constitutional progress, the party that put its faith in ordered and peaceful advance was getting impatient and des-

pondent. Hope deferred makes the heart sick and it was hardly a matter for surprise that the best minds of the country who never lost hope, even when the prospect was most dismal, were at last succumbing to despair.

The report makes a note of what Lord Minto soon after taking charge of his exalted office in 1906 wrote:—

“We, the Government of India, cannot shut our eyes to present conditions. The political atmosphere is full of change; questions are before us which we cannot afford to ignore, and which we must attempt to answer; and to me it would appear all important that the initiative should emanate from us, that the Government of India should not be put in the position of appearing to have its hands forced by agitation in this country or by pressure from home—that we should be the first to recognise surrounding conditions and to place before His Majesty’s Government the opinions which personal experience and a close touch with the every day life of India entitle us to hold.”

In spite of the palliatives applied by the Minto-Morley Reforms the conditions did not improve much.

Partial satisfaction there was, but it soon became evident that the remedies were not potent enough to eradicate the maladies in the body politic. We come now to the next stage of the development of the Indian situation. I have already referred to the declaration of policy made by his Majesty’s Government in regard to India’s constitutional goal. Following upon that, as you are aware, the unprecedented visit to India of the Secretary of State took place, in order to enable him personally to study and investigate the problem, and consult all shades of opinion in reference to it. The results of that investigation are embodied in the Report, to pronounce upon which you have assembled on this occasion.

The Report, gentlemen, is a monument of industry and political acumen. We may not agree with all its conclusions, but we cannot fail to be impressed by it.

The sinister shadow of Mr. Curtis however sits athwart the Report. What Mr. Srinivas Sastri very aptly calls the pedagogic tenets of Mr. Curtis seem to have exercised an influence on the distinguished authors of the Report out of all proportion to their merits.

But for the gratuitous entry of this gentleman into the politics of India, what chance of acceptance the National Scheme evolved by the joint labours of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League would have had, is an interesting, though now, an unfruitful speculation.

It has never been claimed for the Scheme that it was complete in the formulating of the details of its proposals, or that it was a model of draftsmanship. But anyone reading it with care could not fail to discover that it rested upon and embodied certain vital principles. These principles, so far from being anything new or at variance with the moral instincts of the British Nation or with the trend and teaching of British history, were but a reaffirmation by the people of India of what British Sovereigns in succession, and the British nation through its most illustrious statesmen, had repeatedly declared to be their aim with regard to the great Dependency,—as it had hitherto been called—of India.

It may not be out of place to recall some of these declarations. Lord Macaulay in 1833 while introducing the Charter Act, for instance, spoke as follows :

“The destinies of our Indian Empire”, he said, “are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fate reserved for a State which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena. The laws which regulate its growth and its decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system ; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government ; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or to retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history.”

“I trust,” said another statesman, Lord Palmerston, on another occasion, “that Parliament will feel that great power is not given to nations without corresponding duties to be performed. We have, by an almost miraculous train of events, been entrusted with the care of the destinies of 150 or 160 millions of men—with the Government, directly or indirectly, of a vast Empire larger in extent than the whole face of Europe, putting the Russian Empire out of the question. That is a task which involved great responsibility. Do not imagine that it is the intention of Providence that England should possess that vast Empire, and that we should have in our hand the destinies of that vast multitude of men, simply that we may send out to India the sons of gentlemen or of the middling classes to make a decent fortune to live on. That power has been entrusted to us for other and better purposes ; and, without pointing to anything particular, I think it is the duty of this nation to use it in such a manner as to promote, as far as they can, the instruction, the enlightenment, and the civilisation of those great populations which are now subject to our rule.”

What British Sovereigns have said has been no less noble. The Proclamation of 1858 issued to the Princes and People of India by the noblest of sovereigns, Queen Victoria of blessed memory, declared :

“We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations by the blessing of Almighty God we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.”

The Gracious Queen further declared as her Royal will that :—

“So far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race and creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and credit duly to discharge. In their prosperity will be our strength ; in their contentment our security ; and in their gratitude our best reward.”

The Proclamation issued by King Edward VII breathes the same spirit:—

“Steps are being taken,” said the great peace-maker who had personal knowledge of India, and loved her and her people, “towards obliterating distinctions of race as the test for access to posts of public authority and power. In this path I confidently expect the progress henceforward to be steadfast and sure, as education spreads, experience ripens and the lessons of responsibility are well learned by the keen intelligence and apt capabilities of India.

"From the first the principle of representative institutions began to be gradually introduced, and the time has come when, in the judgment of my Viceroy and Governor-General and other of my counsellors, that principle may be prudently extended. Important classes among you, representing ideas that have been fostered and encouraged by British Rule, claim equality of citizenship, and a greater share in legislation and government. The politic satisfaction of such a claim will strengthen, not impair, existing authority and power."

The grandson of the noble Queen, our present gracious Emperor, the first British Sovereign to utter on India's soil to Indian people a message of sympathy and of hope, put a seal by his visit and by his assurances, face to face with his Indian subjects to the Royal pledges given by his august predecessors.

In his Proclamation he said :—

"Queen Victoria of revered memory, addressed her Indian subjects and the heads of Feudatory States when she assumed the direct government in 1858, and her august son my father of honoured and beloved name, commemorated the same most notable event in his address to you some fifty years later. These are the Charters of the noble and benignant spirit of Imperial rule, and by that spirit in all my time to come I will faithfully abide."

The history of India's connection with England being replete with such declarations, proclamations and assurances, it was natural,—it would have been the negation of British history and character if it were otherwise,—that in the British House of Commons, the greatest of free and democratic institutions, the announcement of August 20th was made.

Buoyed up by such assurances as we have cited and having an unextinguishable faith in the cause,—a cause which they believed would further cement the connection of India with England, broad-basing it on a people's willing allegiance,—the representatives of the Indian people, through their national assemblies, evolved a scheme, which, taking into consideration the existing circumstances in India, they thought would be the most suitable beginning of a regime in which the principles enunciated over and over again in Parliament and outside with regard to the governance of this country would have a chance of gradual but progressive application.

Gentlemen, what is the essence of the Scheme? I have already referred to the fundamental principles on which it is based. What are they? They are that the representatives of the people of India should have the "power of regulating the policy, disposing of the finances and controlling the Executive," in their own country. The Scheme was made and promulgated before the famous announcement of August 20th of last year was made in Parliament.

In criticising the scheme the report exultingly says :

"We find then in these proposals no connecting rod between the Executive and the Legislative wheels of the machine which will ensure that they will work in unison..... We can see no prospect whatever ahead along the road which we are invited by the Congress-League to take but embittered and dangerous deadlock; to be resolved when it arose, only by a plunge forward into parliamentary government at once, or by reversion to autocratic methods."

That may be true, but the deadlocks were foreseen and provided against by the insertion of the veto on one side, and the provision that :—

“When the Crown chooses to exercise its power of veto in regard to a bill passed by a Provincial Legislative Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council, it should be exercised within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned”; and also the provision, “If a resolution, vetoed by the Governor-General in Council is again passed after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.” Much ingenuity and argumentative power have been pressed into service to show the unworkability of this part of the scheme. But the fact of the matter is that, like so many proposals in the Report, the process suggested in the Congress League-Scheme to impose the will of the popular Legislature on an irremovable executive was intended to be a transitional phase of the constitution. Moreover, I may be permitted to observe that deadlocks are a recognised device for constitutional advance: when they occur they are almost invariably followed by a step forward rather than backward. “Every political constitution,” as Lord John Russel says, “in which different bodies share the supreme power is only enabled to exist by the forbearance of those among whom this power is distributed.” And we had counted on that forbearance in framing our scheme.

And after all, the Executive was not removable, the Legislature was; it could be dissolved; so the impasse, of which such a gloomy picture is portrayed, was not reasonably likely to have occurred.

Gentlemen, the Government of India has been described as a benevolent despotism. The framers of the scheme did not set themselves to abolish the despotism. They only attempted to increase the benevolence and diminish the despotism. The novelty of this proposal has been remarked upon by the distinguished authors of the Report, but as an eminent critic has pointed out, the Report itself teems with so many novel suggestions, that novelty alone cannot be any argument for or against any particular suggestion.

No two constitutions in the world are identical in every detail; they cannot be by the very nature of things. A constitution cannot be transplanted wholesale. The antecedents of the history of a country may be similar to those of another possessing historical, racial and cultural affinities; but they can never absolutely be the same. The great constitution makers of America, for example, adopted a good deal from the British constitution; and though in race they were the same, and in culture and ideals of government and life they took their inspiration from the same vitalising source, *viz.*, British History, they had to deviate from many important features of their prototype. The responsibility of the Executive in the American system of government, it may be noted, is neither so complete nor so well-defined, nor the consequences to the Executive of its recalcitrance towards those to whom it is responsible so swift and sure, as in the English constitution. And yet it has been found to be satisfactory for all practical purposes.

The device of electing members—Indian members only—to the Executive Council was suggested to bring into the Executive an element of responsibility though in a disguised form. Such elected members would be removable, on the expiry of the life of the council which sent them up; and thus in a manner they would also be responsible to the people. The fears expressed in the Report as to the improbability of the machine “working in unison, in presence of powerful factors operating the other way in the

"differences of race and of political bias," are not convincing, since in these arrangements of divided responsibilities frictions are bound to make their appearance, but "the forbearance of those among whom power is distributed," in Lord John Russell's phrase, should have provided the solvent.

Why should we be so full of gloomy forebodings? Why should we not hope that, in the consciousness of so solemn a charge, the two elements would exhibit those qualities of forbearance which in other climes and other countries people who are working imperfect constitutions with a desire to improve them have shown.

The financial powers,—circumscribed and limited as they are—given to the representatives of the people in the councils are essential features of the Scheme. Any tampering with them must be a mockery of the Scheme as a whole. The power of the purse should be with the representatives of the people. Although I recognise that, as a convention, the initiative in proposals of expenditure should come from members of the Executive Government, the final word must be with the people's representatives.

Gentlemen, you know the scheme, because you prepared it or at least gave your considered assent to it; and it went forth as the united demand of India.

In the historic session of your organisation at Calcutta, in the closing week of 1917, you emphatically reaffirmed your adhesion to it, and you declared that it was the irreducible minimum of your demand. You made that demand by reason of India's advancement in education, economic and industrial progress, political capacity and above all her inalienable right to full and unfettered development, and as an over-delayed act of political justice and equity. If it had been urged that the scheme encroached too much on dangerous ground, which if occupied by the people's representatives, would imperil the safety of India as against foreign aggression, it would have been at least intelligible; but to have rejected it simply because some of its provisions seemed to the distinguished critics not ideally workable does not indicate that any sufficient attempt was made to bring it into relation with the announcement of August 20th. To have accepted it as the basis of the new constitution for the Government of India, and then to have it improved, chiselled, polished, to have its angularities rounded off, would have been more in consonance with the avowed desire to bring it (I again quote the phrase from the Report) into relation with the announcement.

We must constantly bear in mind the essential as distinct from the non-essential comprised in the scheme. For instance, if Official Members of the Provincial Executive Councils cannot be recruited from the ranks of public men in England; if the number suggested for the Executive Councils, *i.e.*, 6, is unacceptable to the distinguished critics; if they do not subscribe to the number the scheme fixed for the members of the Legislative Councils of the various provinces, the scheme is not wrecked.

But to disqualify the whole scheme in the manner in which I am constrained to say Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu have done, is calculated to create, if it has not already created, the impression that these statesmen embarked on their work of investigation with a not altogether unbiased mind against the scheme.

Gentlemen, the doctrines of self-determination and self-realization are at present, exercising the world, and as Lord Morley has said "the world is moving under formidable omens to a new era." "The speeches of English

and Americal statesmen," the Report itself points out, "proclaiming the necessity for destroying German militarism and for conceding the right of self-determination to the nations have had much effect upon political opinion in India, and have contributed to give new force and vitality to the demand for self-government which was making itself more widely heard among the progressive sections of the people."

Gentlemen, do you not think it would have been a wiser policy, and more in keeping with the proclamations and professions of British statesmen, to which the passage just quoted refers, if at such a time as this more deference had been accorded to India's attempt at self-determination, the more so as the attempt took the form of an attempt at constitutional, ordered and evolutionary development.

Gentlemen, instead of the scheme of reforms which the All-India Moslem League in corroboration with the sister organisation, the Indian National Congress, presented to the country and the Government for their acceptance, the report issued over the signatures of His Excellency Lord Chelmsford and the Right Honourable E. S. Montagu, after making an exhaustive survey of the political situation, and taking note of the different complicated problems which the conditions in India give rise to, makes counter proposals with regard to the constitutional reforms which they think ought, in pursuance of the policy enunciated in the announcement of August 20th, to be introduced in the Government of this country forthwith.

The announcement having been made, the vision was now clear, and the goal definitely fixed which His Majesty's Government definitely, and we trust irrevocably,—pledged itself to help India to reach. The announcement naturally raised high hopes in the minds of those Indians who already regarded the principles enunciated in it, as the articles of their political creed, and when simultaneously with the announcement, it was further announced that accepting the invitation of His Excellency the Viceroy, the Secretary of State would proceed to investigate the subject, on the spot, in order to formulate proposals to give effect to what the announcement intended, the Indian patriots began to feel that the era for the inauguration of which they had been striving was drawing perceptibly nearer.

The publication of the Report as a result of this visit and of the enquiry which was the object of the visit has plunged the whole country in a state of intense excitement. It has stimulated thought and provoked keen controversy. The question is being hotly debated as to whether it should be accepted by the country or not: whether or not the proposals it contains satisfy the aspirations and the expectations raised by the announcement itself; whether, in one word, they constitute a substantial step towards the realization of responsible government?

That they have caused disappointment in our minds, cannot and need not be denied. They have fallen short of natural and legitimate expectations. What now is the remedy?

The Sydenhams, the Welbys, the Dr. Nair's and others of their kidney, the self-appointed friends, guides and philosophers of India—would probably rejoice to see the country reject the proposed reforms, not because they consider them, like us, inadequate and insubstantial, but because the perpetuation of the bureaucracy is apparently their chief anxiety. What would be the result of such a course? The Government of this country would remain what it is—bureaucratic and despotic. From top to bottom there will be no element of responsibility in it—responsibility that is to the will of the people,

to the wishes of the governed. In the public services of the country, the sons of the soil would continue to have a meagre share. Honourable careers, and chances of achieving distinction in administration and of rendering service to the Motherland, would continue to be shut out to them. The industries of the country, its trade and its commerce, would continue to remain in the backward condition in which they are. Education would progress as it is progressing now—the progress of the snail. Should we, then, stand aside in disdain, and disgust, recking not what happened to our country, simply because the reforms that we wanted are not granted fully to the extent that we desired.

Now, gentlemen, I submit that it would be a suicidal mistake on our part to adopt that attitude. It would not advance the cause we have so much at heart. It will set back the hands of the clock. The labour, the energy of so many years' strenuous uphill work will have been in vain. Remember against what difficulties, and obstacles, you have had to contend. Faint-hearts deserted you; there came moments when doubts began to assail your minds as to whether you had the strength in you to go on; but you struggled on, till you have reached the top of the hill; and the green valley of self-government inviting in all its wealth of verdure, and foliage, and flowers, and bird-song—lies before you down below. Shall you turn back because the sentinels at the top do not allow you to proceed towards it at the pace your enraptured heart impels you to? No, I beseech you do not do that. Persist and persevere. Be strong.

Gentlemen, the proposals are before you and discussion and consideration of them are invited. Even the distinguished authors say that they are open to revision. The proposals are built upon the foundation of three formulas, which have been stated thus:—

1. "There should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies and the largest possible independence for them of outside control."

2. "The provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps towards the progressive realization of responsible Government should be taken. Some measure of responsibility should be given at once, and our aim is to give complete responsibility as soon as conditions permit. This involves at once giving the provinces the largest measure of independence, legislative, administrative and financial, of the Government of India, which is compatible with the due discharge by the latter of its own responsibilities."

3. "The Government of India must remain wholly responsible to Parliament and saving such responsibility, its authority in essential matters must remain indisputable, pending experience of the effect of the changes now to be introduced in the provinces. In the meantime the Indian Legislative Council should be enlarged and made more representative and its opportunities of influencing government increased."

These formulas and the qualifying phrases and sentences implying distrust of the capacity of the people, with which the announcement of August 20th is hedged, tend to mar the undoubted *bona fides* of the actual proposals.

The formulas which I have just quoted and specially the manner in which they have been evolved and given shape in the concrete proposals put forward, make the Government of India practically unamenable to the influence of the representatives of the people. In fact, the cumulative effect of the proposals seems to me, if anything to take the Government farther away than now from the orbit of such influence. // no!

The institution of the Council of State and the consequent relegation of the Legislative Assembly to a position of secondary importance, the humiliating provision that bills rejected by the Legislative assembly may be referred *de novo* to the Council of State and passed there; and worse still, the reservation of the power of introducing a bill in the first instance in, and of passing it through, the Council of State alone, merely reporting it to the assembly, all point in one direction, viz., to make the voice of the people impotent in the Government of India. I have no quarrel with the dictum of the Report: "In all matters which it (the Government of India) judges to be essential to the discharge of its responsibilities for peace, order and good government, it must, saving only for its accountability to Parliament, retain indisputable power." So it must; but there is no reason why, with the retention of that indispensable power on a secure basis, opportunities to the people of the country for influencing the Government in other matters of vital importance should not be more extended and definite.

No definition has been given as to what will be the boundary line of responsibility for peace, order and good government; and when the definition is left undetermined, as it has been in the Reforms Report, it is conceivable that the domain of things and of actions considered necessary by Government for peace, order and good government, may become co-extensive with the personal predilections and even idiosyncracies of the Executive. It is necessary in my opinion that the boundaries should be well defined as to what matters ordinarily relate to peace, order and good government.

Responsibility to the electorate, an element of which is introduced in the Provincial Government, is entirely absent in the constitution of the central and supreme Government. It is only accountable to Parliament and the Secretary of State. That, I submit, is not the right way to prepare us for full and complete responsible government at a later stage.

In the Government of India also, though in a more circumscribed area than in the Provincial Government, the principle of responsibility should have full sway.

This brings me, gentlemen, to the novel method in which responsibility is sought to be introduced by the distinguished authors of the Report.

In the Provincial Government, where alone the system is to come into vogue, a system of dual government is set up. Departments of Government will be divided into those dealing with reserved and those dealing with transferred subjects. Transferred subjects will be administered by ministers selected from among the members of the Legislative Council and they will be responsible to it. They will be removable by the council inasmuch as their lease of official life will be co-terminous with that of the council itself, of which they will be a member. They will be dependent for administration of their department on the votes of supplies which they may get from the council or from fresh taxation which they may persuade the council to impose for specific benefit of those transferred subjects. The reserved subjects will, on the other hand, be in the happy position of having their financial requirements attended to first to the extent that the Executive Government may demand; and the Legislature is debarred from having any determining voice in the matter.

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|| In so far as this makes a portion of the administration amenable to popular control, the proposal is to be welcomed. But the bifurcation of Government will not lead to that harmonious working for which the authors are so anxious. The duality of the Government has in recent history been in oper-

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ration in Egypt in pre-protectorate days, and Lord Cromer's "Modern Egypt" bears witness to the difficulties and sometimes quite intolerable situations which it gave rise to. It was the forceful personality of Lord Cromer, and the prestige of the Government of which he was at once a symbol and agent, which overcame such difficulties, and tided over the situations. It may be said in reply that there were two Governments, foreign, the dominant, and native, the subservient, ruling side by side and it was due to this anomalous combination that the difficulties owed their origin. That is true; so will it be true of the Government set up in the form of administrations of reserved and transferred subjects. The prestige of the reserved departments will make the transferred departments feel small in their own estimation. I cannot but fear, as has been suggested, that "the one government will be regarded as official and the other as Indian," and although the proposals say that all orders relating to reserved and transferred subjects would be the orders of one Government, it is not difficult to foresee that the subordinate officials would very soon decide as to what orders required prompt and thorough obedience, and what could be complied with at leisure.

There is historical precedent for this view. When the East India Company took over the Divani from the Nawab Nazim of Bengal—although it professed to have acquired nothing more,—in fact the Executive of the Nizamut came in time to be subordinated in the public mind, to the administrators of the Divani. This may be described as an earlier example of dubious dualism in Government.

The administration of transferred subjects will therefore in my opinion start with a great handicap; a handicap which, I submit, cannot be fairly placed on it, and which it should be our aim to remove as soon as possible. But if the system with its attendant defects and dangers is considered necessary as a training school in the art of responsible government for the ministers and the Legislative assembly alike, I accept it. I accept it not for any inherent or intrinsic merit of which I see it possessed, but because I think that this proposal for experimental purposes may be accepted in its principle. hu

The main reason—in fact the only reason—for the suggested bifurcation of Government which has been advanced is the necessity of keeping authority unimpaired in the experienced hands of the Executive Government for maintaining peace, order and good government. The principle being conceded, the Government should act upto its own professions. It should reserve only those subjects which are absolutely necessary for peace, order and good government. Moreover, the distinction should conscientiously be abandoned when its experimental purpose has been served. The period should not extend beyond five years, according to all reasonable calculation, and therefore provision to that effect should be made in the statute. The illustrative list No. 22 showing transferred subjects, any, some or all of which may be transferred to the provinces according to the capacity which the different provinces may be adjudged to possess is not required. What is required is a list of subjects which it is intended to reserve, not at random, but in their indisputable indispensability to peace, order and good government.

In this connection and here it would be proper if I draw your attention to an ominous passage in the Report. It says:—

"What we have to do is at once to encourage and to regulate this process. After five years' time from the first meeting of the reformed councils we suggest that the Government of India should hear applications from either the provincial government or the provincial council

for the modification of the reserved and transferred lists of the province and that after considering the evidence laid before them they should recommend for the approval of the Secretary of State the transfer of such further subjects to the transferred list as they think desirable. On the other hand, if it should be made plain to them that certain functions have been seriously maladministered, it will be open to them with the sanction of the Secretary of State to retransfer subjects from the transferred to the reserved list or to place restrictions for the future on the minister's powers in respect of certain transferred subjects."

Do you realize, gentlemen, what an interminable vista of accusations and allegations against the Indian people this opens up for those—and their number is not negligible yet—to whom the thought of any transference of power to the Indian people is anathema.

Anglo-India and reactionary India, it is idle to disguise, will not fail at the end of five years after the first meeting of the reformed council, to bring charges of serious maladministration with regard to the transferred subjects. The close of the fifth year would be a signal for the revival of racial bitterness. The flood-gates of charges regarding the Indians' want of capacity and their ineptitude will be opened. The doctrine of transmigration, and not of evolution, will thus be applied to the political constitution of India and there will always be the danger of a transferred subject "reeling back into"—the reserved subject. It is not an exaggerated fear. I can foresee what frantic efforts will be made, both here and in England, to have those subjects retransferred to the reserved list. What will be the result? The cycle will not end, and the process will never be complete "of adding to the transferred subjects and of taking away from the reserved ones, until such time as with the entire disappearance of the reserved subjects the need for an official element in the Government procedure in the Grand Committee vanishes and the goal of complete responsibility is attained in the provinces."

The proposals with regard to the autonomy of the provinces in fiscal matters are satisfactory as far as they go. The provinces will no longer be in the position of Collectors of their own revenue for the purpose of handing it over to the Government of India and to beg for whatever doles the latter may be pleased to give out of its abundance, to enable the provinces to eke out an existence. The freedom to impose fresh taxation is accompanied by the freedom to utilize the revenue derived from those taxes for provincial purposes; this is an act of overdelayed justice. But it has come after all; and the provinces will no longer be starved as they have been so far. One caveat the Government of India have made. "Emergencies may arise which cannot be provided for by immediately raising Government of India taxation, in that case it must be open to the central government to make a special supplementary levy upon the provinces."

The Report after considering the advantages and disadvantages of the bicameral system of government comes to the conclusion and I think rightly—that the system should not be introduced here. "We apprehend," says the Report,

"that a second chamber representing mainly landed and moneyed interests might prove too effective a barrier against legislation which affected such interests. Again, the presence of large landed proprietors in the second chamber might have the unfortunate result of discouraging other members of the same class from seeking the votes of the electorate. We think that the delay involved in passing legislation through two houses will make the system far too cumbrous to contemplate for the business of provincial legislation. We have decided for the present therefore against bicameral institutions for the provinces."

After such lucid exposition of reasons against the system, one would have thought that one had heard the last of it, but it makes its appearance all the same in the provincial constitution. What are grand committees, if not second chambers in essence? In spirit and in origin they may be regarded as a diluted form of the second chamber.

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I unhesitatingly declare that in the proposed constitution where the governments have been subjected to such a restricted and partial, in fact illusory popular control, these second chambers, by whatever name you may call them, are not merely superfluities,—they are positively harmful.

I have already shown that I regard the Council of State, as an innovation which would make the Government of India even less amenable to the influence of the representatives of the people of the country than it is now and, therefore, gentlemen, we must urge for its removal from the proposed constitution. I note with satisfaction that in the Executive Councils, the Indian element, is to be increased; but our demand that the Indian element introduced in the council should be truly representative has not been acceded to.

The cogency of arguments which the distinguished authors in the Report advance in support of their inability to satisfy this demand must be admitted and therefore we should not just at present press for the modification of the Report in that respect. But we should insist that in the Executive Councils—the Cabinets of the Government—the Indian element should be increased, they should be half and half. It will comprise representatives of the people by sympathy of sentiment and identity of interest which is the next best thing to representatives by direct election.

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One great matter—which constitutes the basis of the whole structure has been left to be settled later on. I refer, gentlemen, to the electorates that are to come into existence. They will be the motive power of the whole machinery, and yet the determination of their composition and the qualifications which will be demanded of them has been left to the discretion of a committee to be called hereafter to institute enquiries and make recommendations.

These recommendations should have emanated from the distinguished signatories to the Report—they would have had on them the impress of two great and penetrating minds. What will happen now? The whole question of the capacity of the people will be re-opened. Associations and individuals—who have not reconciled themselves to the main principle of the declaration of August 20th and who are otherwise known to be hostile to Indian progress—will start their campaign afresh against the grant of any extended franchise to the people. And it is unfortunate that they will get many weapons from the armoury of the Report itself.

The picture as presented in the chapter on "The Conditions of the Problem" for instance, may in its main outlines, be faithful to the lineaments of the original, but as has been pointed out, the blemishes have been given an undue prominence, "the circumstances which go against the introduction of responsible Government have been given an exaggerated value and those that are in favour of it have been under-estimated or ignored."

The absence of education, the differences of religion, race and caste, the ignorance of the masses of the people, their distressful poverty—far beyond the standards of Europe—the alleged want of political capacity of the rural population—are all paraded forward and backward and side-ways to prove that it is problematical whether people so circumstanced are

capable of properly exercising the power of voting. Yet it may be confessed, more in sorrow than in shame, that not a few of the conditions mentioned are not of our creating. We have been pointing to them insistently for a long time and offering suggestions with a view to their amelioration, but unfortunately, as in other matters, they have fallen on deaf ears.

I have of course no wish to minimise our own responsibility for the prevailing condition of things in India. For much of the religious differences, for instance, that exist we ourselves are to blame. There may be officials who in pursuit of the well-known principle of "divide and rule" would wish to see the perpetuation of these differences; but whose is the fault if we make ourselves not only willing but eager tools in their hands? What efforts—I am talking of sincere and not simulated efforts—have we made to obliterate those cleavages of which the report speaks "the cleavages of religion, race and caste which constantly threaten its (Indian Society's) solidarity and of which any wise political scheme must take serious heed." Social aloofness and separation are not fostered by Government.

For this we are to a greater degree than we wish to admit, responsible. The fact that these differences do not appear to soften down is due, however, I am firmly convinced, to the absence of one factor from the life of the masses of India. It is that apart from the spiritual temperament which keeps the Indian immersed in religious preoccupation, there is also the lack of any other equally engrossing interests in life. Next to religion, politics dominates the minds of men in other places. But the average Indian has been given little opportunity or encouragement to take a healthy and active interest in the affairs of his own country. Politics to him is taboo. And indeed, it could hardly have been otherwise with a system of administration so central and bureaucratic in character, and paternal in its professions, as the one that obtains in India. The consequence is that religion mainly colours the texture of his life.

But there are other things on which an equal emphasis has been laid in the Report, the poverty, ignorance and the helplessness of the masses of the people. In respect of these the Indian is the victim of circumstances, over which he has no control.

The poverty of the Indian masses is a heart-rending problem. It is there, it stares you in the face. But the problem cannot be solved by Indians alone. The economic forces that keep him down cannot be contended against by them unaided. Has the Government responsible for the material and moral well being of the people committed to its charge done enough to help them in his behalf? Have the agrarian, the industrial and the fiscal policies of the Government not indirectly served to bring about that result? Or take again, the question of ignorance. The masses cannot educate themselves. They have not achieved the impossible here any more than in any other country.

The report speaks of the "existence of silent depths through which the cry of the press and the platform never rings." But education alone can have the effect of making those depths illumined, responsive and active.

The bestowal of the franchise will not at once transform the people. It will not, as if by the flourish of a magic wand, at once bring enlightenment and prosperity where darkness and poverty reign. But it will be a very perverse sequence of events if the possession of franchise broad enough to affect large masses of the population, does not stimulate them to demand measures for their education and uplift.

Upto now the educated portion of the Indian population—men whom study and travel and observation have enabled to enter into enquiry and comparison of the conditions of different countries—have asked for and tried to get government to introduce measures for the education of the masses, in vain. If the masses get the franchise, I am convinced their first demand will be for education.

My friend, the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has so admirably dealt with the argument of illiteracy in his recently published memorandum that I need not go over the same ground afresh. I shall content myself with quoting one or two passages from it bearing on this point :

But were not the bulk of the people in every country—aye, even in England—non-politically-minded until they were given an opportunity to exercise political power, until the franchise was extended to them? And is there a better means of getting the people to take an interest in politics than giving them such power?.... But I cannot help feeling, that the argument based on the lack of education among the people, has been unduly pressed against the cause of Indian constitutional reform. We know that in Austria, Germany and France which have adopted the principle of 'manhood or universal suffrage,' a common qualification is that the elector should be able to read and write. So also in Italy, the United States, etc. But except in the case of eight universities, the franchise has never been based in the United Kingdom on any educational qualification. It is the possession of free-hold or lease hold property of a certain value or the occupation of premises of a certain annual value that gives a vote there, and it is said that this is the most universal qualification in all countries where a system of popular election has been introduced. Mr. Disraeli made an attempt in his abortive Reform Bill of 1867 to introduce an educational franchise in England. Hansard records that it was met by ridicule because it proposed a very low educational franchise,—so backward was education in England at the time.

"Mr. Gladstone's Reform Bill of 1868 based the franchise, like its predecessor of 1832, on property qualifications. It was after the franchise had been so extended to the workmen, that Englishmen began to say that "we must educate our masters," and the Elementary Education Act was passed in 1870, making elementary education universal and compulsory. The Duke of Newcastle's Commission of 1861 stated in their report that the estimated number of day scholar in England and Wales in 1833 was one in eleven and a quarter ($11\frac{1}{4}$). Speaking in 1868 Mr. Bruce stated that they had then arrived at the rate of one in seven or eight. In introducing the Elementary Education Bill (1870) Mr. Forester described the situation as showing "much imperfect education and much absolute ignorance,"—"ignorance which we are all aware is pregnant with crime and misery, with misfortune to individuals and danger to the community."

So we are not much worse of than England in 1868—70. Nor are we worse off than Canada when on Lord Durham's recommendation, Parliament established responsible government there. "It is impossible", said Lord Durham in his memorable report which led to the change, "to exaggerate the want of education among the inhabitants. No means of instruction have ever been provided for them, and they are almost and universally destitute of the qualifications even of reading and writing." Let us have a Reform Bill based on the principles of that of 1868, or a substantial measure of responsible government

and one of the first things, if not the first thing, we should do is to pass an Education Act which will remove the stigma of illiteracy from our land and steadily raise the percentage of scholars at schools, until it will equal the standard which has been reached in other civilized countries.

Apart from the historical validity of the official argument, however, it is our duty now, gentlemen, to put on record our views on the subject of franchise instead of waiting for the initiation of enquiries by the Committee which is going to be appointed for the purpose. It may be stated broadly that the present condition of the people in respect of education and training in politics should not be made an excuse for disqualifying a considerable number of them from enjoying that privilege. The electorate must be sufficiently broad-based to include all those who can be expected to be capable of using the vote in an ordinarily intelligent manner. Manhood suffrage is neither demanded nor is feasible, but literacy and possession of small property may well be recognised as qualifications for the franchise.

As regards the public services of the country it is gratifying that Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu do not stop at the recommendations of the Public Services Commission of 1912 but make more equitable and more generous recommendations.

They have recommended among other things the removal from the regulations of the remaining distinctions that are based on race, and the throwing open of all appointments in all branches of the public service without racial discrimination. They have also recommended that in the Indian Civil Service the proportion of recruitment in India be 33 per cent. of the superior posts increasing by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent annually.

I think the percentage though an advance on what the Public Services Commission recommended is not quite adequate. The ethics of the question of the larger employment of Indians in the administration cannot be discussed at length here; but one point may be mentioned.

Among many reasons which have been advanced on every occasion (when the question has been debated) against the admission of Indians in any considerable number to the superior grades of the service, one that has been often put forward is that the British character of the Indian public services will be adversely affected.

I refuse to admit that proposition. Among the lessons of the War there is a striking demonstration of the fallacy of that assumption. Owing to the exigencies of the War, as is well-known, many Indian services notably the Indian Civil Services and the Police have been depleted of their English personnel, and Indians in the Provincial Services are being put in charge of positions which they could not formerly hope to reach. Many districts are now almost entirely manned by Indians, The Police, the Medical, the Judicial and even the Executive charge of some districts is now in their hands. Has the character of the administration become un-British? No, on the contrary the administration has gained by being brought more in touch with the people.

Before leaving the subject of the Public Services I should like to point out that the proposals still further to increase the pay of the European members of the Civil Service, which is already the best paid service in the world, will make the cost of administration disproportionately heavy, and considering the poverty of the country, we should not impose on it a heavier strain. The demand for making the King's Commission available to Indians has

at last been conceded but the proposals in the report are not commensurate either with the requirements of the situation or even with the necessities of the hour.

India is no longer isolated. It is in the vortex of international strifes, ambitions and struggles. The menace to her is not chimerical, we have been told on the highest authority that it is very real. India has been asked—and she is straining every nerve—to put forth her greatest effort in supplying men, money and material for the needs of the Empire, and the defence of her own borders. She is supplying men not in thousands but in hundreds of thousands; would it not be an inspiring sight if these men were to be led to battle by officers of their own race as are the Canadians, the New Zealanders and even the South Africans?

Why this mistrust, even at this supreme moment of trial? The rally of India to the flag has been nothing short of phenomenal. At a critical time of the War the contingent from India turned the scales and we are thankful to Lord Hardinge for having given India an opportunity to prove her mettle.

Let her be given a national army, officered by her own sons, let her people have the right to bear arms, and then we may face with equanimity any menace to her safety.

Gentlemen, no real beginning towards a self-governing India can be made until fiscal autonomy is included in the first instalment of reforms. No nation can make any progress without it, and to my mind it is the very life-breath of the industrial renaissance of which India stands so much in need.

The policy of free trade might have made England what it is; but the principles which will bring economic salvation to India, we are firmly convinced, are not the principles of Adam Smith and his school. The world has travelled very much farther since his days. Protection and bounties and discriminating tariffs which were not the gods worshipped by the political economists of the Victorian age have been now enshrined even in that country. In the economic reconstruction of the Empire after the war, the problems of which are now being considered, the voice of the free trader is no longer heard to any effect. England is committed to a policy of preference. One thing is clear: the belligerent Powers of to-day will not enter into any economic peace on pre-war terms. Even after they have sheathed their swords and resumed political relations there will probably be an allied Zollverein.

India is not alone in her repudiation of free trade. The Central Powers, Austria-Hungary and Germany, rejected that principle. They built up their huge industries, their marvellous trade, and captured the markets of the world by a systematic application of the principles of protection, and encouragement of industries by state subsidies and bounties. Japan, the primitive backward Asiatic country of 40 years ago, did the same. To-day she is a highly industrialised state, and her people are rich and prosperous.

India has been the dumping ground of foreign manufactures of every country in the world. She had no industries to speak of of her own and was dependent for even the smallest article of every-day use, on imports. Her function has been to supply raw materials of every kind, and get them back in the shape of manufactured articles and contribute to the prosperity of those countries which thus sent out their commodities to her.

Following the outbreak of the war, Germany and Austria were automatically excluded from Indian markets and imports from other belligerent countries, too, were restricted. Here was a splendid opportunity to revive and improve her industries ; but, unfortunately, we had neither state subsidies nor protective tariffs to help us forward. The result is that Indian industry continues to be where it was. Instead of Germany and Austria, Japan has flooded our market. Though we cannot expect much help from the British Parliament in this matter, I am sure if we pressed our claim with unanimity and force, the love of fair play of the British Democracy will assert itself and India would get fiscal autonomy. The report under consideration omits to make any proposals, I regret to say, in this regard.

Gentlemen, I now come to a question with which the very existence of the All-India Moslem League is bound up. I mean the question of the separate representation of Musalmans in the Legislative Councils and in local bodies.

I have reserved the consideration of this question to the last, not because it is less important than the others, but for us the most important of all. From the point of view of the Mahomedans of India it should be, and is, under the present circumstances of the country, the dominant factor in Indian polity.

The attitude of the Mahomedans on this question has been characterised by an utter unanimity, and intensity of conviction, which does not appear to have been adequately realised so far by the authorities.

Following upon the rapprochement of 1916, by which the Hindus and Mahomedans self-determined their national demands, the Hindus realizing its beneficent effect on the vital interests of the country, agreed to the Mahomedans having not only separate electorates, but a representation commensurate with their status and special needs in the country. The Mahomedans on their part renounced their participation in mixed electorates. This result was arrived at by mutual consent. That constitutes the chief basis of the agreement. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, however, fails to grasp the significance of the settlement. "We are not aware on what basis the figures were arrived at," say the authors of the Report. I wonder what other basis than the one I have pointed out could be more valid. Is not mutual consent the most satisfactory basis for any such settlement as the one under consideration ?

I may be permitted to point out that in the discussion of its proposals, which the publication of the report has evoked, there has been a unanimous condemnation of, and protest against, on the part of Hindus and Mahomedans alike, of the view taken of the Hindu-Moslem agreement referred to by the authors of the Report. I may further remark that, having regard to the dissatisfaction already engendered by the attitude disclosed in the Report in regard to this matter, there cannot be any doubt that the Mussalmans, any less than their Hindu brethren, will agree to anything less than the restoration of the settlement in any Bill that may be in contemplation. It is my duty, knowing as I do the intensity of Moslem feeling on this question, to sound this note of warning and of appeal.

Gentlemen, I am afraid I have taxed your patience and your indulgence to an inordinate extent, but the seriousness of the occasion is my excuse for it.

We, who are assembled here, have a sacred though a heavy duty to perform, and I pray that God will grant us all light and guidance to see which way our duty lies.

Gentlemen, I shall conclude with one last word. You will have observed that I have refrained from indicating any specific lines for your deliberations to proceed upon. This I need hardly say is not due to any oversight, but to the fact that I very strongly feel that on so momentous an occasion as the present, no individual opinion should be imposed upon the community and that the community itself should, through its chosen representatives, declare its mind on the issue before it according to the constitutional procedure by which we are bound. While on this point I cannot but deplore that at this juncture the Mussalman community is deprived of the benefit of the advice and guidance of some of its most trusted leaders, who, moreover, had made a special study of the constitutional issues on which we are called upon to pronounce.

I refer especially to that brilliant publicist—Mr. Mohamed Ali—who occupies a position of outstanding eminence in the Progressive party of Moslem democracy,—and who, together with his brother and a number of distinguished confreres is still condemned to internment without any well-established cause. The Mussalmans keenly feel the wrong inflicted on them by their being thus deprived of most valuable assistance and guidance in the task of considering and pronouncing upon the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms. May I once again appeal to the Government to meet the wishes and satisfy the sentiment of the Moslem Community in this regard?

REPORT
OF THE
CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERAR
Third Provincial Conference,

ON
Political, Industrial & Social Matters

HELD AT
RAIPUR

on the 29th, 30th and 31st March, 1907

COMPILED BY THE
GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE AND PUBLISHED AT THE
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INTRODUCTION.

Since the idea of holding conferences was first mooted at Nagpur with a view to keep pace with the Political, Social and Industrial progress of our fellow-brethren in the sister provinces, there have been three sessions of these annual meetings in the three most important divisional centres of the Central Provinces, viz, Nagpur, Jubbulpur and Raipur. The first session was held during the Easter of 1905 at Nagpur when Mr. G. S. Khaparde of Amraoti presided over the political section; the second session was held at Jubbulpur about the same time in 1906 under the presidency of the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Chitnavis and the third session was held at Raipur during the Easter period of 1907. Following the usual course, Dr. H. S. Gour, a leading citizen and member of the local bar, invited the conference to Raipur at the close of the Jubbulpur session.

Reception Committee—From the very commencement the people of Raipur took an active and intelligent interest in the conference and no time was lost in forming a Reception Committee which was constituted as follows :—

CHAIRMAN.

Dr. H. S. Gour, M. A. LL. D. D. C. L. *Barrister-at-Law.*

VICE CHAIRMAN.

1. Rao Bahadur Raghoba Mahadik *Zemindar of Rajim.*
2. Seth Bishram Bhai, *Merchant and Honorary Magistrate.*
3. Mr. Byramjee P. C., *Merchant and Honorary Magistrate.*
4. Mohunt Bajrangdas, *Malguzar and Member, District Council.*

SECRETARIES.

1. Mr. D. N. Chaudhuri, *Pleader and President, Municipal Committee.*
2. Mr. K. N. Bagchi, *Pleader and Malguzar.*

JOINT SECRETARIES.

1. Mr. W. B. Lakhe, *Pleader and Malguzar.*
2. Mr. Badriprosod Pujari, *Malguzar and Member, Municipal Committee.*

TREASURER.

Pandit Gobind Lal Purohit, *Banker and Malguzar.*

MEMBERS.

Besides the office-bearers the following gentlemen constituted the Reception Committee.

1. Mr. Yado Rao, *Pleader and Malguzar and Member, Municipal Committee.*
2. Mr. Narain Rao Kusrey, *Pleader.*
3. Mr. Ishaq Ali, *Merchant, Malguzar, and Member, District Council.*
4. Seth Balkissen Nathani of the firm of Saligram Gupikissen.
5. Rai Saheb Seth Kapurchand Acharj, munit of the firm of Rai Bahadur Bansilal Abirchand, *Vice President, Municipal Committee and District Council.*
6. Mr. Nathmull Acharj B. A.
7. Seth Chhotmull Daga, *Merchant and Malguzar.*
8. Seth Kesrimull, munit of the firm of Uttamchand Gambhirmull.
9. Seth Ramdas Dani, *Malguzar and Member, Municipal Committee.*
10. Seth Abhairam Vyasa, *Merchant and Banker.*
11. Seth Ganeshram, *Banker, Malguzar, Member, District Council and Municipal Committee.*

12. Gosain Dharam Puri, *Malguzar*.
13. Dao Ramsaranlal Sao, *Malguzar*.
14. Dao Motilal Sao, *Malguzar*.
15. Mr. Anand Rao Chardikar, *Pleader*.
16. Mr. C. M. Thacker, *Bar-at-Law*.

A rule was unanimously passed that all respectable gentlemen paying a subscription of Rs. 25 were eligible to be members of the Reception Committee and under this rule a large number of gentlemen were subsequently added to the list.

Executive Committee—An Executive Committee of the Reception Committee was also appointed of which the following were the office-bearers:—

PRESIDENT.

Mr. J. N. Sircar *Barister-at-Law*.

SECRETARIES.

Mr. D. N. Chaudhuri and Mr. K. N. Bagchi.

JOINT SECRETARIES.

Mr. W. B. Lakhe and Mr. Badriprosad Pujari.

Help received from officials, public bodies and private individuals—It is with sincere pleasure that the Reception Committee beg to thankfully acknowledge the help that they received from the District Officials, the Municipal Committee and many public-spirited gentlemen of Raipur. Mr. A. B. Napier I. C. S., the then popular Deputy Commissioner of Raipur gladly accorded permission to the Committee to hold the sessions of all the Conferences at the Town Hall. The District Superintendent of Police cordially co-operated with the Secretaries in making arrangements for police guards in the precincts of the Town Hall and the delegates' Camps to preserve order and take care of the properties of the Committee and of the delegates and it affords us much pleasure to state that from start to finish no hitch occurred in any of the arrangements.

The Municipal Committee very generously lent the public *Serai* for accommodation of delegates and the conservancy and sanitary arrangements made by the committee for the comfort and welfare of the delegates were all that could be desired.

Many public-spirited Chiefs and Zemindars also lent their generous help to the committee by placing their houses in charge of the committee for accommodation of delegates and notably among them we may mention the following names:—

- (1) Raja Kamalnarain Sing Bahadur, *Feudatory Chief of Khairagarh*.
- (2) Raja Bhupdeo Sing Bahadur, *Feudatory Chief of Raigarh*.
- (3) Dewan Bahadur Seth Kasturchand of *Kamptee and Raipur*.

Conference Literature—It must be frankly acknowledged that education has not made much progress in the Central Provinces and particularly in the Chhatisgarh Division of which Raipur is the Head Quarter station. From the beginning the promoters of the Conference at Raipur foresaw the huge difficulty which stared them in the face in the matter of creating an interest in the mass of the people for the conference and acquainting them with the objects thereof. A large amount of printed circulars in Hindee was sent to the leading men of all the important towns and villages of the whole division and a system of uninterrupted correspondence was kept up with them to answer all their queries and remove their doubts. This entailed a very heavy amount of work on the Secretaries who had to devote a considerable share of their time on the office work.

Correspondence with other District Centres—Similarly the Secretaries had to keep themselves in touch with the views and opinions of the leading men of other districts in the two sister provinces of C. P. and Berar and by means of a constant interchange of ideas much valuable counsel and sound opinion were collected which proved of very great help.

Election of Delegates—All the important centres of the province were from an early period reminded of the extreme necessity of proceeding with the election of their delegates in good time so that proper arrangements befitting the rank, social status, caste and creed of the delegates might be made by the Reception Committee and with the exception of a few places such as Jubbulpur and Narsingpur whence the inhabitants had to flee for fear of plague, other centres sent their intimations in right time.

Places represented—The conference committee have much pleasure to announce that almost all the districts, towns of importance and trade centres in the whole of C. P. and Berar including many of the Feudatory States were represented at the Raipur Conference, a detailed list of which is given elsewhere.

Number of Delegates—The total number of delegates who attended the conference was 381, which was better than the number which attended the Jubbulpur Conference by about 100 and worse than that which attended the first Conference at Nagpur by about the same figure. A large number of our Muhamedan fellow-brethren also attended as delegates and took a most lively interest in the proceedings.

Selection of President—It was at first expected that a leading gentleman of Nagpur would accept the chair of the political section and the Reception Committee were under this impression up to a very late period when it became apparent that the choice of president should be made from elsewhere. The Reception Committee approached Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar of Amraoti with the request that he might accept the chair only about a month before the session of the conference and be it said to the credit of Mr. Mudholkar that though he was not in very good health and the time was rather short, he laid the committee under very deep obligations by accepting the offer and the excellent address which he delivered at the conference, which is printed *in extenso* elsewhere, fully justified the wisdom of the choice of his selection and threw lustre on his reputation as a shrewd political thinker of a very high order.

Similarly the selection of Mr. M. B. Dadabhoy, the well-known Barrister and mill-owner of Nagpur and of Mr. Srikhande of Saugor, late a distinguished member of the provincial service, to fill the chairs at the Industrial and Social sections respectively, was by the subsequent satisfactory results, found to have been eminently justified.

Accommodation and entertainment of delegates—A strong sub-committee with Mr. Narayan Rao Kusrey, pleader, at their Head, was appointed to look to the matters of housing and feeding of delegates. This sub-committee discharged its duties very satisfactorily and the conference committee derive no small gratification from the fact that all the delegates, however much they might have disagreed on the political platform, were unanimous in enlogizing the efforts of the Reception Committee in giving them a comfortable habitation and dainty dishes.

Policy of the Conference—From the very commencement it had become necessary, in view of the high feelings which existed in many parts of the country regarding some of the political problems, to chalk out a clear line of policy on which the Raipur Conference was to be conducted and the first and foremost policy of the conference committee was *Moderation*. With this end in view the committee set itself to work from the very start in the election of its office-bearers, in the selection of the president and in the dissemination of the conference literature which was distributed broadcast throughout the Chhatisgarh Division, nay, the whole province. Mottoes advocating 'moderation' were hung up at the portals of the arches which had been erected in different places both for the purpose of beautification as well as for the edification of strangers of opposite views. To some, these mottoes might have conveyed the idea of an exaggerated protestation of moderation from the house-tops but the promoters of the conference knew full well the firebrand element which the new activities had brought into being and the wisdom of their action became apparent afterwards when the vanguard of the 'extreme' section fell back in despair at the unsuccessful results of their first and fiercest

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gathering of Indian Gentlemen in conference or congress is complete without an exhibition of articles of *swadeshi* manufacture. Though we cannot congratulate ourselves on the success of our *swadeshi* bazar, we can at any rate claim that an effort, however feeble, was made in this direction.

Report of Proceedings.—Difficulty having been experienced at the conference sessions at Nagpur and Jubbulpur to get correct reports of speeches delivered *extempore* by the speakers the Raipur Conference Committee had engaged the services of the well-known short-hand reporter Mr. B. G. Manker of Bombay as their official reporter. It must be said to the credit of Mr. Manker that considering the well-being of the country which these conferences aim at, he accepted the offer of the committee to come over to Raipur and report the proceedings on a very moderate charge. Mr. Manker took short-hand reports not only of English speeches but also of Hindee and Marathi speeches and his translated reports will be found to be correct and faithful.

Conclusion.—We must apologize to our numerous delegates, friends and supporters for the great delay that has occurred in the issue of this report. All our office bearers are busy professional men and for want of a good local printing press, we had to get our report printed at Calcutta. All these causes contributed to the delay for which none are more sorry than the responsible Secretaries.

Third Provincial Conference of the Central Provinces and Berars at Raipur.

First day—Friday, 29th March, 1907.

On Friday afternoon at 4 P. M., the Third Provincial Conference of the Central Provinces and Berars was opened in the Victoria Town Hall by Dr. Gour, President of the Reception Committee, in the presence of a vast assembly composed of more than 350 delegates and the *elite* of the citizens of the two amalgamated Provinces. Rao Bahadur Rangnath Narshingh Mudholkar, B. A. LL. B., Advocate, and President-elect of the Conference having been ushered into the Hall by Dr. Gour and other members of the Reception Committee accompanied by the corps of Volunteers the whole assembly rose to their feet and received him with ovation in the midst of the cries of *Bande Mataram*. Rao Bahadur Mudholkar having taken his seat, and quiet being restored in the meeting, Dr. Gour rose, amid loud cheers, and delivered the following Presidential address which was received with frequent applauses :

BROTHER DELEGATES AND FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN:—As Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Third Provincial Conference, it is my privilege and duty to welcome you on behalf of the people of this Division, and on their behalf I offer you our most cordial welcome. From my own experience, I know that it involves no small sacrifice on the part of busy men, which I know most of you are to sacrifice your hard-earned holiday and to tramp up to this distant land. I also know what it is to put up in improvised lodgings and partake of a meal made by a mere man. I am therefore, gentlemen, quite conscious of the abnegation of self that your visit here implies, and I can only hope that our efforts to minimize your discomforts and wants may not have proved unavailing. But whether it is so or not, there can be no doubt that no sacrifice, that you may have had to make, can be too great for the great cause that has drawn hither. (Hear, hear). For, when I look back upon the past and think of the progress that we have made I see the horizon radiant with hope and the future full of bright augury. (Hear, hear). Brother delegates, it is only three years since we gave birth to our Conference, and if you were told about its humble origin you would probably be surprised. You know that during the last few years our delegates from the Central Provinces to the National Congress have felt depressed by a feeling of their responsibility to the Nation in the matter of inviting that assembly to our Province, and while at Bombay a hint was passed on to us that we might now shoulder the burden. Some of us, who were then there, conferred on the possibility of our issuing, invitation, but the rest protested that we should be unable to make good our promise unless we had previously acquired some experience of political campaigns which, they suggested, we must do by inaugurating a Provincial Conference. I am happy to say that my friend, Mr. Madho Rao Padhay—(cheers)—promised to work upon our suggestion and it was mainly due to his initiative and exertions that our first Conference was launched at Nagpur, (Hear, hear). Having thus embarked upon a political life we felt it our duty to gauge the feelings of the officials, and I am happy to acknowledge the kindness and sympathy evinced by our late Chief Commissioner Mr. J. O. Miller—(cheers)—and his popular *locum tenens* Mr. Ismay—(Cheers)—who “acknowledged the value to the Administration of having the views of the public on important questions of policy brought before him, the moderation that marks the proceedings of this Conference.” (Hear, hear).

Gentlemen, we can not be too thankful to these gentlemen for these encouraging words at the outset, of our career, for we are conscious that if instead of this encouraging appreciation of our cause we had met with adverse comments, how severe would have been our trial and how uncertain our future. But happily we have now passed over the initial stage and we are, I hope, safely embarked on the tide of progress. (Cheers). And now that we are well out of the wharf and our Chief Commissioner gone, we can offer him our disinterested thanks, as he has given to us his unstinted sympathy. (Cheers). And now that he is gone let us hope that his successor will follow in his footsteps and carry the tradition of the precedence yet a step further: for while Mr. Miller was with us, his successor Mr. Craddock is one of us and we expect from him even more practical demonstration of his sympathy and encouragement. (Cheer). Gentlemen, whatever may be our future I do not think that we need be ashamed of our past record. Our programme has been always a moderate one and our resolutions have invariably recorded our mature convictions. And we are gratified to think that the Government has acted upon at least three of our resolutions by abolishing the Patwari cess, reducing the egregiously high school fee, and partially though still imperfectly curtailing the peregrinations of our magistracy. (Hear, hear). We should be less than human did we not recognize the feeling that has prompted these reforms and I am sanguine, gentlemen, that so long as we preserve our motto which you see inscribed on the main gate: "Moderation is our watch word," so long we should be in no danger of suffering oblivion at the hands of our Government. But there are some amongst you who do not approve of this course, but cry aloud for bolder action. I am not unaware of the deep patriotism of those who counsel this course. But remember gentlemen, you cannot put new wine into old bottles, and whether you denounce our policy as timid or timorous, or apply to it even more opprobrious epithets, you will not find us easy to swerve from the golden path of moderation and persuasion which prudence dictates to us to be the true statesmanship. At the same time, gentlemen, do not mistake me when I counsel moderation in speech and thought for they, like all other things, are but relative terms and their continuance or discontinuance may any moment depend upon a change in our environments (Hear, hear). Indeed, at one time, no one had heard of boycott in connection with the practical politics of this country, and if it is now the cry of not an unimportant section of the community, it is because of the repressive and reactionary measures adopted in defiance of popular opinion. (Hear, hear). And the seed of discontent thus sown has now taken root and risen from its subterranean repose, and those, who flouted the term "national" when applied to our Grand Assembly, now talk of it in bated breath as potent of a possible catastrophe. But those who have studied the undercurrent of Indian thought will not be slow to perceive that the recent events have only given voice and expression to a sentiment which kindred associations have slowly but silently been fostering and developing, and the volume and intensity of which has, as was but natural, grown with the *Pax Britannica* and Western education. (Cheer). And its power has not been unexpected, but is the first healthy blossom of a Renaissance which the policy of wise and great Englishmen in the past had already foreshadowed. It is the noble fruit of a liberal policy of education which is not the least glorious work of England in its great Eastern dependency. (Cheers). And if we have had to pay rather highly for the lesson we have learnt, let us be thankful that we have at last passed beyond the primary tutelage and that our children are now crying out for class promotion. (Hear, hear). But I am sorry to reflect, gentlemen, that the school-masters have misapprehended the capacity of their pupils. They have found us so inapt and slow to master our elements that they have come to think that we cannot go beyond (Laughter). But as we are naturally eager to press forward and learn more, it is for us to be patient and preserving. (Hear, hear). One incautious move may land us into disaster, and I, therefore, adjure you to eschew all intemperance in thought and action specially as better days seem to be within a measurable distance. (Cheers). But to achieve this end we must resolve to a much greater extent now on the spirit of self-sacrifice, self-reliance and power of sustained effort. These are

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essential qualities for supporting great movements as they are the crowning jewels of an individual character. A nation is but an aggregate of individuals, and a national character is but a generalisation of the qualities found in the majority. I am sanguine enough to believe that such deficiencies as we may now possess have now only a short life before them, and that our lives would be happier and brighter and our future history illumined by the names of the brightest diadems of the Creator. (Hear, hear). If instead of listening only to the voices from the graves, we exercise our vision and apply our mind to the stern realities around us we shall have emancipated ourselves not only from the dull conventionalities which corrode our system and eat into our vitals, but we should rise, like Phoenix, from our present grovelling misery to the glorious life which was once ours in the remote past. (Loud applause). To achieve this result, there is ample scope for activity to our workers in the fields of social and industrial reforms, and in this connection I very much rejoice at the present universal clarion call of Swadeshism—(Hear, hear).—which bids fair to do us a world of good in more ways than one. (Hear, hear).

Brother delegates, I think I must now conclude. I do not wish to anticipate resolutions which you will be presently called upon to discuss. As Chairman of the Reception Committee my duty is like that of the conductor of an orchestra who strikes up an overture before the curtain is drawn, and then retires into an invisible obscurity as soon as the players are upon the stage. (Laughter). But before the play actually begins, we must appoint some one to preside over our performance, and I am sure our choice cannot fall on a worthier person than Rao Bahadur Rangnath Narsing Mudholkar (Hear, hear). Who has done so much useful work in the past in the political fields (Hear, hear). I trust that you will accept the nomination *nem con.* (Cheer). Gentlemen, before I leave this chair I wish to give you a very interesting piece of news that we have up to this moment registered 365 delegates—(Hear, hear).—and 68 visitors. (Hear, hear). These figures speak for themselves. They call for no comments. I again beg to propose that Rao Bahadur Mudholkar do take the chair. (Cheers).

In conclusion Dr. Gour said:—

Gentlemen, It is the ordinary practice that all proposals should be duly seconded. I, therefore, call upon my friend Mr. Dadabhoy (of Nagpur) to second this proposal. (Cheers).

Mr. Dadabhoy (of Nagpur) seconded the above proposal in the following terms:—

Brother Delegates, very few words are necessary to second the proposition which Dr. Gour has laid before you. Most of you are absolutely familiar with the name and personality of our esteemed friend and the respected citizen of our Amalgamated provinces, I mean, Rao Bahadur Rangnath Narsingh Mudholkar. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, Rao Bahadur Mudholkar has been a very earnest, devoted and straight-forward worker in the cause of his country. (Hear hear). It is for the last 20 years he has studied politics to which he has given the best portion of his time and industry at considerable sacrifice and personal labour. (Cheers). He has identified himself with many public movements. (Cheers) This is the third year of our existence. After the Amalgamated Provinces came into being this Provincial Conference took its birth. (Hear, hear). When we recall to our mind the three years of our existence we are reminded of the fact that this is the second time that the chair is offered to a Berari gentlemen (Hear, hear and Laughter). You will all realize that we have come to acknowledge and to appreciate the valuable services, help and co-operation of our Berari friends (Hear, hear). Gentlemen, I have nothing future to add. I call upon Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar to preside over the interesting discussion of very useful subjects for which we have come here this afternoon.

Dr. Gour:—Gentlemen, it has been proposed by myself and seconded by Mr. Dadabhoy that Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar do preside at the Third Provincial Conference. Those who are in favour of this resolution will kindly raise their hands.

A voice from the audience : All.

Dr. Gour :—Any against?

Several voices from the audience : None.

Dr. Gour :—The proposition is carried unanimously. Gentlemen, before I call upon Rao Bahadur Mudholkar to assume the duties of the President of this Conference it is necessary that you should have the vernacular translation of my speech. I say this in response to a suggestion that my speech should be translated in Hindi for the information of such of the audience as do not understand English before I abdicate the chair in favour of Rao Bahadur Mudholkar. (Cheers.) (Mr. Yadhawrao Aradhe of Bilaspur read the Hindi translation of Dr. Gour's speech.) Gentlemen, I now call Rao Bahadur Mudholkar to assume the duties of the President of this conference.

Rao Bahadur Mudholkar occupied the chair amidst ringing cheers and delivered the following address.

DR. GOUR :—BROTHER DELEGATES, FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

I am grateful to you for the honour you have done me in electing me President of this Conference and I am very grateful to my friends Dr. Gour and Mr. Dadabhoj for the very kind terms in which they have been pleased to express their appreciation of the humble services which it has fallen to my lot to perform. I value the honour not so much for the dignity which the position accorded by your suffrages carries, but chiefly for the greater scope which it affords for helping the great cause in which you all here and our countrymen in other parts are working (Cheers). Grave questions of and vital interest to the Country are loudly calling for solution and are engaging the attention of the Government and the thinking portion of the people. Various views are advanced, different plans proposed and methods suggested in regard to them. Both on account of the importance and nature of the subjects and the zeal evinced in their discussion it is to be expected that this assembly representing the wisdom, knowledge, experience and public spirit of these Provinces—(Hear, hear).—would be called upon to deal with them directly and indirectly. I esteem it a great privilege to be accorded the position of President on such an important occasion.

THE NEW SPIRIT.

Gentlemen, we are living in a critical period of our history. A new spirit generated by the contact of two great civilizations, the Western and the Eastern, is moving the people of this vast Continent and rousing them to a sense of national existence and making them alive to their duties and responsibilities, their rights privileges as members of a civilised community and a world—wide Empire. Placed by the inscrutable decree of an all-wise Providence in the position of British subjects, welded together by common interests, common objects, common difficulties and common disabilities, the people of India have, through the beneficent influence of elevating knowledge, been awakened to the consciousness that they should have the complete status of British citizens. They are stirred by the worthy ambition of being entrusted with their full share of work in the difficult task of government and their zeal is fired to develop in themselves the requisite physical, mental and moral capacities for this task. (Cheers).

THE SWADESHI PRINCIPLE.

Gentlemen, the principle of Swadeshism, which is manifesting itself with such strength for some time past, is an expression of this lofty spirit of duty and dignity—(Hear, hear).—which is spreading amongst the people. It embodies the sentiment of nationalism or patriotism which is such a potent factor in the progress of the human race. Devotion for the mother-land, love for all her children, and burning desire for strengthening their capabilities so that they may labour for the improvement of the human kind and for the

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faithful observance of the great moral laws which rule the universe, these constitute the essence of this sentiment. (Cheers). The duty which it lays on us is to create a strong, robust, hard-working, industrious, sober, thrifty body of citizens capable of enduring the vicissitudes of life and fit to fight its battles. The citizens have to be equipped with the knowledge of the working of the forces of nature, their action and interaction; and this strength and this knowledge have to be guided and made efficient by moral sense and spiritual faith. In its comprehensive aspect and full significance the Swadeshi principle or, as it might be rendered, the principle of nationalism or patriotism is a message to each nation to qualify itself for the noble purpose of strenuously exerting towards the perfection of mankind. (Hear, hear). Faith in truth, justice, righteousness and universal love are the bedrock on which its temple is reared. (Cheers).

Associated in organised societies in which human units have to live and work, maintenance of peace and order, the establishment of just relations between the different classes and grades of workers, the promotion of co-operation and healthy fellow-feelings amongst them are a prime necessity. Thus it is that politics play such a prominent part in the economy of the human race. The questions they deal with have to be approached not in a spirit of apology but as a matter of imperative necessity and high duty.

Economic Swadeshim forms a part of this great sphere of work and its importance to the Indian community placed in the situation in which it is by adventitious causes cannot be too highly estimated.

THE DIGNITY OF OUR MISSION.

Our Congresses, Conferences and Associations in working for political reforms, industrial regeneration and the elimination of unhealthy social practices and institutions are thus discharging not a merely ordinarily useful or necessary function, but are engaged in a most meritorious and holy work. The sacredness of their mission, its intimate connection with the perfection of human society, its unison with the laws of God cannot be too often insisted upon or too firmly impressed on our minds. In times of difficulty and trial when the obstacles in our path threaten to overwhelm us, when disappointment makes craven suggestions and when the scoff of the Philistine and the faithless seems to produce an unnerving effect, the consciousness of the loftiness of our purpose and its conformity with the eternal verities will put heart into us, steady our step and brighten our vision. Sustained by its criticism and opposition, instead of damping our zeal or enfeebling our energy, would go only to strengthen our resolve and increase our vigour.

ITS PROSPECTS.

Gentlemen, we ought to derive encouragement and support from the progress which our cause is making. It is not very many years ago when the mere mention of political reform roused denunciations and created a storm, and the Congress and its allied institutions were called seditious and dangerous. The stages of hatred and opposition, of opprobrium and misrepresentation, of ridicule and contempt through which every movement having any vitality in it has to pass, have been left behind. We are now well amidst the stage of partial concession, and can reasonably hope for complete acceptance before long. The propaganda which was deemed at one time dangerously subversive is now recognised as legitimate. Its exceedingly modest first demand which was characterised as "a leap in the dark" and "a big jump into the unknown" has long been granted and placed on the statute book. Its further fuller and more thorough-going measures of reform, which were denounced as impossible and revolutionary, are within a measurable distance of at least a partial fulfilment. (Cheers). The first and most difficult steps have been taken. The principle of a real live representation has been accepted, the justice of the claims of Indians to participate more largely in the higher branches of the administration is not now questioned as it once was; financial control, the mere suggestion of which 18 years ago roused Viceregal

ire is now within sight. (Hear, hear). With the return of the wave of Liberalism in England two years back the number of men of position and influence taking interest in the advancement of the political status of Indians has greatly increased. Responsible statesmen are busy considering what further steps towards progress should be taken. Above all in the King-Emperor's message to Parliament the need for early reform is frankly stated. (Hear, hear). But the most notable achievement of the forces of which the National Congress was the first and the most characteristic expression, is the rise of public opinion, the hold which the principle of nationalism is obtaining in the country, the daily increasing spread of earnestness of purpose and activity of effort. (Cheers).

All these are factors which contribute to success and ought to put heart into us. And though a rose-coloured optimism, which sees nothing but the pleasant side of a thing, is not desirable, a pessimism which can see the dark side only is equally to be avoided (Hear, hear). A state of thorough-contentedness with things as they are is a prelude to stagnation. Some measure of discontent is a necessary incentive to progress (Hear, hear). It is on a judicious admixture of the two that solid and permanent advance depends. Avoiding on one hand the helplessness of fatalism and the stolid complacency of optimism, we have to avoid on the other the impatience and haste, which want of sufficient thought and want of sufficient experience are apt to produce. Such success as our agitation is capable of achieving ought to serve as an inspiration and incentive to further efforts. We must utilise our failures to strengthen our purpose and to fix our resolve. Judged in this light our present position is one for hopefulness and expectation. Political progress is of necessity very slow. Even in a homogeneous community no individual or body, possessing power, willingly or easily agrees or submits to part with any portion of it. In the case of India there are the additional difficulties caused by the difference of race and the antagonism of interests due to the fact of an outside rule. As practical politicians and as persons endowed with common sense we must make allowances for all these various considerations and not take up an attitude which ignores them. Similarly, the frame of mind which entertains no confidence in the sense of justice, wise statesmanship or far-sighted prudence of the British nation is emphatically to be deprecated. Such distrust and low estimate is not, in the first place, correct and justifiable, and, in the second place, serves no useful purpose and only increases our difficulties by creating ill-will and friction. It would be untrue to pretend that we are satisfied with our lot and that we are content with a system, a form of Government, in which sufficient scope is not afforded to us to rise to the height of our stature. It would be equally unwise to entertain visions which are incapable of accomplishment. We must look facts fully in the face and adjust our ideals, our objects and our methods accordingly. Whatever regeneration for India is possible lies only through the establishment of solidarity of opinions and sentiments among the different races, castes and creeds inhabiting this vast country. It is by the harmonising of the various interests which exist that our elevation can take place. The educated classes who are the natural leaders of the people must fully perceive this. They must ever bear in mind the utter folly of clannish or parochial aims. It is in the consolidation of an Indian nation including in it all the diverse communities inhabiting this continent or holding interests therein that they ought to put their great trust and faith.

OUR POLITICAL IDEAL.

Self-Government is the goal of our political ambition, because it is only an autonomous nation which can afford scope and supply facilities for the development of those intellectual powers and that moral and spiritual fervour which must be possessed by its citizens before they can take their share in the evolution of the human race. Such autonomy for India is not beyond the range of practical politics when some of the wisest and best men of England admit its justice and contemplate its grant. It is not an impossible or impracticable claim which we advance. It is not merely speculative considerations or abstract principles on

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which we rely. We take our stand on the firm ground of statutory rights and royal pledges (Hear, hear). The combined wisdom of the three Estates of the British realm laid down in 1833:—

“That no native of the said territories (India) nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or emolument under the said Government”. (Act 3 and 4, William 4, C. 85 S. 87). (Hear, hear).

Her late gracious Majesty Queen-Empress Victoria—(Hear, hear),—of revered memory in the Proclamation which she issued in November, 1858, gave assurances which more than anything else restored tranquillity and secured peace. Says that Proclamation:—

“We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and these obligations by the blessing of Almighty God we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. “× × ×. And it is our further will, that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be fully and impartially admitted to offices in our service the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge.”(Hear, hear).

These are not merely empty words vainly uttered. They represent the essence of wise and far-sighted statesmanship. They were issued after mature deliberation. They are solemn promises made in the full knowledge of their sanctity. Those who scoff at them or try to explain them away show the gravest disrespect to the august sovereign from whom they came in the fullness of her heart.

Of these attempts to read away Her late Majesty's Proclamation Lord Ripon said on a memorable occasion in the Viceregal Legislative Council. “The document is not a treaty. It is not a diplomatic instrument. It is a declaration of principles of Government which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to which it is addressed. The doctrine, therefore, to which Sir Fitzjames Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honor of my country, and if it were once to be received and acted upon by the Government of England, it would do more, than any thing else could possibly do, to strike at the root of our power and to destroy our just influence. Because that power and that influence rest more upon the conviction of our good faith than upon any other foundation, save more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our arms.” (Hear, hear).

I would give one more quotation, and this time from a conservative Viceroy. Lord Lytton said on 1st January, 1877, at the Delhi Durbar Assemblage:—“But you, the natives of India, whatever your race, and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian Statesmen and by the Legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India, as binding on its honour, and consistent with all the aims of its policy”.

The latest attempt to nullify the Proclamation was made by Lord Curzon (Shame.) It has received the severe rebuke it deserved from no less a personage than Mr. John Morley who said: “I do not believe that the Ministers who advised Queen Victoria in framing one of the most memorable documents in all our history meant those words “so far as may be” to be construed in a narrow, liberal, restricted or pettifogging sense. I do not

believe that Parliament ever intended this promise of the Queen should be construed in any but a liberal and generous sense." He called the "promise" itself "as wise and politic as it was just." (Hear, hear).

ITS JUSTICE AND PROPRIETY.

I have preferred to rest our claim to the fullest rights of British citizenship more on legal and constitutional grounds than on ethical principles, not because I consider for a moment that these should be or can be ignored or left out of account. Far from thinking so I firmly believe that no individual, no institution, no community, no nation, no empire may lose sight of them with impunity. Gentlemen, the Divine Law is writ large in history. The immutable principles of justice and righteousness govern the universe. It is righteousness which exalteth a nation. (Hear, hear). Disregard of truth, honesty and love, whatever temporary advantages it may secure, is a sure precursor of degeneracy and fall. It is because the declarations, contained in the statute of 1833 and in the Queen's Proclamation, proceed on a recognition of these principles that they have a permanent value and carry high authority. (Cheers).

At the same time it must be ever borne in mind that the obligation to obey the moral law is mutual. The governed as well as the Governors, the people as much as the repositories of authority are bound to obey it. The existence, safety, and prosperity of both depend upon the fulfilment of this condition.

Our view of politics, of the place it should occupy in our esteem, of the objects which are to be achieved through it, depends—like several others—upon our ideal of existence, upon the doctrines we hold about the purpose of life. If individual happiness, personal pleasures and selfaggrandisement are to be regarded as the *he-all* and the *end-all* of human life then politics can be nothing but a game of force, fraud and chicanery tempered only by the fear that two can play at it. But to all those whose faith is deep and firm in the Divine ordinance or those who steady their faltering steps with the worship of an ideal humanity, it is a department of religion itself. It is as much under the domain of the moral law as individual conduct, family life and neighbourly relations. (Cheers).

Equality of treatment to all, equality before law of all, equal opportunities to all, favouritism to none are the basis of a permanent empire. (Cheers). The interests of England and India alike require the scrupulous observance of these principles.

PRESENT ACTION.

The attainment of our ideal can, we recognise, come only in the course of time. But the juncture has certainly arrived when a real and substantial advance on the small beginning inaugurated 15 years ago should be made. It is in the power of the Government, by giving due effect to the frank, generous and wisely statesman-like policy solemnly laid down in 1843 and 1858, to give a living and substantial representation to the people, and thereby confirm them in loyalty and attachment to the British rule. (Hear, hear). The noble instincts of the great sovereign who rules this empire, and the high character and liberal sympathies of the statesmen who wield power in the present ministry, encourage the hope that what Macaulay called "the path of honour and of duty" would be followed. Gentlemen, in this connection, allow me to read a portion of the Viceroy's speech which appears in the "Statesman" of Calcutta of yesterday (28-3-07) to hand this morning. In the course of his observations *anent* the Budget, his lordship delivered himself thus with reference to "The New India":

The Hon. Mr. Gokhale tempts me to foreshadow the future. I am afraid at present I can only do so faintly. I recognise with him that, politically, India is in a transition state, that new and just aspirations are springing up amongst its people, which the ruling power must be prepared not only to meet but to assist. A change is rapidly passing over

the land and we cannot afford to dally. And to my mind nothing would be more unfortunate for India than that the Government of India should fail to recognise the signs of the times. I have deemed it all-important that the initiative of possible reforms should emanate from us. I have felt that nothing would be more mischievous to British Administration in India in the future than a belief that its Government had acted on no conviction of their own, but simply in submission to agitation in this country and in accordance with instructions conveyed to them from Home. If there has been misconception as to this, I hope I may be allowed this opportunity of correcting it. The story, as far as I can tell it at present, is simply this, that last autumn I appointed a Committee of my Council to consider the possibility of a development of administrative machinery in accordance with the new conditions we were called upon to face. The Committee's report was considered by my Council, and a despatch expressing the views of my colleagues and myself has been forwarded to the Secretary of State. What I would impress upon you is that this move in advance has emanated entirely from the Government of India, and that we are justly entitled to deny any accusation of "an inadequate appreciation of the realities of the present situation." We have now to await the reply of the Secretary of State, and there is no intention that any legislation should be undertaken before the public in India and at Home have had ample opportunity for an expression of opinion on the proposals we have placed before him, I can assure all those who are interested in this great question that the despatch we have recently addressed to Mr. Morley is fraught with great possibilities, and I earnestly trust that the suggestions it contains may go far towards satisfying the pressing requirements of the Indian Empire.

THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT LIES UPON US.

But we have to remember, gentlemen, that our advance depends mainly on ourselves. Nations by themselves are made. Representative Government, to be successful, requires in the electors the capacity to exercise the rights asked for and the willingness and readiness to make the requisite sacrifices for their exercise. Keen interest in public affairs, insistence on their legal rights, and readiness to spend their time and money in vindicating them are necessary. We must have union—practically perfect union—among the Indians. (Hear, hear). We must make ourselves fit for the high estate which we claim. We must be self-reliant, manly and just. (Cheers). A lofty ideal and a noble purpose must guide our footsteps in the march towards the promised land. Taught in the school of adversity we must turn our difficulties to account by making them subserve the increase of our strength. Undaunted by obstacles we must combine patience with a firm resolve. (Cheers).

Countrymen, I have dealt at some length on matters of general principles and national import for two reasons. In the first place, we here, in the Provincial Conference, seek to apply to Provincial questions, the policy accepted by us as proper and suitable in matters of national concern. And, in the second place, in the animated discussions that are going on around us and in the apparently conflicting views that are advanced from various sides a statement of our position in clear terms is serviceable for showing that after all there is no real divergence in the so-called opposing schools.

THE AMIR'S VISIT.

Before I proceed to submit my observations on our Provincial matters, there are two events which recently happened to which I must draw your attention. One is the visit of His Majesty the Amir of Afganistan—(Hear, hear)—to this country, and the other the Silver Jubilee of the accession to the Baroda throne of His Highness Sir Sayaji Rao Maharaj Gaikwad. (Loud, applause). Though the Amir could not find it possible or convenient to come into greater personal contact with the non-official Indians—Mahomedans, Hindoos or Parsees—it is obvious that he has an enlightened appreciation of the actualities of the situation, and evidently considers that both on principle and on grounds of common

interests the Mahomedans and Hindoos ought to live on terms of fellow-ship and mutual esteem and to eschew all differences. (Hear, hear).

SILVER JUBILEE OF MAHARAJAH GAIKWAD.

The Silver Jubilee of His Highness Sir Sayaji Rao Maharaja's reign is an event which has given satisfaction and pleasure not only to his subjects but to all Indians—educated Indians particularly. (Hear, hear). The best and most capable of the Indian Ruling Chiefs, there is no other Prince whose name arouses, outside his state, any such enthusiasm, respect, admiration and pride as his. A prince of wide reading and deep culture, his enlightened administration, his devotion to work, his high conception of duty are on a par with the policy he has inaugurated of developing the material resources of his State and raising the intellectual, moral and political condition of his subjects. (Hear, hear). Our best wishes go to him—(Hear, hear),—and we pray to the Almighty to grant long life and strength of purpose to such a Prince to carry out his noble mission. (Loud and tremendous applause).

REPRESENTATION OF C. P. & BERAR ON THE VICEREGAL COUNCIL.

Passing to our local questions, the first and foremost which claims our consideration is the claim of the united territory of the Central Provinces and Berar to be accorded its due share in the administration of its affairs. We join in the prayer which has gone from all India about the expansion of the Supreme Legislative Council,—(Hear, hear)—and a larger introduction of the elective principle in its constitution. (Hear, hear). Gentlemen, while admitting the necessity of a strong central Government, we believe that its efficiency and capability for doing good will be enhanced by enlisting in the work of administration a larger measure of co-operation from the elected representatives of the people. (Cheers).

But it is on more important considerations than oiling the wheels of administration or increasing their speed, that the claim which we advance for thoroughly representative Legislative Councils is based, and we must take care to emphasize those higher grounds. An autocratic form of government, even if there is a succession of kings like King Rama, is, from its very nature, bound to produce degeneration and decay. It is only through proper exercise that our organs or faculties can be developed, or even so much as kept in a normally healthy condition. In these days when communal existence and progress depend upon national efficiency, it is of greater importance to see whether any given institution would stimulate national cohesion and national strength rather than whether it would add to the comforts and pleasures of life. In the language of the Resolutions of 1882 of the Government of India on Local Self-Government, the expansion of the Councils is valuable as "a means of popular and political education," which would enable our people to successfully work such form of representative government as is established or is being established in the other self-governing parts of the British Empire.

In such an expanded Council there should be at least twenty-four elected members and our united territory should have the right of sending at least three members. (Hear, hear).

In one respect, and that is a most important one, the claim of the Central Provinces to have due representation on the Viceregal Council is higher than that of the other provinces of British India. (Cheers). These other provinces have their own Provincial Legislative Councils where all local measures are enacted and where the Provincial Budget is discussed and criticised. Until a similar body is created for this province and while the number of members in the Legislative Council of the Governor-General continues what it is at present, it would be only fair that it should have two nonofficial elected representatives in that Council. As a matter of fact, our position is much more unsatisfactory than that of the other provinces. Only on one occasion, since the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils in 1893, was the appointment of a Central Provinces

representative based on the elective principle. For ten years the appointments were made by Government without ascertaining the opinions of the District Councils and the Municipalities as was required by the Rules. Gentlemen, it is not questioned that the persons who were appointed were capable and good men, deserving the honour; but the omission to consult public opinion remains all the same. In 1905 there was a retrogression, and that year there was no non-official member for the C. P. In 1906 a non-official member was reappointed, but there was again an ignoring of the electorate entitled to be consulted. We have nothing to complain against the choice made, and in criticising the appointment we express no want of confidence in our distinguished countryman and respected friends the Hon'ble Mr. G. M. Chitnavis. (Cheers). Gentlemen, this is not a question of individuals. It is an important principle which is at stake, and we shall be failing in our duty if we did not record our protest against the persistent disregard of a vital principle. It is sincerely hoped that pending the introduction of the larger reforms we pray for, or those, which, judging by what has appeared in the public press, seem to be in contemplation, the Government will give effect to the Rule that the appointment of the C. P. representative should be made in conformity with the opinions of the District Councils and the Municipal Committees.

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Even more important than the reform advocated in regard to our representation on the Supreme Legislative Council is the necessity, which I submit exists, of the creation of a Legislative Council for the Central Provinces and Berar. (Hear, hear). This combined territory has an area of 99,376 square miles of purely British territory or including native states 1,18,874 Square miles. There are 113 towns and 42,987 villages with a total population of 12,783,500. The land revenue and rates in 1905 amounted to Rs. 1,87,29,721. There are large forest tracts and mineral fields which are just opened. The province of Berar and the western portion of the Nagpur Division constitute the most important Cotton producing tract in the country. The number of factories in this area is next to that in the Bombay Presidency alone and the volume of trade is among the largest outside the Presidency towns and the great shipping ports. Gentlemen, the time has certainly come when this important territory, showing so much agricultural, mining, and industrial activity and possessing such vast potentialities, should have an administration which is more in consonance with advanced ideas than the present one. (Cheers). If provincial Legislative Councils were needed elsewhere they are equally needed for our Province. (Hear, hear). Overcentralisation is the weak heel of Indian administration. Gentlemen, this is not the view only of us—Congressmen or non-officials—but high administrators, with years of experience behind them, have loudly been calling for Devolution. It is anomalous that in the application of our provincial finances we have not so much as an opportunity of knowing what dispositions are proposed to be made and the principles on which they are made. While important public interests are unprovided for or only inadequately provided, there has been a multiplication of departments and the creation of posts, the necessity of which is not quite apparent to the uninitiated mind. I think, Gentlemen, that we should, with all the earnestness we possess and all the arguments we can command, move the Government to establish a local Legislative Council for the Central Provinces and Berar, in which each district and each of the large towns with a population of 25000 and over, should have one representative; such Council should have power not only to discuss the budget, but also to vote upon it. The Local Government should have the power of appointing by nomination as many members as there would be elected representatives. The head of the administration would be Ex-Officio member and President and should be invested with the power of veto. I venture to submit that some such system is urgently needed to create a unity of interests and aims between the Government and the people. There would be little chance of Government being put in a position of continuous minority. It would have to be an extremely illadvised measure, against which

the nominated members—in all probability officers of Government—would join their forces with those of the elected members. The power of veto would remove the last vestige of any danger to the administration from any imprudent act of the Council.

Gentlemen, I have little doubt that if the Government are pleased to take action on some such plan as has been advocated above they will before long find out that they have adopted the wisest, the safest and the most honourable course open to them, and that it would conduce as much to strengthen the position and protect the interest of Government as to meet popular wishes and secure popular advancement. No sane or responsible public man is or can be in sympathy with the forces of disorder or anarchy, if any such exist at all in India, which I greatly doubt. Let the Government only trust the people and they will find that every man who has any stake in the country or has a character to maintain will stand firmly by it. (Hear, hear).

DISTRICT COUNCILS.

The association of the people in the practical work of administration needs to be developed further. Below the Supreme Council and the Provincial Council there should come District Advisory Boards. The reform here will in one respect be along existing lines. The powers, functions and resources of the District Boards and Municipal Committees should be increased. Joint Committees of these rural and urban bodies should be created, and these should discharge, in regard to District matters, the functions which the Supreme and Provincial Councils wield in imperial or provincial matters.

STATUS OF BERAR.

In advocating the inauguration of these various reforms we proceed on the tacit assumption that Berar will be given the same treatment as those parts of the Central Provinces which are included in British India,—(Hear, hear),—as the term is generally *understood*. The claim of Berar is now engaging the attention of the Government, and there are indications which warrant the hope that its justness is recognised. That Province is now held on a permanent tenure by the Crown, and as such is as much a part of British Dominions as territories acquired by conquest or cession. It would be only meet and proper that the administration should, in every respect, be conducted on those principles which are accepted as just and necessary for British India. (Cheers). I had on other occasions to go pretty fully into this question. But as its importance and its intimate connexion with the well-being and progress of nearly three millions of people required that I should bring it before you in my observations, I have given here a bare indication of the gist of the argument.

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS.

The next question, Brother delegates, to which I should draw your attention is the separation of Judicial from Executive functions. After the discussion that has been going on for years and the weighty pronouncement made by eminent Englishmen with Indian experience, one would have thought that an elaborate discussion was not needed. Lord Dufferin in his epigrammatic style called it a "counsel of perfection." But though 19 years have passed since then, the establishment of this system, universally admitted to be just and sound in principle, is as remote as ever. It is conceded by all the upholders of the existing system that it is objectionable on principle and mischievous in practice, that it is not good that the same officer, who makes a departmental enquiry or directs a Police investigation, and after going through the papers of these preliminary enquiries directs a prosecution, should himself act as judge in the cause. Except in some few regrettable cases the magistrates are, it ought to be emphatically stated, upright and honourable men, swayed only by the consideration of doing what appears to them justice. But it is not at all easy for ordinary human nature to divest itself of the one-sided view created by

x parte statements and proceedings held *in camera*. The bug bear of "prestige" is put most in requisition for defending the present system. What that means it is not difficult to find out. It is not the prestige of the Government as such which will suffer. There is absolutely no danger that the collection of the land revenue, the local cesses, the income-tax, the punctual realisation of every kind of income direct or indirect, will be affected in the slightest degree. All that would happen would be that instead of the respect and awe, which the possession of great authority produces in the minds of the common District people, being all bestowed on the Collector-Magistrate it will be divided between the Collector and the District Magistrate if separation of duties takes place! This is all that would happen.

As to the plea of increase of expenditure, it has to be pointed out that for more provinces than one it has been shown that it would not be necessary to make any appreciable increase in the total number of officers employed. In our own province—the C. P. and Berar—there were in 1905, 36,115 original criminal cases, of which some 1800 were miscellaneous. Out of these 26·1 per cent cases, *i. e.*, a little above a fourth, were tried and disposed of by Honorary Magistrates sitting singly or by Benches of Magistrates and 72·7 by stipendiary subordinate Magistrates. The Civil list shows 59 Assistant Commissioners, 80 Extra-Assistant Commissioners and 76 Tahsildars. It is not at all difficult to so distribute work and allot officers as to make available a sufficient number of them for purely criminal work and still leave an adequate staff for attending to revenue and other executive and miscellaneous matters. If the principle of Devolution is given a properly due scope, much of the work done at present by executive officers will be done by District Boards and Municipalities. There is thus no reason to fear that any additional taxation will have to be resorted to for carrying out this reform. But even if the case were otherwise, and it was only by making a large increase in expenditure that the separation of judicial from Executive functions could be carried out, it would have to be undertaken all the same. (Hear, hear). The purity of justice and the confidence of the people in our judicial tribunals are objects of sufficient importance to justify this pecuniary sacrifice. (Cheers).

EDUCATION.

The important question of Education demands our attention next. Of grave moment to all nations, its significance to the Indian is incalculable. It is the one remedy for all our ills, our spiritual and moral degeneracy, our deep widespread poverty and low industrial life, our political degradation and social disruption. The work which has to be done is overwhelmingly great. Of the total male school-going population of India 19 per cent receive instruction, and of the girls only 2·2 per cent. Only one child out of 11 children of school-going age goes to school, and out of 10 children who attend school only 1 is a girl! In these provinces 17·5 per cent of the boys and 1·8 per cent of girls are shown as attending school. The census figures for the Central Provinces and Berar show how great is still the prevalence of ignorance. In the C. P. out of a total population of 1,1873,000 there were 3,27,500 or 2·7 per cent literate. In Berar, out of a total population of 27,54,000 only 1,23,300 or 4·5 per cent were literate. Let us see how matters stand in the progressive countries. In Japan 91 per cent of the boys and 68 per cent of the girls in the country receive education. (Hear, hear). For 14,580 cities, towns and villages Japan has 30,420 schools, while in India for 5,74,006 cities, towns and villages there are only 1,04,622 schools. In Germany among 1,39,855 recruits raised for the army in the year 1875 only 3,311 or 2·37 per thousand were found illiterate. In 1898 the figures were 2,52,382 total recruits of whom only 173 or 7 men out of ten thousand were returned as unable to read and write. Gentleman, I have no wish to pile statistics before you and try your patience by reading columns of figures. Impressed as Government and the people are of the backward condition of the greater portion of the masses in this country,

they have frankly to recognise that nothing short of bold steps like those taken by Japan will meet the situation which has arisen. (Hear, hear). Sacrifices are demanded of the Government and of the people, and I hope they will rise equal to the occasion. There must be universally primary education. This means that it should be compulsory and should be free. In most of the European countries and in Japan elementary education extending over a period of about 4 years is compulsory and further education up to the age of 14 is practically enforced during a portion of the day. It is a subject of great satisfaction that the Government are moving in this matter. We must congratulate and thank the Government of India for the proposal to abolish fees in primary schools. (Hear, hear). But as I have said, free primary education must be followed very soon after by the other measure *vis*: to make it obligatory on every parent and guardian to send his child or ward to some school. It is not primary education alone which demands our attention. Secondary education, Higher education, Technical education in all its branches, all require far greater facilities than exist at present. Higher education is distrusted by some persons and the educational policy followed in the C. P. till very recently was not sufficiently liberal. We trust that the keener appreciation of the responsibility of Government will continue to be entertained. The number of High Schools should be increased. A fully equipped Arts College is wanted at Nagpur. There is no College for medicine, nor for Civil Engineering. For scientific and technical education the provision made in the Nagpur and Amraoti Victoria Technical Institutes are sufficient only as a beginning. Concurrently with the increase in the number of institutions the methods also require revision. The present system is based on ideals which the countries, from which our Government borrowed them, have thoroughly revised and changed. Beginning with the Primary Schools—and especially in the Primary Schools—the aim of the curriculum and of the teaching staff should be to train the faculties of observation and experimenting, to bring the pupils into contact with objects and facts, to give to them such instruction as will prove of practical value to them in their life's work. Moral education and the development of character must be attended to. The present text books are unsatisfactory. All that we ask in regard to education is that the British Government in India should follow the ideals, objects and methods which have, after full discussion, been accepted as proper for public schools in England. (Cheers).

THE LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENTS.

The next subject I propose to discuss is one which is vitally concerned with the material well-being of the masses. In the Central Provinces over 70 per cent, and in Berar over 75 per cent of the population are dependent upon agriculture. The one industry which holds out some promise of a better future to us—the cotton manufacturing industry—is itself dependent upon land. There is no question which rouses greater interest among villagers than the subject of the relative rights of the Government, of the owners of lands, and of the various tenure holders. Most of us in this hall own plots large or small in size. It is thus natural if we should devote special attention to this question. Gentlemen, it is a long-standing complaint of the land-holding and cultivating classes that they have always to bear more than their fair share of the burden of the State expenditure, and that they are often crushed under the weight which is placed on them. It is not possible, Gentlemen, to take even a cursory view of the curious—of the fatefully shifting—policy followed by Government towards the landed classes. Whenever the occurrence of a great calamity like famines pricked the national conscience, or when the presence of a grave catastrophe like the mutiny counselled the adoption of a policy of conciliation and sympathy, the Government have in the most unreserved terms, admitted the wisdom of granting to the Indian land-holder fixity of tenure and permanence in the revenue demand. Secretaries of Land State, Royal or Government Commissions, Viceroys, Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, Councillors and other high officers have acknowledged the harm which these periodical revisions of the land revenue demand produce. There is

nothing more unsettling than the so-called Settlements. The harassing nature of the operations, the door they open to corrupt or oppressive practices, the arbitrary enhancements they bring about, are described in vivid colours by men like Sir Auckland Colvin, Mr. Carpenter and others, with a life's experience of Indian land tenures. In 1862 and 1865 the Secretary of State sanctioned Lord Canning's scheme for the permanent settlement of the land revenue demand wherever certain conditions were found to exist or came into existence. In the C. P. the Chief Commissioner Mr. (afterwards Sir) Richard Temple placing full confidence in the declared intentions of Government assured the people that it was recommended that in the case of those land-holders who would effect substantial improvements in their property, the assessments would be revised with a view to limitations being placed upon them in perpetuity. In the revision which was made at the expiry of the settlement effected in Sir Richard Temple's time the Government revenue demand on several of these estates was enhanced 300, 400, 500 percent, and I have seen in some places 1500 percent (!), and instead of the perpetuity promised, the duration of the revised assessments was limited in some cases to 16 or even 12 years. (Shame). Gentlemen, the history of the land revenue limitation question affords an object lesson of how a measure dictated alike by statesmanship and by humanity can first be obstructed and then rendered nugatory by appealing to pseudo-scientific shibboleths and the needs of an impecunious exchequer. The upholders of the doctrine of the unearned increment finding it difficult to meet the broad-minded and wise considerations urged by Colonel Baird Smith's Commission and the Lieutenant-Governor of the N. W. P., which were amplified and emphasised by Lord Canning, hit upon the expedient of suggesting "conditions" and "provisoes." They succeeded in gaining the time they wanted and by 1882/83 they so far achieved their object that even a Viceroy like Lord Ripon had to say that a permanent settlement, pure and simple, was out of the question. But anxious as that generous-minded statesman was to bring some real alleviation to the lot of the land-holder and the cultivator, his government hit upon a plan which would have given a modified form of permanent settlement. There was to be a period of finality fixed for each province after which there was to be no general resurvey or reclassification and the assessment imposed was to be deemed correct and proper: In future enhancements were to be allowable only on three grounds:—(a) increase of cultivation, (b) improvements effected at the cost of the State, and (c) increase of prices.

Gentlemen, this was an eminently reasonable and fair compromise. Nay, it was the most unexceptionable way of placing the settlement system on a just and equitable basis even from the standpoint of the "un-earned increment theory." The principles laid down in Lord Ripon's Resolution were accepted by all the local governments, and it was hoped that the controversy was at an end and that the people would no longer be subjected to the greed of a heartless political economy, which is as unsound in principle as it is inapplicable in practice. But these hopes were short-lived. Madras, the crushing nature of the land revenue system of which has been demonstrated by late Mr. Alexander Rogers (for several years Revenue Councillor to the Governor of Bombay), first quietly raised a difficulty about giving statutory sanction to the principles laid down by the Government of India, and thereupon the Secretary of State disallowed the proposal of the Government of India. The principle, however, was not questioned. A few years more and even that consummation is attained. And now the Resolution of 1902 has given short shrift to the just and equitable canons which the Government of India wisely laid down in 1883. Gentlemen, it is not possible to enter into a discussion of the subject here. All I would do it to point out that the necessity of placing a limitation in perpetuity on arbitrary and crushing enhancements is admitted by all the best, the fairest, most generous-minded of statesmen and administrators, that the Resolution of 1883 emanated from a government which contained Sir Evelyn Baring (Lord Cromer) as Finance Minister, and that it was accepted by local governments and administrations presided over by exceptionally capable and experienced men. It is also very easy to show that the position

taken up in Lord Curzon's Resolution is illogical and is indicative of confusion of ideas. Gentlemen, there is the great fact which has to be faced. Every man—official or non-official—who is not grossly ignorant or grossly callous, admits the intense and widespread poverty of the masses in India. The increase of the indebtedness of the agricultural classes is causing anxiety to Government. Measures like the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act, the Punjab Land Alienation Act and the new sections introduced in the Bombay Land Revenue Code in 1901 are so many confessions which admit the gravity of the situation. If the present system was satisfactory and the ryot was prospering everywhere, why are measures like these placed on the statute book? It is admitted that the condition of the land-holding and cultivating classes is lamentably bad and that exceptional legislation is wanted. But these are mere palliatives; they merely treat the symptoms. The root of the disease is untouched.

Gentlemen, administrators holding the highest places, Commissions, the majority of which were officers of Government, have been forced to admit that "to the revenue system must in candour be attributed the indebtedness of the ryot in no small measure." The position, Gentlemen, is this. Both in the Zamindari and Ryotwari tracts the assessment is based on too high estimates of the capacity of the soil or the estate. It proceeds on assumptions which in the majority of cases turn out to be incorrect in fact; enhancements are effected on unsound principles, the attempt every where being to bring in as large an addition to the revenue as possible. Whether the year is good, bad or indifferent the last pice is too often realised from the ryot! Even in the year of the last great famine, when over five lakhs of people out of a total population of 27 and half lakhs were on relief works in Berar, in several Taluks 95 per cent of the revenue was collected (cries of shame). A high Government officer, in explaining the abnormal increase of transfers of immoveable property by mortgage or sale had to regretfully admit that a large number of them had been effected for paying the Government land revenue demand. (Loud cries of shame). Gentlemen, lakhs and lakhs have been spent over the Survey and Settlement Departments. The data accumulated in regard to the areas and capacities of various estates are sufficiently full and voluminous. Out of sheer mercy for the unfortunate land-owner and tenure-holder Government will be pleased to give up the idea of an impossibly perfect estimation and to save him from the harassing disturbances of these periodical enquiries. With due deference to the authors of the Resolution of 1902 we would ask Government to see that the position taken up in that Resolution is not sound. If general prosperity does not bring about a rise in prices what benefit has the land-holder received for which he can, as a land-holder, be called upon for increased contribution? If justice and equity are to determine the necessity and propriety of an enhancement, then every legal and proper ground on which it can be asked is included in the three heads laid down in Lord Ripon's Resolution.

Gentlemen, what makes these settlement operations unsatisfactory is their one-sided character. The Government determine not only the general policy on which the land revenue demand is to be based; but the capacity of the soil, the value of an estate or field, its future capabilities, the profits existing and prospective, the general advance of the Taluk or District during the currency of the expiring settlement and the general rise of prices; all these are to be judged by the settlement officer. The land-holders have—in the Ryotwari tracts at any rate and, I believe, in the Zemindari tracts also—no means of knowing what the views of this personage is till after the whole thing is settled. Only once were we in Berar given the opportunity of knowing the recommendations of that officer and the reasons given by him in support of them. On that occasion it was demonstrated that a great part of the data on which the report was based was incorrect, that the reasoning was defective and that the conclusions were open to serious question. The Government of India modified the proposals which had been made on those data. We did not get a second opportunity of making similar representations in regard to the revision settlement of the other parts of Berar though we made repeated applications.

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Now, Gentlemen, what we might fairly ask Government is why should there be this investigation and determination behind the back of the ryot, and secondly why should not these orders be liable to be questioned in a court of law? When Bombay Act 1 of 1865 was passed it was stated by the member of Government in charge of the Bill that the jurisdiction of the Civil Courts was not taken away by any of its provisions. During the ten years which followed there arose a number of cases where the action of the department was questioned (I should hardly think questioned successfully) and could not be supported. From 1876 the Indian Statute Book is graced with the provisions which oust the jurisdiction of the ordinary Courts of Law in the most important revenue matters. Gentlemen, it is impossible to approve of this distrust by the Government of the courts established by it and presided over by judges selected by it. Would it not be more consonant with fairness to allow the actions of the settlement department to be examined freely in the open atmosphere, the broad sunshine and light of a court of justice?

The case we have got is a very strong one. But we have been till now worsted in the fight. Instead of gaining ground we have been steadily losing it. We must not, however, lose heart or give up our rulers, and not lack in our efforts till we have succeeded in gaining our object. (Hear, hear).

Gentlemen, there are numerous other wants and grievances of the people which deserve to be taken up by our Conference and placed before the Government for redress. It is not possible to deal with them in one address, not can they be considered at any one sitting of the Conference. Some of them will be dealt with by the resolutions which will be placed before you, others we must leave for future occasions.

INDUSTRIAL REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC SWADESHISM.

I think it my duty, however, to refer to one more matter to which I made a passing reference in the opening portion of my address. With all the natural advantages which India possesses, in spite of the general fertility of her soil, the suitability of the climate for purposes of production of wealth, the vastness of the mineral resources, and the peaceful, sober, industrious and thrifty character of the people, there is deep widespread poverty in the land. This poverty has justly been attributed to the decadence of our old industrial system and to the bulk of the population being thrown on land. The First Famine Commission, which sat 28 years ago, pointed out that this low industrial condition was a powerful contributory cause of the calamities which followed a failure of rains, and they suggested the adoption of steps for promoting the establishment of new industries and for the revival of old ones. Gentlemen, what is true of India generally applies also to these provinces.

For the creation of a sound industrial system, which will by its flourishing condition afford profitable employment to large sections of our people, two things are first wanted: (1) Capital, and (2) Technical and Scientific knowledge and skill. Newly established industries, however, demand tender nurture and special care like infants. The self-governing countries supply such special care and nurture by a well regulated system of protective tariffs and bounties. These methods are not favoured by the prevailing economic policy of the British Government. But it is quite in our power to give such protection ourselves to the products of our indigenous manufactures. (Hear, hear.) We can, by resolving to use Indian articles when these can be had, and by giving preference to them over foreign ones, even though the cost might be higher, afford to our struggling nascent industries the help and succour which they require in their childhood. (Here, here.) It is a matter for congratulation that the Government also are moving in the matter and have adopted a sympathetic attitude towards indigenous articles. (Cheers.) But the main task is ours, the main responsibility is ours, and it is we who must put our shoulders to the wheel. The movement for the encouragement of Swadeshi articles has over and above its objective results a very great subjective value. It teaches us the value of standing on

one's own legs and develops self-reliance, self-help, and self-confidence. (Hear, hear.) It will serve to bring the different classes of the community more closely together and promote unity, mutual sympathy and fellow-feeling. (Hear, hear.)

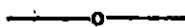
CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Gentlemen, this is the third time we meet in our Provincial Conference. We can claim credit for little achievement. The field over which we have to work is vast and it is strewn over with numerous pit-falls, thorns and sharp stones which impede motion. Our progress is beset with difficulties. But the obstacles, instead of damping our energies, should rouse our courage. (Hear, hear.) Laying aside petty differences of opinion, eschewing personal aims and avoiding personal predilections and jealousies we must work in amity and accord. (Hear, hear.) It is not given to any one man or generation to clear this land and to plant it with beautiful trees. We should be content if in our time we succeed in clearing even so much as a small plot. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, my faith is firm, that if we are true to ourselves, and if we follow the behests of the noble and the great sages of the past and the present we shall raise ourselves to a position of equality with the other great nations of the world. (Hear, hear.)

It is by devotion to duty that our salvation can be achieved. (Hear, hear). The "Stern daughter of the Voice of God" who is "a light to guide, a rod to check the erring and reprove" must rule our conduct. (Hear, hear). Commending ourselves unto her guidance we must pray of her :—

"Oh let my weakness have an end!
 "Give unto me made lowly wise
 "The spirit of self sacrifice;
 "The confidence of reason give,
 "And in the light of truth thy
 Bondman let me live."

(Loud applause and repeated cries of "Bande Mataram)."



Second day, Saturday, 30th March, 1907.



The hall was again crowded to overflowing as on the day previous. The whole assembly rose to their feet to welcome the President as he entered the hall which resounded with the cries of "Bande Mataram." On taking his seat the President announced the receipt of some letters and telegrams from the sympathisers of the Conference wishing success to it.

The president: Gentleman I ask you to bear in mind that as our time is very limited we should adhere to the time limit which it has been the practice of the Congresses and Conferences to follow with regard to the proposers and seconders of propositions. I hope that you will co-operate with me in this matter and will kindly accede to the suggestion which I have made. Ten minutes will be allowed to the mover of each proposition and five minutes to its seconder and supporter. Another thing which I have to mention is to the members of the Subjects-Committee. It refers to the last suggestion which came from a certain gentleman. I ask the members of the Subject-Committee to meet in this place for half an hour to consider that subject. During recess hour for half an hour we will meet here for that purpose; the other half may be enjoyed for recreation. With these words, gentlemen, I call upon Mr. G. R. Shrikhande of Saugor to move the first resolution.

Mr. Shrikhande who rose amid loud cheers moved the first resolution with a speech in Hindi of which the following is a translation :—

Gentlemen, I feel great pleasure in moving the first resolution which runs as follows :—

That this Conference is of opinion that considering the area and population of the Central Provinces and Berar, the magnitude of their interests and the great undeveloped resources of the Country, it is desirable that the Administration should be elevated into a Lieutenant Governorship aided by a Legislative Council, and this Conference is further of opinion that a Chief Court should be substituted for the present Judicial Commissioner's Court.

Gentlemen, Just as there are three classes of schools in the Educational Department, namely, the primary, middle and high schools,—in the same way there are three important divisions in the administrative machinery of our Government. You are aware that Bombay, Madras and Bengal have got their High Courts. In the same way Burma rejoices in having a Chief Court. It is, therefore, our prayer to the benign Government that they raised the Judicial Commissioner's Court in the Central Provinces to the status of a Chief Court and thus confer a great boon upon us. (Cheers). Having regard to the present advanced condition of these Provinces the elevation of the Judicial Commissioner's Court to the dignity of the Chief Court, though it may involve some additional expenditure, would not be without its advantages. (Hear, hear). There is, I am sure, a consensus of opinion that the institution of the Chief Court in the Central Provinces would be very beneficial to us all. (Hear, hear). My second point is that we should be favoured in these provinces with a Lieutenant Governor in place of the Chief Commissioner regard being had to the magnitude of the interests of these Provinces. We also pray that with the appointment of the Lieutenant Governor there should be the establishment of a Legislative Council which is a great desideratum in these parts of the country. (Cheers). The work that is at present done on our behalf by the members of the Supreme Legislative Council is, as they do not belong to these Provinces, like the work of a doctor in Manchester prescribing medicine by Post for a patient in Lancashire without diagnosing his malady by examining it on the spot. (Laughter). Hence, it is extremely desirable that we should have a Local Legislative Council consisting of local men fully conversant with local wants. (Cheers). Take the case of the budget. We don't know how it is passed and we have not the least idea as to how the taxes are expended although we are held responsible for the payment of those identical taxes! It is absolutely necessary that we should have a voice in the Council when the budget is passed with a view to express our opinion as to the disposal of the revenue which we are made to contribute to Government. (Hear, hear). For this reason we should have our own Legislative Council manned by our Local Councillors. (Hear, hear). Gentlemen—it is high time the administrative policy of Government underwent a solid change consonant with the spread of education among our people resulting in their being capable of enjoying high and responsible administrative appointments. Ample testimony is forthcoming from high Government officials as to our fitness to hold responsible posts under Government. (Hear, hear). Gentlemen, there cannot be a difference of opinion as to the general advancement of the people of these Provinces and as to their fitness to send their efficiently trained countrymen to the Legislative Council. (Cheers). With these words, gentlemen, I beg to move this proposition and hope that, when duly seconded, you will pass it with acclamation. (Cheers).

Rao Bahadur Waman Rao Kolhatkar of Nagpur seconded the above resolution with a speech in Marathi of which the following is a translation : Mr. President and gentlemen this is not a new proposition. It was passed by the previous Conferences. Its present motion before this Conference is a mere repetition. But old as this proposition is it can be supported by new arguments. I feel I am echoing the sentiments of this meeting

When I say that these provinces have now emerged from their state of childhood, to that of boyhood, I might even say to that of manhood. You will remember that our president in his address yesterday told us that "this combined territory (the Central Provinces and Berar) has an area of 99,376 square miles of purely British territory or including native states 1,18,874 square miles. There are 113 towns and 42,987 villages with a total population of 12,783,500. The land revenue and rates in 1905 amounted to rupees 7,29,721." There are large forest tracts and mineral fields which are just opened. The Province of Berar and the western portion of the Nagpur Division constitute the most important cotton producing tract in the country. The number of factories in this area is next to that in the Bombay Presidency alone and the volume of trade is among the largest outside the Presidency towns and the great shipping ports. Gentlemen, the time will certainly come when this important territory showing so much agricultural, mining, and industrial activity and possessing such vast potentialities, should have an administration which is more in consonance with advanced ideas than the present one. If Provincial Legislative Councils were needed elsewhere they are equally needed for our Province." Some gentlemen, fear is expressed in certain quarters that if a Lieutenant Governor was appointed to these Provinces additional expenses would have to be incurred. I admit that it would be so, but you must not lose sight of the fact that our revenue is considerably increased and can well stand this additional expenditure necessitated by the establishment of an institution which, it is admitted by all enlightened people, is a great desideratum these days taking into consideration the higher level of advancement to which these provinces have been raised of late. I said that we have reached the state of manhood. We must, therefore, try to handle higher administrative posts. We have hitherto had the benefit of a Chief Commissionership. We now feel we are fit to be under a Lieutenant Governor with his concomitant Legislative Council. (Hear, hear). Let us have them here and let us also have a Chief Court to replace our Judicial Commissioner's Court (Hear, hear). There are no two opinions on the question that we, the people of these provinces, are eminently fitted to be governed by a Lieutenant Governor and to have a Provincial Legislative Council and a Chief Court. Let our own Council make laws and regulations for our benefit and let us no more be subservient to the Viceregal Legislative Council of Calcutta. (Cheers).

The proposition was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Rao Saheb Deorao Vinayak of Akola then moved the second proposition with a speech in Marathi of which the following is a translation:—

Gentlemen, I beg to move the second resolution which is as follows:—

- (a) That this Conference respectfully submits that the present system under which laws and regulations for the Province of Berar are made by executive orders is anomalous, undesirable and of doubtful legality, and prays that as that Province is now held on a permanent tenure by the British Crown, the procedure for making laws for British India be adopted in the case of Berar also after such legislative action here or in England as may be necessary, and
- (b) further urges that as all legislation for the Central Provinces can take place in the Viceregal Legislative Council only, the combined territory of the C. P. and Berar should be represented in that Council by at least two non-official representatives elected from popular constituencies, and
- (c) prays that a Legislative Council similar to those established for the other provinces of British India be created for the combined territory, and
- (d) begs to suggest that till such Provincial Council is established the Budget for the Central Provinces and Berar may be laid before the Viceregal Legislative Council for consideration and discussion.

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Gentlemen, for your information I would like to translate this proposition in Marathi. (translates it) Gentlemen, I feel I should be repeating the statement made by our President yesterday in his address regarding our new Province of Berar. Before that Province was annexed to the British territory it was called "Amani" or the Associated District. It has now become a part of the British territory although it is not so acknowledged by the British Government. Now what are the facts? At the time when Berar was under the Nizam its people had not to pay any income tax because they were the Nizam's subjects. Only those residents of Berar, who were purely British subjects, had to pay the income-tax. But now since the amalgamation of Berar with the British territory every one who lives in Berar has to pay the income tax. There is no more the old distinction of Nizam's subjects and British subjects and consequently there is no exemption for any body from the payment of the income tax. As regards the Legislative Council for Berar Rao Bahadur Mudholkar, our learned President, has written a note which is under the consideration of the Government of India and the Secretary of State. He has made out a very strong case for the establishment of a Legislative Council for Berar and we have hopes that his arguments will prevail and that the Legislative Council will be granted to Berar which is now entirely a British Provinces. As regards the Legislative Council for Nagpur I just happened to read the report of the last Conference and I found that the Central Provinces having tried level best both here and in England to establish their rights for sending their representatives to the Legislative Council of Calcutta, since 1893 they obtained that right and the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis was their first representative in the Viceroy's Council. There was another gentleman also who represented Nagpur with Mr. Chitnavis. But those gentlemen were not subsequently elected by the public. They were nominated by Government. It is inconceivable why the Government deprived the people of Nagpur of their right of electing their representative and why the Government nominated representative for Nagpur of their own choice. Government have not at any time alleged any reason from their two years' experience that the people of Nagpur have failed to prove their capacity for electing a suitable representative. Remember, Mr. Chitnavis was at first elected by the people of Nagpur themselves and that choice on the part of the people could not be said to be a bad one because after the Government had deprived the people of their right of election and commenced to nominate representatives for Nagpur on their own account their choice fell on the same Mr. Chitnavis! After withdrawing the people's right of election the Government began to nominate their own servants not ordinary servants but high-salaried officials drawing thousands of rupees to represent Nagpur, on the Viceregal Council. We, therefore, pray that we should have the right of electing at least two non-official representatives in the Council, so that, among other things, we shall be entitled to say how our taxes should be utilized. (Cheers).

Mr. M. K. Padhye of Nagpur in seconding the above resolution said as follows in Hindi:—

Mr. Chairman, and gentlemen, I am a Mahrathi speaking person and I venture to address you in Hindi which is not my mother tongue. If I commit, any slips, therefore, I hope you will forgive me. Gentlemen, Rao Sahab Deorao Vinayak of Akola has already explained to you the meaning of this resolution in Hindi. You know that this resolution is divided into four parts. In the first part we ask that since Berar has been made a part and parcel of the Central Provinces its system of administration should be the same as that which obtains in the Central Provinces. (Hear, hear). Secondly, we ask that both Berar and the Central Provinces should be given the privilege of having their own Legislative Councils. In connection with this prayer we also say that if it is not thought expedient to give us that privilege, let the right of sending representatives to the Legislative Council at Calcutta be given to the two Provinces. We respectfully suggest that each Province should have the option of sending two members to the Viceregal Legislative Council. Of

course, it would be better if we had the privilege of sending more representatives to that Council, but failing that let us have the opportunity to send at least two representatives on behalf of each Province. Thirdly, our humble request is that the budget should be published in the "Gazette", so that we may know how the revenue we pay to Government is expended. We shall then be in a position to see how much of it is spent on schools, irrigation, public roads &c. (Cheers). You will all admit that the position of Berar is like that of a child with two mothers. (Laughter.) Its one mother is the British Government and the other mother is the Nizam's Government. Gentlemen, there are still traces in Berar of the Nizam's Government. Since the advent of the British Government in the Province they have levied Income Tax upon the Beraris and, therefore, they pray that they should be given the right of sending their representatives to the Legislative Council of Calcutta—(Hear, hear).—So that, those representatives will be able to discuss various matters in the Council in a way beneficial to their Province. (Cheers). At present, there is only one member on behalf of the Central Provinces in the person of the Hon. Mr. Chitnavis. What influence can he wield there against the majority? There is no one else in the Council on our behalf to support him. Let some of our enlightened Malguzars be appointed members of the Council—(Hear, hear).—So that they can do us immense service as they know where the shoe pinches and can suggest measures that ought to be adopted to secure advantages to us from British administration. Having regard to the mediation of Malguzars it would be better to have a Legislative Council at Nagpur.—(Cheers).—Where we can see our way to get our grievances remedied. At best, let there be two Legislative Councils in the two chief Provinces. If there is any difficulty in granting our prayer as to the Legislative Councils for Berar and the Central Provinces let us at least have the right of sending more representatives to the Viceregal Legislative Council. Their presence in that Council will ensure a satisfactory discussion of the question as to the disposal of the revenue which is collected from us. They can say in what directions that revenue ought to be more advantageously spent—such as agriculture and others. (Cheers). Our agricultural resources ought to be expanded having regard to the increasing population, and that can be done in one respect by spending more money than is at present the case on irrigation. (Hear, hear). With these few words I beg to second this resolution. (Cheers).

Pundit Kashiram Tiwari of Hoshangabad supported the resolution with the following speech in Hindi :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I stand before you to support the resolution which has been proposed and seconded by the two gentlemen who addressed you before me. We wish to respectfully urge it on Government to let the same laws and regulations prevail in the two Provinces of Berar and the Central Provinces in view of the fact that both of them are now joined together into one whole Province. As a part of this scheme we ask that both the Provinces should be allowed the privilege of claiming their own Legislative Councils. (Hear, hear). Failing that we ask that both the Provinces should have the privilege of sending their representatives to the Supreme Legislative Council. (Cheers). We are not asking for anything that was not known to this country in the times of the Mahomedan and Mabratta rulers. (Hear, hear). We all remember the instances of the following personages who had the privileges of representing their people in the councils of their respective rulers:—Vikram, Kalidas, Todarmull, Birbal, Jagonnath &c. (Hear, hear). What I mean to say is that the right of representation is our ancient privilege and we should never like it to be interfered with by any one. (Hear, hear). There is a complete justification for us in demanding the privilege of sending at least two representatives on behalf of each of the two Provinces to the Viceregal Council at Calcutta. (At this stage the Chairman reminded the speaker that the 5 minutes during which he had to finish his say were over). Gentlemen, I am told my 5 minutes are over. (Cries of "go on"). Gentlemen, just imagine what are the advantages that we will derive from sending our representatives to the Viceroy's Council. You know the

vernacular phrase which says that it is the wearer who knows where the shoe pinches and not the maker. Similarly, it is our own representatives who can better understand exactly what our grievances are and what measures are required to remove them. Taking the medical simile, I would say they know the seat of pain in our body better, they are better able to diagnose the disease than the Councillors of Calcutta! (Hear, hear and laughter). Speaking in plain language, they would enquire into the question of finances and insist on knowing how the revenue which is exacted from us is spent for our benefit. As matters at present stand, we are all in the dark as to the way our taxes are expended, and even if we have got an inkling into that matter we have not the power to dictate that the money should be diverted from the direction which is not beneficial to us and spent in the direction which is really advantageous to our Provinces and our people. (Hear, hear). Owing to the dearth of information on this subject we don't know how much is saved annually by Government out of our revenues and, therefore, we are incapable of suggesting the new channels through which that saving could be utilized to the lasting benefit of these Provinces. We feel sorely on this question because by means of the education which we have received through the kindness of our benign Government we are led to think that we are in a position to be consulted by Government in matters which touch, in fact, our hearths and homes. We pay the taxes in the belief that they would be applied to our advantage, and now that we are fit to know and suggest the directions in which those taxes could be advantageously spent we think it is our privilege to approach Government and tell them that the time has come when we should be allowed to send our representatives to the Viceroy's Council and through their lips state before the Council what our views are on matters which touch our Provinces the most. (Cheers).

Mr. Gulam Mahomed Khan of Berar in further supporting the above resolution said in Hindi :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I am asked by the Chairman to further support this resolution. Gentlemen, I am not a speaker or an orator. (Laughter). As I am commanded by the Chairman to speak I will just say a few words and conclude. Gentlemen, I am a resident of Berar which has just been joined to Nagpur, and, therefore, stand before you to support the resolution which prays, among other things, that all the laws and regulations which now apply to Nagpur should be made applicable to Berar. (Hear, hear). We Beraris also ask that we should be allowed to have our own Legislative Council so that we can control the expenditure by Government of our revenues. Barring the privilege of having a Legislative Council let us have at least the permission to send a couple of representatives to the Viceregal Council at Calcutta. (Cheers). As long as Berar was a "Badshahi" Province we had no reason to claim a Legislative Council of our own or even the right of representation. But now that that Province is made a part of British territory we feel constrained to make these alternative demands. (Cheers). Suppose, a mother has got two children; would you approve of the idea that the mother should hug to her bosom one child and cast aside the other? (Cries of "No, no"). Thank you; in the same way, would you like the idea of the British Government giving the privilege to one of its Provinces to have a Legislative Council of its own and denying that right to another Province? (Loud cries of "No, no"). Suppose, the two Provinces are the two eyes of British Government; how can, then, the Government afford to close one eye and see with the other? They must open both the eyes and use their vision evenly. (Hear, hear). I say that both the Provinces of Nagpur and Berar should be permitted to have their own Legislative Councils. (Cheers). That is our great ambition and that is our earnest prayer. We pray, that we should have our own Legislative Council; if that privilege cannot be granted for some reason, then let us send at least two, if not more, of our representatives to the Viceroy's Council so that we may be able to express our views in the matter of the disposal of the taxes which are wrung out of us. (Cheers). The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. Raoji Govind of Hoshangabad moved the third resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I beg to move the third resolution which runs thus:—

That this Conference while thanking Government for the abolition of the Patwari and the Famine Cesses and the reductions made a few years ago in the enhanced assessments in the Central Provinces, respectfully but earnestly urges for the consideration of the Government that short term Settlements and periodical revisions are harassing in their operation and harmful in their results to the prosperity and progress of the agricultural and land-holding classes, and prays that for securing their prosperity and progress the Government will be pleased to grant greater fixity of tenure and greater permanence in the land revenue demand, by authoritatively laying down for ryotwari tracts as positive rules of law the principles laid down by the Government of India in 1883 and in the case of malguzari tracts by issuing as a statutory direction of Saharanpur rule that the maximum assessment of an estate shall not exceed 50 per cent of its net assets.

I should like to translate this resolution in Hindi for the information of those of you, gentlemen, who don't know English. (Translates it in Hindi). Gentlemen, we thank the Government for remitting Rs. 40,000 in connection with the Patwari and Famine Cesses, (Cheers). But what are the real facts with regard to the "short time settlements" and "periodical revisions"? When Sir Richard Temple was Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces it was declared that the system of short time settlements then prevailing was harassing and the 30 years' tenure was fixed. In the following regime that fixture was abolished. In 1867 correspondence ensued with the Secretary of State in which it was represented to him that the Saharanpur Rule should be enforced in virtue of which "the maximum assessment of an estate shall not exceed 50 per cent of its net assets." It has been the persistent prayer of our people from that time to this to enforce that Rule in these Provinces. Sir John M. Crossthwaites and others have also recommended that that Rule should be made applicable to these Provinces. (Cheers). This was in 1877. In 1885 Mr. Fuller published a long Report in which he stated that there was no necessity for applying the Saharanpur Rule to these Provinces and that the Lieutenant-Governor would be empowered to treat individual cases on their merits by making suitable settlements with respect to them. (At this stage the speaker read a long list of figures showing the revenues derived by the Malguzars in different years, and what the Malguzars had to pay in those years to Government out of their earnings). Gentlemen, you will see from these figures that the year 1899-1900 was a typical one, in that, in that year the revenue derived by the Malguzars was 11½ lakhs out of which they paid to Government Rs. 4½ lakhs! They thus saved only 7½ lakhs. After that the new settlement took place, gentlemen, and what was the result? The result was that out of their earning of Rs. 11 lakhs and 49,000 the Malguzars had to pay to Government Rs. 9 lakhs! And they saved only 2 lakhs! (Laughter and bitter cries of shame). Gentlemen, wait, the fun is still to come. (Hear, hear). There are instances on record to show that whenever the Malguzars were unable to recover their rents from the cultivators warrants were issued against them (the Malguzars) by Government! What could the Malguzars do under these circumstances except to rush into the clutches of the *sowcars* to borrow money and save their reputation? (Cries of shame). Matters, in some cases, came to such a pass that the "gaums" of some of the Malguzars had to be sold by public auction in liquidation of their debts incurred for these proposs! (Great shame). But be it said to the credit of Government, when this circumstance was brought to their notice, they gracefully remitted the debts of the Malguzars to the tune of Rs. 17½ lakhs. (Cheers). Mark it, gentlemen, the figures that I have given to you are with reference to my own Zillah. But we may take it for granted that the same state of things prevailed in other Zillahs. We have got the authority of Sir Richard Temple—to quote the remarks of our President in the speech which he delivered yesterday—that he placed "full

confidence in the declared intentions of Government and assured the people that it was recommended that, in the case of those landholders who would effect substantial improvements in their property, the assessments would be revised with a view to limitations being placed upon them in perpetuity". Later events do not warrant the hope that that policy would be upheld at all. But having regard to the remissions in the Patwari and Famine Cesses by Government we may hug the belief that our prayer to them would induce them to grant us at least 30 years' settlement. With these words I beg to again move this resolution. (Cheers).

Mr. Ramchandra Vishnu Mahajani of Akola in seconding the above resolution said as follows in Marathi:—

Mr. President and gentlemen, my friend, Mr. Raoji Goving, has told us about the miserable state of the agriculturists and yesterday our President also narrated the condition of the agricultural population in the Central Provinces and Berar. Both of them have proved by quoting facts and figures that the condition of the cultivators is far from satisfactory. The President has gone the length of citing one or two Government authorities in support of his contention that the state of the cultivating classes in these Provinces is heartrending. So, the question before us is not to prove the deplorable condition of the agriculturists—that has been established beyond cavil—but the question before us is what steps should be taken to improve that condition. These steps are suggested in the resolution which I stand before you now to second. (Hear, hear.) It may be argued that as the cultivators use land belonging to Government they ought to pay land revenue for it to Government. That is a fair argument and one that no one can gainsay, but the question is whether there should not be a limit within which alone they should be made to pay that revenue. What happens now is this: Government try to exact out of the cultivators, aye, wring out of them the last farthing they can. In fact, Government apply the pressure of exaction to the breaking point. Looking at this state of things one is reminded of Æsop's story of the "Hen laying the golden eggs." (Hear, hear.) Just as the King in the story killed the hen with the expectation of at one stroke securing all the eggs in the body of the bird, so the Government are trying to press and press and press the cultivators in the mill of exaction of land revenue with a view to draw out of them the last drop of monetary oil—the last coin—of which they are possessed. That is both impolitic and inhuman. Let Government have taxes from that class of useful and hardworking subject-population, by all means, but let them not turn the screw over too much. (Hear, hear.) Let them kill two birds with one stone let them have sufficiency of taxes from the cultivators and at the same time leave the cultivators in a position which would enable them to live happy and comfortable lives. (Hear, hear.) The system of collecting taxes should be such as would ensure a maximum of revenue with the minimum of misery. (Hear, hear.) The history of this question is shortly told. Since 1862 our late Viceroys have assured us that the settlement would be final. The Secretary of State also sanctioned that policy. But owing to our misfortune that sanction was withheld and a settlement with 30 years' tenure was brought into force instead! In some places there is even a less than 30 years' tenure! You can ascertain on enquiry that this state of things does not produce a desirable result. Therefore, we ask Government to give us a permanent settlement. In the event the Government say "it is not a reasonable prayer, indeed", then we say that the settlement should not be of less than 30 years. We also pray that there should be some rules to govern this settlement of 30 years. One of those rules should be to the effect that no cultivator should be called on to pay an increased revenue unless he has wrought improvements in his land. (Cheers.) The cultivators should be asked to pay more assessment provided they have brought more land under cultivation. (Cheers.) What now happens is that at each new settlement heavier assessment is imposed on the Province irrespective of the question of more of its land being brought under cultivation or subjected to further improvements (Shame). Such rules should not be allowed to pollute the pages of the Statute. (Cheers.) With these few words I beg to second this resolution. (Cheers)

Shett Narsingdas of Chindwara in supporting the above resolution said as follows in Hindi :—

Mr. President and gentlemen, I am a Malguzar and I have some bitter experience of the modus operandi of Government officers in the matter of collecting revenue. Government have made us promises of these settlements at various times but those promises are made to the ear and broken to the hope. I have in my hand this book (shows a book) which contains the history of the promises given by Government in this matter only to break them when opportunity arose. One of the promises of Government was that the Malguzars should not be asked to pay more than 50 per cent. of their income and yet they have subsequently increased the limit of the assessment to be paid by the Malguzars. This book is published by the Malguzar and Kastkar Sabha of Jubbulpur depicting in detail the picture of the Government action in skilfully withdrawing the rights of the Malguzars and Kastkars inspite of the protest of the latter classes. When this Province was annexed to the British territory Government were pleased to give us certain pledges which their Officers have not yet degined to fulfil. (Shame). One of the pledges was that the Malguzars would not have to pay more than 50 per cent. of their income as revenue to the British Government in any circumstances and that the settlement would be of a long term. But the pledge has been more honoured in the breach than in the observance. (Shame). There are very few chances of lands of the cultivators being improved so as to result in the general prosperity of the country as long as the policy of increasing assessment at each settlement is continued. Hence, it is essential that Government should direct their officers not to increase the assessment on any land to more than 50 per cent. of its produce at the time of each settlement. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, at first, the rate of assessment was very low; but as gradually the Malguzars began to invest more money and take more trouble in bringing about general improvement in their lands Government began to demand more slices off their profits in the shape of increased taxes. This action of Government is not commendable. But more disgraceful is their conduct in imposing heavier assessment on petty and insignificant Malguzars whose state of land would not make them amenable to any rules regarding assessment. The upshot of the sweeping pressure brought to bear on Malguzars indiscriminately, oblivious of the fact that they were some of them absolutely incapable of paying the assessment, has been their utter ruin as a class. (Shame). We, therefore, in this Conference pray to Government not to depart from the solemn pledges they have given us. We must tell them that according to our Shastras there is no greater sin than that of breaking one's promise, and we implore our 'Sircar' not to commit that heinous sin but to fulfil their promises and make us, poor Malguzars, happy and contented. That is the only way of making the country prosperous. I am glad to have this opportunity of speaking in my own native language. I am still more glad to see that the whole proceedings of this Conference are conducted in our own vernacular languages. (Cheers).

Mr. Keshawrao Deshmukh of Raipur having supported the resolution it was carried unanimously.

Mr. Vishnu Moreshwar Mahajani of Akola moved the fourth resolution with the following speech in Marathi :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I beg to move the following resolution which is Resolution No. 4 on the Agenda paper :—

That this Conference respectfully felicitates the Government upon the reduction of college and school fees made recently in the Central Provinces and upon their resolve to abolish fees in Primary Schools and begs to express its concurrence with the principle that it is the duty of the State to provide free elementary education for all its subjects ;

The Conference further submits that in view of the supreme importance of education both to the people and to the Government, it is very desirable that a large portion

of the public revenue should be spent on education, that primary education be made compulsory in at least the advanced tracts of C. P. and Berar, that the number of educational institutions of other descriptions, Secondary, Higher and Technical, should be materially increased and that the system of education should be revised so as to better develop the faculties and capacities of the pupils and to give them more practical knowledge than is done under the present system.

(After translating the resolution in Marathi). In connection with this resolution I have got only ten minutes. A man who has done a teacher's duty will have much to say on such a resolution but I am handicapped by the ruling of the Chairman for which I am helpless. I will, however, try to do what justice I can to the important subject which is dealt with in this resolution. Gentlemen, there is one point in connection with the subject of education about which there is no difference of opinion between the Government and the people, and that point is that the spread of education among the people should be unrestricted. (Cheers). On that head there is unanimity of opinion. (Cheers). The only bone of contention between the rulers and the ruled is the "quantum" of revenue that Government ought to devote towards this object. While on the one hand the people say to Government "a larger proportion of the revenue should be spent for this purpose" Government callously say "we want a greater portion of the revenue for being spent on military projects. We must supply whatever money is required by the military officers. It is only the surplus that you can look for to meet your educational needs." Gentlemen, this state of things has now lasted for over nine years. The military experts have been demanding more money every year and Government have been meeting their implacable demands. The result is that the plant of educational progress is dwarfed for want of sufficient funds. (Shame). There is ample stock in the treasury of the King's coin but that is reserved for military purposes. The educational institutions may go to the wall for want of money; Government care a jot for that! (Shame). Well, gentlemen, that is now ancient history, as it were. For now Government have admitted that they have a large surplus in the treasury after satisfying the gluttonous military department and they are at a loss to know the manner in which that surplus should be utilised. They don't know what they should do with that money! Well, we will go to their rescue; we will tell them how to make good use of that money. We will make capital of Government being flush of money and ask them to spend a greater portion of it towards feeding the educational institutions of the country. (Hear, hear). They could not afford to do that before but they can certainly do it now with their overflowing surplusage. (Hear, hear). For the last 2 or 3 years they have been giving grants of 30 lakhs or 40 lakhs for educational purposes. (Cheers). For that we are all grateful to them. (Hear, hear). But more money is still required. Gentlemen, don't imagine that Government are ignorant of the requirements of the Educational Department. Not a bit of it. They are as much alive to them as we have been, but they were helpless all these years owing to the want of funds. Now that they are in funds we should remind them of some of the defects in the Educational Department. I say advisedly "we must remind them." I don't say "we must tell them." Because they know all this already. They know full well that the school masters are ill-paid and the schools are manned with ill-trained and incompetent teachers. They knew all this and they tolerated this state of things because they did not want to give us competent teachers. They did not want to make you competent scholars. They wanted to make you tenth rate educated people only. Look at Japan. Only 40 short years ago she was an uncivilized country, and within 40 short years she has become a great nation on the face of the globe. (Hear, hear). In the course of these 40 years she claims 90 per cent. of her population to be educated while the Indian Empire within the long span of 150 years can boast of only 20 per cent. of her people to be educated! (Cries of shame). What a contrast, gentlemen? Well, Government have now realised their position. They feel ashamed of lagging behind Japan. "The people, in their turn,

also have woke up to their degraded condition, and in order to pacify their demands Government are at this moment prepared to throw a sop to them as one would throw a sop to a barking dog. (Hear, hear, laughter and loud cries of Shame). Well, the fact of the matter is that Government are now prepared to spend a little more on education of their subjects and they have touched the thin end of the wedge in that direction by reducing the fees in primary schools. (Hear, hear). In the Central Provinces they reduced the fee to one anna. In Berar that fee would be charged from April next. The Nagpur Conference asked Government to reduce fees in the High School and College and Government immediately replied affirmatively. For that we are grateful to them. (Hear, hear). At least in this one instance Government seemed to appreciate our idea—(Hear, hear)—because they immediately complied with our prayer. (Hear, hear). Now, what was the object of reducing the fees? The object was that all people should take advantage of education. (Hear, hear). In other words, the object was that no one should be deprived of that advantage for want of means to pay heavy fees. The object is that even poor people should be given an opportunity to receive education. (Hear, hear). That is why the fee was reduced. As regards free education I think there is some difference of opinion between the Conference and myself. I have got my personal opinion on this question rather different from that of this Conference. That opinion I have expressed in my Note sent to Mr. Hill. I only mention this casually, because if you happen to know that I have written a separate Note to Government on this subject you may charge me with expressing one view to Government and another to this Conference on the same subject. As regards technical education it should be given to our people on a larger scale. Government have not done as much as they ought to have done in this direction. In point of educational matters Berar is on the same footing with the Central Provinces. Just look at the pay received by High School teachers and Inspectors and you will require no better proof that education is suffering very badly in these Provinces. You cannot get better tuition in schools unless you have well-trained teachers and those you cannot have unless you are prepared to pay them more wages. We ought to have here something of the sort of the Normal Colleges to provide us with efficient teachers. (Hear, hear). The Educational Department looks as if it is the step-child of Government while the Military Department is treated as if it is the child born of their own loins. (Hear, hear and Shame). But let that pass. If Government have come forward to spend more on education nowadays we may forgive them for their past neglect but should be watchful in the future. (Hear, hear). With these words I beg to move this resolution for your acceptance and hope, when it is seconded, you will pass it with acclamation. (Cheers).

Mr. V. R. Pundit of Nagpur seconded the above resolution with the following speech in Hindi:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, Rao Bahadur Mahajani in moving this resolution has placed all the facts in relation to the subject with which it deals. I have not much to add to what has fallen from his lips. His words were the words of authority when he addressed you on this all-important subject of education, because he was a distinguished member of the Educational Department and you could never find a better authority than he to speak on this matter. (Hear, hear). He is one of those who have spent all their lives in that department. Rao Bahadur Wamanrao moved a resolution on this subject two years ago and I then had the privilege of seconding that resolution. We then pointed out to Government the injustice of levying high fees in schools. We asked Government to show to the son of men of moderate means some indulgence by reducing the school fees. We instanced to them the sad result of high fees in these Provinces by stating that intelligent students of these Provinces left here and went a broad to join colleges in other Provinces. Government were convinced of the result we pointed out to them and immediately cancelled their old rule and reduced the school fees making them uniform. (Here, here.) Some time ago Government were not as liberal in educational matters as they are now.

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The reason of that was not far to seek. Government wanted all the money they could spare for military purposes. The demands of the Military Department were always inexorable. And those demands were always forthcoming! Government had, therefore, no alternative but to scrape together all the money they could and utilize it for the purpose of allaying the insatiable hunger of the gluttonous Military Department. But things have changed a "wee bit" of late. Government have found themselves confronted with large surpluses and are inclined to spend a little more than before in supplying the educational needs of the people. (Cheers.) They have very recently resolved that in the villages primary education should be given free in the first, second, third, fourth and fifth classes. (Hear, hear.) We feel sure Government have got enough money to spend for the education of the people. The Malguzars know that the revenue they pay to the Government is sufficiently large to enable Government to satisfy the educational requirements of the people. The surplus fund in the hands of the Government is so large that they can afford to forego all the fees in schools and colleges. I don't agree with Rao Bahadur Mahajani when he said he did not appreciate the reduction of school-fee to one anna, the reason being, he said that there were very few chances of children of poor people taking advantage of such a low fee. He may be right in his argument, but I cannot see my way to appreciate it. I am of opinion that, apart from reducing the fees, Government should go the length of supplying school books free to the children of poor people. (Hear, hear.) Government have now got any amount of money to spend for our education and, therefore, we say that the more they do that the better for the poorer classes.—(Hear, hear).—Whose children have been hitherto shut out of schools on account of heavy fees. There should be Madrassas in all towns! (Cheers). Encouragement should also be given to technical education. (Hear, hear). It is technical education which may be said to be the backbone of the industrial rise of this country in the scale of advanced nations. (Cheers). The Swadeshi movement demands a rapid spread of technical education. (Cheers). Therefore, provision should be made in schools and colleges for such education. (Hear, hear). Apart from Government efforts in this direction, it is the duty of the people themselves to start technical institutions in various parts of the country to satisfy the crying desire of Swadeshim. I fully agree with Rao Bahadur Mahajani in deprecating the spirit in which "padhayee" (cramming) is insisted on. What is our experience? We know that the boys hardly understand what they read. Words are simply stuffed into their heads without concomitant explanation. Such a system of education ought to be stopped and a more useful system substituted in its stead. (Hear, hear). That end can only be assured, gentlemen, if you have got well-trained teachers in schools, and they cannot be had unless you are prepared to pay them higher salaries. So, our earnest request to Government is to spend as much as they can on training our people into being good teachers. Once have well-trained teachers, and then the other good results, of which I have spoken, will of themselves follow. What do our Munshis get? They get Rs. 2/- per month each! (Shame). What are the masters paid, gentlemen? They are paid Rs. 8/- to Rs. 10/- a month each! (Renewed cries of shame). Under these circumstances, how could you expect to get a better sort of education? The universal cry is: "Shikshanki dharti badhand chhatiye" (the system of education ought to be amended). More than that, the scope of educational instruction ought to be enlarged. (Cheers). It is no use patching up the system anyhow in view of the increasing number of students. It is as dangerous to have a patched up system of education to meet the demand of the increasing number of scholars as it is to increase a given quantity of gravy by adding water to it with a view to meet the requirements of the increasing number of diners. The scope of instruction should be enlarged both qualitatively and quantitatively. (Hear, hear). We feel sure Government with the large surplus they now command are capable of doing this for us. (Cheers). With these words I beg to second this resolution which I hope you will pass with acclamation. (Cheers).

Mr. Yado Rao Bhagdekar of Billaspur supported the above resolution with a brief speech in Hindi as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I have very great pleasure to support this resolution. It was on account of the heavy fees that people could not hitherto send their sons to the "Pathshallas" to receive education. Now that the obstacle is removed I make no doubt that they will send their children in large numbers to be educated at schools. (Hear, hear). We certainly ought to thank the British Government for this concession of free primary education. (Hear, hear). Mr. Pundit of Nagpur has already said all that could be said on this subject and, I find, there is very little left for me to say. I would, therefore, conclude and with your permission resume my seat. (Cheers).

Mr. Yeshwant Rao Rajimwalla of Raipur in further supporting the above resolution observed in Hindi as follows:—

In Chhatisghargh people found it very difficult to provide their sons with adequate education on account of the heavy fees that used to be hitherto charged. Let there be primary education provided for people on the same lines as prevail at Baroda. (Hear, hear). Government ought to do for the people all that they can in educational matters. (Cheers). It is only education that will enable people to rise above the scruples against foreign travels across the sea and so on. (Hear, hear). Again, it is only education that will instil into our minds the idea of self-sacrifice, self-reliance, self-abnegation &c. (Hear, hear). Why has Japan come so forward? Because she tried to disseminate education far and wide. (Hear, hear). There should not be a single town in these Provisions without any provision for education. It is the duty of the State to start educational institutions every where for literary and technical instruction. (Hear, hear). Follow the precept of the Hon. Mr. Gokhale to attempt to have our "swaraj." (Hear, hear). That can be had only by means of education which let us all obtain on account of the free education that government has now promised to give. (Cheers). The resolution was put to vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. Waman Rao Joshi of Nagpur moved the 5th resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, the resolution which I am asked to move is as follows:—

That this Conference begs to thank the Hon'ble The Chief Commissioner for partially acceding to the request contained in Resolution VIII of the 2nd Provincial Conference regarding the trial of judicial cases by Magistrates in Camp: this Conference, however, submits that the grievance complained of cannot be redressed until one or two stationary Magistrates are appointed at Head quarters to dispose of all important Criminal work now done by officers, and further prays that it should be laid down as a principle that no Judicial work should be done in camp.

(After translating the resolution in Hindi) Gentlemen, I think there are some pleaders and litigants also in this assembly who will be greatly interested in the resolution I have just moved. (Laughter). It entails a great hardship, physical and pecuniary, on the litigants and their advocates when they have to move from place to place on the heels of the trying magistrates while on tour. Many a time it causes no end of inconvenience to the suitors when they have to follow the roving courts from place to place. To avoid this inconvenience and loss of time and money we sent a copy of a similar resolution passed in the last Conference to the Chief Commissioner praying that orders may be issued for, where practicable, cases being tried at head-quarters and not *en route*; and it is a matter of gratification that that prayer, sound as it was, was immediately paid heed to. (Hear, hear). Our sincere thanks are certainly due to that officer for his kindness in responding to our appeal so promptly and so favourably. (Cheers).

Mr. Hanumant Rao Kaole seconded the above resolution with a Hindi speech as follows:—

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Gentlemen, Mr. Joshi in moving this resolution has explained to you the time, trouble, inconvenience and money which cost litigants when they have to follow in the wake of touring magistrates. I shall therefore, not take up your time by unnecessarily dilating on the same points for fear, lest it should be repeating all that he has already said. All I want to say is that we cannot too strongly condemn a system of administering justice which entails so much "bother" on poor litigants. That being so, we cannot sufficiently thank the Hon. the Chief Commissioner for favourably responding to our representation made last year. (Hear, hear). The concession is all the more valuable in face of the fact that under the old practice, although the suitors were prepared to pay fees to their vakils, yet the latter were occasionally unwilling to accept their briefs as the trouble of travelling on the trail of the magistrates was unbearable. (Cheers).

The resolution was put to the votes and carried unanimously.

Mr. Lakatdar of Bhandara moved the 16th resolution, with a speech in Hindi as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, The resolution which is entrusted to me runs thus :—

That this Conference begs to express its firm conviction that for further improving the administration of justice and increasing the confidence of the people in the judicial tribunals of the Province and to afford some relief from the unnecessary trouble and heavy expenditure which the present system entails, it is just, necessary and expedient that there should be a complete separation of Judicial from Executive functions and that this much-needed reform being capable of introduction without any appreciable increase in public expenditure in the C. P. and Berar, this Conference prays that Government will be pleased to take early steps to direct such separation and to relieve Magistrates of all executive functions.

This Conference begs to invite the attention of the Government to the undesirability of appointing untrained or insufficiently trained officers to fill high judicial posts and submits that all Judges and Magistrates should be selected from persons who have received legal training.

(Translates the resolution in Hindi). I think, since the Congress came into existence this resolution has been passed by it every year. It has also been moved by the Provincial Conferences every year. Even the Provincial Conferences in the Central Provinces have handled this resolution for the last two years. That shows that the subject dealt within it is of grave importance. Our President told us yesterday in his speech, when he touched this point, that Lord Dufferin sympathised with this demand of the Congress and called it as the "Counsel of perfection". When Lord Curzon came to India for the first time, as Viceroy, it is well-known he had brought 12 projects with him to be carried out in this country. One of them was the proposal of the separation of the judicial from the executive functions. For that purpose he collected a large number of reports from different quarters. The heap of the reports was so great that he once said he could not read them! But nothing came of it. The project remained where it was before Lord Curzon came here. However, from Lord Dufferin's time we know that all the responsible Government officers, whose sympathies go with the people, have opined that the two functions under discussion should be separated. (Hear, hear). Contrast with this what Dr. Rash Behari Gosh told us at the last Congress at Calcutta as to how some European officers got irritated when this subject was mentioned to them. The oppositionists of this project urge the plea that if this proposal is carried out people would not mind the authorities who would be deprived of some of their powers due to this separation. But that fear is groundless. You will remember that in the Central Provinces the Commissioner had the power of trying criminal cases as well as civil. He was afterwards deprived of some of those powers. Has that deprivation of powers been followed by disrespect to the officer?

No. Another fear is that the separation of the two functions will entail extra expenditure on the State. That fear is equally groundless. I will briefly explain how. I have got some experience of the "modus vivendi" of our magistrates. The typical magistrate comes to his office at 11 o'clock. He attends to his work here and there and then in comes the Bombay Mail with the "Times of India" newspaper. His worship then spends a short hour or more in reading that repository of public news. Shortly afterwards comes the Punjab Mail bringing the "Pioneer." His Honor then whiles an hour or two in wading through the copious news in Allahabad journal. "Shades of the evening soon fall and the dispenser of criminal justice quietly wends his way home". If you go through the list of these officers you will find that there are many in it who could be entrusted with the new duties arising from the separation of these functions without disorganising the present arrangements and without adding an iota of expenditure to the existing budget. (Cheers). You have only to judiciously re-arrange the whole system of administration, and the object is gained without much trouble and expense. (The speaker at this stage gave a detailed list of the executive officers who had not much work to do, and thereby proved that if they were entrusted with judicial work the question of additional expenditure would prove to be a myth and a bogey). As an instance of miscarriage of justice by an officer indulging in the possession of both these powers I may tell you an incident that happened sometime ago. An officer on tour on one occasion wanted a cart to carry his luggage. His peons went about to find one. They pitched upon a cartman who asked to be allowed a few minutes to rest his animals as they were tired. Well, he was ill-treated because he dilly-dallied before the emissaries of the "boss" and was hauled up before a magistrate and fined. Appeal was preferred against the penalty. Before whom did that appeal come for hearing, gentlemen? Why before the very identical touring officer who by this time had become a full-fledged District Magistrate! He knew that the cartman was innocent and was unnecessarily harrassed by his "chaprasi." He knew all that, but to keep up the "prestige" of the administration, he simply reduced the fine and no more!! We had great respect for this officer, who was a native gentleman, before this incident took place; but, alas! since then he has evoked our pity in the belief that he was helpless under the land of the double-barrelled gun. He worshipped the Goddess of Prestige and insulted the Goddess of Justice. (Shame). Gentlemen, with regard to the second part of this resolution, you must have trained officers if you expect to get even-handed justice. The officers are not God's children so that they may be assumed to come into this mundane atmosphere ready-trained and that they need not get regular training which ordinary mortals require to have. From my own experience I may tell you that even the European I.C.S.'s must have proper training to become efficient District Judges. (At this stage the speaker narrated an instance in which a young officer declined to take a written complaint in a certain case) That shows their ignorance of law. Yet this self-same officer was elevated to the dignity of the District Judge in 2 or 3 months and he also became a Sessions Judge!! The European officers may well call themselves members of the Heaven-born Service, but they cannot pretend to become qualified officers unless they receive special training. I will just give you an instance of unnecessary annoyance caused to parties owing to the appointment of ill-trained officers to dispense justice. Once a Nazir issued a warrant against a man for not complying with a call for the payment of Government dues. The warrant was executed against the servant of the defaulter in spite of the servant's request that the execution be stayed until his master came home. The warrant was executed; then followed the usual appeal and next came the discovery that the warrant was neither signed nor sealed by the Magistrate! These are funny instances to a layman's ears, but those who are deeply concerned with law courts are alive to the most disastrous consequences that ensue from the ill-conceived sense of justice of ill-trained or un-trained officers. We, therefore, pray that such officers should not be selected to responsible posts where questions of people's "Abroo" and wealth are both at stake. (Hear, hear). With these words I move this resolution for your acceptance. (Cheers).

Mr. Mahadew Gangadhar Marathe seconded the above resolution with a speech in Marathi as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I don't think you will like my speech after having heard the interesting address of my predecessor. Gentlemen, just as there are police officers to preserve quiet and tranquility in the country so we require experienced judicial officers to dispense even-handed justice in civil as well as criminal cases. (Hear, hear). The police officers are the guides of the Executive Officers. Hence, when an appeal is made in a criminal case against a police officer the appellant stands very slender chances of getting unalloyed justice being done to him owing to the fact that the officer against whom he has filed the appeal is the light and guide of the judge who sits to dispose of the appeal. We don't mean to say that under the present system of administration justice has become a farce. But we do maintain that we get it only against so many odds. There was a revenue case in the Punjab. In that case the Magistrate was wrong in taking cognisance of the case and committing the accused to the Sessions. The Sessions Judge eventually declared he had nothing to do with the revenue matter and discharged the accused. I will give you another instance of the vagaries of an officer who possessed these two combined powers. You know that according to the rules of the Government of India people living in plague-infected localities are made to evacuate. Well, once it so happened that in a certain town plague broke out and the usual notice to evacuate was promulgated to its residents. One of the residents, a Bora by caste, represented to the officers that he had a shop in the town and said: "I am directed to clear out at once, but who would look after my shop which contains about Rs. 10,000." He, having hesitated to leave the shop which contained so much cash the evacuating officer brought an action against him and got him convicted for disobeying his order! (Shame). I will give you yet another instance of the idiosyncracies of a judicial officer. Once, owing to plague, people of a certain town had gone to live outside. Of course, with them came out of the town the carriages which plied for hire. This fact greatly inconvenienced the European officers of the station and they awaited an opportunity to vent their ire or vengeance-call it whichever you like-on the encamping towns people. It so happened that when these segregated congregation had to return to the town on business daily they had to pass the bungalows of these irate European officers, and, if they drove in carriages, the rumbling noise of the wheels of the carriages became a sort of a nuisance to these officers. So, they ordered that the native carriages should be stopped from passing by their bungalows! Well, I need not tell you how this order was welcomed by the natives. All that I am pointing out is the way in which these officers, armed with the double power, of which we complain, behave themselves to the great annoyance and trouble to the native population. "Prestige, prestige, prestige" is the watchword of these officers, and they try to maintain it even at the cost of pure justice. (Shame). Take again the case of Exchange Compensation. It was granted to all Europeans by virtue of a law that was precipitately passed in the Legislative Council! Then, take the case of Lord Kitchener. If he says he must have so much money the Government of the country is bound to supply it at all costs. If you, however, suggest to Government to spend money in a particular useful or beneficial direction they immediately reply that they have no money to spare! This is all due to the two powers being combined in the same individuals who do not fail to use them to our detriment when necessity arises. Hence, this resolution of gentle protest on behalf of the Conference. (Cheers). The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. Shamrao Jakari moved the 7th resolution with a speech in Marathi as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I beg to move the 7th resolution which runs as follows :—

That this Conference considers that to mitigate some of the hardships caused by the working of the Income Tax Act, it is desirable that in making the assessment the assessing

officer should act in conjunction with a Local Committee for each village and town consisting of half elected and half nominated members and that the assessment should be fixed for a period of at least 3 years.

(After translating the resolution in Marathi) Gentlemen, we are all acquainted with the hardships caused by the Income Tax. I don't think there is any one here who is ignorant of that tax, I mean the hardships caused by that tax. The early history of this tax is shortly this that it was first levied to replenish the British Treasury which was denuded of its valuable coins by heavy military expenditure. It was then stated by the authorities and understood by the people that it was a short-lived imposition, but once introduced to our poor country it has come to stay. It is assessed and re-assessed every year and how? In every village the Tahsildar collects about 4 or 5 persons belonging to the place and with their consent fixes what each individual in that village ought to pay as income tax to the State! Well, it does not stop there for good. No. Once it is fastened on a given person it goes on increasing from year to year! Mind you, its increase is made in spite of your protest and independent of your income. Suppose, your income is not such as to be amenable to the tax fixed on you, you may protest howsoever much you like, the tax clings to you like a leech unless you can prove to the hilt that you are really unable to pay the settled amount on account of the smallness of your income. The burden of proof that your income is very small rests with you. You must satisfy the authorities that it is really so small as to be fit for a smaller imposition. The peculiar section which embellishes the Income Tax Act is the one that empowers Government to assume your income is so and so and base their taxation on that! Of course, you don't know on what date they have concluded your income to be so much. That is a part of their inscrutable method of calculation. Well, they assume your income to be so much although you know how much it exactly is. And you are asked to pay so much as income tax. You say "I cannot pay this amount because my income is very small, please reduce it in consonance with my earnings." Well, Government say: "Our belief is that you underestimate your income; prove that we have overcharged you and then we will grant you rebate; we shall stick to our estimate of your income till then." So, the peculiarity which characterises this Act is the fact that although your earnings may be really small Government can with impunity suppose they are higher and assess the tax accordingly! If you cannot prove—you know what difficulties are generally in one's way to prove it—that your income is smaller than what the Government estimated it to be, well, the tax is fastened on you with a sure prospect of its being increased to some extent next year, again, on the assumption that your income during that year must have increased! Gentlemen, it is all a question of assumptions in favour of Government and to your prejudice. One of the speakers here told us that you will find in every village less than 20 per cent. of educated persons. That being so, just imagine who must be the fair consultants of the Tahsildar who comes to your village, gathers 5 or 6 persons about him and with their consent assesses the tax on individual residents of the village. The result of such a perfunctory consultation is more often than not disastrous to the poor inhabitants of the village. The proper course, to avoid all chances of injustice, would be to consult a few chosen representatives of the villagers themselves instead of random consultants who may not be above party-prejudices and petty jealousies among their neighbours. As no attempt is made to ascertain the exact income of the villagers gross injustice ensues. Therefore, we, in this resolution, pray that people's representatives be consulted on such an important matter and that the assessment of the tax be made every three years. Rao Bahadur Mahajani told us that Government have now got more money than they require and that, therefore, they don't know how to utilize it. Well, we say "utilize it in remitting the income tax which falls unevenly on many people's incomes, for want of proper means at the disposal of Government to ascertain the exact incomes." It behoves Government to give what relief they can to the people of this poor country in respect of certain taxes. They should not

exact the last drop of blood from the people who are already emaciated by reason of being overloaded with taxation of sorts. (Cheers.)

Mr. Ram Narayan of Nagpur in seconding the above resolution addressed the Conference in Hindi to the following effect :—

Gentlemen, this tax touches most the proverbial Bania and as such I feel I am entitled to address you a few words on it. (Laughter.) The Tahsildar's assistant fixes the amount of tax you have to pay on your income and the Tahsildar simply confirms it. If the assistant has any cause to be angry with you and levies more tax than your Income entitles him to fix it and you approach the Tahsildar for remission the curt reply given to you is "Do you think we have made a mistake?" You know how the assessment is arrived at? The Income Tax Officers go to a place and select some of the people of that place. Then the consultation is held. "Who is this man?" one of them asks. "He is Ram Narayan" answers another. "Oh, he is rich and influential," says the third. And in this way the assessment is levied on individual persons. What miscarriage of justice ensues from this "modus operandi" would be avoided if the Committee adopted a better mode of ascertaining people's incomes. Suppose Rs. 50 is assessed as tax per annum on your income, well, if you go to court for remission, you have to pay Rs. 50 besides to your pleader to conduct your case. (Laughter.) If you say to your pleader: "sir, how can I pay you Rs. 50 as your fee when the amount involved in the suit is Rs. 50 please accept Rs. 25," "well," says the pleader "if you cannot pay me Rs. 50, better go to another pleader who will accept your offer of Rs. 25." (Laughter.) My experience, gentlemen, is that you should never go to court for obtaining remission of your income tax. In this resolution you ask that the assessment should be fixed every three years. I am of opinion that if the figure 3 could be replaced by 12 that would meet the situation very well. There must be some opportunity for merchants to settle down after the tax is once imposed. What happens is this if we protest against the increase of the tax once assessed, we are asked to produce our books to prove our transactions during the year under reference. Well, our books are not posted up-to-date for a variety of reasons. Some of our transactions are of such a nature that we are compelled to keep our books open in respect of them. That being so, we cannot sometimes produce our books completely posted up-to-date, and then a charge is made against them that there is some "Gadbad" (confusion in our accounts)! (Laughter.) We are told "your accounts are not regularly kept and so on." For this reason I wish instead of three years twelve years should have been proposed as the period for the continuation of each assessment. However, as it is, I have great pleasure to second the resolution. (Cheers.)

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

(At this stage the Conference adjourned for lunch for one hour—from 2-30 to 3-30.)

(After lunch-Saturday, 30-3-07).

Mr. Thacker of Raipur moved the 8th resolution with a speech in English as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I have been entrusted with the task of moving before you resolution No. 8. This resolution runs as follows :—

That this Conference is of opinion that a Judicial Assistant to the Commissioner, Chhattigarh Division, should be appointed to dispose of purely judicial work in connection with Feudatory States in presence of parties and their legal adviser, the Commissioner disposing of political work only.

This is a resolution, gentlemen, which requires no comments. I am not going to detain you about this resolution much longer.

Cries in the hall: Speak in the vernacular, please.

Mr. Thacker: I am not going to be dictated to by you. This is a resolution—

Chairman: (To the audience) You will also have Marathi and Hindi speeches on this resolution.

Mr. Thacker: (continued). Gentlemen, you are probably aware that in Chhattisgarh Division there are a number of Feudatory States. They are of two characters, viz., those which have independent jurisdiction and where the Chiefs independently manage their own estates and have independent courts of their own. They carry on their own administrations. The only restriction which is placed upon their jurisdiction is that in all cases where the imprisonment is of more than 7 years the sentence has to go for confirmation before the Hon. Chief Commissioner. We have another class of Feudatory States where the Chiefs are minors and their administrations are carried on through the Political Agency. In these States the courts are presided over by Assistant-Superintendents against whose judgments appeals are preferred to the Superintendents. Appeals against the decisions of the Superintendents are lodged before the Commissioner. The grievance which is represented in this resolution is of a three-fold character. Our first grievance is that in all cases where the judicial work is disposed of by the Political Agents or the Commissioners that work ought to be entrusted to the Judicial Assistants. What now happens is this. When appeals are filed in the courts of Commissioners or Political Agents they are, on account of pressure of work, sometimes taken by the courts in camps and disposed of there even in the absence of the parties concerned! We say that is contrary to principle. We say that all judicial work should be dealt with in a judicial manner it ought to be disposed of in the presence of the parties interested in it and also in the presence of their legal advisers. (Hear, hear). We say also that that work ought to be disposed of by a person who has received legal training. This is the three-fold grievance that is represented in this resolution. It is not to be supposed—I mention it in order to clear all misunderstandings—that this resolution aims at diminishing the jurisdiction of the Feudatory Chiefs or at increasing the jurisdiction of the Political Agents. All we say is this, that all work of a judicial character—I do not refer, at present, to the work that is done of a political character—ought to be disposed of in a judicial manner. It ought to be disposed of by a person who has received proper legal training; it ought to be disposed of in the presence of the parties concerned and in the presence of their legal advisers. Their legal advisers ought to be heard. (Hear, hear). There is other sort of work which is being done by the Political Agents. That is the work in reference to Native States where the Chiefs manage their own affairs. These Chiefs have generally final jurisdiction except in cases where the sentence to be inflicted is of more than 7 years. I have already mentioned that that sentence has to go for confirmation before the Commissioner. With reference to these independent Chiefs petitions against their decisions in all civil matters may be allowed to be preferred to the Political Agents. Hear, again, I may mention, this resolution does not wish to curtail the jurisdiction of the independent Chiefs. We say that those petitions should be heard by the Political Agents in the presence of the parties and their legal advisers. (Hear, hear). They are, at present, sometimes heard in the presence of the parties and their legal advisers and sometimes they are not. We contend that as this work is purely of a judicial character the legal advisers of the parties should be heard before the final decision is given. (Cheers). I distinguish this work from the other work which is of a political character, such, for instance, as a complaint against a Feudatory Chief on account of certain of his acts and the like. We don't propose to touch that kind of work in this resolution. I think I have made the meaning of this resolution quite clear to you, viz., that the judicial work should be done in a judicial manner, that is, in the presence of the

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parties and their legal advisers after hearing those legal advisers, and by a person who has received a proper legal training. (Cheers).

Mr. Lakhe of Raipur seconded the above resolution with the following speech in Hindi:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, In seconding this resolution I have very few words to say. One of the reasons why we pray that the judicial work be entrusted to the judicial Assistants is that the Commissioners, who now hear appeals in judicial matters, being overworked cannot attend to those cases without causing the parties much delay and trouble involved in their having to move after them from the headquarters to the camps. Owing to pressure of work the Commissioner is unable to dispose of these cases even within a year after they are brought on his file! He will therefore, certainly be greatly relieved if these cases be left to the Judicial Assistants for final disposal. Another reason why the Judicial Assistants be called upon to take up these cases is that they may have an opportunity of hearing the pleaders or legal advisers of parties whose large interests are dependent on the termination of the cases. At present occasionally the Commissioner has to decide these cases without hearing counsel because the latter refuse to follow him on his tours. The result is that the parties have to appear before him unrepresented by legal advisers to protect their interests. It is for these reasons we are forced to move this resolution. We hope that it will have due weight with the authorities so that no injustice or hardship may ensue to suitors in any sense. (Cheers).

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. V. M. Mahajani moved the 9th resolution with a speech in Marathi as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, this is my second speech. (Laughter.)—you are going to hear to-day. The resolution which I am asked to move runs as follows:—

That with a view to stimulate Industrial enterprise in India and to encourage the production and consumption of indigenous articles this Conference earnestly calls upon all the residents of this Province to supply their needs as far as possible with Indian things and to give preference to Indian things over foreign ones even though the former may cost more in price.

(Translates the resolution in Marathi). Gentlemen, to really appreciate the value of this resolution let us analyse the question of the use of indigenous articles. You must probe the question to the bottom. Mere superficial observation will not suffice. We are taught to believe that our country is our mother. (Hear, hear). "Bhumi" (Our native land) is our mother. That is what we are taught to believe from our infancy. Let us see whether we sincerely observe that principle. The country being our mother we, who live in it, though we may belong to different sections, are brothers. (Hear, hear). We ought to love each other as our real brothers. Suppose some of our brothers are bright in intellect and others are dull-headed. What is the duty of the former towards the latter? Why to teach them as much as the intelligent ones can and to bring them to their level of understanding. (Hear, hear). In the same way if you find any of your countrymen backward it is your duty to bring them forward to the rank of the civilized nations and not to discard them and let them stagnate in ignorance and barbarism. (Hear, hear). You must create in them that "Shakti" (power or inertia) which will edge them on to the front ranks of advanced people. (Hear, hear). You must try to rise from the slough of a cultivator and enter the haven of a manufacturer. (Hear, hear). Don't stop there but become scientists and all that sort of things. In a word, you must emancipate yourself from the state of servitude and become masters. (Hear, hear). How can you achieve this grand object except by helping your own cultivators and manufacturers! Use India-made articles so as to give fillip to the native manufacture which in its turn will give sufficient stamina to the emaciated cultivator of the day. (Hear, hear). Possibly you may have to bear a heavier burden in order to take up the

role of what is now called 'a swadeshi'—(Hear, hear).—But you must do that for future benefit. (Hear, hear). You must, as an elder brother, make some sacrifice in the interest of your younger brother—I mean the less advanced or an absolutely illiterate Indian. Remember, exactly the same principle was followed by the civilized portions of other nations with the happy, aye, enviable results we now see before us. But there is one thing with respect to those nations, *viz.* their rulers and their administration are favourable to the best interests of the people. Such is not the case here. Our Government cannot be said to be entirely favourable to us. We are treated as so many children of a step-mother. Therefore, we must do what we can to help ourselves. (Cheers). The responsibility of raising the industrial tone of the country rests with us and we must discharge that duty. Unless we put our shoulder to the wheel of industrial regeneration of dear India she cannot be prosperous. Let us be true to our mother country and let us be considerate towards our brother country-men. (Cheers). If you wish that they should enjoy a better position in life and help to raise the country in the scale of other advanced nations we must at once set ourselves to the task of setting them on their legs as best we can. (Cheers). Let us love our countrymen as we love our own children or our own brothers. "Their good is our good" should be the motto emblazoned on our banner. (Hear, hear), Be sincere in your devotion to the best interests of your mother-land and then you will have uttered the now much-loved expression "Bande Mataram" as true sons of this country. (Hear, hear). It is no use giving utterance to that expression only superficially. That would be ridiculous on your part and will evoke uncomplimentary remarks from our cavillers. Be sincere in your desires and be serious in your attempts to get those desires honestly fulfilled. (Cheers).

Mr. Krishnarao Deshmukh of Wardha in seconding the above resolution addressed the Conference in Marathi as follows—

Gentlemen, if there is one thing more than another which I love next to my life is my country and the articles produced therein. (Hear, hear). My idea is that mere passing a resolution of this character does not signify that we are sincere in our professions that we are bigotted lovers of country-made articles. The essence of our professions lies in our action and in our conduct let us show by concrete examples that we are what we profess to be true "Swadeshis". (Hear, hear). All our ancient industries are dead; they have disappeared and we are obliged to resort to other countries for the purpose of obtaining articles which we may say are to some extent the necessaries of life. We are made dependent on other countries for getting our needs satisfied. The only thing we can say is our own even at this day is husbandry but that is also in a pitiful condition. It has fast degenerated for a variety of reasons. In the days of yore Hindusthan was not only an agricultural country but a commercial country also, and what is she now? She is a mere wreck of the one and a shadow of the other. Kashmere produced the best of shawls; Dacca manufactured excellent "malmal" and Benares gave us rish "kinkhab." (Hear, hear). Where is that industry now gone to? Why, it has been consigned to the limbo of oblivion! Belgium and Germany have supplanted Kashmere and Benares! They carry away annually crores of rupees from us for the produce with which they inundate this poor country. Formerly our Rajahs were proud to possess huge quantities of country-made wares of sorts in their museums. Now their museums are the exhibitions of foreign-made articles. "O tempora, O mores." Look at that picture and look at this. The times are changed and our tastes are also changed; aye, a change has also come over our sense of feeling, in that whereas there was a time when we were all ambitious to preserve in our midst every thing Indian now we feel disgust for Indian wares—they look to us crude, uncouth and inartistic productions and the foreign-made articles appear to us bright, lovely and enchanting! Fancy, even the idols of Gods that we worship in our pantheons at home are manufactured in foreign countries and imported here for our purchase. Would you require a stronger proof of

our degeneracy than that? The old Chambhar of the village is no longer a living institution. He does not exist because his profession is gone. Time was when he monopolised the shoe trade. Now he is replaced by the Northampton manufacturers of boots and shoes! In the same way the iron trade of the olden days has totally displaced by the ironmongers of Birmingham! To restore the past glory to our mother country we must try to revive all our old industries and that we cannot do better than by resolving to use home-made article, however crude it may appear to our sight and however costly it may prove to our pocket. (Hear, hear). If we are really serious in our efforts to extricate ourselves from the fallen position which is now our common lot we shall not be wanting in resources to gain our object. Remember the story of the lion who was entangled into the meshes of a net. He made friends with a passing rat and induced that rodent to eat away the meshes. Well, the meshes were destroyed and the king of the forest was a free denizen of the wood. Could we not make friends with-with whom, gentlemen?—our own conscience to come to a definite resolution that we shall try to destroy every obstacle that is in our way and proceed unimpeded straight in our path of progress and emancipation? Let us make a firm resolve to regain the ground that we have lost—let us revive our old industries and let us be true Indians again. (Cheers). Let the cry of "Bande Mataram" emanate from the innermost depths of our heart and then that cry will not be the cry in the wilderness. Let us Reiterate that phrase as often as we like in order to "enthuse" our people with the necessary inertia to work fast in the path of regeneration of our mother country. (Cheers).

Mr. Gulam Mahomed Khan of Amraoti supported the above resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and brother-delegates, I am afraid my speech will appear to you dull in view of the eloquent speakers whom you have just heard. I am quite sure if Mr. Khaparde was here he would have made a thrilling speech on this all-important subject. (Hear, hear). Let us decorate our houses with India-made articles and thus give what help we can to our manufacturers. (Hear, hear). Are we not children of India? If we are, how can we see, without shedding tears, the deplorable plight to which her trade and industries are reduced. Why should I say 'reduced'? I should say they are absolutely ruined in face of foreign competition. In times gone by our country had made a headway in commerce in foreign countries. But now it is a thing of the past. Our trade is gone and our industries are also gone. But we need not despair. The Golden opportunity has arrived for us to regain our ancient trade and our pristine glory. (Hear, hear). Let us take advantage of that opportunity and recover all that we have lost belonging to our forefathers by putting our hands a little deeper into our pockets. I mean the industrial upheaval which is taking place in the country should be made capital of at this juncture and should be egged on even if it cost us something. Let us buy only country-made articles even at a trifling more cost. Let us touch the thin of the industrial wedge and we shall save the country from further industrial degeneration. (Cheers).

Shett Ram Narayon of Nagpur in further supporting the above resolution observed as follows in a speech in Hindi :—

Gentlemen, this is a resolution of a peculiar character. It is one which it lies in your power to carry out and if you don't carry it out you will prove false to yourselves and to your mother country. If you pass the resolution and act upon it you will do incalculable good to your impoverished country. (Cheers). Our purchases of foreign-made goods at a cheap cost reminds me of the proverb which says that one in the hand is equal to seven in the bush. I will soon explain my meaning. It is said if you buy foreign-made articles you have to pay more. I admit it for the sake of argument. But just see, if you analyse the question do you not think that cheap as the cost of those articles is that cost goes into a foreigner's pocket while the dear prices which we may have to pay for indigenous

articles must remain in the country. You pay one rupee to-day to your manufacturer and tomorrow he will be in a position to add two rupees to the general wealth of the country because you will be encouraging him to further extend his manufacturing operations. (Hear, hear). The richer your manufacturers are the better for the country. Hence, it is incumbent on us to pay a little more now, to the manufacturers of this country so that time will come when they can supply us all their wares at even a cheaper cost than is at present charged for foreign goods. (Hear, hear). Remember the story of Ghatakoj in connection with the bazaar of the insidious sale of old articles in exchange of new. You know how the new articles soon developed themselves into so many monsters. In the same way the cheap foreign articles may be looked upon and abhorred as so many indications of the foreign monster who is bent on devouring us by slow degrees and no mistake. Become bigotted "swadeshis" and devoted lover of your country. That is the only panacea for the evil from which India is at present suffering. Take a solemn pledge that you will be from now true "swadeshis" and pass this resolution with acclamation. (Cheers).

Mr. Deorao Vinayek still further supported the above resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows :—

Gentlemen, Shett Ram Narayan has explained to you the pith of this resolution in the most feeling manner he could. I am sure you will pass this resolution with acclamation and with a solemn pledge that from this day you will behave as true and devoted "Swadeshis". (Hear, hear). For over 100 or 150 years we have been sleeping over our degenerated condition. Events have now happened to wake us up from our—call it supine languor or definite indifference and we must bestir ourselves to regain the wealth, the splendour and the glory of our mother country. We say—"Bande Mataram" sometimes vehemently and sometimes vigorously but that will have no go if you are not seriously bent on becoming devout "Swadeshis." (Hear, hear). Let us repeat that formula with deep reverence to our country. You must try to stand on your own legs in matters educational and the rest of it. Have your own schools, your own colleges and your own factories. (Hear, hear). At present all these institutions are in the hands of foreigners. Start them on your own hook and gradually try to serve the country and prove yourselves to be her true sons. (Cheers). Aye, let us go further and try to live as affectionate brothers—let Hindus, Mahomedans, and other communities live as real brothers. (Hear, hear). Do that and you will serve your country faithfully. (Cheers).

Mr. Keshawlal Kaole in further supporting the above resolution said as follows in Hindi :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, we have all listened with rapt attention to the interesting speeches of the gentlemen who addressed you before me on this resolution. But they will have addressed you in vain if you acted in a manner which is immortalised in that Marathi proverb which says that the Goldsmith blows air through a pipe at one end and it passed out at the other. What I mean is that you should not be more idle listener but sincere workers in the cause of "Swadeshism" whose motto you are so familiar with in that inspiring phrase "Bande Matram". Be determined to raise the tone of the country industrially, commercially and, as we have met here to do, politically and materially. (Cheers). The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Pundit Kashiram Tewari, of Hoshangabad moved the 10th resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows :—

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I feel great pleasure to move the 10th resolution as follows :—

That in the opinion of this Conference the present rules and practice about *Rasa* and *Begar* lead to abuse and that it is desirable to abrogate the rules altogether, all Government officials being placed on the same footing as non-official travellers.

(Translates it in Hindi). Gentlemen, we are at the mercy of the Commission, Deputy-Commissioner, Subordinate Divisional Officers, Talukdars, Naib-Talukdars, Polji

Inspectors, Police Superintendents and Divisional Officers. We are always at their mercy in this respect. When they go out on tour we are called upon to make necessary arrangements for their accommodation by providing them and their servants and their horses too—(Laughter),—with necessary commissariat. More than these officers, gentlemen, their servants lord it over us as if they themselves are the lords of all they survey. (Laughter). Suppose, an officer is to pass by our towns, or villages we are informed of it and are asked to be in a state of preparedness to receive all and sundry orders that they may issue for providing them with this, that and the other thing. Well, the gentleman afterwards does pass by our village and we try to meet all his demands—reasonable or unreasonable and yet there happens to be an item in his “ukase” in regard to which we are not in a position to satisfy him. Why then can you imagine how the wrath of that officer is inflamed by his dutiful underlings the chaprasis by false representations? Because it is the Chaprasis who bring us all the orders from their masters. We cannot see the masters direct—nor can they see us direct. So these worthy middlemen make capital out of their position as middlemen. They sometimes even issue their own supplementary orders and if you chance to disappoint or displease one of them then, lo! up goes the faithful “chokra” of the officer to him and tells him we don’t know what, and the ire of the great “boss” is inflamed to the highest pitch and we are pitched on to suffer the heaviest penalty. Mind you, we stand the chance of being maltreated both for our unavoidable failure to satisfy the big officer as also for our incapacity to gratify the unctuous desires of his useful servitor. (Shame). It is unnecessary to tire your patience by narrating the various ways in which we are roughly handled by the servants and the syces of the officers passing by our “gaums.” They sometimes ask us to supply them with carts. If we fail to do that for reasons over which we have no control and we are hauled up before the *Sahibs* our explanation is disregarded, aye, absolutely disbelieved and on the strength of the representation, or rather misrepresentation, of their own pet “boys” we are made to pay the penalty. Instances there are in which the chaprasis of these officers have demanded articles in quantities much in excess of what we ourselves use. You have to give these officers and staff, salt, milk, wheat, flour, Bigaris, carts, carriages and what not. Once their orders are issued there is no, go, for you but to do your level best to carry them out to the very letter. That is not my experience alone. Other Malguzars are in the same boat. We all fare the same way. To avoid all this source of complaint we should ask Government to send the orders for supplies through the Talukdars in time so that every thing could be kept in readiness against the arrival of the officers at given places. As it very often happens now we receive orders at the eleventh hour; sometimes they are very inconvenient to carry out on account of their inherent nature and the result is that when the officers don’t get what they have ordered the moment they require, they lose their patience and foam and fret. This is most pitiful both for their sake and ours. If the orders are communicated to us through the responsible Talukdars they know when and how to make that communication so that there would be no cause for delay on our part and no cause for indignation on the officers’ part. We must also protest against these officers making very extravagant demands on our pockets. Because they sometimes require things which cost us a great deal too much and which we find it difficult to recover entirely from the officers. Add to this the revenue of 50 per cent. from our income that Government collects from us. All this completely denudes us of all our money and leaves barely enough for our children. (Shame).

Mr. Gaiind Singh of Drug seconded the resolution with a speech in Hindi as follows:—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, this resolution deals with a subject with which, I may take it, we are more or less familiar. Especially the Malguzars and their like are thoroughly acquainted with the pranks of the army of servants of Government officers who pass through or by our towns *en route*. My predecessor in speech has given you a vivid picture as to how we, the Malguzars of these Provinces, are treated by the travelling officials.

But the trouble and the annoyance and the like that we are made to suffer and to which reference was so graphically made by the mover of this resolution will be avoided if we but anoint the itching palms of the servants of the officers. It is really the case of the money making the mare go. Suppose, you receive an order to supply this, that or the other thing and you tip the man who brings you the message, off goes he in glee to another Malguzar and makes a demand upon him and you are let go scot-free, but if you fail both to carry out the order and to anoint the itching palm of the emissary, owe betide you! You are made a target of all sorts of trouble and eventual punishment in one shape or another. What not infrequently happens is that when you prefer a bill for the supplies made to the touring officers, the Talukdars make you sign the receipts in full and ask you to take the money from the paying officers. Well, the paying officers do not sometimes make the full payment and what is the result? Why, the result is obvious, viz. that the poor Malguzar is out of pocket of that short payment. He has already signed the receipt in full and is helpless. He has only to grin and bear and no more. (Cheers).

Mr. Chindu Patel of Mendha, Bhandara supported the resolution with a speech in Hindi repeating the arguments of the previous speakers and making a vigorous appeal to Government to be pleased to take note of the resolution of the Conference.

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

Dr. Gour in proposing the vote of thanks to the chairman said as follows:—Mr. President, Brother-Delegates and gentlemen, I think we have now come to the close of our deliberations and we have a pleasant duty to perform. It gives me great pleasure to rise to perform that duty. You will observe that we have passed through a number of weighty and thoughtful resolutions since this morning. That would have been impossible had it not been for the tact, deliberation and discretion of the President. (Hear, hear). Our Conference is presided over by Rao Bahadur Mudholkar who is well-known for the earnest interest he takes in the cause of his country. (Hear, hear). You will now be in a position to congratulate yourselves on the happy selection made by you in requesting him to preside at this Conference. You have observed the masterly style in which he has reviewed the political situation as affecting the joint provinces—(Hear, hear).—of Central Provinces and Berar. (Cheers). I am sure we all owe him a deep debt of gratitude and all that we can do is to render him our unstinted thanks (Cheers). This Conference which is the third of its kind in the Central Provinces and Berar has now become an established institution. (Hear, hear). Its deliberations are presided over by a man of master-ful energies in the political cause of these Provinces and this country. (Hear, hear). Rao Bahadur Mudholkar has been indentifying himself with the political life of these Provinces for the last 10 or 12 or 15 years that I have been observing and closely studying politics. He has been the champion and the spokesman of the rights and privileges of the people of these Provinces—(Hear, hear),—and long before this Conference took its birth he was the recognised leader of public opinion on our political platforms. (Cheers). To him, therefore, I think, it is meet that we should offer our sincere vote of thanks and our grateful assurances of gratitude. In doing so, I think, we do honour to ourselves more than we do honour to him, we ask him to accept the acknowledgment of the debt of gratitude that we owe him. (Cheers). In the midst of his multifarious professional duties he has consented to preside over the deliberations of this Conference and he has not done his duty here in a mean or stinted spirit—(Cheers),—from the very beginning. He has given us the benefit of his vast experience and great erudition in the matter of politics. To him, therefore we must say “we are deeply indebted to you” and to him we must say “we thank you most heartily.” I call for three cheers for Rao Bahadur Mudholkar. (Cheers).

The Cheers were lustily given.

Mr. D. N. Chaudhuri in seconding the resolution said as follows :—

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My friends and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in seconding this pleasant resolution which comes at the pleasant end of this pleasant gathering. (Hear, hear and Laughter). Gentlemen, I don't wish to take much of your time in dilating on the excellent work done by our worthy President. He has carried out his duties with an amount of tact, skill and ability which would have done credit even to the President of the Congress. (Hear, hear). Gentlemen, we have had some difficulties with regard to the choice of the President for some time. When we were disappointed in certain quarters and when we approached Rao Bahadur Mudholkar requesting him to occupy the chair of this Conference he accepted our proposal inspite of his other engagements and inspite of his ill-health. (Hear, hear). He has had, we know, to bear personal trouble and other inconveniences in order to accept the Presidentship of this Conference. (Cheers). Gentlemen, I do not indulge in the language of superfluity at all when I say that probably from one end of the Central Provinces to the other you will hardly find a veteran who has paid so much close attention to politics as Rao Bahadur Mudholkar has. (Cheers). He is rightly considered fit to occupy the position of the President of the Congress (Hear, hear). And I feel great pride that we have made the selection of such a worthy individual to occupy the chair of our Conference. One word more.

Inspite of the trouble and the inconvenience that distant travelling entailed, you have come to attend the conference in such large numbers but our resources and our arrangements to accommodate you with comfort have been very scanty. (No, no). It is goodness on your part to say "No, no." I hope you will excuse us for the drawbacks that you might have seen in the arrangements we have made for your reception in the Camps. We plead guilty to the charge of being deficient in our resources to give you all a suitable welcome. I hope you will excuse us for that. (Cheers). With these words I beg to second the resolution. (Cheers).

REPLY OF THE PRESIDENT.

The President rose amid deafening cheers and said as follows :—

Dr. Gour, Mr. Chaudhuri and Brother-Delegates, I find it rather difficult to give expression to what I feel for the very kind words and for the high encomiums which you have passed upon me. Dr. Gour, and Mr. Chaudhuri have given expression to their appreciation of my humble work elsewhere. An appreciation coming from my own countrymen is in one sense a source of great satisfaction. They say that the man who does not care for the applause of his own countrymen will never do any good. (Hear, hear). I confess, gentlemen, that after all that you have said about me I feel deeply grateful and deeply sensible of your kindness. I must make the acknowledgement more clearly and more frankly because I know that I had a difficult task assigned to me and that I may have, in the discharge of my duties, given affront to some of my friends. (Cries of "No, no").—Whom I have known for years and whose kindness and whose affection it has always been my endeavour to secure. Gentlemen, it was due to the duty imposed upon me. You asked me to occupy a certain place and I had to enforce certain rules to carry on the duties appertaining to that place. If in the carrying out of those duties I may have been obliged to enforce those rules by asking some gentlemen to sit down I unreservedly ask to be excused for doing so, but I, at the same time, assure you that what I did I was actuated in doing not by any mean motives. I was obliged to take up that attitude to carry out the duties which you had accorded to me. Gentlemen, my friends in this hall have been pleased to refer to my work. That is the work of the generation which might be considered to be rather passing away. If we have been working, remember, we have been working not for ourselves.—(Hear, hear).—But for ourselves and for those who will come after us. (Loud applause). I ask my young friends of the new generation to bear

in mind that if they find that there is anything in which the old generation does not come up to their ideal, the old generation has been doing its duty from honest convictions. (Hear, hear). In whatever they do they have in view the benefit of the old and the young alike. (Hear, hear). My young friends, it is on you that the future of the country depends. (Cheers). You have to carry out the torch to which we of the old generation have only applied the lucifer match. (Hear, hear and laughter). You have to bear that torch higher and higher and it is for you to carry out the illuminations into your country. You have to stir up into activity those who are lying in a lethargic sleep and who are living in darkness. My dear countrymen, remember what I said yesterday, that our own well-being depends upon ourselves only. (Hear, hear). We have, certainly, the right to expect a sympathetic treatment from a Government which is civilized, from a Government which is based on morals and from a Government which proceeds to work on the principles of Christ. (Cheers). We have a right to ask them to be moral and we have a right to ask them to carry on the administration of this country according to the high principles of religion. (Hear, hear). But remember you can only have that which you deserve. (Hear, hear). If I want to receive anything I must make myself worthy of it. If I want rights I must be prepared to maintain them and I must be prepared to make sacrifices—(Hear, hear), for maintaining them. Gentlemen, you have just heard of the great hardships which our Malguzars, or Patels, our Patwaris and our ryots are made to suffer in regard to "begar" and "rasad". I shall tell you of a case where a gentleman of high education with two degrees following his name was obliged to ask pardon of an officer who had prosecuted him for not giving him his bullocks. (Cries of 'shame'). This is because, gentlemen, we have not developed sufficiently our strength of character and this is because we have not developed sufficiently all these good characteristics of self-reliance, and self-respect. (Hear, hear). That is the reason why we are not treated well by other persons. I ask my young friends to remember that self-respect for one's self also means respect for others. (Cheers). I would also ask you to remember that we are like brothers, we are fellow-countrymen. (Hear, hear). If anything I do you find does not come up to your standard please don't get angry. (Cheers). I am an old man; take me along with you; don't leave me behind. (Hear, hear and laughter). Our Province has taken upon itself a great responsibility in inviting the Congress here this year, and I am sure, in spite of apparent difficulties—I say advisedly "apparent difficulties—the work of the Congress will be carried on with harmony and with success. (Hear, hear). Gentlemen, I wished to say something more but I wish to cut short my remarks with a few words more. (Cries of "Go on"). Gentlemen, remember we are brought face to face with civilization of the West. Mark the characteristics of the West. They have the capability to endure physical sufferings and they have the capacity to unite for common purposes, for moral strength among themselves and to unite to be true to each other. They try to educate themselves physically, intellectually and morally. These are the qualifications which have enabled them to acquire the dominions that they have done,

We are a nation physically degenerated. To improve our condition we have to create mutual unity and mutual trust. (Hear, hear). We are at present pressed down by mutual jealousy and mutual distrust. Gentlemen, that was the golden opportunity for us to unite when owing to the rivalry and jealousy of the Mahomedans and Hindus the British Government obtained a hold on this country. The reason was our incompetency and our distrust. (Hear, hear). It was our mistaken pride and it was our incapacity to perform. Gentlemen, I refer to the past not for the purposes of casting any reflections on our ancestors but for the purpose of asking you to remember that the mistakes made in the past ought to be our guide for the future. (Hear, hear). The mistakes of the past afford us a very important lesson for the future. They are our beacon lights. Be careful not to repeat those mistakes. Let there be no jealousy among the different classes of people inhabiting this country. Let

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Christians. We are all Indians before everything else. India is our mother land. Let us all love her as our real mother. (Hear, hear). That is the principle on which we have to work to achieve our object. Gentlemen, one of the most important and one of the most pleasant duties I have to perform on your behalf is to convey our thanks to the Reception Committee who have been actively engaged in taking care of us all and showing us the greatest possible kindness (Hear, hear). We are under their deep obligation for that reason. (Cheers). Dr. Gour, Mr. Chaudhuri, Mr. Narayan Rao, Mr. Lakhe, Mr. Byramjée and other gentlemen deserve our sincere thanks for discharging to every one a satisfaction the heavy duties they had taken upon themselves to make this Conference a complete success. (Hear, hear). I tender on your behalf and on behalf of myself the hearty acknowledgments of our gratitude to the members of the Reception Committee. (Cheers). Gentlemen, there is another body of workers to whom also we owe our thanks. I am referring to our young friends, the Volunteers. (Hear, hear). Their duty is certainly praiseworthy. Since we have all come from long distances we have been watching the way in which they are doing their work for our convenience and comfort most assiduously. (Hear, hear). To them we must acknowledge our grateful thanks. (Cheers). We have to express our acknowledgments to the Volunteers for what they have done for us (Cheers). Gentlemen, I have to thank you for the great trouble you have taken in coming here and for the great burden you have accepted. I am quite sure that the spirit which has been moving the Central Provinces and Berar during the last three years will continue to manifest itself with greater vigour than before. I sincerely hope that the people of these two Provinces will work in future with the same zeal and with the same enthusiasm as before so that our Provinces will rise to a higher status so that we shall be able to raise it to a much higher status than before. Gentlemen, with these words I beg your permission to declare that this Conference is dissolved. (Hear, hear).

The President took his seat amidst the roaring cries of "Bande Matram". Dr. Gour called for three cheers for the King-Emperor which were lustily given and the Conference broke up.

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Proposed by—Mr. Raoji Govind of Hoshangabad.

Seconded by—Mr. R. V. Mahajani of Akola.

Supported by—Sheth Narsingdass of Chhindwara.

IV. That this conference respectfully felicitates the Government upon the reduction of college and school fees made recently in the Central Provinces and upon their resolve to abolish fees in Primary Schools, and begs to express its concurrence with the principle that it is the duty of the State to provide free elementary education for all its subjects ;

The Conference further submits that in view of the supreme importance of education both to the people and to the Government it is very desirable that a large portion of the public revenue should be spent on education, that primary education be made compulsory in at least the advanced tracts of Central Provinces and Berar, that the number of educational institutions of other descriptions, Secondary, Higher and Technical, should be materially increased and that the system of education should be revised so as to better develop the faculties, and capacities of the pupils and to give them more practical knowledge than is done under the present system.

Proposed by—Mr. V. M. Mahajani of Akola.

Seconded by—Mr. V. R. Pandit of Nagpur.

Supported by—Mr. Yadorao Bhagdekar of Bilaspur.

” ” —Mr. Yeshwantrao Rajimwalla of Raipur.

V. That this Conference begs to thank the Hon'ble The Chief Commissioner for partially acceding to the request contained in Resolution VIII of the 2nd Provincial Conference regarding the trial of Judicial cases by Magistrates in Camp. This Conference however submits that the grievance complained of cannot be redressed until one or two stationary Magistrates are appointed at Head Quarters to dispose of all important Criminal work now done by officers and further prays that it should be laid down as a principle that no Judicial work should be done in camp.

Proposed by—Mr. Wamanrao Joshi of Nagpur.

Seconded by—Mr. Hanmantrao Kale.

VI. That this Conference begs to express its firm conviction that for further improving the administration of justice and increasing the confidence of the people in the Judicial tribunals of the Province and to afford some relief from the unnecessary trouble and heavy expenditure which the present system entails, it is just, necessary and expedient that there should be complete separation of Judicial from Executive functions and that this much needed reform being capable of introduction without any appreciable increase in public expenditure in the Central Provinces and Berar, this Conference prays that Government will be pleased to take early steps to direct such separation and to relieve Magistrates of all executive functions.

This Conference begs to invite the attention of the Government to the undesirability of appointing untrained or insufficiently trained officers to fill high Judicial posts, and submits that all Judges and Magistrates should be selected from persons who have received legal training.

Proposed by—Mr. Jakatdar of Bhandara.

Seconded by—Mr. M. G. Marathe of Akola.

VII. That the conference considers that to mitigate some of the hardships caused by the working of the Income Tax Act, it is desirable that in making the assessment the assessing officer should act in conjunction with a local committee for each village and town consisting of half elected and half nominated members and that the assessment should be fixed for a period of at least 3 years.

Proposed by—Mr. Shamrao Jakate of Nagpur.

Seconded by—Mr. Shet Ram Narayan of Nagpur.

VIII. That this Conference is of opinion that a Judicial Assistant to the Commissioner, Chhattisgarh Division should be appointed to dispose of purely Judicial work in connection with Feudatory States in presence of parties and their legal advisers, the Commissioner disposing of political work only.

Proposed by—Mr. Thacker of Raipur.

Seconded by—Mr. Lakhe of Rajpur.

IX. That with a view to stimulate Industrial enterprise in India and to encourage the production and consumption of indigenous articles this Conference earnestly calls upon all the residents of this Province to supply their needs as far as possible with Indian things and to give preference to Indian things over foreign ones even though the former may cost more in price.

Proposed by—Mr. V. M. Mahajani of Akola.

Seconded by—Mr. Krishnarao Deshmukh of Wardha,

Supported by—Golam Ahmed Khan of Pimpalgaonraja (Berar),

„ Shet Ram Narayan of Nagpur.

„ Rao Saheb Deorao Vinayek of Akola.

„ Mr. Keshavrao Kavle of Wardha.

X. That in the opinion of this Conference the present rules and practice about *Rasad* and *Begar* lead to abuse and that it is desirable to abrogate the rules altogether, all Government officials being placed on the same footing as non-official travellers.

Proposed by—Pandit Kashiram Tewri of Hoshangabad.

Seconded by—Mr. Govind Sing Dube of Drug.

Supported by—Mr. Chindhu Patel of Mendha,—Bhandara.

„ „ Mr. Shankarrao of Saugar.

XI. That this Conference is of opinion that in view of the prosperous condition of the Postal Department the Dak Cess should be abolished.

Proposed by—Mr. Keshorao Deshmukh of Raipur.

Seconded by—Mr. Dwarka Prasad.

XII. That in view of the fact that examinations for district and High Court Pleaders are held in other Provinces in India, this Conference prays that the examination held locally in the Central Provinces for admission to Pleadership be revised and that the rule prescribing the holding of such examination in Berar be continued.

Proposed by—Mr. Raghunath Baldeo of Nagpur.

Seconded by—Mr. Wazalwar of Bhandara.

XIII. That this Conference of representatives from Central Provinces and Berar begs to offer its most hearty and respectful felicitations to His Highness Sir Sayaji Rao Maharaj Gaekwar of Baroda on the Silver Jubilee held in commemoration of the first 25 years of his beneficent reign and authorize the President to submit a copy of this Resolution to His Highness.

Put from the Chair.

XIV. That the President be authorised to submit under his signature copies of the Resolutions passed by this Conference to the Hon'ble the Chief Commissioner, the Government of India and the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for India.

Put from the Chair.

R. N. MUDHOLKAR,

President,

The Third Central Provinces & Berar

Provincial Conference.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

DELIVERED AT THE

THIRD PROVINCIAL SOCIAL CONFERENCE

OF THE

CENTRAL PROVINCES & BERARS.

HELD AT RAIPUR

On the 31st March 1907.

BROTHER DELEGATES & GENTLEMEN,

I am heartily thankful to you for the honor you have done me by resolving that I should preside over the deliberations of the third Central Provinces and Berar Social Conference. The duties of the office of the President are no doubt onerous and difficult, and I should have preferred, had your choice fallen upon some gentleman who had taken more active part and interest in the matter of social reform and who had studied the rules of our Hindu society and known better about the wishes, wants, and requirements of the different communities of these Provinces. Personally, I have been a sincere and ardent sympathiser of the reform movement as such, and have been watching with no small delight any efforts which have given a real impetus to the cause of reform. I may take the liberty and ask your indulgence that much that I am going to say is not new and probably the matter that I am going to lay before you has exercised your minds in some shape or other.

Gentlemen, Progress in the matter of reform has been so slow and imperceptible in our Provinces that year after year our leaders of reform have been under the dire necessity of making the same suggestions and resolutions for reconstructing the fabric of our society to an indifferent and apathetic public who have only very recently shown an aptitude and inclination for taking some interest in this most vital concern and it is no doubt a healthy sign of the times that public opinion awakened to new national ideals is prepedated and craving for a healthy change.

Our Provinces being backward compared with the other Provinces of India, the work of reform is much more delicate and complex and requires careful and cautious handling. It is, gentlemen, no easy task to get rid of our old and cherished habits and customs. It is a truism of the doctrine of evolution that all advance must be slow, sympathetic and continuous to be able to persist. This can be attained, not by a violent disorganization, but by means of gradual assimilation of new knowledge and the suggestive operation of the new necessities and by carrying the imagination to the glories and superiority of the past and by inducing the desire to bring them back. In our joint Provinces a number of beneficial forces have been steadily and silently at work and our desire for reform is in no small measure attributable to this forces. Educational institutions were already preparing the ground for a chang and western ideas which were fast permating the younger rising generations had given a rude shock to old world ideas which were rapidly crumbling, having come in contact with new ideas of science and religion. We are as well under a debt of gratitude to a strong and vigilant missionary influence which in and out of season is ever ready to proclaim the evils of our time honored institutions. Similarly our thanks are due to the press, both Anglo-Indian and Indian, which is constantly bringing to light the current abuses and weak spots of our systems.

Gentlemen, you will see that of late there has been a general material awakening in all directions and a great future seems awaiting our "Aryavarta." New and advanced ideas brought about by the course of natural evolution and the contact of the East and West, have taken place of the old. The intellectual progress has roused a feeling all round that the old customs and ordinances which were adapted to the then existing circumstances can not now endure and be blindly and absolutely followed without modification in such a manner as may suit the present conditions of our Society and the requirements of our modern life.

Being under a foreign Ruler, professing a different religion, we cannot look to our benign Government for any material help in this direction but must look to our own "Acharyas" (leaders) for our domestic and social economy. This state of things seems in keeping with the modern idea of dis-association of the State from religious and social spheres which concern the People themselves. All well wishers of our communities should, therefore, take up the cause of introducing such reforms in our societies as would excite least resistance and opposition. All hopes and aspirations of political progress are vain unless our social condition which is defective and full of pernicious abuses is materially altered and brought in conformity with present day requirements. History repeats the lesson that no community can advance politically unless it has attained and shown a similar social religious and industrial progress. There admittedly are many evils and abuses in our society which hinder our progress and it should be the duty of every earnest worker to remove, correct and purify them by sympathetic treatment.

In our Provinces, with a few honorable individual exceptions the question of social reform has not been taken up with sincere earnestness by any of the communities, the time has however come when, following in the wake of other Provinces, we may discuss some of the non-contentious subjects to influence public opinion and as far as possible to bring them into practice without much fear of opposition.

The reforms suggested are :—

- [1] The question of further raising the marriageable age of boys and girls.
- [2] Discouragement of making extortionate demands in matrimonial alliances.
- [3] Curtailment of unnecessary and exorbitant marriage expenses.
- [4] Promoting temperance and social purity.
- [5] Encouraging inter-marriages and inter-dining between the sub castes and thereby attempting to break up the sub caste barriers.
- [6] Advancement of national education in general and of females in particular.
- [7] Removal of social restrictions in the way of readmission into society of Hindoos returning from foreign countries beyond the seas.
- [8] Inspired by the maxim of liberty, equality and universal brotherhood to accord a brotherly and cordial treatment to our Mahomedan brethren.
- [9] To elevate the condition of our low castes and backward communities.
- [10] Discouraging disfigurement of widows and of child widows in particular.
- [11] Revival of Panchayat system.
- [12] Opening of Widows' Homes for helpless widows.
- [13] Remarriage of child widows.
- [14] Discouragement of Parda system.
- [15] Establishment of orphanages.
- [16] Reclamation of such out castes who sincerely repent and wish to return to their old faith.
- [17] Appointment of a band of missionaries to preach the social gospel among the masses.

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The list is not exhaustive and yet seems pretty long, for we are wicked and our abuses are many, but here I say, our work is real, not depending on mendicancy, but on our own exertions unlike that of an advocate of Politics. Gentlemen, I need not point out that most of these evils seem of later day origin and growth; and are in no sense "Aryan." We cannot admit them as "settled facts" and as such I do not see why we should not uproot them. But we have to deal with a conservative and apathetic society, it is therefore very necessary to bear in mind the great importance of caution before anything can be attempted to upset the old time honoured organisation. If we attempt any radical reform we leave the masses behind in bewilderment. There is thus no good in passing resolutions containing radical reforms which our communities are ill prepared to accept. We must be more practical and I hope the resolutions that will be laid before the conference this day have been so prepared as to meet with the least opposition, in fact I believe there is nothing in them to which any right thinking man can take exception.

The movers and supporters of these resolutions, no doubt will discuss the various subjects before the conference with great ability and wisdom, it is therefore not necessary for me to take up your time treading over the same ground. I will however confine myself to making a few observations on some important matters.

Female Education.

Female Education is deplorably backward in our Provinces. Ladies have not yet begun to take openly any interest in questions relating to their own welfare. The people are now realizing the wrong done in this direction in having neglected this question in the past. There is thus much room for improvement. More Schools and better class of qualified Mistresses to manage them are needed. Much is done by our Government in this respect, it is now time for the people to take more interest in it. "Zanana" teaching by mission ladies is not sufficient nor so popular. A number of new primary and middle schools are needed in all important localities, where besides ordinary teaching the girls should get a thorough-training in all the domestic arts. The guardians of girls and boys be encouraged not to marry them unless they have acquired a certain standard of efficiency in their schools. Home classes are also a necessity for the education of grown up and married girls.

Sea Voyage.

This seems authorized by 'Shastric' texts. The Hindus were a seafaring people and have yet colonies beyond the seas. No question of loss of caste is raised in respect of people visiting Ceylon and Aden for service; besides Hindu regiments that went to Malta, Soudan and China had no such restrictions.

The Rajas and Chiefs that attended the coronation ceremony had no such difficulty. The question thus seems to have solved itself. The Presidency Towns have now accepted this reform, but there is some misunderstanding in the mofussil which may be removed. Any Hindu undertaking a voyage to foreign countries for education, change of climate, commerce or for other useful purpose may be admitted to his caste on his taking a nominal "Prayashchit."

Arbitration Panchaits.

These Panchaits be started or initiated to check the unnecessary litigation which is demoralizing and ruining the country. Practised Barristers and Pleaders of patriotic feelings should make endeavours to reconcile their clients out of court as far as possible, failing this, the parties be referred to Panchaits bearing in mind that "Law is made for man and not man for law."

Girl Widows.

Now a word about Girl widows. Of late plague and pestilence have added to their number, the harrowing pictures of the miseries of widows are too well known and need no recapitulation here. The question of the marriage of such girl widows as are only married in name is a question of pressing necessity and any right thinking man cannot on principle object to this salutary reform being sanctioned by the community. There appears to be unanimity of feeling and opinion on this vital subject even among the so called orthodox people and this reform can be safely introduced without any opposition whatsoever. Whoever takes an active part in this benevolent cause will be remembered by posterity as a true benefactor and will earn the respect of people in no small measure.

Gentlemen the time at my disposal is so short that I have only dealt with some of the important subjects very cursorily. But before I conclude I may be permitted to sound a note of warning to those who take an active interest in these matters, that in the past we have been exposed to a severe and trenchant criticism on the score of our inability to further the cause which we have at heart and that all our glib talk is never translated into action. Unpleasant criticism like this has its bad effect upon the people who have to be approached. Our chief defect lies in the fact that we cover a very widerange of work and our energy which ought to be concentrated in turning out real, solid work, is wasted and dissipated. It will not be out of place if I remark that gentlemen whose sole ambition consists in seeing hurried resolutions passed, are not the true friends of reform. It is no satisfaction to think that duty devolves on others to bear the brunt and that the professed pioneers of reform should barely content in passive indolence themselves and self satisfaction. You must all have that ring of sincerity in you which will mark you out as earnest workers. You must take your proper share in rousing men's minds to real state of affairs and earnestly act up to your convictions. In this and this alone there lies a hope of true progress. Individuals and communities are then sure to recognise the necessity and advisibility of some readjustment in the old order of things. Believe in what an eminent writer has said "The end of men is in action and not in thought though it be the noblest."

We all have by our bitter experience realized that our national degeneration is due to causes which have disintegrated our society and lowered our national ideals. We have now rightly diagonalised the disease and it is by proper and scientific treatment that we can radically cure it. Social reform viewed in this light has prior and preferential claims over political and industrial activities in our Provinces. The gospel of "First deserve and then desire" should be kept constantly in view and if practicable be brought home to our minds by paid itinerant social and political preachers.

In conclusion, Gentlemen, I may remind you that your destinies lie entirely in your hands. Nations like individuals have to be made great and it is the few, who are wise who mould such destinies. It is by chance that Providences has made you the leaders of thought and in your hands are the forces which will either make or mar your destinies.

A soleman duty devolves on you to study the virtues of the rising nations of the earth, by your intelligence and action make them your heritage and engraft them on your national ideals so that they may become your own. The rapid rise of Japan by a similar process is an object lesson which should be taken to heart. Elevate your brethern, make them feel that they are fit to take their place amongst the nations of the world. Make them men and then and then alone your glorious past will no longer remain a matter of history but will become a matter of reality.

GANPAT RAO SHRIKHANDE.

Central Provinces & Berar Provincial Conference,
RAIPUR.

SPEECH DELIVERED

BY

M. B. Dadabhoy, Esq.,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

On the 31st March, 1907.

GENTLEMEN,—The duty has fallen to me to-day of addressing you in the second year of your existence. I had hoped that this chair would be otherwise and more worthily filled to-day. I have watched the industrial movement with constant interest, ever since its first conception in 1888, and I consider myself very fortunate in being granted this opportunity of expressing my sentiments this afternoon on a subject in which I have always taken a keen and lively interest. It is by your indulgence and forbearance that I am privileged to take so leading a part in a movement which has so promising a future before it, and which is calculated to give new force and greater impetus to the industrial energies of the people of these Provinces, I thank you again heartily for the honour you have done me. In joining in such large numbers in the deliberations of this gathering, you most aptly and practically illustrate the fact that this organisation supplies a common platform on which all can meet, aiming at a common purpose regardless of all social and political differences, and promoting a cause in the success of which we are all so deeply and devotedly interested. Permit me, therefore, to state that the Industrial Conferences which are so frequently held in the several Presidencies of this great and united Empire are unmistakable proof of this fact.

The industrial movement was started not a day too early. Not unlike all other great movements, we had to contend with difficulties of a very serious character at an early stage of its existence, but the circumstances have been very fortunate, and by the cumulative intelligence and well-directed energies of the leaders of public thought and activity, we have been in a position to fill up an important and by far the most undesirable gap in our public institutions. The zeal and devotion with which the movement is carried on, and the loyal aid and assistance which are rendered by many of our worthy citizens, afford unmistakable evidence of the "awakening desire of the people to co-operate for purposes of almost incalculable advantage to themselves, and gives Government the best practical means of helping those who thus show that they are willing to help themselves."

Efforts of Government.

In its efforts to promote the material welfare of the Indian people, the Government has achieved a large measure of success. From the days of Lord Dalhousie onwards, its progress in this direction has been very great. If the great mass of the people are still very poor, their poverty is owing to no want of kindly effort on the part of their rulers. It is less extreme, with reference to local conditions, than the poverty which prevails in some parts of Europe and even in parts of the British Isles it may even be due in some measure to the very excellence of a rule, which aims at protecting life and property and forbids all manner of internal strife. We can see, at any rate, how much the general wealth of the country has increased in the last thirty years, how rapidly and marvellously

its trade has expanded, with the removal of all inland duties, and the disappearance from the customs' tariff of almost every article of import or export, and how many millions a year, after all deductions, return as savings into the people's pockets. You can see for yourselves what possibilities of growing wealth are contained in the extension of railways, irrigation works, cotton and jute mills, presses, and ginning factories, coal, iron and manganese mines. These are all striking evidences of national prosperity. We know that irrigation canals have converted millions of acres from desert into garden and have saved other millions of acres from ruin in years of drought, and that railways have carried thousands of tons of grain betimes into districts smitten by famine. The rise of great mercantile towns and cities, the steady increase in various items of revenue, the good wages earned by large numbers of people on the many industries which recent years have called into busy play, the difficulty of getting labour, the vast extension of the cultivated area, the sextupling of the export trade in the last twenty-five years, the rapid growth of the artizan, working and professional classes—all these things attest the progress in well-being which united India has made, and is making, under British rule. Even a cursory review of the history of the industrial growth of the Empire will show how large a balance of profit yearly accrues to India from the impulse thus given to her productive energies.

Let not the past misguide us.

But brilliant and hopeful as have been the achievements in the past, they should not mislead or misguide us. Do not rest content with what you have achieved in the past with Government help and guidance, but try individually and collectively to outstrip the past by the exercise of personal energy and private capital. Posterity will judge us by our actions; let us therefore endeavour to leave to our successors a more glorious heritage than that which it has been our good fortune to receive from our predecessors. But how can that success be attained without a mental and moral equipment? It is essentially necessary for the development of our nation's resources that we should in the first instance prepare the people for the great work that lies before them. It is the preliminary preparation that will enable the nation to hold its own in the great struggle which is now taking place in the arena of the commercial world. We should aim at the dissemination of technical, commercial and agricultural education. Every meeting of this or any other Industrial Conference should vigorously insist on the extension of such education. I do not in the least desire to undervalue either primary or secondary education; but you must admit that the form in which such education has been given to us in the past has hardly infused into the masses a desire for commerce and industries; and I am not wide of the mark in stating that such education will not make our nation self-dependent and enterprising; it will not give us tradesmen and merchants and manufacturers, will not furnish us with those powerful sinews required for ameliorating our condition and acquiring material prosperity. If intelligence and love of progress are required for a nation's development, they are not wanting in the people of this country. The history of the world has shown how poor and backward nations have risen high in the scale of progress when imbued with the spirit of enterprise. The ground work of all industrial progress must be industrial knowledge; no society can advance unless it has in every branch of industrial science persons possessing such knowledge. The industrial development of a nation can only be assured when people combine and acquire scientific knowledge, and do their utmost to set the mind of the nation in a new direction by the general spread of such knowledge. It is education that teaches the child to use its hands, its eyes and its other faculties, and it is such knowledge alone that works a substantial change and improvement in the mental equipment of a people. The Indian system of education has adhered to obsolete methods, which cramps the growing aspirations of our nation. We want a system of primary education that will train not merely the memory but the mind of the child, together with his hand and eye. We want a system of secondary and collegiate education that will produce men of action as well as philosophers, a system under which science will be given its rightful position as well

as the literary arts. And above all we want a system of technical, commercial and agricultural education that will train our sons to take their rightful position in the industrial development of our country, and to turn their earnest national aspirations into the right channel. I would therefore exhort you, in the words of a well-known scholar, that "your task is to fan this smoking flax into a flame, and thus, like true lovers of your people, to seek through scientific instruction, however humble, to do for the ancient industries of India what scientific scholars are doing for its literature. And I doubt not, with the marvellous manual dexterity and patient industry of your workers, who love, like true artists, to linger over details which would weary the artizan of the West, that India may regain her place as the mother of the finer textile, and of other minor arts. But not only must you promote this departure in the lower industrial regions, the regions of the artizan, but you must also do what in you lies to promote the same movement by bringing all classes within it, more especially the mercantile and the substantial landholders, and you must thus bridge over the great gap which lies between the artizan classes and the science graduates of the Universities. The movement towards industrial development material interest of the country and the application of scientific knowledge to every branch of activity connected with the must, to be really effective, permeate every class in the community and people of every calling. Your counsel to your countrymen must be, get wealth, not by the devices of the usurer, but by those of the prudent farmer who will leave no clod unturned, no spot unplanted, no subterranean spring untapped, no labour-saving or labour-supplementing machine untried, if from such labour or such outlay he may hope to add to the productiveness of his land in other words, to his wealth, to the capital of the country. You are thrifty people in most respects, but it seems to me that you are too apt to wrap up your rupees in a napkin when they might be judiciously expended in providing for some sound industrial enterprise. You need not imitate the wild speculations of the West, but you may well adopt that spirit which will not rest until it has wrung from nature all her secrets, and made the Earth-goddess grant to her worshipper her richest boons."

Revival of Rural and Village Industries.

I have quoted the above significant and weighty words, in extenso as they so effectively lay down the lines on which it is necessary at the present juncture to move, and if you, as enlightened leaders of the people, work with interest and enthusiasm, your success will be unquestionably assured. For years past we have come directly in contact with an intelligent and energetic race, capable of continuous and sustained labour and possessed of those admirable habits of punctuality, precision, and almost mechanical regularity, which enable a man to go through a considerable amount of work with the smallest effort. We must frankly admit that as a nation we have not yet acquired those habits, and our indigenous modes of work are somewhat leisurely and comparatively inefficient. We have to stand side by side with our rulers and take part with them in the magnificent work of administration, and also to compete with them and other European and foreign races in matters of trade, commerce and manufacture. The growing intellect and moral force of the country are now invading some fields of activity, and I see no reason why we should not move with equal if not with greater speed in industrial development. The task and responsibility of regenerating the resources of the country have devolved upon us and we must prove ourselves equal to the burden which a progressive civilization has imposed upon us. It behoves us then to take note of the material and mechanical resources of England and other countries that have attained a high standard of commercial prosperity and to imitate and adopt all that is new and worthy of acceptance, to grasp and examine every new idea or scheme from all points of view. We can no longer afford to adhere to our primitive methods and appliances, but we ought to stride rapidly on in the work of improvement. It is true that the resources of foreign countries are vast and manifold, but at the same time I have no hesitation in stating that the Indians,

as a class, possess immense powers of organisation ; they are watchful and alert, their work is no less methodical and systematic than that of their foreign competitors, and though they may be somewhat lacking in an overpowering sense of national duty, they are animated by a sense of inexhaustible patriotism. We should then, endeavour to inculcate habits of orderly and methodical work ; the masses should be made to understand that they have certain interests as a community which it is their paramount duty to promote by a just and faithful exercise of the powers with which nature has endowed them. It is only by cultivation of the industrial arts and a regeneration of our lost industries that the pressure of population on land will decrease with the greatest benefit to the country. I advise the formation of district industrial associations or committees in which you should include men of all classes and professions, and whose aims should be not only the abstract discussion of industrial topics but the suggestion of concrete measures and the full-hearted co-operation and encouragement of a diversity of occupations. These district associations should keep themselves in close contact with the provincial body by the interchange of correspondence, and, if necessary, by meetings and conferences.

The provincial conference should appoint a central provincial committee for the purpose of helping and encouraging the district associations. Each district association should also be called upon at the annual Provincial Conference to give an account of its labours ; and thus, by a general interchange of communication, incalculable benefit will accrue. I also express a hope that the district associations will devote their principal efforts to the improvement of rural industries. It is in the revival of rural industries that district and suburban associations can justify their existence and prove their usefulness. My primary object in making this suggestion is to impress on you the indispensable necessity for such work, or rather to appeal to you to make a new departure. They should in the first instance confine themselves to the protection of existing and the revival of dead rural and village industries. Permit me also to state that district associations should not scorn Government help and advice, but should work in co-operation with Government towards the desired end. In my opinion the department of Agriculture can render immense assistance, and supply considerable information which will help in the resuscitation of our rural industries. Government officials are directly and closely connected with the inner life of the people, and they are in a position to render practical assistance and useful suggestions.

The members of the district associations must clearly realise that their organisations are started more with the object of co-operation with, rather than opposition against Government, and the promoters of the movement should, if they desire success, work in concert with local officers. I refer to this matter as I know that in certain quarters an erroneous impression prevails that we would be better off without Government help. Such an impression, you will all candidly admit, is very prejudicial, nay, absolutely detrimental to the growth and progress of our industrial institutions. I think there is a great future before any industrial movement started under favourable circumstances and conducted with laudable vigour and with the advice and assistance of Government officials. The holding of annual exhibitions, the establishment of provincial and local museums, the revival of our ancient fairs and the creation of a community loving local arts and manufactures and encouraging indigenous industries and trades will add materially to the interest and prosperity of the masses.

Free Trade or Protection.

I wish also to say a few words regarding the principles that rule the commercial policy of India, but as I have still various other topics to deal with, I shall endeavour to be concise in my statement and treatment of the subject. In order to promote the material prosperity of its people, Government should consider what should or could be done towards reviving and fostering the internal trades and industries. I do not wish to enter into any serious discussion as to whether Free-Trade or Protection should be the commercial policy.

of India ; I do not myself wish this conference to pledge itself either way on this subject of vital importance, which is still in the throes of party-controversy, but if the principles of Free-Trade are to regulate and guide Indian commerce, there is one trade indeed, that of the gold and silversmith, in which those principles have never been fairly or adequately carried out. The restrictions still imposed on the export of gold and silver work from India to England are altogether unworthy of a nation which professes to open its ports freely to all the world, and has but lately repealed the last of the duties levied in India on Manchester cotton goods. The ornamental work turned out by our Indian gold and silversmiths is unsurpassed for beauty of form, richness and purity of treatment and general artistic effect. If the trade in such things were virtually free, the demand for them in England would no doubt become very brisk and steady, greatly to the benefit of our artizans. But the practice of hall-marking in England, combined with a heavy import duty has prohibited anything like an active trade in this branch of Indian industry, and a large number of our artizans suffer, in order that English goldsmiths may command their own prices for work artistically inferior. There is surely no greater reason for thus protecting one class of home manufactures, than for protecting other manufactures. If it is right to exclude Indian gold and silver wares from English markets, why should India be debarred from levying a moderate duty on Manchester cotton or any other article which India could manufacture for herself ?

The Question of the Application of Capital to Industry.

What this country wants above all things is material prosperity ; and how that standard of prosperity is to be attained is daily becoming a more and more crucial question. To all thoughtful men it is now perfectly apparent that the position of a nation in the scale of civilization chiefly depends upon its greater or less acquaintance with and employment of mechanical forces as aids to production. A country in which attention is not paid to the development of a vast number of trades and callings is incontestably unfit to maintain its place abreast of other countries. But the development of the various trades already existing and the creation of new industries as fresh avenues of wealth require capital. To make "any advance in the arts of industry or the comforts of life, a rate of production "exceeding the rate of consumption, with consequent accumulation of resources, or in "other words, the formation of capital, is indispensable." Capital does not necessarily mean money, property, or Government scrip. In fact, it includes within its definition the accumulated savings and profits of labour. The question of the application of capital to industry is perhaps the most difficult one to solve in this country. It is not yet fully realised that "it is that portion of the annual produce reserved from consumption to supply future "wants, to extend the sphere of production, to improve industrial improvements and "processes, to carry out works of public utility, and, in short, to secure and enlarge the "various means of progress necessary to an increasing community." In India, unfortunately, there is not free circulation of capital ; and, I think, the fault lies with the educated and intelligent classes. There is a growing tendency to look to the English capitalist for the promotion of all pioneer industrial works. We shall never achieve substantial progress in the matter of industrial development if we continue to depend upon foreign capital. This is a danger which I should like you to recognise and to face. I have often heard it said that India sorely needs great supplies of capital borrowed in the cheapest market, but I cannot fully endorse such a proposition. People of this country are as a rule prudent and thrifty, and there are large accumulations of wealth lying stagnant, which, if placed in productive and recuperative channels, would increase tenfold and add to the material prosperity of the country. The disinclination of the masses to invest their savings in productive channels is partly due to the natural habits of the people and partly to the want of confidence in the speculative nature of the many trades and industries. I am aware that a considerable proportion of Indian capital has always been invested in agriculture and trade, but it is not yet recognised that these are not the only outlets for the industrial activity

of the country. There is no gainsaying that the masses are not animated by a desire to promote industrial wealth, and that the country as a whole is still avoiding industrial life. I venture to think that the country is now quite ripe for the investment of its capital in various industries, and that you, as leaders of public movements, should take the matter seriously in hand. What we want is action, not idle speechifying. If we are deeply interested in the prosperity and welfare of our country, we should go to the heads of our own people and point blank tell them that honours and prizes are not alone confined to learned professions and Government service, but that true honour and glory is gained only by contributing by labour and industry to the national wealth. We all recognise that there are serious drawbacks to the development of trade, and there is no doubt that Government is partly responsible for the growing apathy towards industrial concerns. Encouragement is required for the investment of private capital. Government should start in the first instance useful local industries, and thus enable the people to realise the benefits that accrue by the employment of private labour and capital. Government should be ready and ever willing to supply information, grant concessions and monopolies in the beginning as those are the best ways for drawing out private capital from family treasuries and secure resting places under ground. No real or substantial industries growth is possible unless Government understands what real industrialism means in this country. The bureau of commerce and industry which was started in Calcutta under the late memorable Viceroyalty has as yet failed to fulfil the public expectations that were naturally formed at its creation. We hoped for a change in the policy of Government towards industrial development and for substantial assistance in the introduction of new manufactures, but we have only as yet seen the birth of a new official department, content to work on the old lines and to take over branches of administration from other departments, instead of setting itself to achieve the true object for which it was created. But the disappointment is inevitable, and we cannot hope for any substantial improvement, or encouragement or support of private industries while that department continues to remain under the control of a civilian Government official. Place that department under the control and supervision of a commercial man, with business training and instincts, and I believe that the change will be rapid and the progress more substantial and gratifying.

But still public men can do a great deal by mutual sympathy and co-operation. We can, without much difficulty, establish bodies and associations for the financing and prospecting of local industries. We can safely establish Agricultural Banks, loan societies, and small trading companies all over these Provinces. We must bear in mind the daily increasing demand of India's chief industry, Agriculture, in order to supply the ever increasing volume of her export trade. We should devote our attention to the employment of capital in larger proportion in the form of investment in machinery. I have heard it often said that machinery is superfluous in India, where labour is cheap and abundant; but this impression is unfounded and will not stand the test of examination. If we wish to make cheap articles of trade, we should employ machinery, as hand labour is too slow and limited to compete with the out-turn of machinery. Moreover, the question of labour is daily becoming more serious, and is likely to cause much anxiety in the near future.

The greatest drawback which a private capitalist has to confront is that of securing cheap and suitable labour. It is true that labour is comparatively cheap in this country, but all those who are connected with industrial concerns of any magnitude agree that in recent years labour has become scarce and in many parts of the country can only be secured with much difficulty. The recent cycles of famine and scarcity as well as the periodic recurrence of plague all over India have contributed to this difficulty in this Province. Be that as it may, it is undeniably true that the growth of industries and the rise of commerce, free circulation of money and the generally prosperous condition of the people, the higher standard of living, and various other causes, have contributed towards the enhancement of the price of labour. If ordinary labour has become more scarce and more expensive, the

cost of skilled labour has risen still more. The rise in the cost of labour cannot leave the same margin of profit in business and local industries as before, but still there are many trades which can be profitably carried on by the exercise of business sagacity, skill and prudence. The real remedy for India is to improve the quality of its labour, as it will never be in a position to utilize its vast stores of raw material until the labourer is taught to be a better working man than he is at present. The many disabilities under which Indian industries suffer are mainly due to the poor quality of the Indian labourer, and it is necessary that her statesmen and patriots should give this question a statesmanlike consideration.

College of Commerce.

The Central Provinces have already served its period of apprenticeship, and is now entering on an era of industrial prosperity. Its infancy was full of hope and brightness but its youth is full of greater promise, and we may, in the near future, look forward to a stage of development almost unprecedented. Rapid as the progress has been, we must admit that we are very backward as compared with some other parts of India. Our mineral wealth is abundant and we have only to develop private enterprise and capital to reap a full measure of success. But success cannot be attained till the people are fit, by special and practical education, to embark upon great enterprises with some degree of confidence. I am of opinion that the time has now arrived when the Government of India should establish a College of Commerce; and it behoves the various Universities to take up the question seriously and examine it in detail. A College of Commerce, equipped with a specially trained staff, and with a curriculum designed to give an opportunity for the analytic and scientific study of commerce in all its relations, and for the higher education of business men, will, without doubt, prove a useful and valuable institution. But till such an institution comes into existence, it is necessary that we should work on some methodical lines, so that there may be not only continuity of action, but also a harmonious and advantageous interchange of communication between local and provincial and also between the Provincial and general bodies. We ought, first, to arrange for a standing committee in every important industrial or commercial centre in India. The delegates of the Industrial Conference should mainly be selected from members of such committees who have taken special interest in industrial subjects, either as pioneers of any particular industry or as managers of large industrial institutions. These standing committees should confine their energies primarily to the establishment of centres of industrial or Commercial activity, securing funds for granting honorariums and scholarships to students prosecuting technical studies in Europe, or in America or Japan, and should also find suitable avenues for the employment and utilization of the knowledge and services of the successful students. Unless we proceed on the lines I have suggested, we will neither reap any benefit nor attract the attention of our well-wishers, and no substantial good will come out of these annual gatherings. But we may not be able to proceed on these lines for some time to come, and certainly not without many preliminary difficulties. Still it is in our hands to make our programme less ambitious, and if you, gentlemen, cooperate with native sowkars, malguzars and leading men, you will be in a position to contribute much towards the community's well-being. The economic problems of India, with its large population, and great undeveloped resources are of the very gravest kind, and no perceptible change can be made unless our educated classes put their shoulders to the wheel and augment the wealth by which the people are to be supported. You can easily organise small classes for imparting practical knowledge on subjects such as drawing, designing, modelling, wood and copperplate engraving, carriage building, gold and silver-smith's work, and a variety of other subjects. Knowledge should also be imparted through competent agencies for the preparation of rough tools, dyes, glass, mineral oils, sugar, and also for the manufacture of wool and yarn into cloth. We can count on the tips of our fingers very many small local industries more or less of a paying nature which

are allowed to droop either on account of small or no encouragement or pecuniary support. I sincerely exhort you, my friends, to put a certain portion of your savings into industrial concerns, and I am sure you will not only be yourself benefited by an adequate return, but you will be making the lives of many village people a great deal happier than they would otherwise be; and you will to a certain extent be contributing towards the industrial development of the country. We should readily appreciate our position then as the teachers of the village communities, and fulfil as well as recognise the great and many responsibilities which that position involves.

The Necessity for an Industrial Survey.

I now crave your indulgence while I say a few words on the question of an industrial Survey for India. We are all clamouring for the industrial reorganisation of the country but how is such a change to be made without collecting all the necessary data and information on the subject. How are we to make suggestions and to devise methods and means to revive the many languishing industries of this country; how are our leaders to lay down any definite rules and regulations for a great industrial revival unless we are able to gather all the necessary information on the subject, and until a categorical statement, based on facts and figures, is made out? The proper body to start and complete a comprehensive industrial survey is Government, inasmuch as it has at its disposal not only endless opportunities but ample resources to make such a survey perfectly accurate, reliable and exhaustive. The Government can no longer shirk its grave responsibility in this matter, and must approach the question in a broad spirit of sympathy. It is time that the Government of India should give without any further delay an industrial survey on the lines suggested by Dr. Forbes Watson in 1872, and supported by such an eminent and well-informed authority as Sir Louis Mallet. It is really very surprising that no practical steps have been taken by Government towards giving this subject of popular demand any shape, though the necessity for such a survey was recognised by the Government of India as early as the year 1881. This matter was again brought to notice by the First Industrial Conference at Benares, at its sitting in 1905, and it was re-affirmed in the Viceroy's Council last March, and the attention of the Secretary of State for India was also drawn to it last winter. But, unhappily, the wheels of Government move very slowly, and we may, perhaps, now, hope that the present Government will not lose any further time in taking the necessary action to collate all available information as to industrial products and the means of production accessible to agriculturists, manufacturers and men of varied business generally. I should also suggest that in this work the Government, and especially the Local Governments, should associate the people of the various parts of the Empire, as such an action will result in the collection of much valuable information. The people are the best repositories of information of this sort, and the act of Government going to the people will kindle fresh ardour in their already much abated enthusiasm. Our Local Government has again and again recognised the necessity for an industrial survey, but so far at least as these Provinces are concerned no practical steps have been taken towards this desirable end. Let this Provincial Industrial Conference make one more appeal to the Chief Commissioner to initiate a full survey of the rural industries of the Central Provinces and Berar, a full enquiry into their present condition, the causes of their decay, and the best means of promoting their revival. And let us on our part promise to co-operate fully in such an enquiry and to give our best assistance in bringing it to a successful issue, for it is essentially a work which can only be done thoroughly by the united efforts of Government and the public. We shall thus obtain a reliable basis upon which the development of one branch of our industrial life can proceed. Meanwhile let us all be prepared for a free and full discussion of the existing conditions, the disabilities which affect the progress of industrialism, the prospects of its growth, and many other useful and valuable suggestions as to the policies to be pursued and as to the ways and means to be contrived. We should in this, as well as in all industrial questions, never lose sight

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of the axiomatic truth that no nation can hope to be commercially great without economic independence, and that it is the province of industrialism to lay the foundation for all economic progress.

Demand for improved methods of agriculture.

THE ground work of all commercial expansion in India is the industry of her farmer. At the present juncture when the attention of all is rivetted upon *Swadeshi* manufacture, we must not lose sight of the main fact that the industrial growth of the Empire, whether in her manufactures or trade, is principally dependent upon the success of her agriculture. The link between agriculture and commerce is inseparable, the success of the one means the prosperity of the other; the decay and retrogression of the one means the virtual failure of the other. To illustrate this by a concrete example, I would state that by the growth of good staple cotton we could turn out piece-goods which could profitably compete with British productions; and for our export of wheat and linseed we would be able to secure markets against any other competitor. The majority of the population is dependent upon agriculture for subsistence, and they must ever remain so dependent. Those who have looked for the advancement of the Indian peasantry through their diversion from agriculture to any other industry are short sighted in the extreme. The question of agriculture is of paramount interest and importance, but I must say that it has not received that amount of attention or consideration either from the public or the Government which it merits. We are moving in a hopelessly slow manner in the direction of agricultural progress. But I am glad to find that in these Provinces we are not behind other parts of India in the race for agricultural improvement. The task to be undertaken, however, both by Government and the public, is of the greatest magnitude. We have already trodden, and rather too long, in easy and familiar paths. The various provincial agricultural departments have suggested experiments which have been fully tried and reported upon. The first Famine Commission in their report stated that "the defect in the efforts made by Government to instruct the cultivator has consisted in the failure to recognise the fact that, in order to improve Indian agriculture, it is necessary to be thoroughly acquainted with it, and to learn what adaptation is needed to suit modern and more scientific methods and maxims to Indian staples and climate." What we want, then, in the first instance, is help and assistance from State departments, not alone by guiding us in local knowledge, but also by furnishing us with summaries of information collected, progress achieved, and the experiments made, by countries so widely differing in agricultural conditions as Great Britain and other European and American countries. To those useful auxiliaries if we add our national information, our organization, our mutual help and instruction, we may anticipate practical and favourable results. Speaking generally, I may say that so long as existing circumstances continue, we need not expect any tangible or appreciable change in the agricultural development of these Provinces. The first question that may then be asked is: has the Government fully discharged its responsibility in the matter of agricultural instruction? Sir Andrew Fraser, our former Chief Commissioner, who strove to encourage the formation of agricultural associations in the Central Provinces, in notifying the creation of a similar institution in Bengal, has thus remarked: "The agricultural department has admittedly failed hitherto to make known among the people the results which have been attained by experiments. Accounts of the various operations undertaken are published annually, but they have not reached the cultivating classes; and even in the vicinity of the various Agricultural Farms improved methods of cultivation have not been adopted. There are many zemindars and merchants keenly interested in agriculture, but their sympathy and co-operation have not been enlisted. In these circumstances, the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that an agency is wanted to disseminate agricultural knowledge, and to awaken further interest in, and discussion of, the agricultural development of the Provinces." Who can dispute the validity or propriety of the above indictment, made by an officer who has been in close contact with the people

throughout his official career, and who has had abundant opportunities of gaining incontestable information on the subject. I am, therefore, not reluctant to state that the agricultural department is powerless to render any great help to the generality of tenants and malguzars unless there are organizations or effective channels through which they can be reached. It is therefore essentially necessary that we should, in the first instance, endeavour to supply an agency by which such information can be communicated, and no system of efficient agency can possibly be devised or the agricultural industry substantially or permanently improved without universal and whole-hearted co-operation. We should, then, do our best to encourage agricultural improvement among the people, and I feel confident that if we bestow the same attention and energy on this subject which we give to other departments of knowledge, considerable good will accrue to the community at large. We cannot but recognize that progress must be slow. The land-holder refuses to follow new methods or new principles, not because he is inert or unwilling to profit by any new experiments, but because there is nobody to teach him or to show him that new methods are profitable. We must, therefore, recognise the principle that any improvement in the general state of the agricultural industry can best be effected by the training of a staff of *Indian* specialists; and for that purpose it is essential to offer prospects which will attract the best Indian talent,—prospects, if not greater, at any rate equal to those in other Government departments. It is the lack of any such prospects that has resulted in the decline of the Nagpur Agricultural School. It is the duty of Government to take up the question seriously, and devise schemes which will attract intelligent and apt pupils, who will first take up the study of agricultural science, and then be able and willing to impart the knowledge so gained to their fellow-countrymen. Agricultural Colleges for the benefit of those who require primarily to become acquainted with the theory and technique of agriculture and its investigation should be established under efficient control at suitable centres. In our own Provinces that capable and distinguished civilian, Mr. F. G. Sly, the present Director of Agriculture, has rendered most useful and excellent service to all of us in these directions. He has succeeded in rousing the interest and enthusiasm of our leading men by establishing, all over the Provinces, agricultural associations and demonstration plots, which, in the course of time, will considerably improve on the primitive methods hitherto adopted by the people, and will tend to teach them to grow improved varieties of crops and to generally indicate the advantages of improved methods of cultivation. The great drawback which an Indian cultivator has to contend against is the want of capital. It is impossible for every cultivator to provide modern instruments and appliances. The usual resources of the cultivator are very limited, and we can hardly look forward to a general improvement in the methods of cultivation unless some system more satisfactory than that on which the various industries of the country now rests is devised. The Agricultural Board very recently admitted that: "One reason for the slow progress which could only be hoped for in India was that the Indian cultivator was not a capitalist. The agriculturist here cannot, without extraneous assistance, undertake experiments or introduce improvements requiring an outlay of capital; and it is the duty of Government to render such assistance." The improvement of the breeds of cattle, the introduction of artificial manures, the sowing of selected seeds, and such like, should engage the attention of those who wish to improve the productive power of the soil.

Irrigation Works,

In the matter of Irrigation I must state that very little progress indeed has been made in these Provinces. It is true that the greater portion of these Provinces has the advantage of the Arabian Sea as well as the Bay of Bengal monsoon, and our general supply of rain in normal years is quite sufficient to produce an average harvest. But the two recent famines clearly indicate the necessity of opening out large irrigation works, if not in any other, certainly in the Chhattisgarh Division. The existing system of irrigation absolutely affords no protection from famines in years when there is a total failure of the

monsoon, though it might be of partial service in storing rain water for use during a year of drought. The irrigation works undertaken by Government in many of the important districts of these Provinces in the shape of tanks and reservoirs are inadequate. The number of such tank is entirely out of proportion to the cultivated area, not to speak of virgin land which could be profitably broken up in all parts of the country if there were an abundant storage of water. In the annual distribution of expenditure over the different parts of the country under the head of Irrigation, the Government of India have hardly treated the Central Provinces with equality and fairness; and if these Provinces have been neglected or overlooked in the past, it is certainly because the local Government, as well as its accredited representatives in Council, have failed to press upon the Imperial Government the urgency of the matter. Irrigation works are either of a productive or protective character, and I can mention several schemes that could be usefully and profitably executed in these provinces, and which, when ready, would provide a perennial supply of water to many dried up parts of the country. The great scheme for the Mahanadi Canal in the Raipur District should no longer be delayed by the Government. It is estimated to cost 95 lakhs, and when ready would irrigate 200,000 acres of cultivated land. It is true that it will not be a paying concern, as the probable return is not expected to exceed much more than three per cent; but it is a work essentially of a protective nature and the smallness of return should not be a barrier in the way of starting and completing a magnificent project which will make green so many acres of land, and which will supply food to a large number of people. The chief interest in this new project lies in the fact that it will be the first extensive irrigation work in the Central Provinces, a country which has suffered acutely during the last two famines. We hope our Government will press the necessity of completing the project as soon as possible. But large irrigation works, from their very nature, can only be undertaken in parts where the natural and geographical conditions can fairly permit their execution. It is necessary therefore that artesian wells and tanks should be freely and in great numbers dug all over the Province. Here the ordinary cultivator is again confronted with the question of capital; but whatever may be the extent of his difficulty we should strenuously urge upon him the necessity of investing his savings in sinking wells or other similar works of utility, instead of hoarding his money under ground, as such investments would be essentially of a reproductive nature.

Railway Projects.

I shall now pass on to the subject of Indian Railways. I do not propose to enter into any detailed examination of the policy of the Government as regards its management and control. It is indisputable that the Railway system in India does not give us any uniform organisation; it is at best "a complex and chaotic mass of disorganisation involving considerable unprofitable expenditure of time and money." The reason for this very unsatisfactory state of affairs is found in the fact that in India the railways are monopolies of Government, and they are built for the express purpose of retaining in the control of Government a material source of public revenue. It can hardly be said that much improvement has been made in the working system or in the Railway policy of Government since the formation of the Railway Board, and I have no hesitation in stating that the management of Indian railways has not been conducted to the entire satisfaction of the commercial public. The reason for the failure is obvious inasmuch as the whole scheme of railway finance is radically unsound. It is not possible to develop adequately the various State Railway systems so as to meet the commercial requirements and at the same time extract from the service an income which will swell the Imperial revenues. It is not possible to meet the public needs and requirements, satisfy the growing ambitions of the ever increasing public and, at the same time, make the whole system a vast source of assured income to the State. If we are to have a truly economical railway system, it must be conducted with a clear insight into and understanding of the commercial needs of

the country; and the financial policy of the Government should be so recast as to permit of a fair and reasonably rapid development and a high condition of efficiency. The Government cannot be unaware of the great dissatisfaction which prevails in commercial communities throughout India owing to the inability of the Railway Companies to provide sufficient rolling stock for the carriage of goods and commodities. Trade and commerce have of late been paralysed and business all round has been handicapped to the serious inconvenience and loss of the merchant classes. In our Province of Berar a very considerable business in cotton is done, and at the present moment there is universal complaint that on account of an insufficient supply of waggons merchants are unable to send their consignments of cotton to Bombay in time. Similarly thousands of tons of manganese are lying alongside of the railway line between Balaghat and Nagpur awaiting transit. I need not refer to any particular trade, but you can fully estimate the loss which must be caused to traders and merchants by this failure on the part of the Railway Administration to provide a sufficiency in the carrying capacity of nearly every railway line in the country. But is this the only inconvenience which the commercial communities have to suffer? As regards speed, if not comfort, the Indian Railways seem to the great disappointment of the travelling public to have reached a point beyond which they are not likely to go or, at any rate, do not show a disposition to proceed beyond. India is probably the only country in which the important conditions of Railway travelling, namely, multiplication of lines, rapidly of movement, facility in transshipment of goods—have not been yet correctly understood. The other matter which I wish to refer to is perhaps the most important of all, and that is the unwillingness on the part of the Railway Board to encourage private enterprise by granting concessions to construct small lines on the same plan that Government itself is going to construct them. If the Government monopoly is to be confined to the matter of construction of main lines, I share the opinion very strongly with many of you that as far as feeder lines and light railways are concerned the capital required for their construction should be left to the enterprise of private joint stock companies. A beginning in this direction must be made and people given an opportunity of directly associating themselves with the development of the entire inland trade. The Hon'ble Mr. Baker when placing his Financial statement for the year 1906-7, said that the Government of India had under consideration a proposal as to whether District Boards might be empowered to levy a small additional cess for the construction or guarantee of light local railways or tramways, such as is permitted in the Madras Presidency under Act VI of 1890. It was then said that the system had beneficial results in Madras, and that it might be deemed expedient to extend it to other parts of India. We have not heard anything further about the proposal probably because it has not reached the stage of a definite project ready for execution. It is necessary therefore that this matter should also receive the attention of Local Boards and Councils and should be critically examined in all its bearings. We must also press proposals regarding the construction of new lines in these Provinces. The Vizianagram—Raipur section when completed will bring us in touch with the seaboard trade of the Madras Presidency, and also bring the eastern part of these Provinces into contact with a fertile and rich country. But we should also press for the opening out of the Nagpur—Itarsi section, which will not only directly join the southern part of these Provinces with the northern trade of the country, but will secure a less circuitous route to southern India. I also think that our friends in Berar will strenuously advocate the joining of Khandwa to Akola, and also a line connecting the latter station with the rich cotton district of Bassim, thence passing through the Nizam's territory and linking the latter to the Godavari Valley Railway. I would also ask you to urge the construction of feeder lines from Pulgaon to Arvi, from Amraoti to Morsi, from Dhamangaon to Teotmal, from Malkapur to Karanja, as these will not only open out the internal trade of some of our richest districts, but will also secure manifold blessings for the people of these Provinces.

Some leading Industries of the Provinces.

I can but briefly deal with the principal industries in which the people of these Provinces are deeply interested and the conditions under which they can be improved and developed so as to conduce to the prosperity of the people generally. It can not be said that we have made much advance in the Mill Industry in these Provinces. The mills that we have in the Central Provinces and Berar are numerically few, and it is difficult to understand why, with an ample supply of cotton at our door, we have not made a greater advance in this direction. The city of Ahmedabad, with a population of about 50 per cent. more than Nagpur or Jubbulpore, has nearly fifty mills, and, with conditions less favourable, it is fast becoming a large mercantile city. If we only consider the number of hand-loom weavers that are working all over the many districts of these Provinces, we can better realize the bright future that is still in store for this industry. It is, perhaps, the labour question, as well as the unsuccessful working of one or two mills, which have tended to damp the ardour of the people and retard the rise of the Mill industry here, but we have only to look to the magnificent Empress Mills in Nagpur to realise that there is still a great deal of room for well conducted and honestly worked mills in these Provinces. I am aware also that there is a growing fear entertained in some quarters that the growth of the power-loom will lead to the decay of the hand-loom industry, but these apprehensions are really unfounded, for the simple reason that, if the hand-loom is displaced by the power-loom, hand-loom weavers will find not only congenial but more lucrative employment on power-loom, and the country will be turning out more fabrics and importing less from foreign countries. But I am one of those who wish to see the hand-loom not decaying but prospering side by side with the power-loom. The silk-bordered *saries* and the famous *dhoties* which are woven on hand-loom in Burhanpore and Nagpur are evidences of the dexterity and industry of our people, who have good reason to be proud of their weaving industry. But we must also admit that if the hand-loom industry is to prosper we must teach the native weaver to discard his primitive methods, and we must also give him an improved hand-loom, so that he may be in a position to compete with the power-loom. Until prompt attempts are made to help the indigenous weaver in this direction, we cannot be very hopeful of the success of the hand-weaving industry. I profess to possess no expert knowledge on the subject, but I am aware that many people who have given some thought to the matter appear to think that the looms of our indigenous weavers require considerable improvement. The Indian Textile Journal, writing about the hand-loom the other day, very pertinently remarked that "the improvement in the Indian hand-loom is a matter of great urgency. "An enormous number of good looms is required, but a new design of general utility would seem to demand the combined ability of several experienced weavers and inventors. "The object of the inventors should be to ascertain the best possible working speed in "picks per minute of the average weaver, and then to adapt the mechanism of the loom to withstand the strain of work." It is then, imperative that a body of experts should submit to a detailed examination the apparatus connected with this industry from the different centres, and so ascertain the best appliance or mechanical contrivance which will make the work of the Indian weaver more efficient. Our weavers are, as a class, very poor, and dislike any change in their methods, and unless our philanthropists come forward and actively aid them and impress upon them the advantages of modern machinery, they are not likely to adopt them. But in all such matters we must expect initial difficulty and impediment. You might also consider the project of starting small hand-loom factories in suitable localities; and to carry out, this sort of work you might profitably call in the aid of joint stock capital.

The Mill industry is a progressive one and it is constantly undergoing some change either in machines and appliances or in methods of working, and it is therefore advisable that all the mill owners in these Provinces should meet together and exchange views. I do not deprecate any healthy rivalry between the different mill companies, but there should not

be jealousy and bad spirit between the proprietors of the different concerns. We must all aim at the advancement of the industry, and we should be ever willing to discuss and settle all doubtful points by co-operation. I would therefore very vehemently urge upon you the necessity of starting a Mill-owners' Association on the same lines as that in Bombay, for a fair, full and unselfish examination of all questions affecting our common interests. The objects which such an Association should keep in view are of a twofold nature, firstly, to disseminate the information we already possess, both technical and general; and secondly, to obtain more precise information of local conditions and circumstances under which this branch of India's most important industry can be successfully carried out. An Association constituted and conducted on these lines, with my friend Khan Bahadur Bezonji Dadabhoy as its Chairman and guide—than whom there is no more competent or reliable authority on mill industry in all India—is bound to prosper, and the industry is sure to rapidly develop in our Provinces.

In the department of mineral industry, a fairly good share of both English and Indian capital has been of late invested in our Provinces. You are all aware of the fever which is now prevailing in the trade in manganese ore, and a good many European and Indian firms have obtained mining leases and many others have applied for prospecting licenses. The export of manganese ore is very paying at present, but it is proper that a warning note be sounded in good time. I do not wish to say anything that will discourage that trade, but it is necessary that our investors should act with caution and prudence. Several extensive deposits of more or less good quality have of late been discovered in Southern India, and it is difficult to state how long the present boom in the trade is likely to continue; but those who are competent to express an opinion are positive that if all the deposits at present discovered continue to export the ores the supply is bound to exceed the world's demand. The chaos and disorder prevailing in the Russian dominions as well as the activity which has prevailed of late in the iron and steel trade of America and Germany, have contributed to the rise in prices. Intending investors might take these matters into consideration, as the normal conditions may be restored any day and the result would be an inevitable and disastrous drop in the selling price of the commodity.

But there is another industry for which there is a great future in our Provinces. I refer to the coal industry. There are excellent deposits both in the Chanda and Chhindwara Districts, and the enterprise of private capitalists is needed to open out these mines, which can be worked most advantageously. This branch of industry ought to be encouraged by all those interested in the progress of the country; moreover, in promoting this industry, you have not to fall back on foreign markets and ports for consumption. We have a market at our door, and we will thus be able to supply a growing demand for coal in our local mills, factories and railways, and we will be making India independent of all foreign coal imported from abroad. The coal-mining enterprise also compares very favourably with other industries in that the average labourer finds it a more congenial and profitable employment and can unquestionably earn higher wages than when engaged in agriculture or in Cotton Mills.

There are numerous minor industries to which a small capitalist and ordinary investor might profitably turn his attention. Block-printing, which was a thriving industry at one time in the Nagpur, Bhandara and Chanda Districts, is gradually languishing. A little encouragement would revive this useful but decaying industry. The Bell-metal industry of Mandla also needs a little more extraneous aid for its development. The flower vases and the various articles made there can compare most favourably both in point of elegance and purity of design with the metal ware industry of the United Provinces. A leather tanning factory started on proper lines would be a very paying business. The great quantity of hides sent to Bombay and Cawnpore distinctly shows that there is ample scope for the development of this industry in many parts of these Provinces. Button making as well as the cutlery trade should be profitable forms of investment. Improved tile-making and

brick-making are productive industries which if established on a large scale would find ready markets. There are two pottery works in Jubbulpore, but a few more can be stately maintained with advantage along the railway line between Gondia and Jubbulpore. The glass and bangle-making industry of the Ramtek Tahsil in the Nagpur District is also entitled to your special attention and encouragement. Why should carpet making be restricted to Jails and reformatories as a penal industry only to be learnt by convicts and the like? If private enterprise is extended to this most useful form of industry, I see no reason why some of our central stations should not compete with Mirzapore and Bikanir. A flour mill in Nagpur and a glass factory in Kamptee would prove profitable industries for our wealthy and enterprising citizens. These brief notes do not cover the whole ground of our industries to which attention should be directed; they are simply intended to mark the nature and character of some of our most profitable industries to which our patriotic and philanthropic citizens might usefully turn their attention and employ their energies.

True Swadeshism.

If we therefore unite and work on the lines I have indicated above we will be not only supporting but promoting a truly *Swadeshi* movement. Our strength and our prosperity hang on our national trade; and it is essential for the augmentation of our national wealth that there should be regular expansion in the volume of our trade. How can our country bear the weight of its increasing national expenditure unless our internal trade increases and the markets for our food-stuffs, raw materials and indigenous productions attract a greater share of the worlds' attention? We should strive to create a liking for all articles that are produced in this country, and strenuously endeavour to foster a preference for everything made in this country, and then we must meet that liking or preference by healthy expansion of our home manufactures to meet the demand thus created. Thus we shall have true *Swadeshism*. Nobody can take exception to a true and righteous *Swadeshism*. I attach the greatest importance to the *Swadeshi* movement. *Swadeshism* in its purely industrial aspect cannot but command the best sympathy of all right thinking people. Why should India be blamed for seeking to adopt a movement which all other nations have been uniformly following for years past. But let us begin in a reasonable manner. We can incur no censure if we honestly strive to protect our own interests. By all means, then, let us adopt measures to foster and encourage our indigenous industries, to use our home manufactures in preference to foreign goods, and by an economic organisation learn to utilize our labour, our capital and all our best resources and energies, and thus ensure ourselves ultimate success. "The desire to see the country economically independent will not be accomplished by merely patriotic demonstrations against foreign goods. Their importation can be prevented only by the manufacture in this country of the same quality at lower rates or of better materials at the same price. To do this enterprise is wanted more than self-sacrifice, enterprise on the part of students willing to take up technical subjects instead of law, philosophy and literature; enterprise on the part of capitalists ready to invest intelligently in industries now taxed by borrowed capital." In the practice of true *Swadeshism* we can make ourselves better respected and appreciated in the commercial world. We all know that Great Britain has acquired her commercial and industrial supremacy as well as her conspicuous position as a nation of vast capital by rigidly following a policy of strict protection in the earlier years of her export trade. Before the year 1846, when a new departure was made by entering on an era of free trade, she had profitably developed textile, iron, coal and endless other industries. Why should not India follow the example thus set by England, and regain the past commercial and industrial supremacy which she once enjoyed? Even England, with her mighty resources, her unsurpassed commerce, her enormous wealth, her great powers of production and recuperation, is now gradually drifting towards a protective tariff, and it would cause no wonder if in a few short years she were finally to revert to a system of exclusion and protection to save for herself at

least the supply of British markets. But in promoting the *Swadeshi* movement we must bear in mind that the basis of commercial progress in India is the dual industry of farmer and manufacturer. Any *Swadeshi* movement therefore must keep this dual object in view. It must recognise that it is essential for all true *Swadeshim* to promote the true interests of the farmer as well as the manufacturer. It must have as bases "two power stations; "the one agricultural and the other manufacturing. This will not lead to friction or "discord; though working separately these two generating stations will co-operate. "They will develop power side by side, and in practice they will act and re-act bene- "ficially, the one upon the other. The inter-dependence of agricultural and manufacturing "industrialism, their, mutual helpfulness, the full play of the forces that each can bring to "bear for the advancement of the common interest of the two must not be lost sight of. As "an example, to manufacture sugar in India from raw material the product of this country "is not sufficient to assure success. We must get at the root of the problem. The raw "material must be produced at the lowest possible cost and of the best quality that can be "grown in this country. Based chiefly upon agriculture, industrial progress in India "should have before it a great future; but it is imperative that attention be given to both "the producing and the manufacturing branches of the work. Nor should the mineral "resources of the earth be overlooked. The main object is to make nature yield her "best, from deep below as well as near to the surface, and to complete within India as "advanced a stage of manufacture or preparation of natural products as may be possible."

Conclusion.

In the above remarks I have endeavoured to lay before you, Brother Delegates, a few suggestions which seem to me to constitute the chief factors in our industrial and economic development. I am fully conscious of my many short comings, and I am aware that in dealing with a subject of such vast interest and magnitude I have not approached the task either with a fulness of knowledge or ripeness of judgment. But my great consolation is that there are energetic, arduous and fervent workers in the cause of industrialism and that a bright and glorious future is even now distinctly visible on the horizon. I congratulate these Provinces in their having the good fortune to secure for their Chief Commissioner an officer who has always taken a keen and ever abiding interest in the industrial welfare of these Provinces. In the personality of the Hon'ble Mr. Craddock we have a true and staunch friend of Indian industries. Many of you are aware how closely he has associated himself with the industrial development of the Nagpur Division during the six arduous years he held the office of Commissioner. With such a faithful and devoted friend of industrialism at the head of these Provinces, with such an adroit and cautious helmsman, the ship of industrialism can now confidently start on its mighty voyage, laden with the fulfilment of our best hopes and blessings, and we pray that the great Power may bless and prosper the glorious work that we have in hand and make it fruitful in beneficent results. I shall conclude, then in the words of Lord Ripon, the most beloved of India's Viceroys, that "when the widest generalizations of science are reached, and its loftiest discoveries are mastered, there will still remain, above and beyond them, all those mysteries of life which prove to us that the utmost knowledge of the outward universe will never solve the greatest problem of life, and that we must look elsewhere for that help which is to enable us to fulfil our work on earth, for the glory of Him who is the Ruler, not only of the world around us, but of the hearts and spirits of men."

Names of Delegates.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
1.	Abdulali Ahmadjibhai	Merchant.	Raipur.
2.	Abdul Hossein Tuyobbhai	do.	do.
3.	Ahmad Ali Yusufalli	do.	Rajnandgaon.
4.	Ahmadbhai	do.	Raipur.
5.	Abdul Ali	do.	do.
6.	Abdulla Osman	do.	do.
7.	Ahmad bhai	do.	do.
8.	Abhoiram Byas	do.	do.
9.	Abdul Ali Alabux	do.	do.
10.	Amarchand Sett	Banker.	Raipur, Rajim.
11.	Ali Khan Haji	Merchant.	Damoh.
12.	Ajodhia Pershad	Banker.	Bilaspur.
13.	Asgar Ali	Pleader.	Raipur.
14.	Amrit Sivram	Malguzar.	Bemetarra, Drug.
15.	Anund Rao Vamon	do.	Drug.
16.	A. C. Bannerji	Secy. H. Sabha	Jubbulpur.
17.	Anund Rao	Malguzar	Gondia.
18.	Annoji Kesho	do.	Himganghat.
19.	Abdul Guffoor	Contractor	Raipur.
20.	Abdul Hossein	do.	do.
21.	Amarnath Pandit	Merchant.	do.
22.	Beniram	Malguzar	do.
23.	Bajrongdass	Mohant Malguzar	do.
24.	Bansilall	Malguzar	do.
25.	Bhagwandass	Mohant	do.
26.	Balkissen Nathani	Merchant	do.
27.	Badripershad	Banker	do.
28.	Bisrambhai	Marchant	do.
29.	Bonsilall Purohit	Banker	do.
30.	Bagchi Kedar Nath	Pleader	do.
31.	Balkrishna Srikher	Malguzar	do.
32.	Balwont Rao Modok	do.	do.
33.	Baji Rao	do.	do.
34.	Badruddin	do.	do.
35.	Banmali Puranik	do.	Raipur, Rajim.
36.	Bhowani Singh Sukul	do.	Raipur.
37.	Balmukund	do.	Bilaspur.
38.	Bhaiialall	do.	do.
39.	Bhasker Ganesh	Pleader	Nagpur.
40.	Babu Rao Powar	Malguzar	Raipur, Dhamtari.
41.	B. G. Ghate	Pleader	Amraoti.
42.	Byramji P. C	Merchant	Raipur.
43.	Bapurao Dada R. B.	Pleader	Nagpur.
44.	B. S. Munji	Doctor	do.
45.	Bansgopal	Malguzar	Raipur.
46.	Bhayalall	Merchant	Dhaneli.
47.	Bhargarao Gadgil R. B.	Pensioner	Nagpur.
48.	Bhagovati Pershad Misro	Malguzar	Drug.
49.	Bisohnlall Babu	do.	Raipur.
50.	Bansgopal	do.	do.
51.	Banmali Pershad	do.	Drug.
52.	Bisram Tewari	do.	Rajim, Raipur.
53.	Baldeopershad Pande		Jubbulpore.
54.	Balvant Rao Mudholker	Pensioner	Amraoti.
55.	Bholaprosad	Malguzar	Raipur.
56.	Bisram Babu	do.	do.
57.	Bhagvan Sett Pundit	Manager	Drug.
58.	Bhola Singh	Malguzar	do.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
59.	B. G. Bodhanker	Pleader	Amraoti.
60.	B. N. Deshmukh	do.	do.
61.	Bhagwani Lohar	Agriculturist	Drug.
62.	Behari Lall Khazanchi	Banker	Jubbulpore.
63.	Baji Rao Kridutt	Malguzar	Raipur, Dhamtari.
64.	Beniram Chotniall	Banker	do.
65.	Chandu Lall Pandey	Malguzar	Drug.
66.	Chudaman Sing	do.	Raipur.
67.	Cursetji P. C	Merchant	do.
68.	Chindri Patel	Malguzar	Bhandara.
69.	Chandu Lall Sethia	Banker	Raipur.
70.	Chandan Sing	Malguzar	do.
71.	Chedilall	do.	Bilaspur.
72.	Chunilall Dube	Pleader	Damoh.
73.	Chamru Sah	Malguzar	Dhamtari, Raipur.
74.	Dev Sing	do.	Raipur.
75.	Dulganjan Singh	Zemindar	Fingeswar, Raipur.
76.	Dharampuri	Malguzar	Dhamtari, Raipur.
77.	D. C. Khaparde	Pleader	Amraoti.
78.	D. N. Chaudhuri	Pleader	Raipur.
79.	Dwarka Prosad Rayzada	do.	Drug.
80.	Debidin	Banker	do.
81.	Deorao Vinayek	Pleader	Amraoti.
82.	Dhund Moreswar	Malguzar.	Raipur.
83.	D. R. Chandakar	do.	Betul.
84.	G. A. Rowani	Hd. Master M. School	Raipur.
85.	Gajanan Rao	Pleader	do.
86.	Gajanan Sao	Malguzar	do.
87.	Govind Lall	Merchant	do.
88.	Govindpershad Sao	do.	do.
89.	Gunpatrao Sitaram	Malguzar	do.
90.	G. V. Shrikhande	Pleader	Saugor.
91.	Gunny Bhai	Merchant	Raipur.
92.	Gunny Bhai	Agent	do.
93.	Gunni Haji	Merchant	do.
94.	Ganpat Rao Mahadik	Zemindar	Rajim.
95.	Govind Rao	Mukhtear	Raipur.
96.	Gopal Rao	Agent	do.
97.	Goibinath	do.	do.
98.	Gangaram Subedar	Malguzar	Arang, Raipur.
99.	G. V. Kukoley	Banker	Nagpur.
100.	Gokulpershad	do.	Bilaspur.
101.	G. S. Khaparde	Pleader	Amraoti.
102.	G. M. Buti	Banker	Nagpur.
103.	Govinlall	do.	Raipur.
104.	Gokuldhara	Agriculturist	do.
105.	Govind Rao Khusre	Malguzar	do.
106.	Gaindsing Dao	do.	Drug.
107.	Gopal Ramchundra Deo B. A.	do.	Bilaspur.
108.	Gopal Sing Deo	do.	Drug.
109.	Gunpat Lall Ojha	do.	do.
110.	Gajadhor Sao	Merchant	Bilaspur.
111.	Ghoti Shastri	Malguzar	Nagpur.
112.	Govind Nand Raiguru	Photographer	Raipur.
113.	Golam Ahmad	Merchant	Buldana.
114.	Gulam Abbas	do.	Raipur.
115.	G. L. Shrikhande	Pleader	Saugor.
116.	Ganesh Dutt	Malguzar	Raipur.
117.	Habib Bhai Nuralli	Merchant	Rajnandgaon.
118.	Hirasing	do.	Raipur.
119.	Haripershad	Malguzar	do.
120.	Hanuman Pershad R. B.	Pensioner	Jubbulpore.
121.	Haldher Shastri	Malguzar	Raipur.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
122.	Hemgir Mohunt	Malguzar	Raipur.
123.	Harshebok Prashad	Mukhtear	Soormur, Zemindar.
124.	H. M. Kale	Pleader	Betul.
125.	Hemraj Joy Kissen	Malguzar	Bhandara.
126.	Hoormusji P. T.	Agent	Raipur.
127.	Hanuman Singh Thakur	Malguzar	Rajim, Raipur.
128.	Huseni Beg	do.	Drug.
129.	Hari Anund Rao	do.	Bhandara.
130.	Harial Babu	Mukhtear	Raipur.
131.	Hasnu Tailor	Tailor	do.
132.	Izaz Hossein	Merchant	Raipur.
133.	Ishak Ali	do.	Dhamtari, Raipur.
134.	Joharmal	do.	Raipur.
135.	Jagunnath	do.	do.
136.	Jamal Bhai	do.	do.
137.	Jagdeo Rao	Malguzar	Dhamtari, Raipur.
138.	Jawahir Sing Deo	do.	Drug.
139.	Jalom Chand	Merchant	Nagpur.
140.	Joydeo Sing	Malguzar	Drug.
141.	Jado Balwant Kerkary	do.	do.
142.	Jaharwal Singh	do.	Bilaspur.
143.	Jugunath Pershad	do.	Raipur.
144.	Jellabhai	Merchant	do.
145.	Jageswor Kesho Pande	Pleader	Betul.
146.	Jonardon Brahman	Mukhtear	Drug.
147.	Jandrao Nandji	Pleader	Akola.
148.	Jagannath Pershad	Contractor	Raipur.
149.	Jeswant Rao Mardiker	Malguzar	do.
150.	Jaylall Pershad	do.	do.
151.	Kasiram	Malguzar	do.
152.	Kuleswar Prosad	Malguzar	do.
153.	Kesarimal	Agent	do.
154.	Kanhyalall	Banker	do.
155.	Kamruddin Khan	Malguzar	do.
156.	Kalyansing	Tahutdar	do.
157.	Kanhayalall Sahu	Banker	do.
158.	Kashiram Tewari	Malguzar	Hoshangabad.
159.	Kalka Dutt Ojha	do.	Raipur.
160.	Krishn	do.	Bhandara.
161.	K. R. Deshmukh	do.	Raipur.
162.	Kapilnath	do.	do.
163.	K. V. Densker	do.	Bilaspur.
164.	Kissen Prosad	do.	Raipur.
165.	Karamsing	do.	do.
166.	Kashipershad Choube	do.	Jubbulpore.
167.	Keshoji Ramji	Banker	Raipur.
168.	Kesho Venkatesh	Landholder	Amraoti.
169.	Kaliram Some	Malguzar	Raipur.
170.	Khuman Singh	do.	do.
171.	Karia Sao	do.	Drug.
172.	Krisna R. N. Desmukh	Pleader	Wardha.
173.	Kesho Rao Mahaden Kale	do.	do.
174.	Latif Bhai	Merchant	Raipur.
175.	Loknath Sao	Malguzar	do.
176.	Laloo Lall	Merchant	do.
177.	Lachman Ram	Malguzar	Hoshangabad.
178.	Lal Giraj Singh	Zamindar	Soormar Raipur.
179.	Laxman Vishnath	Malguzar	Raipur.
180.	Loknath Ojha	Agent	do.
181.	Lalloopershad	Malguzar	do.
182.	Laghua Sahu	do.	Drug.
183.	Lalloopershad	Agent	Raipur.
184.	Lalji Vithorn	Pleader	Akola.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
185.	Mansaram	Malguzar	Raipur.
186.	Mathuradass	do.	do.
187.	Mulchand Sethia	Merchant	do.
188.	Munnalall Sahu	Malguzar	do.
189.	Murlidher	do.	do.
190.	Muhammad Ali Abdul Ali	Merchant	do.
191.	Musekher Kederji	do.	Fingeswara Raipur.
192.	Mohanlall	Agent	Nagpur.
193.	M. K. Padhey	Pleader	do.
194.	M. K. Sapre	Manager Press	do.
195.	Manik Rao Nago Rao Deshmukh	Malguzar	Bilaspur.
196.	Manmohan Singh Thakur	do.	Nagpur.
197.	M. V. Kawgai	Banker	Amraoti.
198.	M. A. Despande	Malguzar	Bhandara.
199.	Motiram	do.	Raipur.
200.	Maharajdin Mothuraprasad	Banker	do.
201.	M. M. Chackravarti	Bar-at-Law	Nagpur.
202.	Maniram	Malguzar	Bilaspur.
203.	M. N. Sircar	Pleader	do.
204.	Motilall Sao	Malguzar	Raipur.
205.	Monshwar Rao	Banker	do.
206.	Mathurapershad	Malguzar	do.
207.	Mahadeo Dadaji	Banker	do.
208.	Murlidher	Malguzar	Drug.
209.	Mohonlall	Merchant	Bilaspur.
210.	Mannolall	Malguzar	Raipur.
211.	Manmohan Lall	do.	Akola.
212.	Mohadeo Gangadhar	Pleader	Jubbulpore.
213.	Mannulall Mathuria	Banker	Akola.
214.	Nazat Ali Kamruddin	Merchant	Raipur.
215.	Narain Rao	Pleader	do.
216.	N. K. Mitra	do.	do.
217.	Nathuji Jagtap	Malguzar	Dhamtari, Raipur.
218.	Narain Rao	do.	Raipur.
219.	Narayan Rao Dani	do.	do.
220.	Narain Rao Wadegenker	Doctor	do.
221.	Narain Balkissen Nakre	Proprietor Press	Saugor.
222.	Nathmull	Banker	Raipur.
223.	Nandrau	Malguzar	Chindwara.
224.	Narsingdass Chodnak	Merchant	Hoshangabad.
225.	Narsygurad Tikaram	Malguzar	do.
226.	Nanhylall	do.	Nagpur.
227.	N. Raghunath	Pleader	Wardha.
228.	N. Vinayak	Malguzar	Bilaspur.
229.	Nago Atmaram	do.	Nagpur.
230.	N. D. Udhoji	Pleader	do.
231.	N. N. Dey	Bar-at-Law	Bilaspur.
232.	Nathmull Rattanlall	Banker	Raipur.
233.	Nathumull Acharji	do.	do.
234.	N. K. Chowdhury	Pleader	Drug.
235.	Narain Doss	Malguzar	do.
236.	Nilkanto Dalal	Merchant	do.
237.	Narainpershad Dube	Contractor	do.
238.	Nilkanto	Malguzar	Raipur.
239.	Nana Shamrao	Contractor	do.
240.	Narain Tailor	Merchant	Drug.
241.	Nagri Dass Mohunt	Malguzar	Raipur.
242.	Purusottam Ganes	do.	do.
243.	Puranlall	do.	do.
244.	Parmeswar Shastri	do.	do.
245.	Purusottan Balkrishna	Petition Writer	do.
246.	Parasram	Malguzar	do.
247.	Parmeswar Dayal	Muktear	do.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
248.	Pendabri Sahu	Muktear	Raipur.
249.	Pyare Lall	Malguzar	do.
250.	Pandurang	Muktear	Nagpur.
251.	Paranjpe Dar	Dr.	Berar.
252.	P. D. Sathu	Pleader	do.
253.	Ramdass Dani	Malguzar	Raipur.
254.	Radha Kissen	do.	do.
255.	Ramsaranlall Sao	do.	do.
256.	Ram Kissen Nathani	Merchant	do.
257.	Ramdoyal	Malguzar	do.
258.	Ramjilall	Tahutdar	do.
259.	Ramlall	Malguzar	do.
260.	Ramnarain	do.	do.
261.	Ratan Chand Bagri	Merchant	do.
262.	Roghoha Ramchand	Malguzar	do.
263.	Rekhabdass	Malguzar	do.
264.	Ramchandra Sakharam	do.	do.
265.	Rahim Sekh	Merchant	do.
266.	Ramkissen Sao	Malguzar	do.
267.	Ramadhin	do.	do.
268.	Ratanji	Merchant	Nagpur.
269.	Raghunath Rao	Pleader	do.
270.	Ramkrishna Rao	Malguzar	Hoshangabad.
271.	Raoji Govind	Pleader	do.
272.	Raghoba Laxman	Malguzar	Nagpur.
273.	Ramnarain Rathi	Banker	do.
274.	Ramprosad	Malguzar	do.
275.	Rajaram Pant R. B.	Contractor	do.
276.	Ramprosad Sao	Malguzar	Raipur.
277.	Ramkrishna	do.	do.
278.	Ramprosad Sukul	do.	do.
279.	Ramratan	do.	do.
280.	Ramdass Nayik	do.	Amraoti.
281.	R. N. Mudholker R. B.	Pleader	do.
282.	Rameswarpershad	Agent	Drug.
283.	R. C. Bose	Pleader	do.
284.	Raghunath Chindhe	Malguzar	Bhandara.
285.	Raghubanslall	do.	Drug.
286.	Rupram	Banker	do.
287.	Ramprosad	Muktear	do.
288.	Ramratan	Malguzar	Raipur.
289.	R. V. Mahajani	Pensioner	Amraoti.
290.	Ram Chandra Annoji	Pleader	Bhandara.
291.	R. B. Joshi	Contractor	Saugar.
292.	Raja of Saugor	Political Pensioner	do.
293.	Raroopershad	Malguzar	Drug.
294.	Sovsing	Agent	do.
295.	Sivram Sukul	Malguzar	Rajnandgoan.
296.	Sharafalli Ahmadali	Merchant	Raipur
297.	Sohanlall	do.	do.
298.	Shanker Venkatesh	Malguzar	do.
299.	Haji Sale Mahomed	Merchant	do.
300.	Suliman	do.	do.
301.	Sitaram Bhate	do.	do.
302.	Sahadev Sao	Malguzar	do.
303.	Siv Ram Bhoo Herdiker	Malguzar & Banker	do.
304.	Sadasiv Rao Herdiker	do.	do.
305.	Sadasiv Vasude Despotra	Malguzar	do.
306.	Seikh Rahim	Merchant	do.
307.	Surjoopershad	Malguzar	do.
308.	Sarodaprosad	do.	do.
309.	Sunderlall	Talukdar	do.
310.	Sheoprasad	Malguzar	do.

No.	NAME.	PROF.	DISTRICT.
311.	Sunderlall	Malguzar	Raipur.
312.	Suganchand	Agent.	do.
313.	Sambhudayal	Malguzar	do.
314.	Sheodutt	Merchant	do.
315.	S. N. Parolkar	Malguzar	Hoshangabad.
316.	Sitacharan Dube	Pleader	do.
317.	Shamrao Krishna	do.	Nagpur.
318.	Sakharam Purohit	Malguzar	Raipur.
319.	Sitaram	do.	do.
320.	S. C. Mitter	Pleader	Bilaspur.
321.	Saligram Divedi	Malguzar	Hasangabad.
322.	Sakharam Narain	do.	Bilaspur.
323.	Sheochurn Tewari	Muktear	Raipur.
324.	Sunderlall	do.	do.
325.	Samliia Deo	Malguzar	Rajim.
326.	Sitaram	do.	Raipur.
327.	Swaroopasing	do.	do.
328.	Sanker Rao Govind	do.	Nagpur.
329.	Salabut Khan	Malguzar	Drog.
330.	Sitaram	do.	do.
331.	Sadeseo Rao Palesdhor	Pleader	Nagpur.
332.	Sheolall Babu	Malguzar	Raipur.
333.	S. S. Wazlwar	Pleader	Bhandara.
334.	Sobhan Somor	Malguzar	Raipur.
335.	Sadasiv Doyal	do.	do.
336.	Shamir Khan	Merchant	do.
337.	S. K. Durani	Pleader	Berar.
338.	Sheoraj Buth	Contractor	Raipur.
339.	Sadasiv Swyobhom	Pleader	Amraoti.
340.	Sitaram Luxman	Malguzar	Akola.
341.	Sitaram Amrut	Mafidar	Raipur.
342.	Taber Alli Golamalli	Merchant	Rajnandgaon.
343.	Tukaran Vishna	Pleader	Raipur.
344.	Thacker C. M.	Bar-at-law	do.
345.	Thakurpershad Tewari	Malguzar	do.
346.	T. Vinayek	Merchant	do.
347.	Trimbak Rao Sathe	Pensioner	Nagpur.
348.	Trimbak Rao	Pleader	Bilaspur.
349.	T. R. Zahady	do.	Wardha.
350.	Tarachand Dube	Malguzar	Bilaspur.
351.	Umarbhai	Merchant	Raipur.
352.	Vallabhdass	do.	do.
353.	V. S. Sivji	do.	do.
354.	Venkat Rao	Malguzar	do.
355.	V. R. Joshi	Pleader	Nagpur.
356.	V. R. Pundit R. B.	Bar-at-law	do.
357.	Vickoji Panth Bhasker	Contractor	do.
358.	W. R. Kolhatkar R. B.	Pensioner	do.
359.	Vithal Baijnath	do.	Amraoti.
360.	Venkat Rao	Malguzar	Bhandara.
361.	Vinayek Rao	do.	Gondia.
362.	V. M. Jakatdar	Pleader	Bhandara.
363.	V. Ramchandra	do.	Amraoti.
364.	Vishnu Mureshwar	do.	Akola.
365.	Vishna Balkrishna	do.	do.
366.	V. B. Kekra	do.	Mandla.
367.	B. S. Munje	Doctor	Nagpur.
368.	W. B. Lakhe	Pleader	Raipur.
369.	Y. J. Rajimwallah	Malguzar	do.
370.	Yado Rao	Pleader	Bilaspur.
371.	Yado Rao	do.	Raipur.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 to 1909 (24 & 25 Vict., c. 67, 55 & 56 Vict., a. 14, and 9 Edu. VII, c. 4).

The Council met at Government House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 4th
March 1912.

INDENTURED LABOUR.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "Sir, I rise to move that this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Government of India should now take the necessary steps to prohibit the recruitment of Indian labourers under contract of indenture, whether for employment at home or in any British Colony.

"Hon'ble Members will remember that two years ago this Council adopted a Resolution recommending that the Governor General should obtain powers to prohibit the recruitment of indentured labour in this country for the Colony of Natal. The Government, who accepted that recommendation, gave effect to it by carrying through this Council the necessary empowering legislation, and the new law was put into operation on the 1st July last against Natal. I respectfully invite the Council today to go a step further and recommend that the system of indentured labour should now be abolished altogether. It is true that the Resolution of two years ago was adopted by this Council principally as a measure of retaliation rendered necessary by the continued indignities and ill-treatment to which our countrymen were subjected in South Africa; but my own view, expressed even then in this Council, was that apart from the question of retaliation the system should be abolished because it was wrong in itself. I do not think it necessary to describe to this Council at any length what this system really is. Its principal features may roughly be stated to be six in number. Under this system, those who are recruited bind themselves, first, to go to a distant and unknown land, the language, usages and customs of which they do not know, and where they have no friends or relatives. Secondly, they bind themselves to work there for any employer to whom they may be allotted whom they do not know and who does not know them, and in whose choice they have no voice. Thirdly, they bind themselves to live there on the estate of the employer, must not go anywhere without a special permit, and must do whatever tasks are assigned to them, no matter however irksome those tasks may be. Fourthly, the binding is for a certain fixed period, usually five years, during which time they cannot voluntarily withdraw from the contract and have no means of escaping from its hardships, however intolerable. Fifthly, they bind themselves to work during the period for a fixed wage, which invariably is lower, and in some cases very much lower, than the wage paid to free labour around them. And sixthly, and lastly, and this to my mind is the worst feature of the system, they are placed under a special law, never explained to them before they left the country, which is in a language which they do not understand, and which imposes on them a criminal liability for the most trivial breaches of the contract, in place of the civil liability which usually attaches to such breaches. Thus they are liable under this law to imprisonment with hard labour, which may extend to two and in some cases to three months, not only for fraud, not only for deception, but for negligence, for carelessness and—will the Council believe it?—for even an impertinent word or gesture to the manager or his overseers. These, Sir, are the principal features of the system, and when it is remembered that the victims of the system—I can call them by no other name—are generally simple, ignorant, illiterate, resourceless people belonging to the poorest classes of this country and that they are induced to enter—or it would be more correct to say are entrapped into entering—into these agreements by the

unscrupulous representations of wily professional recruiters, who are paid so much per head for the labour they supply and whose interest in them ceases the moment they are handed to the emigration agents, no fair-minded man will, I think, hesitate to say that the system is a monstrous system, iniquitous in itself, based on fraud and maintained by force, nor will he, I think, demur to the statement that a system so wholly opposed to modern sentiments of justice and humanity is a grave blot on the civilization of any country that tolerates it. Let the Council glance briefly at the origin and the history of the system, and it will at once be struck by three facts which in themselves are a sufficient condemnation of the system. The first is, that this system of indentured labour came into existence to take the place of slave labour after the abolition of slavery. This is a fact admitted by everybody, and Lord Sanderson's Committee, whose report I have before me, put it in the very fore-front of its report. The second fact is that it is a system under which even the negro, only just then emancipated, scorned to come, but under which the free people of this country were placed. And thirdly what strikes one is that the conscience of Government—and by Government I mean both the Government of India and the Imperial Government—has been very uneasy throughout about this question, as may be seen from various inquiries ordered from time to time into the working of the system, its repeated suspension for abuses, and its reluctant resumption under pressure from planters. The first, and in some respects the most important, inquiry that was held was due to the action that the Parliament in England took at the very start in this matter. As I have already mentioned, the system came into existence about the year 1834, after the abolition of slavery. In 1837 the matter attracted the attention of Parliament, and in the debate on the question that followed the system was denounced in strong terms by Lord Brougham and Mr. Buxton, and other great Englishmen of that time. The result was that the system was discontinued at once and an inquiry was ordered into its nature and working. A Committee of four gentlemen was appointed, who sat in Calcutta and considered the whole subject. The Committee, after a very careful investigation, submitted a majority and a minority report. Three members out of four condemned the system altogether, and urged that it should not be allowed to come into existence again. Only one member expressed himself in favour of reviving the system under certain safeguards which he suggested. The matter went back to Parliament; but the Parliament, already exhausted by the great effort that it had made in connexion with the abolition of slavery and wearied by the constant wail of planters in regard to the ruin that was threatening them, ultimately followed in this case a somewhat extraordinary procedure and adopted the minority report of one member, as against the majority report of three members. And this was done in a very thin House, only about 150 members being present. As a result of this vote, the system was allowed to be revived in the year 1842. The conscience of the Government, however, has continued troubled, and there have been, since then, numerous other inquiries into the working of the system, resulting in its temporary suspension, followed unfortunately by its resumption again owing to the influence of the planters. I will give the Council a few instances. In Mauritius the system was introduced in 1834, was suspended in 1837 on account of the debate in Parliament, to which I have already referred, and was resumed in 1842 after that vote in the House of Commons. It was, however, suspended again in 1844, was resumed in 1849, and was finally stopped last year; at any rate, there is no more any indentured immigration into Mauritius. In British Guiana the system was suspended in 1838 under the action of the House of Commons; it was resumed in 1844, was suspended again in 1848, and was resumed in 1851. In Trinidad, where it began in 1844, that is, after the Parliamentary action I have spoken of, it was suspended in 1848 and was resumed in 1851. In Jamaica it began in 1845, was suspended in 1848, resumed in 1860, suspended again in 1863, resumed in 1869, suspended once more in 1876 and was resumed in 1878. I am omitting the later suspensions and resumptions which were due to indentured labour not being temporarily required by the Colony. In Natal, the system began in 1860, it was suspended in 1869 and was resumed in 1872. Even in Assam, where the system was introduced in 1859, there were inquiries held in 1861, 1868, 1881 and 1895. I have not included in this list the last enquiry of 1906, because it was not undertaken to inquire into the abuses of the

system. Now, Sir, these facts clearly show that the Government has been torn throughout between two sets of considerations—one, a natural feeling of sympathy for the material interests of the white planters, and the other a regard for the humanitarian standards of administration which characterise all modern Governments.

“I have so far dealt with facts connected with this question that lie on the surface. I will now deal in greater detail with the principal objections to the system, and I will then say a word about the arguments used in its favour by its supporters. The principal objections to the system are roughly five. The first is naturally its utter inequity. Sir, whatever view one may take of the agreements into which these poor people are made to enter under the system, to dignify them by the name of ‘fair contract’ is to misuse the English language. For the stream is poisoned at its very source. It is significant that nobody has a good word to say for the professional recruiters who entrap and entice away these poor people. The recruiters are admittedly men who are generally ignorant and unscrupulous, and who, with the exception of perhaps a very few, have never been to the Colonies for which they recruit, and who, being paid so much per head, try by hook or by crook to get into their meshes as many persons as they can. The Government of India stand aside on the plea that it is a fair contract between the emigrant and his future employer! Sir, how can a contract be called a fair contract, the two parties to which are most unequally matched? How can it be a fair contract when one party to it is absolutely in a state of ignorance and helplessness, and the other party—the powerful party—takes care that it shall not know how much of it is undertaking to abide by. Take, for instance, the penal nature of the contract. The terms that are explained to the emigrants, when they enter into indenture, never include a statement of the penal nature of the law under which they have to live. Here, in volume III of the Sanderson Committee’s report the Council will find the agreements for the different Colonies reproduced. There is not a word here about the penal liabilities thrown on the poor creatures by the special laws under which they must live in the several Colonies. If this single fact is explained to them before they agree to emigrate, namely, that they would be placed in the Colonies not under the ordinary civil law for the enforcement of the contract but under a special penal law rendering them liable to imprisonment with hard labour even for trivial faults, I should like to see how many even of such ignorant, resourceless people agree to go to these distant places. I say, therefore, that the stream is poisoned at the source; that it is not a fair contract; that it is a contract between two parties that are absolutely unequally matched, a contract vitiated by the fact that most important facts in connection with it are kept from the knowledge of one party.

“In this country, Sir, the Government have from time to time enacted laws for the special protection of the peasantry. In the Bombay Presidency, for instance, we have the Dekkhan Agriculturists’ Relief Act. In the Punjab some time ago legislation was passed restricting the right of the agriculturist to alienate land. The theory that underlies such legislation is that persons who are ignorant and resourceless, do not stand on terms of equality with those who are well to do and who possess knowledge, and that a contract between two such parties is not necessarily a fair contract. The State, therefore, has a right to look into such contracts carefully, to go behind them, so to say, for the purpose, and then decide how far they should be enforced. If this is the case where only civil liability attaches to contracts, how much more should that be the case where penal liability is thrown on one party—and that the weaker party—under the contract? I therefore say that this system is altogether iniquitous. The apologists of the system, however, urge that there are safeguards provided, to prevent hardship and injustice to the emigrants when they go to their respective colonies; two such safeguards are specially mentioned; one is that in every colony there is an officer known as the Protector of Emigrants, specially to look after the interests of indentured immigrants. And secondly, there are the Magistrates to give the protection of the law to the immigrants against any cruelty that may be practised on them by their employers. Sir, these safeguards look all right on paper; in actual practice, however, both are found to be more or less illusory. These men—the Protectors and the Magistrates—are officers of the Colonial Governments.

They belong to the same class to which the planters belong. They are generally one in sympathies and in interests with the planters ; and it is not in ordinary human nature that they should care to displease those with whom they have to live, with whom they have to mix socially,—and all this for granting protection to the poor, ignorant people from a distant land, in whom their interest is purely official. Sir, if the Council has any doubt in the matter, let it turn to the evidence that is contained in the second volume of the Sanderson Committee's Report. I invite the Council to go through the evidence of a Protector named Commander Coombes ; I must also ask you to read the evidence of another witness who had once been a Protector, named Mr. Hill ; and I lastly ask you to go through the evidence of a Magistrate from Mauritius, a gentleman named Mr. Bateson. Commander Coombes was Protector of Immigrants in Trinidad in the West Indies ; Mr. Hill was a Protector in the Straits Settlements, that is, on this side nearer home ; and Mr. Bateson was a Magistrate in Mauritius. Of the three witnesses, Commander Coombes is frankly a friend of the planters ; he makes no secret of the fact that he is there nominally as a Protector of the immigrants, but really to see that they do the work for which they are taken to the colony. It comes out in the cross-examination of this gentleman that he is himself a planter, and one can easily see where his sympathies must be on account of his position as a planter. Of course he takes care to say that he himself does not employ indentured labour, but he is obviously very much alive to the difficulties of the planters in that place. This gentleman uses the word 'we' when he has occasion to speak of the planters. Thus in explaining how he deals with coolies, who complain that they cannot do the work, he says : 'We send for them, and we tell them that they have been brought to this colony for doing their work ; and if they do not choose to do so, they will have to do work for Government for nothing in jail ; and it is left for them to choose either the one or the other !' The whole evidence of this witness shows an attitude of complete identification with the interests of the planters and of hostility to the interests of the immigrants, and it is an irony that he should have the title of Protector of Immigrants. The other Protector I have mentioned, Mr. Hill, is of another type altogether—a very rare type, but a type that does honour to the English name. In spite of the fact that socially and in other ways his life was bound up with that of the community in whose midst he was placed, he stood up boldly in defence of the interests of the immigrants and thereby incurred the serious displeasure of the planters. And what was the result ? He was removed from his office before his term had expired. He found that the mortality among the indentured population in the Straits Settlements in his time was very high, and he drew the attention of the planters to that and insisted on their carrying out strictly the terms of the ordinances concerning the health of indentured labourers. The answer of the planters was to remove him from his office, and to appoint another in his place, even before the expiry of the time for which his appointment was made. And because he was a strong man, who would not take such treatment lying down, the Colony had to pay him £2,500, being his salary for the unexpired period for which he should have held office. They paid him the full salary for the unexpired period, because they thought that that was a smaller evil to them than his being there to protect the interests of the immigrants. The third witness, to whose evidence I call the attention of the Council, is a Magistrate from Mauritius—Mr. Bateson. I have already told you how these poor creatures are liable to be punished with hard labour for the most trivial faults—even for an impertinent word or for an impertinent gesture. Mr. Bateson speaks out strongly against this. It is impossible for me with the limited time at my disposal to read to the Council any portions of this important evidence, but I must ask Hon'ble Members to mark specially two or three of Mr. Bateson's statements. In one place, he says, 'the system resolved itself into this—that I was merely a machine for sending people to prison.' In another place he says, 'there is absolutely no chance of the coolie being able to produce any evidence in his own favour ; the other coolies are afraid to give evidence ; they have to work under the very employer against whom they may be called upon to give evidence.' He says that even if a coolie came before him with marks of physical violence on his body, it was practically impossible to convict the person charged with assault

for want of corroborative evidence. Then he says, 'it was a most painful sight to him to see people handcuffed and marched to prison in batches for the most trivial faults.' Well, I do not wish to dwell at greater length on this evidence; but those who will go through it will know what value to attach to the statement that the presence of the Magistrate in these Colonies is a safeguard to the coolie against ill-treatment. So much then about the illusory nature of the safeguards. My third objection to this system is the vast and terrible amount of suffering that it has caused during the 75 years that it has been in existence. Sir, it is difficult to speak in terms of due restraint on this point. Even the hardest heart must melt to think of this phase of the question. I will not speak now of the imprisonments with hard labour endured for trivial faults; I will not speak of personal violence which in some cases has been proved and very many cases could not be proved, though alleged. I will not speak of the bitterness engendered in the minds of thousands when they realised that they had been deceived, that they had been entrapped, and that there was no escape for them. I will not speak of the homesick feeling, destroying their interest in life. These are all serious matters that could be charged against the system. But more serious even than these is the heavy mortality that has prevailed in the part in all colonies under the system, a mortality which has been examined from time to time by Commissions of Inquiry and which has been established beyond doubt—a mortality for which indentured emigration was prohibited to Federated Malay States only last year, and which even to-day is admitted to exist in certain districts of Assam amongst the statute labourers. Then the numerous suicides which have resulted from the system—poor, innocent people preferring death with their own hands to life under it—are a ghastly feature of the system. And, Sir, last, but not least, the unutterable tragedy and pathos of men and women, at a distance of thousands of miles from their homes, knowing full well that the vast sea rolled between them and their native country, starting actually to *walk* back to their country, imagining in their simplicity and ignorance that there must be a land route somewhere, and either caught on their way and forcibly taken back to the life from which they were fleeing or else devoured by wild beasts or perishing of hunger and cold; all this, Sir, constituted a sum total of human misery which is appalling to contemplate, and which will be a standing witness against the system for all time. It is true that things are somewhat better now, but they cannot be very much better under a system which has inherent characteristics such as those that I have described. Moreover, as Lord Curzon said in this Council in 1901, 'even if such cases have occurred only in a few instances, the very fact that such cases can occur under the system constitutes a severe condemnation of the system.'

"Sir, my fourth objection to the system is the frightful immorality that is inseparable from it. This is a fact which has been admitted by everybody, among others by the Government of India and by the Sanderson Committee. The Committee, who deal with all other phases of the indenture question, carefully avoid making any recommendation as to how the frightful immorality involved in the system may be remedied. Under the law, every hundred male indentured labourers must be accompanied by 40 females. Now very few respectable women can be got to go these long distances; our men themselves do not really care to go, much less do the women. The statutory number, therefore, is made up by the recruiters, and, as admitted by the Government of India in one of their despatches to the Secretary of State, by including in it women of admittedly loose morals, with results in the colonies which one had better leave to the imagination of the Council than describe. Sir, this frightful immorality has characterized the system from the very first. As Mr. Jenkins, who was afterwards first Agent General of Canada, said in 1870, 'the women are not recruited for any special work, and they certainly are not taken there for ornamental purposes.' He also speaks of the immoral relations existing not only between many of these women and the men for whom they are taken from this country, but also between them and some of the planters themselves and their overseers. It is a shocking affair altogether, a considerable part of the population in some of these colonies being practically illegitimate in its origin.

"My last objection to the system is that it is degrading to the people of India from a national point of view. I do not think I need really say much on this aspect of the question. Wherever the system exists, there the Indians

are only known as coolies, no matter what their position may be. Now, Sir, there are disabilities enough in all conscience attaching to our position in this country. And I ask, why must this additional brand be put upon our brow before the rest of the civilized world? I am sure, if only the Government will exercise a little imagination and realise our feeling in the matter, it will see the necessity of abolishing the system as soon as possible.

“I will now turn for a moment to the arguments which are usually adduced in favour of this system. Briefly they are three. First of all it is said that without this system of indentured labour, the sugar and other industries in many of the colonies will cease to exist; the second argument is that, under the system of indenture, a certain number of Indians make remittances to this country and thus a certain amount of money is received here; and thirdly, that a number of these men, after completing their indenture, settle down in the colonies, become prosperous and attain a status which they could never attain in this country. Now, Sir, so far as the first argument is concerned, I may brush it aside at once; it does not concern us nor does it concern the Government of India, who are here to promote *our* interests. If the planters cannot carry on their sugar or other industries without a continuance of this pernicious system, the sooner those industries cease to exist, the better. As regards the remittances made, or the amounts brought to this country by returned emigrants, considering that these people have been for five years under indenture, the savings are really very small. The average savings brought to India are about R150 per head; in a few cases, the amount may be higher, R200 or so, but the average is about R150. Now R150, saved in five years, means only R30 a year or R2-8 a month. This is not very much after all. The mill-hands in Bombay, for instance, can save much more than that. Again, what about those who save nothing, are broken down in health and spirits, and either perish in the colonies or else are sent back to this country, mere wrecks of their former selves? Finally as regards those who settled down in the Colonies and prosper in the first place, the number of such persons is very small; and secondly, even they have to go through a system with which are associated all the degradation and misery of which I have spoken. When these things are considered, it must be admitted that even if a few persons prosper under that system after the completion of their indenture, the price that has to be paid for such prosperity is far too great.

“Sir, I will now briefly refer to the extent of this evil, as it exists at the present moment. I will not deal with the case of those colonies where indentured labour once flourished but has now been stopped. In four French colonies and one English colony, it has been stopped on account of abuses; in one English colony it has been discontinued for economic reasons, and in another it has been prohibited as a measure of retaliation. But the system still prevails in three British colonies in the West Indies, namely, British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica, and in one Dutch colony named Surinam, about which, however, under our rules I am precluded from saying anything. Then it exists in Fiji, a Crown colony in Australasia; there is also a small supply of indentured labour to the Straits Settlements; and last, there are four or five districts in the Upper Valley of Assam where the system is still in force. The annual supply to the different colonies comes to a little less than 2,000 in the case of Fiji; about 600 to Jamaica; and nearly 3,000 to Trinidad; and about 2,200 to British Guiana. In Assam the whole labour force is about 800,000, of which the indentured labourers are now only about 20,000. Now taking Assam first,—and here I would like to express my obligations to the Hon’ble Mr. Clark for his courtesy in having a note on the subject specially drawn up for me in his office, giving me up to date information on the subject—I understand that the Government have decided to stop the system of indenture altogether there from next year. The Hon’ble Sir Charles Bayley stated the other day in one of his speeches in East Bengal that, from July 1st of next year, this system would cease to exist in Assam. Probably the Hon’ble Member in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry will also make a statement on the subject to-day. As the system will be discontinued from next year in Assam, I do not wish to say anything more about that here. I would, however, like to point out that the Committee, appointed in 1906, recommended

the complete stoppage of indentured labour in Assam in the course of five years. They would have liked to stop it earlier, but they did not want to inconvenience the planters, and therefore they suggested an interval of five years. According to that, the system should have been discontinued in 1911. And I should like to know why it has been allowed to go on for two years more. That is, however, comparatively a small matter. But, Sir, if the Government has decided to stop the system in Assam, where its working can be watched under its own eyes, I cannot see why it should be allowed to continue in the case of distant colonies, where there can be no such supervision. The position of those who urge the abolition of the system becomes now all the stronger on account of the Government contemplating its abolition in Assam.

“Then, Sir, there is the question of re-indenture in three colonies—in Natal, to which indentured emigration has now been prohibited, in Mauritius, where it has stopped of itself owing to economic causes, and in Fiji, where it is still allowed to continue. This re-indenture is one of the most vicious parts of the system, because though a man may indenture himself at the start only for five years, by means of repeated re-indenture he could be kept in a state of perpetual servitude. And this has become a most serious question now in Natal. There the Government of the colony imposes an annual £3 tax on all ex-indentured labourers who want to settle there as free persons. All those who have been emancipated since 1901—males about 16, and females above 13—have to pay this £3 tax. Now see how it works in practice. Take a family of husband and wife and four children—two daughters of 13 and 15, and two boys below 13. The family must pay the tax for four persons—father, mother and the two daughters—or £12 a year, that is, £1 a month. The man can earn an average wage of about 25 shillings a month, and the wife and the two girls may earn among them about 15 shillings extra, that is, which means a total income of 40 shillings or £2 a month for the family. Of this, half or £1 has to be paid as license-tax. Then there are other taxes; and there is house-rent. The Council may judge how much can remain after deducting these expenses for food and clothing for six persons. Is it any wonder that this tax has broken up homes—as has been admitted by prominent Natal men—that it has driven men to crime and women to a life of shame? Sir, there is no doubt whatever that the tax is nothing less than a diabolical device to drive the poor Indians either into re-indenture or else out of the colony. It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost importance that the Government should take the earliest possible steps to bring this miserable system of re-indenture to an end. I may mention that the Sanderson Committee has strongly recommended the stoppage of re-indenture.

“One word more, Sir, and I will bring my remarks to a close. Sir, this is a question which really throws a great responsibility upon the Government. I am aware that the Government of India have from time to time taken up the position that they maintain an attitude of neutrality in this matter, that they do not themselves encourage indentured emigration, but that if people choose to accept certain terms and go, it is not for them to interfere. I would only ask the Council to contrast this attitude with the attitude which the Government have adopted in regard to the peasantry of the country, in legislating on lines to which I have already referred. I do not think that the Government can absolve themselves from their responsibility in this manner. In the first place, the recruiters are granted licenses to recruit by District Magistrates. That, in itself, imposes a responsibility upon the Government, because, by granting licenses to these persons, the Government make themselves to a certain extent responsible for the representations by which these men secure recruits. Then the Magistrates, before whom the poor emigrants are taken and made to enter into agreements, are the servants of Government. The third and last point is that, though the fact about the penal nature of the contract has been carefully kept out of all agreements all these years, the Government have so far taken no steps whatever to remedy this. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Member, when he rises to reply, why this has happened, and how the Government explain their inaction in the matter. If a penal liability is not necessary to the system, I shall gladly with-

draw the greater part of my objection to the system. If you are prepared to abolish the penal nature of the contract under which these labourers have to work, the rest would be comparatively a very simple question, and I shall not press this motion to a division; but, as I understand it, penal provisions are the very essence of the system; without them the system cannot be worked. If penal liability is thus indispensable, I ask why the Government have not taken steps all these years to see to it that this nature of the contract is explained to the emigrants before they enter into their agreements? Sir, this is really a most serious question, for whatever the Government may say, as a matter of fact, everybody in the country believes that without the countenance of Government, the system could not have gone on so long. India is the only country which supplies indentured labour at the present moment. Why should India be marked out for this degradation? The conscience of our people, unfortunately asleep too long, is now waking up to the enormity of this question, and I have no doubt that it will not rest till it has asserted itself. And I ask the Government not to make the mistake of ignoring a sentiment that is dear to us, namely, the sentiment of our self-respect. We have no doubt plenty of differences between the Government and the people in regard to the internal administration of this country; but those are matters which stand on a different footing. Outside the country, the Government of India must stand up for us on every occasion; must stand up for our dignity, for our honour, for our national pride. If they will not do this, to whom else can we turn? I feel, Sir, that though this system has been allowed to exist so long, yet its days are really numbered. It will soon cease in Assam, and then it cannot last very much longer in the case of the colonies. And I am confident that a people who have spent millions upon millions in emancipating slaves, will not long permit their own fellow-subjects to be condemned to a life which, if not one of actual slavery, is at any rate not far removed from it. Sir, I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name."

The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey: "Mr. President, I rise to support the motion moved by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. Only last week the Hon'ble Home Member, in opposing the Bill brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Basu, argued that one of the principles on which the Government would act would be that any practice was an outrage upon humanity. I maintain, Sir, that this practice of indentured labour, so graphically described by the Mover, is an outrage upon humanity. Apart from this question, may I ask why this practice is permitted? Would our labourers starve if Government stopped this practice? I say, no. Without being charged with vanity, I may claim to know something about Indian labour. I was a member of the Factory Commission in 1908, and in that capacity I went round along with my colleagues throughout India to see for ourselves at first hand the conditions of labour, their habits, their ideas, and about their home life and their work. We were at work on this special mission practically every day for six or seven hours for seven months; and what did we see? Instead of starving, exhausted, servile workmen, we saw independent, healthy, well-paid workmen. The result of the deliberations of the Factory Commission are recorded in the report issued in 1908, and with your permission, Sir, I will read a few lines from the same. On page 19 the Commission says:—

'The position of the operative has been greatly strengthened by the fact that the supply of factory labour undoubtedly is, and has been, inadequate, and there is, and has been, the keenest competition among employers to secure a full labour supply. These two main causes—the independence of the Indian labourer, owing to the fact that he possesses other and congenial means of earning a livelihood, and the deficient labour supply—govern the whole situation.'

"Then further it goes on to say—

'We have also been impressed with the fact that employers are greatly disposed to concede promptly all reasonable demands made by their workers, and, even where the demands are unreasonable, to treat them as proposals which it is desirable to accede to, if possible. Great nervousness is frequently displayed by employers of labour as to the effect even of trivial changes on the workers; numerous expedients are adopted to conciliate them, and the attitude of the employers throughout appears to be based on the knowledge that the operatives are in fact the masters of the situation.'

"This is the deliberate opinion of the Commission, expressed after due inquiry and seven months of hard work. Well, Sir, this is the position of our Indian labour, and in spite of that the Government of India felt itself justified to interfere, and in this Council brought forward the Bill and carried it through, legalising a maximum of twelve hours for these workmen; and we have to remember that these workmen are free men, free agents, and if the work in the factory was not congenial to them or they find it distasteful, they were quite at liberty to leave the work and go away elsewhere. Then, why should we allow this recruitment, which, according to the description of the Mover, and according to all the facts that we know, is nothing more, nothing less, than practical slavery? It has been said and mentioned also by the Mover of this Resolution that if the penal contract was not allowed, the labourers would not get the work and the colonies would not employ them. My reply is—so much the better for India and for the labourers themselves. India can provide work for all these labourers that are going there, and for more than that. Then he said that they are better paid. They are getting a shilling a day or Rs. 22 a month (Mr. Gokhale tells me the average is Rs. 12 a month). The Factory Commission says on page 22—'That ordinary hands in card and frame departments earn from 7 to 18 rupees, head spinners from Rs. 25 to Rs. 35, mill-hands up to Rs. 16, and weavers from Rs. 18 to Rs. 35 a month'. These are the wages at present paid in India against an average wage of Rs. 12 in the colonies to these indentured labourers. But Sir, even if we grant that these people are slightly better paid, are we to allow people to barter the freedom of our men and women for a few coppers? It has been already said by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale that it was the English nation that spent millions and millions of pounds sterling to eradicate slavery. Now, India is going to sacrifice about 7 to 10 crores of rupees every year out of the opium-revenue, in order to save a foreign nation, the Chinese, from the harm that the use of opium does them. This amount, if capitalised at only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, would mean about 300 crores of rupees for us. If India can afford to sacrifice such a large amount for the foreign nation, certainly, if need be, it can provide food for the few that are going to our colonies. Then Mr. Gokhale has also said that it is not only the question of hard work to these labourers, but it is a question of dignity to us. When we find nations all over the world pointing out a finger to India as the only country in the world where this practical slavery of their men is tolerated, it boils our blood, if I may be permitted to use the sentence.

"Sir, I would only mention this in conclusion, that it is an irony of fate that we in this Council should have any occasion to approach the Government of India, and through the Government of India the British nation, to abolish this practical slavery—a nation which has, as I have said, spent millions and millions in the past, and a nation that to-day is willing to risk the prosperity, the great hardship to the poor, and the very defence of the country, rather than interfere with the freedom of the coal miners by legalizing them to work and be reasonable. Sir, I think the time has come when the Government of India might accept this proposition, and do away with the practice."

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle:—"Sir, I have been appointed to this Council for a special purpose which, with the passing of the Co-operative Credit Societies Act, has now been fulfilled; so I feel that some justification is due for my intervening in the debate to-day. That justification is that I was a member of the Committee which sat, less than three years ago now, to consider the case of the subject of emigration to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates. My interest in the subject of over-seas emigration did not begin with the constitution of that Committee, nor did it end with its dissolution. In the year 1905, I was on special duty inquiring into scarcity of labour, and in the course of that inquiry visited a large number of emigration depôts in Bengal and the United Provinces. In subsequent years, during the course of my tours as Registrar of Co-operative Societies, I have seized every opportunity which availed itself of visiting those depôts again, and I have talked to the coolies assembled there both those who were going to the colonies for the first time and those who had been there before. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale made a very passing allusion to the Committee which sat in 1909. I think it should be known that that Committee made very careful inquiries

into this particular system of indentures. Among its members were Sir James LaTouche, who is well known as being one of the most sympathetic Lieutenant-Governors who has ever ruled an Indian Province, and Sir George Scott Robertson, a Liberal Member of Parliament, who was not the least inclined, when that Committee began its sittings, to regard the system of indentures in a favourable light. The Committee sat for 71 days, and examined 83 witnesses. Every opportunity was given to the opponents of indentured labour to come forward and say what they had to say. Government went so far as to pay the expenses of Mr. Richards, the Chairman of the Workingmen's Association of Trinidad, to go over to England to give evidence on the Committee. The view put forward by these gentlemen was that Indian emigration should be discouraged on the ground of the competition with native West Indian labour. The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. David, a Member of the Legislative Council of Trinidad, and Mr. Summerbell, a Labour Member of the Imperial Parliament, also put forward a similar view. There was also an Association called the People's Association of British Guiana, which put forward the same view. With these exceptions, no voice was raised before the Committee against this system of indentured emigration. On the other hand, there was a very large body of opinion in its favour. I do not mention the planters and employers of labour, who are naturally prejudiced in such questions. There were, however, many Governors of Provinces of established reputation, some of them men who had retired and given the greater part of their subsequent career to writing on public questions, such as Lord Stanmore, formerly Sir Arthur Gordon, and Sir Charles Bruce, and there were also Sir John Anderson, and Sir Sidney Olivier, the present Governor of Jamaica. Besides these gentlemen, there were many independent witnesses. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says that the Magistrates who deal with offences against the Immigration Law are prejudiced in the planters' favour. That may be or may not be. Sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. The description certainly does not apply to some of those who appeared before the Committee. One example the Hon'ble Mover has himself given. As regards that example, it is that of Mr. Bateson, a Magistrate from Mauritius: it was discussed I may say by the Committee in paragraph 99 of their report and the Committee were of opinion that he did not take a proper view of his duties, or else he would have been able to do very much more good, as no doubt he wanted to do, to the Indian indentured cooly. Besides these independent witnesses such as Magistrates and doctors, there were also several missionaries who gave evidence, and they could not be considered to be prejudiced. There were also some well-known men. One was Sir Rupert Boyce, who was specially sent out by the Colonial Office to the West Indies to inquire into the prevalence of yellow fever, and he made special inquiries, while there, into the condition of the Indian indentured labourer. There was also a gentleman named Mr. Alleyne Ireland, an American publicist who had spent the greater part of his life in inquiries into political, social and economic questions of that character. All these gentlemen were in favour of the system. The report concerning this says, 'there is a general concurrence of opinion that the system as actually worked, so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the Indian, has in fact encouraged the growth of independence of character'; and it says also that the general effect of the bulk of the evidence was to show the excellence of the arrangements made for the immigrants and the prosperity to which the majority attained after they had become free citizens.

"The Hon'ble Mover has stated that indentured coolies do not get adequate help from the Inspectors of Immigrants, and that the latter were men recruited from the same class as the planters, and in fact in some cases have regarded themselves as planters. Now I think anyone who has studied the subject will admit that in those colonies which have a large number of indentured labourers, such as Trinidad, British Guiana and Fiji—these are the only three which have now a large number—the legal and administrative arrangements made for the benefit of the immigrants are very complete. In each colony there is a Protector of Immigrants, or an Agent-General who is assisted by medical men and also by a staff which consists of 4 Inspectors in British Guiana, 3 in Trinidad and 5 in Fiji, where communications are very difficult. Now it is

the sole duty of the Protector and this considerable staff to look after the immigrant population, whether indentured or unindentured ; and it is in pursuance of those duties that they are constantly visiting the plantations to see that the immigrants are properly housed and treated and get the wages to which they are entitled. There is also a special provision in the law for a man who wants to leave the estate to make a complaint. Temperaments vary, and some officials are more sympathetic than others when it comes to the point of inquiry into grievances which may be more or less sentimental, but it is quite certain that under the present system no serious abuses can remain unredressed. Sir, no human institution is perfect, and I am not concerned to state that the indenture system is any exception to this rule. No doubt there are defects in it. Several of these defects have in fact been pointed out by the Committee, and they are at present under the consideration of the Colonial Governments concerned. That they are not considered very serious by the people most concerned can perhaps be indicated by the fact which I saw stated in the report of the Protector of Emigrants, Calcutta, that last year no less than 475 coolies who had already been to the colonies re-indentured themselves to serve a further term. The Hon'ble Member drew a picture for us which depicted the artifices of the recruiters and stated that it was not a fair contract because the conditions were not known to the people recruited. Now for that portion of the recruiting district with which I am well acquainted, and which extend from Gonda and Fyzabad to Basti and Gorakhpur and Benares, I can say that the people there are very well acquainted with the conditions of service in the colonies. As I stated at the beginning of my remarks, I have spoken to a large number of them, and I have never found one who has gone to the colonies without knowing the conditions prevailing there. Each man goes because his own people or relations have been there and knows perfectly well the conditions under which they work."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : "Including the penal nature of the contract ?

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle : "Of course, they know something about the penal nature of the contract : it has not done them any damage."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : "It is not in the agreement."

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle : "They know perfectly well, I maintain, the conditions under which they are going. I do not say that for all the would-be emigrants recruited, but it is true for that very large number of them which comes from the main recruiting districts such as those which I have stated. But surely, as the Committee state in paragraph 100, of their report, the system must, like other systems, be judged by its results, and as to its results, I submit there is very little room for doubt. The statistics we find in the report will prove certain facts, such as that Indians in British Guiana own property averaging £2 per head for each man, woman and child in the community ; that in Trinidad in 14 years 70,000 acres of Crown lands have been bought by the Indians ; that in Fiji between the years 1898 and 1908 the land held by Indians, whether on leasehold or freehold terms, increased from 6,000 acres to 46,000 acres. 46,000 acres would be 17 acres per head for every man, woman and child in the free community of Fiji. And I think that Indians now in the colonies have some right to be heard on the subject. I do not know how far the Hon'ble Mover has consulted them, but two gentlemen gave evidence before the Committee—two young Indians,—their names were Mr. Francis Edward Muhammad Hussain and Mr. George Fitzpatrick. They were themselves the sons of indentured immigrants who had gone to the colonies under this degrading system which the Hon'ble Mover has painted to us. They were born and educated in the colonies and had come to England at that time for the purpose of being called to the Bar. These two gentlemen, although they pointed out certain defects, as they appeared to them, in the system of indentures, were emphatic in their approval of the continuance of emigration of Indians. Mr. Hussain, for instance, says of the indentured coolie, 'I think they are very well

treated,' and when asked whether the mass of the coolies, after having served their indenture, are prosperous, he replied, 'The prosperity of the colony itself is evidence of that.' And Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was specially appointed as the representative of the Indian community to give evidence before the Committee, said clearly that the community he represents are in favour of the continuance of emigration. He further stated in his memorial which he submitted to the Committee as follows: 'The East Indians, after their term of indenture, have proved themselves to be desirable colonists. As agriculturists, they have aided materially in the development of the colonies; they have purchased Crown lands, and have successfully opened up the country; they undertake cane-farming, kitchen-gardening, and on them the colony is largely dependent for vegetables, &c. They become skilled labourers and are employed by the local road boards, municipalities, railways, etc. They and their descendants become proprietors, merchants, shopkeepers, contractors, teachers, etc., all of whom are most loyal and patriotic, thus forming an important factor in the colony.'

"Now, I submit, this hardly fits in with the Hon'ble the Mover's description of the Indian in the colonies as 'always a coolie.' The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey has stated in his remarks that there can be no necessity for helping coolies to go to the colonies when they have such excellent opportunities in the mills and factories. Well, he claimed to be of some authority on the subject of the Indian labour-supply. I think, perhaps, I may claim the same. And if the Hon'ble Member will read the report which I issued in 1905, he will perhaps see some reason why agriculturists do not desire to go and work in those mills and factories. On the other hand, they are very glad to get agricultural labour even though it may take them some considerable distance from their homes. The wages of agricultural and non-agricultural labour, as every Member of this Council knows, are very different. I have here the Gazetteer of Gonda in Oudh, which was published in the year 1905, and this is what it says about agricultural wages in that district. I may say that this district and the adjoining district of Basti sent to the colonies last year 3,490 men, that is to say, one-third of the total number that went to the colonies from the port of Calcutta. The Gazetteer says, 'the labourer receives either a cash wage of two and a half rupees a month, though the constant complaint of the landlords is that the rate is rising to two annas per diem, with a blanket in winter and perhaps two local maunds of grain at harvest, or else a grain wage of four or five kachcha seers of coarse grain daily. The system of *sáwak* labour, so common in the adjoining district of Bahraich, is still well known in Gonda. The *sáwak* is a member of the lower castes such as Koris, Chamars or Lunnias, who for a fixed sum of a money, almost invariably required for marriage expenses, binds himself in serfdom to the zamindar until the loan be repaid—a contingency which hardly ever occurs in actual experience. The consideration varies with the necessities of the borrower but rarely exceeds one hundred or is less than twenty rupees. A man in this position receives the ploughman's customary share in the produce, supplemented by contributions from his master, which are converted at the market rate and added to the principal.'

"Only last week I read in the *Statesman* about a class of serf-tenants in the vicinity of Giridih who in return for a loan of from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 practically sell themselves into perpetual servitude. It is said, indeed, that the position becomes hereditary, the son taking over the burden of his father's debt. Well, that is some indication of the position to which these poor labourers, with their dependants numbering some 46 millions in this Indian Empire, may fall, and I think that a class of men who are exposed to such economic conditions and who are liable to fall into a state of lifelong hopeless servitude will hardly object to a five years' indentureship and to a free life to come; and I think that they will not thank the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale for the attempt which he is now making to cut away the ladder to becoming proprietors of land and self-respecting citizens of the Empire."

The Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi: "Sir, I have listened with the closest attention to the speech which has just been delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, and I confess that, in spite of the close attention which I have

been able to give to it, the Hon'ble gentleman has failed to convince me that the position taken up by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale is not the correct one. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale gave a graphic description of the circumstances under which these contracts of indentured labour are entered into. He described the ignorance of the coolies, on the one hand, and all the tricks played by those who have the task of engaging these coolies, on the other. He pointed out that undue advantage is taken of the ignorance of the coolies, and some of the facts most material to the validity of the contract are kept concealed from them. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not deny the facts as alleged by Mr. Gokhale. In fact, as I understood him, he admitted that the penal laws under which these coolies have, after their emigration to and settlement in these colonies, to live are actually concealed from them at the time these contracts are entered into. Well, as I have understood Mr. Gokhale's position, the main complaint of the Hon'ble Mover was that in concluding these agreements, this, the most vital portion of the whole affair, was actually concealed from these coolies; and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle has not been able to deny that. Therefore, it seems to me that the most serious portion of the indictment brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, so far as this aspect of the question is concerned, remains absolutely unanswered. Then the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale described in detail the results which these coolies have to face upon their arrival in these colonies, the sort of life they live, and the kind of punishments which are meted out to them upon the most trifling defaults, and even for what is said to be impertinent gesture on their part they receive imprisonment in jail. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his reply to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has again left that portion of the indictment absolutely unanswered. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the evidence which had been given by three gentlemen, each one of them representative, as I understand, of the class of persons who had to deal with these coolies in the colonies, and justified his statements upon the authority of the evidence given by these witnesses before the Commission. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not controvert the facts which were stated by these witnesses, and indulged in what I cannot help regarding as general statements not corroborated by any evidence upon which one could lay one's hands. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle pointed out that there were Protectors and Inspectors who looked after the interests of these coolies. Well to my mind, in the first instance, the very necessity of appointing these Protectors shows that there is something against which protection is needed. That is to say, there are causes and circumstances existing in these colonies which necessitated the appointment of these Protectors in order to prevent the coolies who go to the colonies from being maltreated. But the point of the argument of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale was that the evidence of one of these Protectors showed that they were Protectors rather of the interests of the planters than of those of the coolies who had to work under these hard circumstances. Well, Sir, the evidence of that Protector, some portions of which were read out by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, remains uncontroverted, and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his speech has not referred to anything which can take away from the weight of that evidence and render the statements put forward by that witness and by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale here to-day as statements not worthy of consideration—aye special consideration—of this Council.

“ Sir, when discussing the provisions of the Hon'ble Mr. Basu's Special Marriage Bill the other day, the Hon'ble the Home Member pointed out that the Government of India does not feel itself justified in undertaking legislation unless two conditions exist—one that there is, on the part of the Indian people in the country, an almost unanimous demand for undertaking that legislation, and the other is that the circumstances resulting from a given state of things constitute an outrage upon humanity. Well, the second argument has already been referred to by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey. So far as the first condition precedent to undertaking legislation referred to by the Hon'ble the Home Member is concerned, I need only mention that so far as the Indian people in this country are concerned, there is a complete unanimity of opinion in support of the demand which has been made by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his speech to-day.

"Only yesterday at the meeting of the All-India Moslem League held in the local Town Hall a Resolution was unanimously adopted urging upon the Government the necessity of stopping indentured labour. So far as the Muhammadan community is concerned, therefore, the fact that the Resolution was unanimously adopted by the League at its anniversary is, in itself, conclusive evidence of the fact that the Muhammadan community demands that the recommendation put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution moved to-day should be accepted by Government. And, so far as the Hindu community is concerned, not only has the National Congress adopted this Resolution, but the Hindu representatives present here in Council are, I believe, absolutely unanimous in this demand. Therefore, I submit that the two conditions laid down by the Hon'ble the Home Member in reference to legislation of this kind being there, the Government of India ought to accept the recommendation which has been put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution to-day, and I have great pleasure in giving my hearty support to that Resolution."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : "I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has moved. It has much to commend it to the acceptance of Hon'ble Members apart from any point which the unsatisfactory condition of Indian settlers and the treatment which they receive in South Africa may give to the appeal. I do not believe in indentured labour; the free workman is a far more productive agent than any one working under contractual conditions. Even from the employer's point of view, the present system of indenture is undesirable. It is antiquated, and is not required in a world remarkable for its progressive arrangements for inter-communication. I endorse the opinion expressed by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey about the increasing dearth of labour and the rise in wages in India. I expressed some such views on the subject at Jabalpur in 1905 when presiding over the Provincial Conference there, and the subsequent labour conditions in India have only confirmed those views."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao : "I may be permitted to express my surprise at the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the attitude which he has taken towards this question. He has described in rather glowing colours the conditions under which indentured labourers, specially in Trinidad, live. He says that there is practically no cause of complaint with regard to the way in which labour is recruited and the way in which labourers are treated in the colonies, and he wants us to believe that there is no debasing or degrading influence upon the people concerned, and that there is no complaint coming from the parties who are chiefly subject to this system. I may say at once that he has lost sight of one important consideration in this matter. We may concede all that he has stated; we may even hold with him that what the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has described is not correct. The question still remains: how does this indentured system affect the country at large? Has it a debasing and degrading influence upon India in the estimation of the outside nations? What is the attitude of those people who receive these coolies towards India as a whole? I think the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle must admit that on account of this system India has fallen in the estimation of the civilised world. Therefore, Sir, the important question that centres around this Resolution is this: whether the present system does not vitally affect our national honour, our national self-respect, in fact, our national existence as an integral part of the British Empire. I submit, Sir, that this is the question which the Council has to take into consideration and the Government has to consider. A speech like that of the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle's if delivered some ten years ago might have passed unchallenged. Much water has flowed since then under the bridge. There has been rude awakening of our national consciousness. We feel, Sir, that we have taken things lying down. We do not blame any one for this state of things. We have allowed things to go on in this way; we have not asserted our dignity to be treated like other civilised nations. But times have changed, and we now ask why India, alone among all the countries of the world, should be subjected to this indignity.

We urge, Sir, that the system of indentured labour should be abolished at once. We are all familiar, how in Natal, for instance, the best and most cultured of Indians are treated as coolies. Why is that? The simple reason is that South Africa has come into contact with India in the shape of coolie labour, and she only knows India as a vast recruiting ground of menial labour, and therefore whoever goes from India is naturally looked down on as a coolie, and no better than a coolie. Similarly, women who first went to Burma from the East Coast happened to be women of ill-fame, and were called Coringa women from the place whence they came. Even now women of ill-fame, no matter from what part of the East Coast they come, are still called Coringa women. That name has stuck to these people and it has come down to this day. Therefore, Sir, we cannot be too careful as to the way in which we open our relations with other countries. It is a great misfortune to India that this indentured system should ever have been introduced at all and the Emigration Act should have been placed on the Statute-book. Well, there is no use of regrets for what has taken place. We have now to repair a great wrong done to India. Two years ago the Government of India, by accepting the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale regarding the prohibition of immigration to Natal, has earned the thanks of the public. By amending the Emigration Act, they took the first step to repair a great wrong done to India, and I venture to submit that they would be doing the right thing by going a step further, by prohibiting altogether the emigration of indentured labour to different parts of the world. If any other course be adopted in this matter, I venture to say, Sir, that the action of the Government would be viewed by the Indian public with deep disappointment. No doubt, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, it is a question of time when this system would be abolished. I submit that the Government of India would do well to take time by the forelock, by paying heed to the popular sentiment and by coming forward at once to prohibit this kind of emigration. I don't care to discuss the merits or demerits of the present system. I know several cases where people were inveigled by recruiters to go to a foreign country by describing it as a land flowing with milk and honey. I shall only say this. "The system is vicious in itself, stunting the moral growth of the people concerned, and labour should not be prostituted to promote the industries of a few. Leaving all these questions aside, we have got this broad fact, that this question strikes at the root of our national self-respect, our national honour, and national existence. I appeal to the Government of India that in a matter of this kind they should not run counter to the sentiment of the people at large. On this question, Sir, all classes of people are unanimous, and I submit that the Government should be with them in repealing the Emigration Act. I do not wish to say more. I heartily support the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mazharul Haque : "Sir, in 1910, when Lord Minto was presiding over the deliberations of this Council, I had the honour to lay my views about indentured labour. Then I said :

'The whole system of indentured labour is vicious in principle ; it brutalises the employer ; it demoralises the employed. It perpetrates the worst form of slavery in the guise of legal contract ; it is bad in its inception, inhuman in its working and mischievous in its results, and ought to be done away with without any further delay.'

"Two years ago these were my views. I hold these views now and abide by them. Sir, I condemn indentured labour on the higher ground of the freedom of man. God created man free, and this divine right has been taken away by human laws. Labour should be free as man should be free in conscience and in action. My Hon'ble friend, Mr. Shafi, has brought to the notice of this Council the fact that the people of India are unanimous on this subject. He has reminded it that only yesterday the great organisation of the Muham-madans of India, the All-India Moslem League, passed unanimously a Resolution in favour of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Resolution. I believe my Hindu brethren are also unanimous. Then what is in the way of the Government which prevents them from accepting this Resolution? Sir, we are helpless in the matter. You, the members of the British Government, are the trustees of our good name, of our dignity and of our honour ; and I appeal to you, all

Englishmen in India, to come and help us in this matter and try to save our honour in the eyes of the nations. The people of India feel very keenly about it. They think that they are disgraced in the eyes of other countries inasmuch as India is the only country, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has reminded this Council, which supplies indentured labour. It is certainly nothing else but a very bad form of slavery. Sir, I invite the Council to help us and accept the Resolution of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar: "Sir, I will speak a few words only to show that the sentiment is general in this country, that the system of the recruitment of indentured labourers in India is degrading and against the principal dictates of humanity. Sir, I do not wish to repeat, after the very graphic description which my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has given, the circumstances in which such labour is recruited and the state of things which exists in the countries to which these indentured labourers are sent. I do not wish to say anything on that aspect of the question. We are indeed told by a gentleman—by an Hon'ble Member who occupied a position of authority (because he was a member of the Sanderson Committee of 1908)—that the Committee considered that there was nothing in the system which demanded its removal. Sir, assuming, for the sake of argument, that there were none of the hardships which have been pointed out by witnesses—and in regard to them I might remark parenthetically that no decisive reply has been given to the very specific charges which Mr. Gokhale has brought—I say, assuming that in the majority of cases there was no real hardship, still we Indians have a right to protest against India being made a recruiting ground for a system which is not far removed from slavery.

"Sir, the indentured system of labour has been devised for the purpose of supplying labour for places where free labour scorns to come or where free labour has not sufficient attractions. If the prospects which are afforded in British Guiana, in Trinidad and elsewhere are so alluring as they are stated to be, where is there any necessity at all of having this system of indentured labour? There is the market open; let them go and recruit their labourers in the open market and take them wherever they like. Why should the authority of Government be utilised for the purpose of supplying these plantations with the labour which they require? And above all why should India be the one unfortunate country where this kind of system is to be allowed? Have we no voice in the matter whatsoever? Are our feelings not to be consulted? Are our sentiments to receive no recognition from Government? This is a matter in which there is a very deep feeling entertained in the country. It may be that at the time when that inquiry was made, this feeling which is now springing up all over the country amongst all classes of the people, amongst Muhammadans and Hindus alike, had not received that articulate form which it has now received; but it is there. And I would implore Government to pay heed to it and not to allow the system to go on, which is justly considered as an outrage upon Indian sentiment and Indian self-respect."

The Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Majid: "Sir, I beg to give my hearty support to the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. My reasons are that the general sentiment in this country is that this indentured labour should not be allowed to continue. Only yesterday, as the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi has reminded this Council, an unanimous Resolution was passed at the Annual Session of the All-India Moslem League, that this indentured labour system should be abolished in this country altogether."

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: "Sir, I beg to support the motion which has been brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. The criticisms which have been offered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, tending to favour the system, do not touch the points that have been raised by Mr. Gokhale, and I think that it is desirable that the important aspects to which attention has been drawn by the Hon'ble Member should be borne in mind. I hope that the Government will bear them in mind and decide the question upon them. There are two aspects of the question which deserve consideration. There is

the human aspect and there is the national aspect. As regards the human aspect, the inherent evils of the system to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has drawn attention show that the system is not far removed from slavery; that the contract or agreement into which the emigrant is led to enter is anything but fair. Other considerations apart, the fact that the emigrant is not informed of the special penal laws to which he becomes subject by entering into a contract of indenture, entirely condemns it as an unfair transaction. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle said in answer to Mr. Gokhale that the coolies who return from the colonies to India must have told their fellows who were going out for the first time what these penal laws were. There is nothing to show that this is done. And by the very nature of things, such information cannot reach the great bulk of those who are induced to go out. Besides, that is no answer to the charge that the penal clauses have been kept back from the people. I do not agree with the opinion that these clauses have been actively concealed. I think if it was brought to the notice of the Magistrates who registered the emigrants, that it was unfair to the emigrants to keep back such important information from them, they would probably have drawn the attention of the would-be emigrants to those clauses. Probably attention was not drawn to it. But it is undeniable that the penal clauses have not been explained to the persons who have been most vitally affected by them. And the labourers who indenture under the system have been placed in a very unfortunate position, in a position of pitiable helplessness. The object of the Government in passing the Emigration Act was, as was explained by the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert in 1883, that those who wished to take Indian labourers outside India to employ them should not be hampered by unnecessary restrictions or impeded by unreasonable prejudices, and to protect the emigrants against being entrapped or deluded into unfair bargains or carelessly or oppressively dealt with after they have left their homes. The first of these objects has been more than fully secured under the Act. Since the system was introduced, it has brought into existence the recruiter. He receives a license from the District Magistrate to go about the country to induce persons to indenture. It is his profession, his business, to get hold of as many persons, men and women, as he can, by fair means or foul, and he gets hold of them oftener by foul means than fair. As the system prevails, once a man is caught hold of by the recruiter, he is taken to the depôt. In that depôt he is kept supplied with food and other necessaries of life until he is taken before the Magistrate in that place. But he is during all the time under the control of the recruiter and his agents. It is extremely difficult for him to get out of that control even when he wishes to do so. I have on more than one occasion tried to rescue some of these unfortunate persons who had been taken to these depôts. Twice in Allahabad, I attempted, either directly or through some of my friends, to render some assistance to the coolies who had been taken to the depôt and who were not able to come out of it when they wanted to do so. I was foiled in the attempt. On one occasion I was nearly charged with having trespassed into the depôt, though I had taken care to have a sub-inspector of police and an Honorary Magistrate with me. On another occasion I had secured a writ from the Joint Magistrate for some persons to go into the depôt; but I was even then baffled in my attempt, because the system is so practised and kept up that it is impossible for a man who is an outsider to find out where the person who is unwilling to go is. Even when you can gain admission into a depôt, you ask for a certain person, and a certain person is brought before you who is said to be that person. You have often no means to find out whether the right person has been brought before you or not. Then there is another reason why persons who are taken to the depôt find it extremely difficult to come out of it. They are given some money by the recruiter to meet their expenses, and if they want to get out they are required to refund the money. They are seldom in a position to do so while they are shut up in the depôt. The other day in Calcutta, a Marwari gentleman having heard that some of those who were going to be shipped to a certain colony were in such an unfortunate plight, offered to pay R10 each for every person who was not willing to go and who wished to purchase his release. But he was not able to get the necessary assistance, and he had to

bear the sorrow of seeing, or at least believing, that a number of his brothers and sisters had to go out of their country against their wishes. Further, these recruiters often practise a great deal of fraud. It appears from the *Venkatash-war Samachar* of Bombay of the 9th ultimo that in December last two young ladies of respectable families who went from Lucknow to Cawnpore to see a relation got into a conveyance and asked the driver to take them to a certain place which they named. The driver, who was evidently in the employ of the recruiting agents there, took them about for the whole day and in the evening put them into the emigration depôt, where they were kept in wrongful restraint, subjected to much ill-treatment, and after they had been thus sufficiently prepared to say what they had been tutored they were presented before the Magistrate to be registered as indentured labourers. One of these ladies was made to say that she was a prostitute. Her appearance and demeanour roused the suspicions of the Magistrate, who started an inquiry with the result that the driver and the recruiting agent are under trial and the ladies have been rescued and restored to their freedom. But for one such case in which the fraud is detected there may be, probably are, many in which it is successfully carried out. I submit, therefore, that the system is inherently bad. If you let loose a number of recruiters armed with licenses from District Magistrates to get hold of persons by persuasion to go to distant countries and supported with the sections of the Emigration Act which provide a great deal of support to these recruiters, it must in nine cases out of ten be very difficult for those who have been inveigled by them and caught in their hands to get out of their control. It is obvious that the system would not be in existence but for the support of Government. Without such support the recruiter would not be free to get hold of many persons and to put them in the emigration depôt and to constrain their will. For the protection of the emigrant, the Government has no doubt provided that he or she shall not enter into an agreement without being brought before a registering officer, often a Magistrate, and until he or she shall have been asked whether he or she was going out with a knowledge of the nature of the agreement and with a free will or otherwise. But we have seen that this object, is not fully secured under the Act. But even if it were, the law does not provide beyond it to ensure that the emigrant shall be fairly dealt with in the colonies. In speaking on the Emigration Bill in 1883, the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert said :—

' Thus every reasonable precaution is taken which our law can enforce that the emigrant should be properly treated from the time when he leaves the place where he is recruited to the time when he lands in the colony for which he is bound. Further than this our law cannot follow him, and after this point we can only provide indirectly for his welfare by such influence as we can bring to bear on the Government of the country in which he has established himself.'

" It is clear from this that whatever protection is provided by the Government for the emigrants is provided from the time when they start from the place of their recruitment until they land in the country for which they have embarked. After that they are left at the mercy of the special laws which prevail in that country, and my friend the Hon'ble Mover of the Resolution has graphically depicted the conditions to which they are subject under those laws. I submit therefore that the human aspect of the case requires that the contract which is entered into under such conditions—conditions which are intrinsically and inherently bad in the one place in not letting the penal nature of the laws known to those who will be subjected to them under the indenture for labour, and secondly in admitting of such penal clauses to be put in force against any human being—such a system of contract should be put an end to, and as long as these penal clauses exist in the system, no contract which has been entered into under the Indian Emigration Act which subjects any emigrant, man or woman, to these clauses, ought to receive the smallest countenance from the Government of India.

" Then there is the national aspect. I submit, Sir, that it is a matter of the greatest reproach to us all, Europeans as well as Indians, that our fellow-subjects, those whom Lord Morley described as 'our equal fellow-subjects,' should be subjected to such inhuman penal clauses which reduce them to the condition of serfs. It is a matter of deep shame and pain that any one of them, man or woman, should be subjected to those indignities and cruelties which, it has been proved, have been heaped upon Indians in many of these colonies. The

honour of the Indian people and of the Indian Government demands that a law which permits or helps such indignities to be heaped on Indians should be at once abolished. Nothing that has been said by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle would justify the continuance of such a law for one moment. I will not take up the time of the Council by repeating all the charges that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has brought against the system. These prove that the system cannot, while it lasts, be separated from the evils to which he has drawn attention; and as it cannot be mended, the best thing is that it should be ended, and that without delay.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle referred to certain advantages which he says have resulted to Indians who have gone to foreign lands. What would the whole world avail the emigrant if he lost his soul by going to those lands? He is subjected to moral degradation; he is subjected to national degradation; he is utterly demoralised, placed under conditions in which he has to live a life of sin and shame; in which he ceases to be a free man and virtually becomes a slave—a slave of the worst type? That he can save Rs. 30 a year or so under such a system is not a consideration worth urging in support of it. Let him starve, if he must, in his own country, a free man, but not be subjected to these servile restraints and inhuman indignities to save a petty sum of Rs. 30 a year. India can yet afford employment for all her sons and daughters; they will certainly not starve if they are not induced or inveigled to migrate out of the country. The evil lies in the system being what it is, and the remedy lies in its total abolition. The point of complaint that has been raised is that, without the aid of Government, the system cannot last for one moment. If it was left to Indians—coolies or non-coolies—to contract freely according to their own choice to go to foreign lands, the evil will soon be remedied. The system will fall to pieces to-morrow if the Government withdrew its own aid and assistance, and as it is owing to the Government that it is enabled to exist, it is the duty of the Government to do all that it can to eradicate its evils. But as the evils cannot be eradicated, the best thing is to abolish the system. The Government was pleased to recognise this duty last year in stopping indentured labour to Natal. It has recognised it in deciding to abolish the system of indentured labour in Assam. I hope that the motion which has been brought forward by my Hon'ble friend will commend itself to the Government and receive its whole-hearted support, and that this evil system will be abolished before many days are passed."

The Hon'ble Malik Umar Hayat Khan: "Sir, I only get up as I have to get up to-day. This is a Resolution for a popular cause and it does require sympathetic treatment. To argue at length to make a case and then to argue the same thing or argue for it straight off in the beginning comes to the same thing, and that is why I have not entered into the details. I think that the case has been clearly put by the Hon'ble Mover and others. It is useless to advance another set of arguments. I think there is sufficient field in India for labour and the dearth of it has begun to be felt. Men can get work easily. I think ignorant people go with a wrong idea. The first thing is that when they are told they will get such and such sum for their wages, they do not know the respective value of money in this and that country. Secondly, they do not know the respective value of the cost of living in the two countries. When Government has admitted that indentured labour was undesirable in one colony, why should they not have admitted that it would be wrong in others, as it is the principle of indentured labour which is to be blamed? When the people abroad cannot treat Indians properly, I think there is no use of letting them go there. Sir, there is another thing that I want to say. I think cent. per cent. Indians are all on the side of Mr. Gokhale, and when we are cent. per cent. on one side and it is our Government, our Government must be on our side, because otherwise it will not be our Government. I want to say one thing. You have chosen all of us here. There are certain rules framed that we all should come into the Council in such and such a way. Either that rule that has chosen us is wrong or we are all wrong; and if we are right, and are opposed to it, it means that the one side which opposes it is not perhaps so much in touch with the other, because we are born and die with our people; at any rate we know

something about them. And as it is, there is very great difficulty for the ordinary labourer to get his complaint heard by them. I support Mr. Gokhale to

The Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu: "Sir, I rise only to associate myself with the Resolution that my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has proposed. It is needless for me to go into the history of the legislation which he has brought up for discussion. Even a cursory examination of the ways in which that legislation has been worked will show that without any delay it should be removed from the Statute-book.

"There is only one matter in this connection to which I wish to draw the attention of Government. There was a Committee which sat in 1906 about the Assam Labour Emigration Act and which recommended that in five years' time that Act should be withdrawn from the Assam Valley Districts. That five years, time has now expired and the public is anxious to know when the Government will announce the date on which operation of that Act would cease in the Assam Valley."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "Sir, the Hon'ble Member who has moved this Resolution has made it abundantly clear that on moral, social and political grounds alike, he objects to indentured emigration in any form for his countrymen, and he has argued his case with a vigour and eloquence which we have learnt to expect from him in this Council. With much that he has said, I am, if not in agreement, at any rate in sympathy, but I think he will admit that he does not approach this question with an unbiassed mind (with which of course I have no quarrel), and also that he has not put it before Council from an entirely unprejudiced point of view. I hope I am not misrepresenting anything he stated, but I am almost sure that he did not think it necessary even to mention the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of 1908. That was a very important Committee, an impartial one, and they found in favour of continuing the system. I must say I think it is curious that the Hon'ble Member should have omitted this point in his strong indictment. I will give one more example of the attitude with which he has approached the subject. He has mentioned three points in the history of indentured emigration on which he considers that this system should be condemned. First, that the system takes the place of slave labour; secondly, that the system was one under which the negro would not work; and, thirdly, that the fact that there had been so many inquiries shows that the conscience of the Imperial and the Indian Governments is uneasy about it. As to the third—I will take them in inverse order—it is the custom of Government to inquire before they take any action, and if the Hon'ble Member chooses to place this interpretation upon their inquiries, it is not of much use my arguing the matter with him. But the second is a very extraordinary statement. Surely every one knows that the reason why Indian labour was required for the Colonies was that as soon as the negro was emancipated, he refused to work at all under any conditions, and therefore to say that he objects to work under the indentured system, which was not then in force, seems to me a most extraordinary piece of logic. What I have said in the second case explains the first. The Indians came to these Colonies to take the place of the negro who would not work. It is true that previously the work had been done by slaves, but what degradation is it to the Indian who has been doing agricultural work in India to do the same kind of work in the colonies? Is it merely because the man who did it before was a slave before the system of slavery was abolished? I fail to see any connection between the two. The other Hon'ble Members who have dealt with this question have spoken with great force, but I venture to think that they have laid too much stress on what for want of a better term I can only describe as the sentimental aspect of the question. I hope Hon'ble Members will not think that I am using that term in any offensive or unsympathetic sense. Nothing could be further from my intentions. We are on common ground in wishing to see the rights of the Indian labourer duly safeguarded and also, I take it, in wishing to see full freedom of opportunity given to him; and the rest should be mainly a question of fact whether or not the system of indenture is such as to fulfil these requirements. I do not mean to say that the other aspect of the case—the undoubted feeling which

exists against indentured labour in itself—can be disregarded; but surely the point of prime importance is the practical issue of how the system affects those who are employed under it—what the drawbacks of it are and what advantages it confers; and it is from this practical standpoint especially that I propose now to deal with the question.

“The Resolution falls into two parts, dealing with indentured labour in India and with indentured emigration to the colonies. I think it will be convenient if I dispose of the Indian question first, because that is relatively a small matter. In India the indenture system only survives in four or five districts in Northern Assam, and there, as the Hon'ble Member has told us, it is moribund. It only survives in these districts and is there under sentence of death. It dates back from the early days of the tea industry, when Assam was a little known country and very difficult of access. As the country developed and communications became more easy, it became less and less necessary to use the penal provisions, and in some districts, in the Surma Valley, for instance, they had practically fallen into desuetude by 1906. Only two per cent. of the coolies there were recruited under indenture and 98 per cent. were recruited otherwise than under indenture. In the same Resolution in which the Government of India announced their determination to withdraw the labour district provisions of the Act from the Surma Valley, they announced the appointment of a Committee to consider the whole question of recruitment of labour for the tea gardens in Assam. They called attention to the increasing difficulty in securing an adequate supply, and expressed their view that having regard to the importance of the interests involved, the matter required investigation by a strong Committee before further action could be taken. The Committee reported in 1906, and in 1908 the Government of India announced in a Resolution based on the report that, while they did not consider that it would be fair to the industry in the Brahmaputra Valley to withdraw at once the labour district provisions of the Act which had already been withdrawn from the Surma Valley, they proposed to take up the question again in two years, and in the meantime they advised the tea industry to consider how best they could adapt themselves to the changed situation, which would then be created. Various causes contributed to delay the question being dealt with until last year when Government informed the Indian Tea Association that they proposed to withdraw the provisions from the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley as from 1st July 1913. When this withdrawal has been carried into effect, indentured labour will have ceased to exist within the limits of the Indian Empire.

“As the system will so soon have come to an end, it is hardly necessary for me to examine its merits and demerits at any length, but there are one or two points which it is of importance to emphasise in connection with the present Resolution. The marked unpopularity of employment in Assam which led directly to the appointment of the 1906 Committee is undoubted, and it is equally beyond question that the penal clauses were a contributory cause to that unpopularity; but they certainly were not the only or even the main cause. The Committee, to quote their own words, ‘placed in the forefront of the reasons for the unpopularity of Assam, the strong resentment which exists among all classes of the people against the malpractices of the *free* emigration system which existed under Act I of 1882.’ In a case like this the grounds of unpopularity are no bad index of where abuse really lies. Undoubtedly malpractices in the recruiting districts before the Act of 1901 were very serious. Sir Charles Rivaz in his speech in Council in 1901 stated that the consequence of this system was ‘that a horde of unlicensed and uncontrolled labour purveyors and recruiters sprang into existence who, under the guise of assisting *free* emigration, made large illicit gains by inducing, under false pretences, ignorant men and women, chiefly from the backward districts of Bengal and the Central Provinces, to allow themselves to be conveyed to Assam, and by practically selling these people to the planters for the purpose of being placed under labour contracts in that Province.’ It is only since the Act of 1901 came into force that the recruiting areas have been restricted and placed under better supervision, with the result that the objection to Assam labour has been gradually, if slowly, dying out. No doubt, as the Committee

also say, the penal contract has been a further bar to recruitment. Reports of the compulsory powers vested in the planters before the abolition of the right of private arrest added to the suspicion with which Assam was regarded; but the primary cause was beyond question the malpractices in the recruiting districts. It has to be remembered—a point which I shall have to insist upon later—that there are two sides to the labour contract; it helps the employer by binding down the labourer to work on certain terms, and it protects the labourer by ensuring him regular work at fixed wages and by enforcing on the employer the provision of the necessary safeguards for the labourer's health and material welfare. It is only fair to the planters to say that the Committee found, after touring the districts, that the material condition of the coolie was good and that his welfare was well looked after; that he was provided with good lodgings, good water, and that the conditions of labour were not such as a man of ordinary strength could not well comply with, while they gave him an opportunity at certain times of the year of earning money, without excessive additional labour, over and above his pay.

“The Government of India, since the Resolution of 1908 was issued, have never wavered in their view that the time has come when the penal contract should go. But what has primarily influenced them in arriving at this decision is that, with the improvement of communications, they consider—and the Committee supported this view—that this portion of the Act is no longer required for the protection of the labourers, and they hold strongly that free labour will eventually benefit the industry. Of one thing I am convinced, and that is that the tea industry will never have done for good with their troubles in regard to the supply of labour, until we have managed to secure free labour and free recruitment. Free recruitment must be a matter of some time, especially as the industry have not yet made up their mind that they can do without the contractor; but at least the first necessary step is the removal of that penal contract, and that is now about to be done. Labour under penal provisions has become an anachronism in districts within the limits of India itself, under the direct control of the Indian Government, and now no more difficult of access than many other outlying parts of the country.

“I turn now to what is in the circumstances the more crucial question, that of the recruitment of Indian labour for employment under indenture in British colonies. First of all, let us be clear as to exactly what the scope of contract emigration to the colonies is. Emigration under a contract of indenture can only take place under the Emigration Act of 1908 to certain specified colonies. These are now Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica, Mauritius and British Guiana. Ceylon and the Straits Settlements are in different position and are not affected by the Act. From time immemorial, there has been a regular flow of free labour, chiefly from districts from the south of India, to those colonies, and the greater part of that emigration has been free. As the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale told us, there has been some indentured emigration to the Straits Settlements, and there has been in certain cases regrettable mortality on unhealthy estates. I quite admit that, but I do not attach very much importance to it because the system there is practically dead. The Government of that colony has taken up the question, and although we have not heard definitely that they have put an end to it, it is generally understood that they are very soon going to do so. In the Malay States, where great mortality had occurred, they have actually stopped it altogether. That the coolie even in the Malay States does not feel the weight of his chain very heavily, is shown by the fact that 80 per cent. of the indentured coolies in Perak offered themselves for service under the free contract when they were released.

“Returning to the list of colonies which I have mentioned, recruitment has also stopped for Mauritius, where, owing to the depression through which the colony has been passing, there is no longer any demand for labour, and the Government of India have under consideration the desirability of prohibiting it to that colony altogether. Thus we have only to take into consideration emigration to the four colonies of Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica and British Guiana. Indentured labour for Natal, I need hardly remind the Hon'ble Member who took so deep an interest in the matter, was put an end to from July of last year.

“I cannot help thinking, Sir, that some of the feeling which has grown up against indentured labour is owing to the nature of the contract not being clearly understood. It is very far from being, as is sometimes supposed, a contract solely in the interests of the employer. The interest of the employer in the matter is, of course, clear. He has brought the coolie a great distance over sea at considerable expense to a country where *ex hypothesi* labour is scarce; and the indentured system guarantees that on his arrival the coolie will have to work and will not be tempted away by the offer of better wages or pleasanter conditions elsewhere. The advantage to the labourer is no less real. The system now in force secures him protection in recruitment; on the voyage; on his arrival in the colony, and during the term of his indenture; it secures him, according to the colony concerned, either his passage home or substantial assistance towards it. But I will avoid generalities, and in order to make the matter clear will put briefly before Council the obligations and rights imposed respectively on the two parties by the contract of indenture and by the operation of the Indian Emigration Act of 1908 and the Colonial Immigration Laws; and Hon'ble Members can then judge for themselves. I should explain that there are slight differences in the requirements in the various colonies, but these are not sufficiently substantial to affect my argument. First of all, as to the obligations upon the coolie. The coolie is bound to his employer for a period of five years. He has to reside on the plantation, and if absent without a pass, is liable to arrest, and can be arrested without warrant; he is liable to fine for such absence. If he is absent without leave for a certain number of days, he is considered to be a deserter and may be fined or imprisoned; he is liable to punishment if he refuses to go to hospital when ill and also for refusing to perform his work, or hindering, molesting or persuading any other emigrant from doing his work; and he is also punishable with a fine or imprisonment for offences against discipline. I turn now to what is done for him by the requirements of the contract and of the law. In the first place, his recruitment is hedged in with safeguards. No person is entitled to recruit labour unless he is licensed by the Protector of Emigrants appointed by the Indian Government at each port from which emigration is lawful. The terms which the recruiter is authorised to offer are submitted to the Protector, who countersigns a written or printed copy, and the recruiter is permitted to give only a true copy of this statement to the persons he invites to emigrate. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale laid very great stress on the question whether the coolie knows about penal provisions. It is perfectly true there is not a requirement in the Act that the terms of the contract are to contain the fact that if he does not carry out his contract or commits the other offences I have mentioned, then he is to incur imprisonment or fine. That is so; it is not made clear in the contract. It is a point on which I propose to have inquiry made. I think there is a great deal of force in the contention that he ought to know exactly what he is in for, not only the actual requirements of work, and so on, but that he should know the exact terms of the penalties. But there are one or two considerations which I should like to bring before the Council. In the first place, there is good reason to suppose that most of them know perfectly well what is going to happen. Then the coolie, it must be remembered, in India, is generally tied down in some form or another. The coolie going to Ceylon is bound down by a load more or less of debt. He is recruited by a person called the 'kangani,' who advances him money, and when he arrives in the colony he is not really free until he has paid off his debt. The coolie, therefore, when he engages himself to do work, expects, as a rule, that something will happen to him if he does not do it. Then I should like to point out another thing. The assumption is that when a man enters into a contract, he means to carry out the contract. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's assumption is that he does not understand the contract properly, and when he gets to the colonies he will wish to break it, and then it is very hard on him that he should suffer a penalty for breaking it. I do not think that is a fair way of looking at it at all. The coolie has signed a contract of which the terms have been most carefully explained to him, and it is only reasonable to suppose he has understood that he has to work well, and that he means to carry out his contract; and if he refuses, he at any rate is not likely to be surprised at finding himself punished. There are clauses in the Indian Penal Code which provide for something not unsimilar at the present moment.

“Every agreement to emigrate must be executed in the presence of a registering officer. The registering officer is required to examine the intending emigrant apart from the recruiter, in order to ascertain whether he is willing and competent to emigrate and understands the terms of the contract, or whether he has been induced to execute the agreement by any coercion or undue influence or mistake. Before embarkation the emigrants are kept in a depôt, in which they are examined as to their physical fitness to undertake a voyage. If the Protector finds that any emigrant is physically unfit or that any irregularity has occurred in his recruitment or in his treatment, he may return him to the place of registration at the expense of the recruiter. The next step is the voyage to the colony. The Emigration Act and the rules framed under it make elaborate provision for the safety, comfort and proper treatment of emigrants during the voyage. Emigrant ships have to be equipped and provisioned according to the scales laid down in the rules, and every such vessel has to provide a duly qualified medical officer. The ships cannot sail without an examination by Government officials as to their seaworthiness and the quality and quantity of food, medicines, accommodation and equipment. When the emigrant arrives in the colony of his destination, he is provided for by the law in force in that colony for the regulation of indentured immigration, and it should be remembered that emigration is permitted to no country from India, unless the Governor General in Council is satisfied that that country has made such laws and other provisions as are sufficient for the protection of immigrants during their stay therein. For a certain period after arrival rations are supplied on a scale and at a cost prescribed by the law—a cost which does not exceed 4 annas a day in the case of a male adult. Suitable dwellings, medicines, medical attendance, hospital accommodation and proper diet during sickness have all to be provided for the immigrant free of cost. The hours of work are laid down in the immigration laws and do not exceed 7 hours in the field and 10 hours in the factories, which is, I may point out, a very low figure compared with factory labour in this country, and a minimum wage is prescribed. Protectors of immigrants are appointed who are empowered to visit plantations, to require the production of emigrants, to enquire into complaints made by the labourers, and so on. The Protector may cancel the indentures of immigrants if they are ill-used, or for any breach of contract on the part of the employer, or may institute an action in a Court on behalf of any labourer. Inspectors are also appointed to visit the estates at regular intervals to assist the Protector, and Medical Inspectors also go round to inquire into the labourers’ state of health, the sanitation of the plantation, etc. Lastly, grants of land are made to emigrants who resign their right to repatriation and wish to settle in the colonies. If they do not wish to settle they receive from British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica assistance towards their passage back to India and from Fiji a free return.

“I think, Sir, that if we are to consider this matter fairly, we ought to set against the penal provisions the advantages conferred by the various provisions which I have just enumerated. Let Council consider for a moment what would happen if there were no contract hedged in as this contract has been with the most meticulous safeguards. The coolie from a district such as the Hon’ble Mr. Fremantle has described to Council is not likely to be a skilful bargainer, and on the other hand may well be tempted without much difficulty from his native land. He would have no security for any proper provision on the voyage. On landing he would find himself in a strange country where he would find difficulty in securing food and dwelling. He would be at the mercy of his employer, and if he were turned off, there would be no alternative for him but to work at any wage, however small, or to starve. It is scarcely possible that he would be able to save money, and his chances, therefore, of ever returning to his native land would be infinitesimal.

“The critics will no doubt say that these provisions are all very well, but what guarantee have we that they work properly in practice—one of the points which Mr. Gokhale took up and pressed with some vigour? The question is most pertinent, and I fully agree that the justification of the entire system depends upon the answer. Fortunately we have the necessary material ready at our hand, for the whole problem of indentured emigration to British colonies has been recently reviewed by a Committee appointed in England in

March of 1909. No one can question the impartiality of the Committee. It was presided over by a distinguished ex-Civilian of the English Service. There were representatives of India in Lord Sandhurst, Sir James LaTouche and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who has spoken on the subject to-day. The Colonial Office was represented, and there were also on the Committee two Members of Parliament, one of whom, Sir George Scott-Robertson, is a strong Liberal, who, if he had any bias in the matter at all, would certainly not be disposed in favour of indentured labour in any form."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao: "Was there any Indian member?"

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "There was no Indian member. The report of the Committee was unanimous. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who was a member of it, has, I think, proved to Council how far-reaching were their inquiries and what care was taken to hear every side of the question. Although the Committee did not actually visit the colonies concerned, representatives of different shades of opinion were brought over at Government's expense to give evidence. The considered opinion of the Committee on the main issue is best quoted in their own words.

It can safely be said,' they write, 'that, notwithstanding some unfortunate occurrences at times now remote, the system has in the past worked to the great benefit not only of the colonies but equally of the main body of emigrants, and this is so still more in the present.' So far did they consider that the majority of emigrants undoubtedly prospered, that they wished steps to be taken by the Government of India to popularise emigration in India; relinquishing to this end the attitude which they have hitherto maintained of a strict neutrality. The Committee rejected unhesitatingly the imputation, which is still at times advanced, that the system of indentured labour, as it affects emigrants to British Colonies, partakes of the nature of slavery. They expressed the opinion, after examining the best and most authoritative evidence that they could obtain, that whatever abuses might have existed in the past, no such charge can be substantiated against the system as it at present exists, and as it has been in practice during the last twenty or thirty years.

"They considered that the restrictions placed on indentured emigrants are not in their practical operation excessive. They noted that the provisions as to arrest if a coolie is found without the passes which he has to use when he leaves the plantation seemed to be excessive and unnecessary, but they said on the whole that in actual practice they found that these provisions were not abused. They point out that outside the terms of the contract, the principal conditions of which have been twice explained to the coolie before he enters into it, he is for all purposes a free man whose rights are carefully watched over and guarded by a special staff of Government officials. Of course much must depend on the efficiency and rectitude of the Government officials, but as the Committee say, the system must in the last resort be judged by its results, and in the evidence before them they found a general concurrence of opinion that so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the emigrant, it in fact encourages in him the growth of an independence of character. There is an impressive passage in the evidence of Sir Charles Bruce, who was Governor of British Guiana, when Surgeon-Major Comins, then Protector of Emigrants in Calcutta, came to visit the colony on a tour of inspection. He quoted the following words which Surgeon-Major Comins had used:—

'No one,' he said, 'who knows the Indian coolie can fail to be struck by the great difference between the coolie in India and his children born in the colony.' * * * Whatever be the cause, whether change of climate, better food, easy times, more responsible duties or position, the influence of travel, or freedom from the narrowness of caste prejudice, the result is very apparent. The children born in the colony of Indian parents revert to a higher type of civilization, and in appearance, manner and intelligence are so much superior to their parents that it is difficult to believe they belong to the same family. The boys and young men are stronger and better looking, and are able to turn their hand to anything at a moment's notice, with a smartness and knowledge of the world which would vastly astonish their grandparents in India; while the girls and young women have a beauty and refinement rarely seen in public in India many having all the appearance of good birth and breeding usually associated only with families of the best blood. The daughters of men who do not require them to work, lead a happy life, free from the care and toil which aged their mothers before they had reached their prime.'

"In the same way another witness, the Rev. J. Morton, who lived 41 years in Trinidad—and a missionary I imagine is not a person who would take a biased view in this matter—found that the system worked better and induced a better and more independent type in the labourers that came over. I think in the face of such evidence it cannot be contended that indentured labour has an evil influence either on the physical condition or on the morale of the Indian emigrant. In connection with this question of physical condition, Hon'ble Members will recollect that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the considerable mortality which has taken place on occasions among indentured coolies during the last seventy-five years. He went back a long way, but I think he might have added a little more as to the present state of the figures of health. I have here the figures of mortality in this country and in the colonies. In British Guiana the death-rate of Indians on the estates under indenture averaged 26·6 per thousand over the last nine years, in Trinidad during the same period it ranged from 14·5 to nearly 20 per thousand, in Fiji in 1909 it was only 7·43 per thousand, and in Jamaica it is 23 per thousand: that is to say, the highest is 26 per thousand and the lowest is nearly 8 per thousand."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "In Jamaica it is higher than British Guiana. In Jamaica it is 33. It is higher than the general population."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "Among the indentured immigrants the death-rate is 23."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "In Jamaica the total rate for the Indian population is higher."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "I am not referring to the general population. The comparison I was going to make was between Indians in the colonies and in their native country. My point is that the death-rate is lower among the indentured immigrants than the death-rate in the United Provinces, from which a large number of these coolies are obtained, and where the death-rate was in 1909 37 per thousand and in 1910 52 per thousand. At the same time it is perfectly true that the sound working of the system depends upon a series of safeguards, and there are openings through which abuses can creep in. I will not deny that, and it is not surprising to find that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and other speakers have called attention in the course of the debate to certain points referred to in the evidence before the Committee. The first of these is the question of Protectors and Magistrates. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale considers, I think, that these officers do not carry out their duties as efficiently as they ought to. He went a little further and hinted that some of them were inclined to favour the planter rather than the labourer. The most serious complaints contained in the evidence before the Sanderson Committee under this head were in connection with Trinidad. A Member of the Trinidad Legislative Council, the Hon'ble Mr. C. P. David, who gave evidence before the Committee, complained that the Protector was not sympathetic with the Indians; that he lived in the town at some distance from the estates; and that inspection was not as thorough as it should be. Similarly, Mr Fitzpatrick of Trinidad, who attended as a representative of the Indian community, gave evidence somewhat of the same tenor. On the other hand, Mr. Huggins, a Magistrate, who was in the colony for 25 years, gave entirely conflicting evidence, and said that the Protectors were very popular with the Indians, who came to them about any troubles however small. The Committee themselves arrived at the conclusion that while they considered that Mr. Fitzpatrick's views were not justified in the evidence brought forward, it was no doubt a matter which required watching. There was another complaint mentioned by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in connection with a certain Magistrate, Mr. Bateson, in Mauritius. But Mr. Bateson stated that he found difficulty in cases where a coolie brought an action against his master because the coolie could not state his case efficiently in Court, and Mr. Bateson did not feel that he was as Magistrate entitled to assist him in any marked degree. The Committee in their comment on this evidence considered that Mr. Bateson

had taken too narrow a view of his duties, and that he might very well have made more efforts to assist the coolies, and I think this is a conclusion with which everybody must agree. These are the only two cases where the evidence points to anything like a shortcoming. I do not think therefore that there is any strong presumption of shortcomings, but at the same time I entirely agree with the conclusions of the Committee that the matter requires careful watching, because a great deal depends upon it.

“ A more serious matter in my judgment is the large number of prosecutions that occur under the Act, and it is all the more serious because it can be substantiated by figures. In British Guiana, in 1907-1908, there were 3,835 complaints by employers against immigrants with an indentured population of only 9,784. The percentage of complaints to the indentured population was 39·2 and of convictions 20·6. In Trinidad, there were 1,869 convictions for offences against the labour law in 1907-1908 for a total indentured population of 11,506, or about 16·5 per cent., and in Fiji there were no less than 291 charges against labourers, of which over 90 per cent. resulted in convictions. In Mauritius, matters are much better; but, even there, at the time when Mr. Muir-Mackenzie visited the colony, there were 4,101 convictions as compared with the total number of indentured labourers employed of 52,247, giving an average of 7·8 per cent., although the average has since fallen to a little more than 3 per cent.

“ Well, I think, there is no denying that these figures are disquieting. I think everybody will be glad that the Committee has recommended that the colonies in question should hold an inquiry into the matter. There are certain contributory causes which account in part for the large number of these convictions. Whatever the precautions taken in the recruiting districts, a certain proportion of men are accepted, who are not fitted for agricultural work, or who are idlers with no intention of working except under compulsion. These men swell the list of prosecutions and often come before the Courts again and again. The limitation of the area of recruiting suggested by the Committee should make for the elimination of this factor. In Trinidad, again, in order to prevent an employer encouraging or permitting his labourers to abscond when work is slack so as to avoid having to pay them their wages, he is compelled to prefer a charge against any deserter within 15 days of the offence; and an absence for three full days without leave constitutes desertion. The Indian labourer is not fond of continuous work, and it is probable that this fact would account for a good many of the prosecutions. But the case for inquiry is strengthened by the general tenor of the evidence which shows that, in the best managed estates, prosecutions are not much resorted to. It is very desirable, I think, that the inquiry should be held, and it is greatly to be hoped that the Colonial Governments will look into the matter and that estate managers will in the future be less ready to adopt this most unsatisfactory means of enforcing their strict claims against the immigrants. The Committee made several other recommendations dealing with defects which they considered to exist either in the laws in the colonies or in the arrangements for recruiting in this country. Those recommendations have been considered by the Government of India and we are now in correspondence on the subject with the Secretary of State. I, therefore, cannot make any definite statement about them, but I think I may say this much, that the Government of India are, generally speaking, in agreement with the great majority of the recommendations made. One of the most important of the matters dealt with is the question of re-indentures to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred. Now there is no question that re-indentures stand on an entirely different footing to indentures. The indenture system is necessary in the interests of the employer as ensuring him some return for the cost of the passage of the labourer whom he has imported from a great distance, and is necessary in the interests of the labourer because it ensures him work and proper housing, and so on, when he arrives in a new and strange country. Neither of these arguments can be brought forward in defence of re-indentures. When a coolie has finished his first indenture he has discharged his obligations to the employer in respect of the cost of his passage. On the other hand, he may fairly be expected to have found his feet and no longer to need special

protection. This matter, again, is one which is under correspondence with the others with the Secretary of State and I cannot say anything definitely about it ; but undoubtedly there is much to be said for the recommendations of the Committee that in all colonies where the system still prevails, the duration of contracts of re-indenture should be limited to twelve months and that measures should be taken to abolish the practice within a reasonable time.

“ I have now referred, Sir, to the principal points on which the Committee suggest improvements. The Colonial Governments, apart from there being no reason whatever for thinking that they would not in any case wish to protect the Indian immigrants to the best of their ability, have a very strong motive for doing so, since the continuance of emigration is of great economic importance to the West Indian colonies and the Government of India have powers to prohibit emigration to any colony where they are not satisfied, either with the treatment of the indentured immigrant or of settlers who have completed their indenture and elected to remain in the colony. I think, therefore, that there is very little reason to doubt that, when the Sanderson Committee's report is known to the several Colonial Governments, they will do their best to meet the points which have been raised. Although it is very important that any defects should be remedied, I do not think it can be said that in their sum total these various matters can be held—any more than they were held by the Committee—to constitute a condemnation of the indentured system. Of course I quite agree, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, that the Government of India have no special duty to consider the interest of colonies. At the same time the colonies are a part of the same Empire, and we certainly should not wish to do them harm, unless there were very strong grounds shown for doing so because the interests of our own people demanded it. I submit, Sir, that no such grounds have been shown. We have had before us the report of a strong and impartial Committee which recommends the continuance of this system. It is true, as Sir Vithaldas Thackersey says, that the system in so far as it takes away any labour from India effects a reduction in the available labour force of this country. It effects some reduction, but the reduction is so small that very little weight can be attached to the argument. In the last three years the average emigration to the four colonies which were still taking coolies was some nine thousand men, and considering the enormous population of India, that cannot be held to be anything but an infinitesimal proportion.

“ The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has referred to the difficult question of women in the colonies. It is certainly the case that the question of finding the statutory proportion of women presents difficulties and that the women sent are not always of a desirable class. The evidence shows that trouble has occurred in plantations from time to time both from the number of men being considerably in excess of the women, and from the women not always being of good character ; but I am inclined to think that the Hon'ble Member's view has been perhaps too much influenced by a passage in the Government of India's despatch of 1877—that is, a despatch written now 35 years ago. Much greater care has been taken since to improve matters and to procure a better class of women emigrant ; and special precautions are prescribed on registration to prevent wives emigrating as a means of leaving their husbands.

“ Well, Sir, I have already referred to the evidence which shows that for coolies that go to the colonies emigration has resulted in a growth of independence of spirit and improvement in their physique and morale. They also make considerable profits by going. In 1910, savings brought back by coolies from Trinidad came to £1,000, from Jamaica £2,344, from Mauritius £4,099, and from British Guiana £9,252. Their remittances during the same time were, from Trinidad £3,990 ; Fiji £3,535 ; from Jamaica and Mauritius £390 and £690, respectively ; and from British Guiana £2,269. It is scarcely possible that they could have done as well if they had stayed at home. Yet if the Hon'ble Member's Resolution were adopted, I do not see how it will be possible for coolies to go from this country to distant colonies. I have explained to the Council the obligations of the contract, and I have shown by contrast what would be expected to happen if the coolies were to go free and unprotected to a distant and to them a foreign country. Only the

other day we had a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Consul at Colon telling us that certain coolies had gone out on the chance of getting work on the Panama Canal, and had been stranded there. If we accepted the Hon'ble Member's Resolution, we should have no alternative but so far as in us lies to prevent the overseas emigration of labour. I submit that no case has been made out for so extreme a step, for so harsh an interference with the liberty of the subject, and that we should be far wiser to maintain the attitude of neutrality which the Government of India has taken up in the past towards this question. This policy is well described in a despatch of 1877 from Lord Lytton's Government, in reply to a despatch from the late Marquis of Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, in which he suggested that it might be possible and advisable for the Government of India to afford greater encouragement to emigration, having special regard to the greatness of the Indian population and with the probability that the population would continue to increase. The Government of India held that any material departure from the permissive attitude which had hitherto been observed would be extremely impolitic. They did not base this opinion on the ground that it would be inexpedient to part with any portion of the population of the country, for they held, and history has amply justified them, that any amount of emigration that would be likely to take place could not have more than an infinitesimal effect upon the population. They objected on the grounds of the effect which a direct and active interposition of Government in such a matter would be likely to have on the minds of the people and on the difficulty and embarrassment in which Government would become involved by undertaking responsibilities towards the colonies on the one hand and towards the emigrants on the other, which it would be practically impossible for it to discharge in a satisfactory manner. They, therefore, proposed to maintain the policy which, as they put it, may best be described as one of seeing fair play between two parties to a commercial transaction and of acting as protector to the weak and ignorant in order to ensure that in the bargain which they have freely made with those who bid for their labour, they will not be molested or imposed upon.

"The Government of India see no reason to depart from that policy. They hold no brief for indentured labour. While explaining to Council their reasons for thinking that the system should not be discontinued, I have endeavoured to weigh the drawbacks and advantages as dispassionately as I can. Nor can they admit that there is any inconsistency in ending indentured labour in Assam and permitting indentured emigration to continue to British colonies. In the one case, the coolie is working at a relatively short distance from his home, under Indian law within the limits of the Indian Empire; in the other, he is being taken from his own country and placed amongst strangers in a distant colony. From the standpoint alike of his own interests and of his employers the situation is entirely different. There remains the sentiment that indentured labour bears the taint of slavery. It is based on a complete misconception, for in essentials the two differ fundamentally. The labourer under indenture has entered of his own free will into a contract the terms of which have been explained to him again and again, while the essence of slavery is that it is involuntary and forcible; and there is no resemblance in fact between the penalties applicable to an indentured coolie who offends against the labour laws, and the position of the slave who is the absolute possession and chattel of his master. I know that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's only motive in bringing forward this Resolution is his belief that the system is not in the true interests of his countrymen, and no one who has listened to his speech could question the absolute sincerity of his convictions. Yet I venture to think that he is mistaken. Hon'ble Members know the sources from which the greater number of these emigrants are drawn. They come largely from localities where the pinch of poverty is acutely felt, even if it is not always so oppressive as in those districts described by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle where men sell themselves into perhaps lifelong serfdom for the few rupees required to pay for a marriage festival. To my mind, Sir, there is no bondage so pitiless as the bondage of poverty and lack of opportunity. The indentured system at least affords to the more adventurous spirits their chance to open up a new life in another land; perhaps to settle there, in a condition of prosperity undreamt of in the environment from which they have emerged; or to return to their own

country with substantial savings, if they have been thrifty, or at least with a wider outlook and a new store of experience. I would not, Sir, for fear of this unreal phantom of servitude, deprive them of that opportunity.

“Government must oppose this Resolution.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: “Sir, the Council has heard two speeches against this motion, one from the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the other from the Hon'ble Mr. Clark; and I will first deal with what has fallen from Mr. Fremantle. The Hon'ble Member began by complaining—and in that complaint the Hon'ble Mr. Clark joined later on—that I had referred only in passing to the recommendations of the Sanderson Committee. Sir, it is quite true that I made only a very passing reference to the deliberations of that Committee. Shall I tell you why? It was because I was very much disappointed with some of the recommendations of that Committee. I think the whole standpoint from which the Committee approached the question was faulty. But the responsibility for that lay with the terms of reference. The Secretary of State had appointed the Committee, as the terms of his minute show, to consider—

‘the general question of emigration from India to the Crown colonies, and the particular colonies in which Indian immigration may be most usefully encouraged’ and so on.

“Thus the standpoint from which the members were invited to approach the question was not whether indentured emigration should be permitted from India but how Indian emigration should be encouraged to the Crown colonies. The Secretary of State started with the assumption, and the Committee took up the assumption, that Indian immigration was necessary for the Crown colonies, and the question to be considered was how it was to be encouraged. That being so, whatever was against indentured emigration was more or less lost sight of and whatever went to favour such emigration was prominently brought forward. Even so, there are statements in the report which go to show that if the Committee could have recommended the abolition of indenture, they would have gladly done so. One has only to read between the lines of the report to see that it is so. But being convinced that Indian emigration to the colonies was possible only under contract of indenture, and impressed with the idea that without such emigration the interests of the colonies would be jeopardized, the Committee could not but make the recommendations which it has made. Sir, the Hon'ble Member has told the Council that though the penal provisions of the contract are not stated in the agreements or explained beforehand, after all the coolies who go under the system understand what they are going to in the Colonies. This, coming from my Hon'ble friend, is surprising. Let me appeal in the matter from Mr. Fremantle, Official Member of this Council, speaking against my Resolution, to Mr. Fremantle, member of the Sanderson Committee. The report of the Committee, which the Hon'ble Member has signed, says :—

‘We have heard from many colonial witnesses who gave evidence before the Committee that Indian emigrants, when drawn from the agricultural classes, make excellent settlers and that a large proportion do actually settle down either on the sugar and other plantations or on holdings of their own. Yet it seems doubtful whether the majority of the emigrants leaving India fully realise the conditions of the new life before them or start with the deliberate intention of making for themselves a home in a new country. They go because they are uncomfortable at home and welcome any change of circumstances. They have quarrelled with their parents or their caste fellows, or they have left their homes in search of work and have been unable to find it. Many are not recruited in their own villages. The recruiters hang about the bazars and the high roads, where they pick up loiterers and induce them to accompany them to the depôts and agree to emigrate, by relieving their immediate wants and by representations, no doubt often much overdrawn, of the prospects before them. The male emigrant more often than not is unaccompanied by any member of his family, and, indeed, the family is frequently not even aware that he has left the country until (possibly some years afterwards) he re-opens communications. Since, except in times of scarcity or of famine, the supply of casual recruits of this kind is not likely to be large at any one place, the net of the recruiters has to be spread far afield, and we hear of their operations one Delhi, in Rajputana and in Bundelkhand, where there is certainly no congestion of population, but, on the other hand, constant complaints of insufficiency of labour both for agricultural and industrial purposes. The same is the case in Calcutta, where about one thousand emigrants

are registered yearly, and still more so in Cawnpore, where the local Chamber of Commerce has on several occasions called attention to the prevailing scarcity of labour and deprecated the encouragement of emigration to the colonies."

"That shows, Sir, how much these poor people know about the life to which they are going, and how far the contract is a free contract.

"Then, Sir, my Hon'ble friend said that whatever abuses there might have been at one time, there were no serious abuses now. I will mention to the Council certain facts brought to the knowledge of the Committee by one of the witness, Mr. Fitzpatrick, to whom Mr. Fremantle has himself referred. Mr. Fitzpatrick mentions two cases of serious abuse and they are both of them really significant of the feeling which still prevails in the colonies on the right of indentured labourers to proper treatment. Both cases, it should be remembered, were tried in Courts, and in both cases convictions were obtained. This is what Mr. Fitzpatrick says :

'To put it briefly. Four overseers on Hermitage Estate, Trinidad, beat several indentured emigrants, and amongst them a woman. One of the male immigrants laid a charge of assault and battery and the overseers were fined 10 shillings each.

'One of the blows received by the female immigrant was on her abdomen. She being pregnant at the time, abortion immediately took place, thus endangering her life.

'The immigration authorities for so serious an offence were satisfied to lay a charge against the overseer for the minor charge of assault and battery. The Magistrate fined the accused £2 only and £3 as compensation.

'The charges for beating the other two immigrants were withdrawn by the Inspector. On the 29th September, four immigrants were charged for assaulting an overseer. They were not fined but sentenced to three months' hard labour.'

"I will leave it to the Council, Sir, to say, after this, if there are now no abuses under the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member says that serfdom exists even in India. If that is so, the Government should deal with that at once. I do not know of any instances of serfdom that may exist in this country. But if serfdom does exist here, by all means let it be put a stop to at once. We must distinguish, however, between the kind of serfdom that Mr. Fremantle mentions and the serfdom that the system of indenture impose upon indentured people. In the cases which the Hon'ble Member mentions, is there the right of private arrest? Are there imprisonments with hard labour for negligence, for carelessness, for impertinence, or for things of that kind? That really is the essence of my complaint about the system. The Hon'ble Member has told the Council that he could not understand why the non-official Members of the Council should make so much fuss about this matter. He did not say it in so many words, but that is what he meant. But practically the same thing was said when proposals to abolish slavery were first brought forward. The friends of the planters in the House of Commons, when the question was brought forward there, said that the slaves were contented and they could not understand why the abolitionists wanted to disturb the contentment and the harmony of their lives. The Hon'ble Member said that Indians in the colonies certainly would not thank me for bringing forward this Resolution. Sir, I am quite content that he should earn their thanks by opposing the Resolution. Be his the thanks which the champions of slavery expected to receive from those who were anxious to continue in slavery! Be mine the denunciation, with which the advocates of abolition were threatened by those champions at the hands of slaves, unwilling to be free!

"One more remark of Mr. Fremantle's I must notice. He mentioned the fact that 475 returned emigrants went back again last year, as evidence of the satisfactory conditions of life that prevailed in the colonies for indentured people. But 475 out of how many returned emigrants? If things were really attractive there, why should not a larger number go? I remember to have read in this report (Sanderson Committee's report) an explanation as to why a few men, after coming back to India, again return to the colonies. It is because these people, having stayed for a number of years in the colonies, find it impossible to get back into their old grooves of life in India, and after spending some time here and there, and not knowing what else to do when their savings are exhausted, they again go to the colonies in a

spirit of venture. The Protectors and the planters, however, do not want them. Indeed, their attitude towards such returned emigrants came out very well in the evidence of Commander Coombs. And curiously it was my Hon'ble friend, Mr. Fremantle, who, in his examination of Commander Coombs, brought out the fact that Protectors and planters do not like to receive returned emigrants, as it is feared that they know the system too well and are sure to poison the minds of other emigrants on the voyage. Mr. Fremantle summed up this attitude in these words:—

'It sounds rather as if you wanted to keep the people who come out in the dark as to the conditions in the colony if you discourage returned immigrants.'

"I am therefore surprised that he should mention the fact of these 475 returned immigrants going back as a sign that the system was satisfactory.

"Now, Sir, I will say a few words in reply to what the Hon'ble Mr. Clark has said. I am thankful to the Hon'ble Member for the promise that he has given of inquiring into why the fact of the penal nature of the contract is not mentioned in the agreements. I hope that the inquiry will be satisfactory and that this fact will be prominently brought out in all future agreements. The Hon'ble Member wondered how I could attach any importance to the fact that emancipated negroes scorned to come under the indenture system, and how from that I concluded that there was something servile about the system. Now, Sir, any man who goes through the third volume of Sanderson Committee's report will see what opinion the emancipated negroes have of the system. In Jamaica there is plenty of emancipated negro labour, but the emancipated negroes require higher wages than what are paid to indentured Indians, and the planters are not willing to pay them because their profits are reduced if higher wages are paid. And what is the result? The negroes are emigrating from Jamaica. The Baptist Union of that colony has pointed out in one of its representations that the emancipated negroes there are being forced to emigrate elsewhere for want of employment. They do not get the wages they want; they cannot be satisfied with the wages offered to them; and therefore they are compelled to emigrate from the places where they were born, and where they have spent all their lives. The Council will thus see that the emancipated negroes think that the indenture system is not good enough for them; and I am quite justified in drawing from this the conclusion that it is a system unworthy of free or even emancipated men, and I think that that is a sufficient condemnation of the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member said that emigrants might be ignorant of the conditions under which they would have to live, when they start, but things are explained to them when they land.

"What is the good of explaining things to them when they are ten thousand miles away from their houses? If they were explained before they started, then that would be something."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "The Hon'ble Member has misunderstood me. I said that the terms of the contract were explained to them when they were registered and again when they came to the depôt before they sailed."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I understood the Hon'ble Member to say that the things were explained to them when they reached the colonies. In any case the penal nature of the contract is not explained to them here, and that is my main argument. Then the Hon'ble Member told us that these laws of the colonies dealing with indentured labourers were laws which had received the assent of the Government of India."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "I am sorry to interrupt the Hon'ble Member again. Colonial laws do not receive the assent of the Government of India. What I said was that if we found that the laws and their operation were open to objection, we could always stop emigration."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I am sorry that I was not able to hear quite clearly what the Hon'ble Member had said, and I mentioned the impression left on my mind. However, I will mention one instance of how laws passed in the colonies are often approved by the Government of India, as a matter of course. The law in Natal which imposes the £3 annual tax on

ex-indentured Indians was passed in 1895, and it was approved by the Government of India. I am quite sure that the approval could not have been deliberate. There was then no separate Department of Commerce and Industry, and the thing must have gone through the ordinary routine, some Under Secretary saying that he saw nothing objectionable in the Act, and thus the Government of India's approval must have been notified to the colony. Well, that is the way in which laws are approved, and that is also the way their operations are watched from this distance. The Hon'ble Member also said 'there is a provision in the statutes for complaints being heard, that the Protector goes round in many places to hear complaints. Commander Coombs tells us that he visits the estates three times in the year. And what does he do? Before he goes, he sends a notice to the manager, and when he goes round, he is accompanied by him. Under these circumstances how many people will come forward, in the presence of the planter, to lodge complaints before the Protector, who visits an estate after giving proper notice to the manager and after the manager has had time to set everything right? Sir, the whole thing is on the whole a more or less make-believe sort of thing, and we cannot attach much value to it.

"Referring to the argument used by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey that India wants all her labour for herself and she cannot afford to lose those who emigrate to the colonies, the Hon'ble Member says that such emigration cannot appreciably affect the labour-supply of India. But if the reduction in the labour-supply is so small, the benefit that India gets from the remittances of emigrants is also trivial; so really both factors must be eliminated from our consideration of this matter.

"The Hon'ble Member holds that the colonies are a part of the Empire, and that, though the question of their interests does not directly concern us, it cannot be left out of account altogether on Imperial grounds. Well, Sir, if the colonies are a part of the Empire, we too are a part of the Empire. But do the self-governing colonies ever take that into account? What have they ever done for us and what obligation rests on us to take the interests of the colonies into our consideration and submit on their account to conditions which, in essence, are not far removed from the servile? Moreover, if the people of India and of the colonies belong to the Empire, so do the emancipated negroes. But what happens to them? It is a heart-rending tale which is told in the appendices to the Sanderson Committee's report—that of the manner in which these neglected people are driven to emigrate from the colonies in which they were born by want of employment.

Finally the Hon'ble Member objects to my comparison between this system and slavery. It is true that the system is not actual slavery, but it is also true that it is not far from it. The contract is not a free contract. You have here the right of private arrest, just as they had in the case of slavery. Moreover, the labourer is bound to his employer for five years and he cannot withdraw from the contract during that period. And there are those harsh punishments for trivial faults. Therefore, though the system cannot be called actual slavery, it is really not far removed from it.

"One word more, Sir, and I have done. The Government, it is clear, are not going to accept this Resolution; that being so, the Resolution is bound to be thrown out. But, Sir, that will not be the end of the matter. This motion, the Council may rest assured, will be brought forward again and again, till we carry it to a successful issue. It affects our national self-respect, and therefore the sooner the Government recognize the necessity of accepting it, the better it will be for all parties."

The Council divided :

Ayes—22.

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao, the Hon'ble Raja of Kurupam, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, the Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar, the Hon'ble Sir Gangadar Rao Chitnavis, the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy, the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi, the Hon'ble Khan Zulfikar Ali Khan, the Hon'ble Malik Umar Hyat Khan, the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhurgri, the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey, the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble

Nawab Abdul Majid, the Hon'ble Raja of Partabgarh, the Hon'ble Raja of Mahmudabad, the Hon'ble Maulvi Shamsul Huda, the Hon'ble Raja of Dighapatia, the Hon'ble Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, the Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, and the Hon'ble Mr Haque.

Noes—33.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the Hon'ble Sir Robert Carlyle, the Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Ali Imam, the Hon'ble Mr. Clark, the Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock, the Hon'ble Major General Sir M. H. S. Grover, the Hon'ble Mr. Maclagan, the Hon'ble Mr. Porter, the Hon'ble Mr. Sharp, the Hon'ble Mr. Enthoven, the Hon'ble Mr. Wheeler, the Hon'ble Mr. Brunyate, the Hon'ble Sir A. H. McMahon, the Hon'ble Mr. Lyon, the Hon'ble Mr. Saunders, the Hon'ble Sir James Meston, the Hon'ble Mr. Gordon, the Hon'ble Surgeon General Sir C. P. Lukis, the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, the Hon'ble Mr. Vincent, the Hon'ble Mr. Carr, the Hon'ble Mr. Arthur, the Hon'ble Mr. Madge, the Hon'ble Sir C. W. N. Graham, the Hon'ble Mr. Phillips, the Hon'ble Mr. Meredith, the Hon'ble Mr. Gates, the Hon'ble Mr. Slacke, the Hon'ble Sir Charles Stewart-Wilson, the Hon'ble Mr. Dempster, the Hon'ble Mr. Kenrick, and the Hon'ble Mr. Kesteven.

So the Resolution was rejected.

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Extract from the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 to 1909 (24 & 25 Vict., c. 67, 55 & 56 Vict., c. 14, and 9 Edw. VII, c. 4).

The Council met at Government House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 4th
March 1912.

INDENTURED LABOUR.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "Sir, I rise to move that this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Government of India should now take the necessary steps to prohibit the recruitment of Indian labourers under contract of indenture, whether for employment at home or in any British Colony.

"Hon'ble Members will remember that two years ago this Council adopted a Resolution recommending that the Governor General should obtain powers to prohibit the recruitment of indentured labour in this country for the Colony of Natal. The Government, who accepted that recommendation, gave effect to it by carrying through this Council the necessary empowering legislation, and the new law was put into operation on the 1st July last against Natal. I respectfully invite the Council today to go a step further and recommend that the system of indentured labour should now be abolished altogether. It is true that the Resolution of two years ago was adopted by this Council principally as a measure of retaliation rendered necessary by the continued indignities and ill-treatment to which our countrymen were subjected in South Africa; but my own view, expressed even then in this Council, was that apart from the question of retaliation the system should be abolished because it was wrong in itself. I do not think it necessary to describe to this Council at any length what this system really is. Its principal features may roughly be stated to be six in number. Under this system, those who are recruited bind themselves, first, to go to a distant and unknown land, the language, usages and customs of which they do not know, and where they have no friends or relatives. Secondly, they bind themselves to work there for any employer to whom they may be allotted whom they do not know and who does not know them, and in whose choice they have no voice. Thirdly, they bind themselves to live there on the estate of the employer, must not go anywhere without a special permit, and must do whatever tasks are assigned to them, no matter however irksome those tasks may be. Fourthly, the binding is for a certain fixed period, usually five years, during which time they cannot voluntarily withdraw from the contract and have no means of escaping from its hardships, however intolerable. Fifthly, they bind themselves to work during the period for a fixed wage, which invariably is lower, and in some cases very much lower, than the wage paid to free labour around them. And sixthly, and lastly, and this to my mind is the worst feature of the system, they are placed under a special law, never explained to them before they left the country, which is in a language which they do not understand, and which imposes on them a criminal liability for the most trivial breaches of the contract, in place of the civil liability which usually attaches to such breaches. Thus they are liable under this law to imprisonment with hard labour, which may extend to two and in some cases to three months, not only for fraud, not only for deception, but for negligence, for carelessness and—will the Council believe it?—for even an impertinent word or gesture to the manager or his overseers. These, Sir, are the principal features of the system, and when it is remembered that the victims of the system—I can call them by no other name—are generally simple, ignorant, illiterate, resourceless people belonging to the poorest classes of this country and that they are induced to enter—or it would be more correct to say are entrapped into entering—into these agreements by the

unscrupulous representations of wily professional recruiters, who are paid so much per head for the labour they supply and whose interest in them ceases the moment they are handed to the emigration agents, no fair-minded man will, I think, hesitate to say that the system is a monstrous system, iniquitous in itself, based on fraud and maintained by force, nor will he, I think, demur to the statement that a system so wholly opposed to modern sentiments of justice and humanity is a grave blot on the civilization of any country that tolerates it. Let the Council glance briefly at the origin and the history of the system, and it will at once be struck by three facts which in themselves are a sufficient condemnation of the system. The first is, that this system of indentured labour came into existence to take the place of slave labour after the abolition of slavery. This is a fact admitted by everybody, and Lord Sanderson's Committee, whose report I have before me, put it in the very fore-front of its report. The second fact is that it is a system under which even the negro, only just then emancipated, scorned to come, but under which the free people of this country were placed. And thirdly what strikes one is that the conscience of Government—and by Government I mean both the Government of India and the Imperial Government—has been very uneasy throughout about this question, as may be seen from various inquiries ordered from time to time into the working of the system, its repeated suspension for abuses, and its reluctant resumption under pressure from planters. The first, and in some respects the most important, inquiry that was held was due to the action that the Parliament in England took at the very start in this matter. As I have already mentioned, the system came into existence about the year 1834, after the abolition of slavery. In 1837 the matter attracted the attention of Parliament, and in the debate on the question that followed the system was denounced in strong terms by Lord Brougham and Mr. Buxton, and other great Englishmen of that time. The result was that the system was discontinued at once and an inquiry was ordered into its nature and working. A Committee of four gentlemen was appointed, who sat in Calcutta and considered the whole subject. The Committee, after a very careful investigation, submitted a majority and a minority report. Three members out of four condemned the system altogether, and urged that it should not be allowed to come into existence again. Only one member expressed himself in favour of reviving the system under certain safeguards which he suggested. The matter went back to Parliament; but the Parliament, already exhausted by the great effort that it had made in connexion with the abolition of slavery and wearied by the constant wail of planters in regard to the ruin that was threatening them, ultimately followed in this case a somewhat extraordinary procedure and adopted the minority report of one member, as against the majority report of three members. And this was done in a very thin House, only about 150 members being present. As a result of this vote, the system was allowed to be revived in the year 1842. The conscience of the Government, however, has continued troubled, and there have been, since then, numerous other inquiries into the working of the system, resulting in its temporary suspension, followed unfortunately by its resumption again owing to the influence of the planters. I will give the Council a few instances. In Mauritius the system was introduced in 1834, was suspended in 1837 on account of the debate in Parliament, to which I have already referred, and was resumed in 1842, after that vote in the House of Commons. It was, however, suspended again in 1844, was resumed in 1849, and was finally stopped last year; at any rate, there is no more any indentured immigration into Mauritius. In British Guiana, the system was suspended in 1838 under the action of the House of Commons, it was resumed in 1844, was suspended again in 1848, and was resumed in 1858. In Trinidad, where it began in 1844, that is, after the Parliamentary action I have spoken of, it was suspended in 1848 and was resumed in 1851. In Jamaica it began in 1845, was suspended in 1848, resumed in 1860, suspended again in 1863, resumed in 1869, suspended once more in 1876 and was resumed in 1878. I am omitting the later suspensions and resumptions which were due to indentured labour not being temporarily required by the Colony. In Natal, the system began in 1860, it was suspended in 1869 and was resumed in 1872. Even in Assam, where the system was introduced in 1859, there were inquiries held in 1861, 1868, 1881 and 1895. I have not included in this list the last enquiry of 1906, because it was not undertaken to inquire into the abuses of the

system. Now, Sir, these facts clearly show that the Government has been torn throughout between two sets of considerations—one, a natural feeling of sympathy for the material interests of the white planters, and the other a regard for the humanitarian standards of administration which characterise all modern Governments.

“I have so far dealt with facts connected with this question that lie on the surface. I will now deal in greater detail with the principal objections to the system, and I will then say a word about the arguments used in its favour by its supporters. The principal objections to the system are roughly five. The first is naturally its utter inequity. Sir, whatever view one may take of the agreements into which these poor people are made to enter under the system, to dignify them by the name of ‘fair contract’ is to misuse the English language. For the stream is poisoned at its very source. It is significant that nobody has a good word to say for the professional recruiters who entrap and entice away these poor people. The recruiters are admittedly men who are generally ignorant and unscrupulous, and who, with the exception of perhaps a very few, have never been to the Colonies for which they recruit, and who, being paid so much per head, try by hook or by crook to get into their meshes as many persons as they can. The Government of India stand aside on the plea that it is a fair contract between the emigrant and his future employer! Sir, how can a contract be called a fair contract, the two parties to which are most unequally matched? How can it be a fair contract when one party to it is absolutely in a state of ignorance and helplessness, and the other party—the powerful party—takes care that it shall not know how much of it is undertaking to abide by. Take, for instance, the penal nature of the contract. The terms that are explained to the emigrants, when they enter into indenture, never include a statement of the penal nature of the law under which they have to live. Here, in volume III of the Sanderson Committee’s report the Council will find the agreements for the different Colonies reproduced. There is not a word here about the penal liabilities thrown on the poor creatures by the special laws under which they must live in the several Colonies. If this single fact is explained to them before they agree to emigrate, namely, that they would be placed in the Colonies not under the ordinary civil law for the enforcement of the contract but under a special penal law rendering them liable to imprisonment with hard labour even for trivial faults, I should like to see how many even of such ignorant, resourceless people agree to go to these distant places. I say, therefore, that the stream is poisoned at the source; that it is not a fair contract; that it is a contract between two parties that are absolutely unequally matched, a contract vitiated by the fact that most important facts in connection with it are kept from the knowledge of one party.

“In this country, Sir, the Government have from time to time enacted laws for the special protection of the peasantry. In the Bombay Presidency, for instance, we have the Dekkhan Agriculturists’ Relief Act. In the Punjab some time ago legislation was passed restricting the right of the agriculturist to alienate land. The theory that underlies such legislation is that persons who are ignorant and resourceless, do not stand on terms of equality with those who are well to do and who possess knowledge, and that a contract between two such parties is not necessarily a fair contract. The State, therefore, has a right to look into such contracts carefully, to go behind them, so to say, for the purpose, and then decide how far they should be enforced. If this is the case where only civil liability attaches to contracts, how much more should that be the case where penal liability is thrown on one party—and that the weaker party—under the contract? I therefore say that this system is altogether iniquitous. The apologists of the system, however, urge that there are safeguards provided, to prevent hardship and injustice to the emigrants when they go to their respective colonies; two such safeguards are specially mentioned; one is that in every colony there is an officer known as the Protector of Emigrants, specially to look after the interests of indentured immigrants. And secondly, there are the Magistrates to give the protection of the law to the immigrants against any cruelty that may be practised on them by their employers. Sir, these safeguards look all right on paper; in actual practice, however, both are found to be more or less illusory. These men—the Protectors and the Magistrates—are officers of the Colonial Governments.

They belong to the same class to which the planters belong. They are generally one in sympathies and in interests with the planters ; and it is not in ordinary human nature that they should care to displease those with whom they have to live, with whom they have to mix socially,—and all this for granting protection to the poor, ignorant people from a distant land, in whom their interest is purely official. Sir, if the Council has any doubt in the matter, let it turn to the evidence that is contained in the second volume of the Sanderson Committee's Report. I invite the Council to go through the evidence of a Protector named Commander Coombes ; I must also ask you to read the evidence of another witness who had once been a Protector, named Mr. Hill ; and I lastly ask you to go through the evidence of a Magistrate from Mauritius, a gentleman named Mr. Bateson. Commander Coombes was Protector of Immigrants in Trinidad in the West Indies ; Mr. Hill was a Protector in the Straits Settlements, that is, on this side nearer home ; and Mr. Bateson was a Magistrate in Mauritius. Of the three witnesses, Commander Coombes is frankly a friend of the planters ; he makes no secret of the fact that he is there nominally as a Protector of the immigrants, but really to see that they do the work for which they are taken to the colony. It comes out in the cross-examination of this gentleman that he is himself a planter, and one can easily see where his sympathies must be on account of his position as a planter. Of course he takes care to say that he himself does not employ indentured labour, but he is obviously very much alive to the difficulties of the planters in that place. This gentleman uses the word 'we' when he has occasion to speak of the planters. Thus in explaining how he deals with coolies, who complain that they cannot do the work, he says : '*We* send for them, and *we* tell them that they have been brought to this colony for doing their work ; and if they do not choose to do so, they will have to do work for Government for nothing in jail ; and it is left for them to choose either the one or the other !' The whole evidence of this witness shows an attitude of complete identification with the interests of the planters and of hostility to the interests of the immigrants, and it is an irony that he should have the title of Protector of Immigrants. The other Protector I have mentioned, Mr. Hill, is of another type altogether—a very rare type, but a type that does honour to the English name. In spite of the fact that socially and in other ways his life was bound up with that of the community in whose midst he was placed, he stood up boldly in defence of the interests of the immigrants and thereby incurred the serious displeasure of the planters. And what was the result ? He was removed from his office before his term had expired. He found that the mortality among the indentured population in the Straits Settlements in his time was very high, and he drew the attention of the planters to that and insisted on their carrying out strictly the terms of the ordinances concerning the health of indentured labourers. The answer of the planters was to remove him from his office, and to appoint another in his place, even before the expiry of the time for which his appointment was made. And because he was a strong man, who would not take such treatment lying down, the Colony had to pay him £2,500, being his salary for the unexpired period for which he should have held office. They paid him the full salary for the unexpired period, because they thought that that was a smaller evil to them than his being there to protect the interests of the immigrants. The third witness, to whose evidence I call the attention of the Council, is a Magistrate from Mauritius—Mr. Bateson. I have already told you how these poor creatures are liable to be punished with hard labour for the most trivial faults—even for an impertinent word or for an impertinent gesture. Mr. Bateson speaks out strongly against this. It is impossible for me with the limited time at my disposal to read to the Council any portions of this important evidence, but I must ask Hon'ble Members to mark specially two or three of Mr. Bateson's statements. In one place, he says, 'the system resolved itself into this—that I was merely a machine for sending people to prison.' In another place he says, 'there is absolutely no chance of the coolie being able to produce any evidence in his own favour ; the other coolies are afraid to give evidence ; they have to work under the very employer against whom they may be called upon to give evidence.' He says that even if a coolie came before him with marks of physical violence on his body, it was practically impossible to convict the person charged with assault

for want of corroborative evidence. Then he says, 'it was a most painful sight to him to see people handcuffed and marched to prison in batches for the most trivial faults.' Well, I do not wish to dwell at greater length on this evidence; but those who will go through it will know what value to attach to the statement that the presence of the Magistrate in these Colonies is a safeguard to the coolie against ill-treatment. So much then about the illusory nature of the safeguards. My third objection to this system is the vast and terrible amount of suffering that it has caused during the 75 years that it has been in existence. Sir, it is difficult to speak in terms of due restraint on this point. Even the hardest heart must melt to think of this phase of the question. I will not speak now of the imprisonments with hard labour endured for trivial faults; I will not speak of personal violence which in some cases has been proved and very many cases could not be proved, though alleged. I will not speak of the bitterness engendered in the minds of thousands when they realised that they had been deceived, that they had been entrapped, and that there was no escape for them. I will not speak of the homesick feeling, destroying their interest in life. These are all serious matters that could be charged against the system. But more serious even than these is the heavy mortality that has prevailed in the part in all colonies under the system, a mortality which has been examined from time to time by Commissions of Inquiry and which has been established beyond doubt—a mortality for which indentured emigration was prohibited to Federated Malay States only last year, and which even to-day is admitted to exist in certain districts of Assam amongst the statute labourers. Then the numerous suicides which have resulted from the system—poor, innocent people preferring death with their own hands to life under it—are a ghastly feature of the system. And, Sir, last, but not least, the unutterable tragedy and pathos of men and women, at a distance of thousands of miles from their homes, knowing full well that the vast sea rolled between them and their native country, starting actually to *walk* back to their country, imagining in their simplicity and ignorance that there must be a land route somewhere, and either caught on their way and forcibly taken back to the life from which they were fleeing or else devoured by wild beasts or perishing of hunger and cold; all this, Sir, constituted a sum total of human misery which is appalling to contemplate, and which will be a standing witness against the system for all time. It is true that things are somewhat better now, but they cannot be very much better under a system which has inherent characteristics such as those that I have described. Moreover, as Lord Curzon said in this Council in 1901, 'even if such cases have occurred only in a few instances, the very fact that such cases can occur under the system constitutes a severe condemnation of the system.'

"Sir, my fourth objection to the system is the frightful immorality that is inseparable from it. This is a fact which has been admitted by everybody, among others by the Government of India and by the Sanderson Committee. The Committee, who deal with all other phases of the indenture question, carefully avoid making any recommendation as to how the frightful immorality involved in the system may be remedied. Under the law, every hundred male indentured labourers must be accompanied by 40 females. Now very few respectable women can be got to go these long distances; our men themselves do not really care to go, much less do the women. The statutory number, therefore, is made up by the recruiters, and, as admitted by the Government of India in one of their despatches to the Secretary of State, by including in it women of admittedly loose morals, with results in the colonies which one had better leave to the imagination of the Council than describe. Sir, this frightful immorality has characterized the system from the very first. As Mr. Jenkins, who was afterwards first Agent General of Canada, said in 1870, 'the women are not recruited for any special work, and they certainly are not taken there for ornamental purposes.' He also speaks of the immoral relations existing not only between many of these women and the men for whom they are taken from this country, but also between them and some of the planters themselves and their overseers. It is a shocking affair altogether, a considerable part of the population in some of these colonies being practically illegitimate in its origin.

"My last objection to the system is that it is degrading to the people of India from a national point of view. I do not think I need really say much on this aspect of the question. Wherever the system exists, there the Indians

are only known as coolies, no matter what their position may be. Now, Sir, there are disabilities enough in all conscience attaching to our position in this country. And I ask, why must this additional brand be put upon our brow before the rest of the civilized world? I am sure, if only the Government will exercise a little imagination and realise our feeling in the matter, it will see the necessity of abolishing the system as soon as possible.

“ I will now turn for a moment to the arguments which are usually adduced in favour of this system. Briefly they are three. First of all it is said that without this system of indentured labour, the sugar and other industries in many of the colonies will cease to exist; the second argument is that, under the system of indenture, a certain number of Indians make remittances to this country and thus a certain amount of money is received here; and thirdly, that a number of these men, after completing their indenture, settle down in the colonies, become prosperous and attain a status which they could never attain in this country. Now, Sir, so far as the first argument is concerned, I may brush it aside at once; it does not concern us nor does it concern the Government of India, who are here to promote *our* interests. If the planters cannot carry on their sugar or other industries without a continuance of this pernicious system, the sooner those industries cease to exist, the better. As regards the remittances made, or the amounts brought to this country by returned emigrants, considering that these people have been for five years under indenture, the savings are really very small. The average savings brought to India are about R150 per head; in a few cases, the amount may be higher, R200 or so, but the average is about R150. Now R150, saved in five years, means only R30 a year or R2-8 a month. This is not very much after all. The mill-hands in Bombay, for instance, can save much more than that. Again, what about those who save nothing, are broken down in health and spirits, and either perish in the colonies or else are sent back to this country, mere wrecks of their former selves? Finally as regards those who settled down in the Colonies and prosper in the first place, the number of such persons is very small; and secondly, even they have to go through a system with which are associated all the degradation and misery of which I have spoken. When these things are considered, it must be admitted that even if a few persons prosper under that system after the completion of their indenture, the price that has to be paid for such prosperity is far too great.

“ Sir, I will now briefly refer to the extent of this evil, as it exists at the present moment. I will not deal with the case of those colonies where indentured labour once flourished but has now been stopped. In four French colonies and one English colony, it has been stopped on account of abuses; in one English colony it has been discontinued for economic reasons, and in another it has been prohibited as a measure of retaliation. But the system still prevails in three British colonies in the West Indies, namely, British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica, and in one Dutch colony named Surinam, about which, however, under our rules I am precluded from saying anything. Then it exists in Fiji, a Crown colony in Australasia; there is also a small supply of indentured labour to the Straits Settlements; and last, there are four or five districts in the Upper Valley of Assam where the system is still in force. The annual supply to the different colonies comes to a little less than 2,000 in the case of Fiji; about 600 to Jamaica; and nearly 3,000 to Trinidad; and about 2,200 to British Guiana. In Assam the whole labour force is about 800,000, of which the indentured labourers are now only about 20,000. Now taking Assam first,—and here I would like to express my obligations to the Hon’ble Mr. Clark for his courtesy in having a note on the subject specially drawn up for me in his office, giving me up to date information on the subject—I understand that the Government have decided to stop the system of indenture altogether there from next year. The Hon’ble Sir Charles Bayley stated the other day in one of his speeches in East Bengal that, from July 1st of next year, this system would cease to exist in Assam. Probably the Hon’ble Member in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry will also make a statement on the subject to-day. As the system will be discontinued from next year in Assam, I do not wish to say anything more about that here. I would, however, like to point out that the Committee, appointed in 1906, recommended

the complete stoppage of indentured labour in Assam in the course of five years. They would have liked to stop it earlier, but they did not want to inconvenience the planters, and therefore they suggested an interval of five years. According to that, the system should have been discontinued in 1911. And I should like to know why it has been allowed to go on for two years more. That is, however, comparatively a small matter. But, Sir, if the Government has decided to stop the system in Assam, where its working can be watched under its own eyes, I cannot see why it should be allowed to continue in the case of distant colonies, where there can be no such supervision. The position of those who urge the abolition of the system becomes now all the stronger on account of the Government contemplating its abolition in Assam.

“Then, Sir, there is the question of re-indenture in three colonies—in Natal, to which indentured emigration has now been prohibited, in Mauritius, where it has stopped of itself owing to economic causes, and in Fiji, where it is still allowed to continue. This re-indenture is one of the most vicious parts of the system, because though a man may indenture himself at the start only for five years, by means of repeated re-indenture he could be kept in a state of perpetual servitude. And this has become a most serious question now in Natal. There the Government of the colony imposes an annual £3 tax on all ex-indentured labourers who want to settle there as free persons. All those who have been emancipated since 1901—males about 16, and females above 13—have to pay this £3 tax. Now see how it works in practice. Take a family of husband and wife and four children—two daughters of 13 and 15, and two boys below 13. The family must pay the tax for four persons—father, mother and the two daughters—or £12 a year, that is, £1 a month. The man can earn an average wage of about 25 shillings a month, and the wife and the two girls may earn among them about 15 shillings extra, that is, which means a total income of 40 shillings or £2 a month for the family. Of this, half or £1 has to be paid as license-tax. Then there are other taxes; and there is house-rent. The Council may judge how much can remain after deducting these expenses for food and clothing for six persons. Is it any wonder that this tax has broken up homes—as has been admitted by prominent Natal men—that it has driven men to crime and women to a life of shame? Sir, there is no doubt whatever that the tax is nothing less than a diabolical device to drive the poor Indians either into re-indenture or else out of the colony. It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost importance that the Government should take the earliest possible steps to bring this miserable system of re-indenture to an end. I may mention that the Sanderson Committee has strongly recommended the stoppage of re-indenture.

“One word more, Sir, and I will bring my remarks to a close. Sir, this is a question which really throws a great responsibility upon the Government. I am aware that the Government of India have from time to time taken up the position that they maintain an attitude of neutrality in this matter, that they do not themselves encourage indentured emigration, but that if people choose to accept certain terms and go, it is not for them to interfere. I would only ask the Council to contrast this attitude with the attitude which the Government have adopted in regard to the peasantry of the country, in legislating on lines to which I have already referred. I do not think that the Government can absolve themselves from their responsibility in this manner. In the first place, the recruiters are granted licenses to recruit by District Magistrates. That, in itself, imposes a responsibility upon the Government, because, by granting licenses to these persons, the Government make themselves to a certain extent responsible for the representations by which these men secure recruits. Then the Magistrates, before whom the poor emigrants are taken and made to enter into agreements, are the servants of Government. The third and last point is that, though the fact about the penal nature of the contract has been carefully kept out of all agreements all these years, the Government have so far taken no steps whatever to remedy this. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Member, when he rises to reply, why this has happened, and how the Government explain their inaction in the matter. If a penal liability is not necessary to the system, I shall gladly with-

draw the greater part of my objection to the system. If you are prepared to abolish the penal nature of the contract under which these labourers have to work, the rest would be comparatively a very simple question, and I shall not press this motion to a division; but, as I understand it, penal provisions are the very essence of the system; without them the system cannot be worked. If penal liability is thus indispensable, I ask why the Government have not taken steps all these years to see to it that this nature of the contract is explained to the emigrants before they enter into their agreements? Sir, this is really a most serious question, for whatever the Government may say, as a matter of fact, everybody in the country believes that without the countenance of Government, the system could not have gone on so long. India is the only country which supplies indentured labour at the present moment. Why should India be marked out for this degradation? The conscience of our people, unfortunately asleep too long, is now waking up to the enormity of this question, and I have no doubt that it will not rest till it has asserted itself. And I ask the Government not to make the mistake of ignoring a sentiment that is dear to us, namely, the sentiment of our self-respect. We have no doubt plenty of differences between the Government and the people in regard to the internal administration of this country; but those are matters which stand on a different footing. Outside the country, the Government of India must stand up for us on every occasion; must stand up for our dignity, for our honour, for our national pride. If they will not do this, to whom else can we turn? I feel, Sir, that though this system has been allowed to exist so long, yet its days are really numbered. It will soon cease in Assam, and then it cannot last very much longer in the case of the colonies. And I am confident that a people who have spent millions upon millions in emancipating slaves, will not long permit their own fellow-subjects to be condemned to a life which, if not one of actual slavery, is at any rate not far removed from it. Sir, I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name."

The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey: "Mr. President, I rise to support the motion moved by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. Only last week the Hon'ble Home Member, in opposing the Bill brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Basu, argued that one of the principles on which the Government would act would be that any practice was an outrage upon humanity. I maintain, Sir, that this practice of indentured labour, so graphically described by the Mover, is an outrage upon humanity. Apart from this question, may I ask why this practice is permitted? Would our labourers starve if Government stopped this practice? I say, no. Without being charged with vanity, I may claim to know something about Indian labour. I was a member of the Factory Commission in 1908, and in that capacity I went round along with my colleagues throughout India to see for ourselves at first hand the conditions of labour, their habits, their ideas, and about their home life and their work. We were at work on this special mission practically every day for six or seven hours for seven months; and what did we see? Instead of starving, exhausted, servile workmen, we saw independent, healthy, well-paid workmen. The result of the deliberations of the Factory Commission are recorded in the report issued in 1908, and with your permission, Sir, I will read a few lines from the same. On page 19 the Commission says:—

'The position of the operative has been greatly strengthened by the fact that the supply of factory labour undoubtedly is, and has been, inadequate, and there is, and has been, the keenest competition among employers to secure a full labour supply. These two main causes—the independence of the Indian labourer, owing to the fact that he possesses other and congenial means of earning a livelihood, and the deficient labour supply—govern the whole situation.'

"Then further it goes on to say—

'We have also been impressed with the fact that employers are greatly disposed to concede promptly all reasonable demands made by their workers, and, even where the demands are unreasonable, to treat them as proposals which it is desirable to accede to, if possible. Great nervousness is frequently displayed by employers of labour as to the effect even of trivial changes on the workers; numerous expedients are adopted to conciliate them, and the attitude of the employers throughout appears to be based on the knowledge that the operatives are in fact the masters of the situation.'

“This is the deliberate opinion of the Commission, expressed after due inquiry and seven months of hard work. Well, Sir, this is the position of our Indian labour, and in spite of that the Government of India felt itself justified to interfere, and in this Council brought forward the Bill and carried it through, legalising a maximum of twelve hours for these workmen; and we have to remember that these workmen are free men, free agents, and if the work in the factory was not congenial to them or they find it distasteful, they were quite at liberty to leave the work and go away elsewhere. Then, why should we allow this recruitment, which, according to the description of the Mover, and according to all the facts that we know, is nothing more, nothing less, than practical slavery? It has been said and mentioned also by the Mover of this Resolution that if the penal contract was not allowed, the labourers would not get the work and the colonies would not employ them. My reply is—so much the better for India and for the labourers themselves. India can provide work for all these labourers that are going there, and for more than that. Then he said that they are better paid. They are getting a shilling a day or Rs. 22 a month (Mr. Gokhale tells me the average is Rs. 12 a month). The Factory Commission says on page 22—‘That ordinary hands in card and frame departments earn from 7 to 18 rupees, head spinners from Rs. 25 to Rs. 35, mill-hands up to Rs. 16, and weavers from Rs. 18 to Rs. 35 a month’. These are the wages at present paid in India against an average wage of Rs. 12 in the colonies to these indentured labourers. But Sir, even if we grant that these people are slightly better paid, are we to allow people to barter the freedom of our men and women for a few coppers? It has been already said by the Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale that it was the English nation that spent millions and millions of pounds sterling to eradicate slavery. Now, India is going to sacrifice about 7 to 10 crores of rupees every year out of the opium-revenue, in order to save a foreign nation, the Chinese, from the harm that the use of opium does them. This amount, if capitalised at only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, would mean about 300 crores of rupees for us. If India can afford to sacrifice such a large amount for the foreign nation, certainly, if need be, it can provide food for the few that are going to our colonies. Then Mr. Gokhale has also said that it is not only the question of hard work to these labourers, but it is a question of dignity to us. When we find nations all over the world pointing out a finger to India as the only country in the world where this practical slavery of their men is tolerated, it boils our blood, if I may be permitted to use the sentence.

“Sir, I would only mention this in conclusion, that it is an irony of fate that we in this Council should have any occasion to approach the Government of India, and through the Government of India the British nation, to abolish this practical slavery—a nation which has, as I have said, spent millions and millions in the past, and a nation that to-day is willing to risk the prosperity, the great hardship to the poor, and the very defence of the country, rather than interfere with the freedom of the coal miners by legalizing them to work and be reasonable. Sir, I think the time has come when the Government of India might accept this proposition, and do away with the practice.”

The Hon’ble Mr. Fremantle:—“Sir, I have been appointed to this Council for a special purpose which, with the passing of the Co-operative Credit Societies Act, has now been fulfilled; so I feel that some justification is due for my intervening in the debate to-day. That justification is that I was a member of the Committee which sat, less than three years ago now, to consider the case of the subject of emigration to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates. My interest in the subject of over-seas emigration did not begin with the constitution of that Committee, nor did it end with its dissolution. In the year 1905, I was on special duty inquiring into scarcity of labour, and in the course of that inquiry visited a large number of emigration depôts in Bengal and the United Provinces. In subsequent years, during the course of my tours as Registrar of Co-operative Societies, I have seized every opportunity which availed itself of visiting those depôts again, and I have talked to the coolies assembled there both those who were going to the colonies for the first time and those who had been there before. The Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale made a very passing allusion to the Committee which sat in 1909. I think it should be known that that Committee made very careful inquiries

into this particular system of indentures. Among its members were Sir James LaTouche, who is well known as being one of the most sympathetic Lieutenant-Governors who has ever ruled an Indian Province, and Sir George Scott Robertson, a Liberal Member of Parliament, who was not the least inclined, when that Committee began its sittings, to regard the system of indentures in a favourable light. The Committee sat for 71 days, and examined 83 witnesses. Every opportunity was given to the opponents of indentured labour to come forward and say what they had to say. Government went so far as to pay the expenses of Mr. Richards, the Chairman of the Workingmen's Association of Trinidad, to go over to England to give evidence on the Committee. The view put forward by these gentlemen was that Indian emigration should be discouraged on the ground of the competition with native West Indian labour. The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. David, a Member of the Legislative Council of Trinidad, and Mr. Summerbell, a Labour Member of the Imperial Parliament, also put forward a similar view. There was also an Association called the People's Association of British Guiana, which put forward the same view. With these exceptions, no voice was raised before the Committee against this system of indentured emigration. On the other hand, there was a very large body of opinion in its favour. I do not mention the planters and employers of labour, who are naturally prejudiced in such questions. There were, however, many Governors of Provinces of established reputation, some of them men who had retired and given the greater part of their subsequent career to writing on public questions, such as Lord Stanmore, formerly Sir Arthur Gordon, and Sir Charles Bruce, and there were also Sir John Anderson, and Sir Sidney Olivier, the present Governor of Jamaica. Besides these gentlemen, there were many independent witnesses. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says that the Magistrates who deal with offences against the Immigration Law are prejudiced in the planters' favour. That may be or may not be. Sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. The description certainly does not apply to some of those who appeared before the Committee. One example the Hon'ble Mover has himself given. As regards that example, it is that of Mr. Bateson, a Magistrate from Mauritius: it was discussed I may say by the Committee in paragraph 99 of their report and the Committee were of opinion that he did not take a proper view of his duties, or else he would have been able to do very much more good, as no doubt he wanted to do, to the Indian indentured cooly. Besides these independent witnesses such as Magistrates and doctors, there were also several missionaries who gave evidence, and they could not be considered to be prejudiced. There were also some well-known men. One was Sir Rupert Boyce, who was specially sent out by the Colonial Office to the West Indies to inquire into the prevalence of yellow fever, and he made special inquiries, while there, into the condition of the Indian indentured labourer. There was also a gentleman named Mr. Alleyne Ireland, an American publicist who had spent the greater part of his life in inquiries into political, social and economic questions of that character. All these gentlemen were in favour of the system. The report concerning this says, 'there is a general concurrence of opinion that the system as actually worked, so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the Indian, has in fact encouraged the growth of independence of character'; and it says also that the general effect of the bulk of the evidence was to show the excellence of the arrangements made for the immigrants and the prosperity to which the majority attained after they had become free citizens.

"The Hon'ble Mover has stated that indentured coolies do not get adequate help from the Inspectors of Immigrants, and that the latter were men recruited from the same class as the planters, and in fact in some cases have regarded themselves as planters. Now I think anyone who has studied the subject will admit that in those colonies which have a large number of indentured labourers, such as Trinidad, British Guiana and Fiji—these are the only three which have now a large number—the legal and administrative arrangements made for the benefit of the immigrants are very complete. In each colony there is a Protector of Immigrants, or an Agent-General who is assisted by medical men and also by a staff which consists of 4 Inspectors in British Guiana, 3 in Trinidad and 5 in Fiji, where communications are very difficult. Now it is

the sole duty of the Protector and this considerable staff to look after the immigrant population, whether indentured or unindentured; and it is in pursuance of those duties that they are constantly visiting the plantations to see that the immigrants are properly housed and treated and get the wages to which they are entitled. There is also a special provision in the law for a man who wants to leave the estate to make a complaint. Temperaments vary, and some officials are more sympathetic than others when it comes to the point of inquiry into grievances which may be more or less sentimental, but it is quite certain that under the present system no serious abuses can remain unredressed. Sir, no human institution is perfect, and I am not concerned to state that the indenture system is any exception to this rule. No doubt there are defects in it. Several of these defects have in fact been pointed out by the Committee, and they are at present under the consideration of the Colonial Governments concerned. That they are not considered very serious by the people most concerned can perhaps be indicated by the fact which I saw stated in the report of the Protector of Emigrants, Calcutta, that last year no less than 475 coolies who had already been to the colonies re-indentured themselves to serve a further term. The Hon'ble Member drew a picture for us which depicted the artifices of the recruiters and stated that it was not a fair contract because the conditions were not known to the people recruited. Now for that portion of the recruiting district with which I am well acquainted, and which extend from Gonda and Fyzabad to Basti and Gorakhpur and Benares, I can say that the people there are very well acquainted with the conditions of service in the colonies. As I stated at the beginning of my remarks, I have spoken to a large number of them, and I have never found one who has gone to the colonies without knowing the conditions prevailing there. Each man goes because his own people or relations have been there and knows perfectly well the conditions under which they work."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "Including the penal nature of the contract?"

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle: "Of course, they know something about the penal nature of the contract: it has not done them any damage."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "It is not in the agreement."

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle: "They know perfectly well, I maintain, the conditions under which they are going. I do not say that for all the would-be emigrants recruited, but it is true for that very large number of them which comes from the main recruiting districts such as those which I have stated. But surely, as the Committee state in paragraph 100 of their report, the system must, like other systems, be judged by its results, and as to its results, I submit there is very little room for doubt. The statistics we find in the report will prove certain facts, such as that Indians in British Guiana own property averaging £2 per head for each man, woman and child in the community; that in Trinidad in 14 years 70,000 acres of Crown lands have been bought by the Indians; that in Fiji between the years 1898 and 1908 the land held by Indians, whether on leasehold or freehold terms, increased from 6,000 acres to 46,000 acres. 46,000 acres would be 17 acres per head for every man, woman and child in the free community of Fiji. And I think that Indians now in the colonies have some right to be heard on the subject. I do not know how far the Hon'ble Mover has consulted them, but two gentlemen gave evidence before the Committee—two young Indians,—their names were Mr. Francis Edward Muhammad Hussain and Mr. George Fitzpatrick. They were themselves the sons of indentured immigrants who had gone to the colonies under this degrading system which the Hon'ble Mover has painted to us. They were born and educated in the colonies and had come to England at that time for the purpose of being called to the Bar. These two gentlemen, although they pointed out certain defects, as they appeared to them, in the system of indentures, were emphatic in their approval of the continuance of emigration of Indians. Mr. Hussain, for instance, says of the indentured coolie, 'I think they are very well

treated,' and when asked whether the mass of the coolies, after having served their indenture, are prosperous, he replied, 'The prosperity of the colony itself is evidence of that.' And Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was specially appointed as the representative of the Indian community to give evidence before the Committee, said clearly that the community he represents are in favour of the continuance of emigration. He further stated in his memorial which he submitted to the Committee as follows: 'The East Indians, after their term of indenture, have proved themselves to be desirable colonists. As agriculturists, they have aided materially in the development of the colonies; they have purchased Crown lands, and have successfully opened up the country; they undertake cane-farming, kitchen-gardening, and on them the colony is largely dependent for vegetables, &c. They become skilled labourers and are employed by the local road boards, municipalities, railways, etc. They and their descendants become proprietors, merchants, shopkeepers, contractors, teachers, etc., all of whom are most loyal and patriotic, thus forming an important factor in the colony.'

'Now, I submit, this hardly fits in with the Hon'ble the Mover's description of the Indian in the colonies as 'always a coolie.' The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey has stated in his remarks that there can be no necessity for helping coolies to go to the colonies when they have such excellent opportunities in the mills and factories. Well, he claimed to be of some authority on the subject of the Indian labour-supply. I think, perhaps, I may claim the same. And if the Hon'ble Member will read the report which I issued in 1905, he will perhaps see some reason why agriculturists do not desire to go and work in those mills and factories. On the other hand, they are very glad to get agricultural labour even though it may take them some considerable distance from their homes. The wages of agricultural and non-agricultural labour, as every Member of this Council knows, are very different. I have here the Gazetteer of Gonda in Oudh, which was published in the year 1905, and this is what it says about agricultural wages in that district. I may say that this district and the adjoining district of Basti sent to the colonies last year 3,490 men, that is to say, one-third of the total number that went to the colonies from the port of Calcutta. The Gazetteer says, 'the labourer receives either a cash wage of two and a half rupees a month, though the constant complaint of the landlords is that the rate is rising to two annas per diem, with a blanket in winter and perhaps two local maunds of grain at harvest, or else a grain wage of four or five kachcha seers of coarse grain daily. The system of *sáwak* labour, so common in the adjoining district of Bahraich, is still well known in Gonda. The *sáwak* is a member of the lower castes such as Koris, Chamars or Lunnias, who for a fixed sum of a money, almost invariably required for marriage expenses, binds himself in serfdom to the zamindar until the loan be repaid—a contingency which hardly ever occurs in actual experience. The consideration varies with the necessities of the borrower but rarely exceeds one hundred or is less than twenty rupees. A man in this position receives the ploughman's customary share in the produce, supplemented by contributions from his master, which are converted at the market rate and added to the principal.'

"Only last week I read in the *Statesman* about a class of serf-tenants in the vicinity of Giridih who in return for a loan of from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 practically sell themselves into perpetual servitude. It is said, indeed, that the position becomes hereditary, the son taking over the burden of his father's debt. Well, that is some indication of the position to which these poor labourers, with their dependants numbering some 46 millions in this Indian Empire, may fall, and I think that a class of men who are exposed to such economic conditions and who are liable to fall into a state of lifelong hopeless servitude will hardly object to a five years' indentureship and to a free life to come; and I think that they will not thank the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale for the attempt which he is now making to cut away the ladder to becoming proprietors of land and self-respecting citizens of the Empire."

The Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi: "Sir, I have listened with the closest attention to the speech which has just been delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, and I confess that, in spite of the close attention which I have

been able to give to it, the Hon'ble gentleman has failed to convince me that the position taken up by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale is not the correct one. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale gave a graphic description of the circumstances under which these contracts of indentured labour are entered into. He described the ignorance of the coolies, on the one hand, and all the tricks played by those who have the task of engaging these coolies, on the other. He pointed out that undue advantage is taken of the ignorance of the coolies, and some of the facts most material to the validity of the contract are kept concealed from them. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not deny the facts as alleged by Mr. Gokhale. In fact, as I understood him, he admitted that the penal laws under which these coolies have, after their emigration to and settlement in these colonies, to live are actually concealed from them at the time these contracts are entered into. Well, as I have understood Mr. Gokhale's position, the main complaint of the Hon'ble Mover was that in concluding these agreements, this, the most vital portion of the whole affair, was actually concealed from these coolies; and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle has not been able to deny that. Therefore, it seems to me that the most serious portion of the indictment brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, so far as this aspect of the question is concerned, remains absolutely unanswered. Then the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale described in detail the results which these coolies have to face upon their arrival in these colonies, the sort of life they live, and the kind of punishments which are meted out to them upon the most trifling defaults, and even for what is said to be impertinent gesture on their part they receive imprisonment in jail. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his reply to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has again left that portion of the indictment absolutely unanswered. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the evidence which had been given by three gentlemen, each one of them representative, as I understand, of the class of persons who had to deal with these coolies in the colonies, and justified his statements upon the authority of the evidence given by these witnesses before the Commission. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not controvert the facts which were stated by these witnesses, and indulged in what I cannot help regarding as general statements not corroborated by any evidence upon which one could lay one's hands. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle pointed out that there were Protectors and Inspectors who looked after the interests of these coolies. Well to my mind, in the first instance, the very necessity of appointing these Protectors shows that there is something against which protection is needed. That is to say, there are causes and circumstances existing in these colonies which necessitated the appointment of these Protectors in order to prevent the coolies who go to the colonies from being maltreated. But the point of the argument of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale was that the evidence of one of these Protectors showed that they were Protectors rather of the interests of the planters than of those of the coolies who had to work under these hard circumstances. Well, Sir, the evidence of that Protector, some portions of which were read out by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, remains uncontroverted, and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his speech has not referred to anything which can take away from the weight of that evidence and render the statements put forward by that witness and by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale here to-day as statements not worthy of consideration—aye special consideration—of this Council.

“ Sir, when discussing the provisions of the Hon'ble Mr. Basu's Special Marriage Bill the other day, the Hon'ble the Home Member pointed out that the Government of India does not feel itself justified in undertaking legislation unless two conditions exist—one that there is, on the part of the Indian people in the country, an almost unanimous demand for undertaking that legislation, and the other is that the circumstances resulting from a given state of things constitute an outrage upon humanity. Well, the second argument has already been referred to by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey. So far as the first condition precedent to undertaking legislation referred to by the Hon'ble the Home Member is concerned, I need only mention that so far as the Indian people in this country are concerned, there is a complete unanimity of opinion in support of the demand which has been made by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his speech to-day.

"Only yesterday at the meeting of the All-India Moslem League held in the local Town Hall a Resolution was unanimously adopted urging upon the Government the necessity of stopping indentured labour. So far as the Muhammadan community is concerned, therefore, the fact that the Resolution was unanimously adopted by the League at its anniversary is, in itself, conclusive evidence of the fact that the Muhammadan community demands that the recommendation put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution moved to-day should be accepted by Government. And, so far as the Hindu community is concerned, not only has the National Congress adopted this Resolution, but the Hindu representatives present here in Council are, I believe, absolutely unanimous in this demand. Therefore, I submit that the two conditions laid down by the Hon'ble the Home Member in reference to legislation of this kind being there, the Government of India ought to accept the recommendation which has been put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution to-day, and I have great pleasure in giving my hearty support to that Resolution."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : "I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has moved. It has much to commend it to the acceptance of Hon'ble Members apart from any point which the unsatisfactory condition of Indian settlers and the treatment which they receive in South Africa may give to the appeal. I do not believe in indentured labour; the free workman is a far more productive agent than any one working under contractual conditions. Even from the employer's point of view, the present system of indenture is undesirable. It is antiquated, and is not required in a world remarkable for its progressive arrangements for inter-communication. I endorse the opinion expressed by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey about the increasing dearth of labour and the rise in wages in India. I expressed some such views on the subject at Jabalpur in 1905 when presiding over the Provincial Conference there, and the subsequent labour conditions in India have only confirmed those views."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao : "I may be permitted to express my surprise at the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the attitude which he has taken towards this question. He has described in rather glowing colours the conditions under which indentured labourers, specially in Trinidad, live. He says that there is practically no cause of complaint with regard to the way in which labour is recruited and the way in which labourers are treated in the colonies, and he wants us to believe that there is no debasing or degrading influence upon the people concerned, and that there is no complaint coming from the parties who are chiefly subject to this system. I may say at once that he has lost sight of one important consideration in this matter. We may concede all that he has stated; we may even hold with him that what the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has described is not correct. The question still remains: how does this indentured system affect the country at large? Has it a debasing and degrading influence upon India in the estimation of the outside nations? What is the attitude of those people who receive these coolies towards India as a whole? I think the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle must admit that on account of this system India has fallen in the estimation of the civilised world. Therefore, Sir, the important question that centres around this Resolution is this: whether the present system does not vitally affect our national honour, our national self-respect, in fact, our national existence as an integral part of the British Empire. I submit, Sir, that this is the question which the Council has to take into consideration and the Government has to consider. A speech like that of the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle's if delivered some ten years ago might have passed unchallenged. Much water has flowed since then under the bridge. There has been rude awakening of our national consciousness. We feel, Sir, that we have taken things lying down. We do not blame any one for this state of things. We have allowed things to go on in this way; we have not asserted our dignity to be treated like other civilised nations. But times have changed, and we now ask why India, alone among all the countries of the world, should be subjected to this indignity.

We urge, Sir, that the system of indentured labour should be abolished at once. We are all familiar, how in Natal, for instance, the best and most cultured of Indians are treated as coolies. Why is that? The simple reason is that South Africa has come into contact with India in the shape of coolie labour, and she only knows India as a vast recruiting ground of menial labour, and therefore whoever goes from India is naturally looked down on as a coolie, and no better than a coolie. Similarly, women who first went to Burma from the East Coast happened to be women of ill-fame, and were called Coringa women from the place whence they came. Even now women of ill-fame, no matter from what part of the East Coast they come, are still called Coringa women. That name has stuck to these people and it has come down to this day. Therefore, Sir, we cannot be too careful as to the way in which we open our relations with other countries. It is a great misfortune to India that this indentured system should ever have been introduced at all and the Emigration Act should have been placed on the Statute-book. Well, there is no use of regrets for what has taken place. We have now to repair a great wrong done to India. Two years ago the Government of India, by accepting the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale regarding the prohibition of immigration to Natal, has earned the thanks of the public. By amending the Emigration Act, they took the first step to repair a great wrong done to India, and I venture to submit that they would be doing the right thing by going a step further, by prohibiting altogether the emigration of indentured labour to different parts of the world. If any other course be adopted in this matter, I venture to say, Sir, that the action of the Government would be viewed by the Indian public with deep disappointment. No doubt, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, it is a question of time when this system would be abolished. I submit that the Government of India would do well to take time by the forelock, by paying heed to the popular sentiment and by coming forward at once to prohibit this kind of emigration. I don't care to discuss the merits or demerits of the present system. I know several cases where people were inveigled by recruiters to go to a foreign country by describing it as a land flowing with milk and honey. I shall only say this. The system is vicious in itself, stunting the moral growth of the people concerned, and labour should not be prostituted to promote the industries of a few. Leaving all these questions aside, we have got this broad fact, that this question strikes at the root of our national self-respect, our national honour, and national existence. I appeal to the Government of India that in a matter of this kind they should not run counter to the sentiment of the people at large. On this question, Sir, all classes of people are unanimous, and I submit that the Government should be with them in repealing the Emigration Act. I do not wish to say more. I heartily support the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mazharul Haque : "Sir, in 1910, when Lord Minto was presiding over the deliberations of this Council, I had the honour to lay my views about indentured labour. Then I said :

'The whole system of indentured labour is vicious in principle ; it brutalises the employer ; it demoralises the employed. It perpetrates the worst form of slavery in the guise of legal contract ; it is bad in its inception, inhuman in its working and mischievous in its results, and ought to be done away with without any further delay.'

"Two years ago these were my views. I hold these views now and abide by them. Sir, I condemn indentured labour on the higher ground of the freedom of man. God created man free, and this divine right has been taken away by human laws. Labour should be free as man should be free in conscience and in action. My Hon'ble friend, Mr. Shafi, has brought to the notice of this Council the fact that the people of India are unanimous on this subject. He has reminded it that only yesterday the great organisation of the Muhamadans of India, the All-India Moslem League, passed unanimously a Resolution in favour of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Resolution. I believe my Hindu brethren are also unanimous. Then what is in the way of the Government which prevents them from accepting this Resolution? Sir, we are helpless in the matter. You, the members of the British Government, are the trustees of our good name, of our dignity and of our honour ; and I appeal to you, all

Englishmen in India, to come and help us in this matter and try to save our honour in the eyes of the nations. The people of India feel very keenly about it. They think that they are disgraced in the eyes of other countries inasmuch as India is the only country, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has reminded this Council, which supplies indentured labour. It is certainly nothing else but a very bad form of slavery. Sir, I invite the Council to help us and accept the Resolution of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar : "Sir, I will speak a few words only to show that the sentiment is general in this country, that the system of the recruitment of indentured labourers in India is degrading and against the principal dictates of humanity. Sir, I do not wish to repeat, after the very graphic description which my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has given, the circumstances in which such labour is recruited and the state of things which exists in the countries to which these indentured labourers are sent. I do not wish to say anything on that aspect of the question. We are indeed told by a gentleman—by an Hon'ble Member who occupied a position of authority (because he was a member of the Sanderson Committee of 1908)—that the Committee considered that there was nothing in the system which demanded its removal. Sir, assuming, for the sake of argument, that there were none of the hardships which have been pointed out by witnesses—and in regard to them I might remark parenthetically that no decisive reply has been given to the very specific charges which Mr. Gokhale has brought—I say, assuming that in the majority of cases there was no real hardship, still we Indians have a right to protest against India being made a recruiting ground for a system which is not far removed from slavery.

"Sir, the indentured system of labour has been devised for the purpose of supplying labour for places where free labour scorns to come or where free labour has not sufficient attractions. If the prospects which are afforded in British Guiana, in Trinidad and elsewhere are so alluring as they are stated to be, where is there any necessity at all of having this system of indentured labour? There is the market open; let them go and recruit their labourers in the open market and take them wherever they like. Why should the authority of Government be utilised for the purpose of supplying these plantations with the labour which they require? And above all why should India be the one unfortunate country where this kind of system is to be allowed? Have we no voice in the matter whatsoever? Are our feelings not to be consulted? Are our sentiments to receive no recognition from Government? This is a matter in which there is a very deep feeling entertained in the country. It may be that at the time when that inquiry was made, this feeling which is now springing up all over the country amongst all classes of the people, amongst Muhammadans and Hindus alike, had not received that articulate form which it has now received; but it is there. And I would implore Government to pay heed to it and not to allow the system to go on, which is justly considered as an outrage upon Indian sentiment and Indian self-respect."

The Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Majid : "Sir, I beg to give my hearty support to the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. My reasons are that the general sentiment in this country is that this indentured labour should not be allowed to continue. Only yesterday, as the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi has reminded this Council, an unanimous Resolution was passed at the Annual Session of the All-India Moslem League, that this indentured labour system should be abolished in this country altogether."

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya : "Sir, I beg to support the motion which has been brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. The criticisms which have been offered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, tending to favour the system, do not touch the points that have been raised by Mr. Gokhale, and I think that it is desirable that the important aspects to which attention has been drawn by the Hon'ble Member should be borne in mind. I hope that the Government will bear them in mind and decide the question upon them. There are two aspects of the question which deserve consideration. There is

the human aspect and there is the national aspect. As regards the human aspect, the inherent evils of the system to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has drawn attention show that the system is not far removed from slavery; that the contract or agreement into which the emigrant is led to enter is anything but fair. Other considerations apart, the fact that the emigrant is not informed of the special penal laws to which he becomes subject by entering into a contract of indenture, entirely condemns it as an unfair transaction. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle said in answer to Mr. Gokhale that the coolies who return from the colonies to India must have told their fellows who were going out for the first time what these penal laws were. There is nothing to show that this is done. And by the very nature of things, such information cannot reach the great bulk of those who are induced to go out. Besides, that is no answer to the charge that the penal clauses have been kept back from the people. I do not agree with the opinion that these clauses have been actively concealed. I think if it was brought to the notice of the Magistrates who registered the emigrants, that it was unfair to the emigrants to keep back such important information from them, they would probably have drawn the attention of the would-be emigrants to those clauses. Probably attention was not drawn to it. But it is undeniable that the penal clauses have not been explained to the persons who have been most vitally affected by them. And the labourers who indenture under the system have been placed in a very unfortunate position, in a position of pitiable helplessness. The object of the Government in passing the Emigration Act was, as was explained by the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert in 1883, that those who wished to take Indian labourers outside India to employ them should not be hampered by unnecessary restrictions or impeded by unreasonable prejudices, and to protect the emigrants against being entrapped or deluded into unfair bargains or carelessly or oppressively dealt with after they have left their homes. The first of these objects has been more than fully secured under the Act. Since the system was introduced, it has brought into existence the recruiter. He receives a license from the District Magistrate to go about the country to induce persons to indenture. It is his profession, his business, to get hold of as many persons, men and women, as he can, by fair means or foul, and he gets hold of them oftener by foul means than fair. As the system prevails, once a man is caught hold of by the recruiter, he is taken to the depôt. In that depôt he is kept supplied with food and other necessaries of life until he is taken before the Magistrate in that place. But he is during all the time under the control of the recruiter and his agents. It is extremely difficult for him to get out of that control even when he wishes to do so. I have on more than one occasion tried to rescue some of these unfortunate persons who had been taken to these depôts. Twice in Allahabad, I attempted, either directly or through some of my friends, to render some assistance to the coolies who had been taken to the depôt and who were not able to come out of it when they wanted to do so. I was foiled in the attempt. On one occasion I was nearly charged with having trespassed into the depôt, though I had taken care to have a sub-inspector of police and an Honorary Magistrate with me. On another occasion I had secured a writ from the Joint Magistrate for some persons to go into the depôt; but I was even then baffled in my attempt, because the system is so practised and kept up that it is impossible for a man who is an outsider to find out where the person who is unwilling to go is. Even when you can gain admission into a depôt, you ask for a certain person, and a certain person is brought before you who is said to be that person. You have often no means to find out whether the right person has been brought before you or not. Then there is another reason why persons who are taken to the depôt find it extremely difficult to come out of it. They are given some money by the recruiter to meet their expenses, and if they want to get out they are required to refund the money. They are seldom in a position to do so while they are shut up in the depôt. The other day in Calcutta, a Marwari gentleman having heard that some of those who were going to be shipped to a certain colony were in such an unfortunate plight, offered to pay Rs10 each for every person who was not willing to go and who wished to purchase his release. But he was not able to get the necessary assistance, and he had to

bear the sorrow of seeing, or at least believing, that a number of his brothers and sisters had to go out of their country against their wishes. Further, these recruiters often practise a great deal of fraud. It appears from the *Venkatashwar Samachar* of Bombay of the 9th ultimo that in December last two young ladies of respectable families who went from Lucknow to Cawnpore to see a relation got into a conveyance and asked the driver to take them to a certain place which they named. The driver, who was evidently in the employ of the recruiting agents there, took them about for the whole day and in the evening put them into the emigration depôt, where they were kept in wrongful restraint, subjected to much ill-treatment, and after they had been thus sufficiently prepared to say what they had been tutored they were presented before the Magistrate to be registered as indentured labourers. One of these ladies was made to say that she was a prostitute. Her appearance and demeanour roused the suspicions of the Magistrate, who started an inquiry with the result that the driver and the recruiting agent are under trial and the ladies have been rescued and restored to their freedom. But for one such case in which the fraud is detected there may be, probably are, many in which it is successfully carried out. I submit, therefore, that the system is inherently bad. If you let loose a number of recruiters armed with licenses from District Magistrates to get hold of persons by persuasion to go to distant countries and supported with the sections of the Emigration Act which provide a great deal of support to these recruiters, it must in nine cases out of ten be very difficult for those who have been inveigled by them and caught in their hands to get out of their control. It is obvious that the system would not be in existence but for the support of Government. Without such support the recruiter would not be free to get hold of many persons and to put them in the emigration depôt and to constrain their will. For the protection of the emigrant, the Government has no doubt provided that he or she shall not enter into an agreement without being brought before a registering officer, often a Magistrate, and until he or she shall have been asked whether he or she was going out with a knowledge of the nature of the agreement and with a free will or otherwise. But we have seen that this object, is not fully secured under the Act. But even if it were, the law does not provide beyond it to ensure that the emigrant shall be fairly dealt with in the colonies. In speaking on the Emigration Bill in 1883, the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert said:—

‘Thus every reasonable precaution is taken which our law can enforce that the emigrant should be properly treated from the time when he leaves the place where he is recruited to the time when he lands in the colony for which he is bound. Further than this our law cannot follow him, and after this point we can only provide indirectly for his welfare by such influence as we can bring to bear on the Government of the country in which he has established himself.’

“It is clear from this that whatever protection is provided by the Government for the emigrants is provided from the time when they start from the place of their recruitment until they land in the country for which they have embarked. After that they are left at the mercy of the special laws which prevail in that country, and my friend the Hon'ble Mover of the Resolution has graphically depicted the conditions to which they are subject under those laws. I submit therefore that the human aspect of the case requires that the contract which is entered into under such conditions—conditions which are intrinsically and inherently bad in the one place in not letting the penal nature of the laws known to those who will be subjected to them under the indenture for labour, and secondly in admitting of such penal clauses to be put in force against any human being—such a system of contract should be put an end to, and as long as these penal clauses exist in the system, no contract which has been entered into under the Indian Emigration Act which subjects any emigrant, man or woman, to these clauses, ought to receive the smallest countenance from the Government of India.

“Then there is the national aspect. I submit, Sir, that it is a matter of the greatest reproach to us all, Europeans as well as Indians, that our fellow-subjects, those whom Lord Morley described as ‘our equal fellow-subjects,’ should be subjected to such inhuman penal clauses which reduce them to the condition of serfs. It is a matter of deep shame and pain that any one of them, man or woman, should be subjected to those indignities and cruelties which, it has been proved, have been heaped upon Indians in many of these colonies. The

honour of the Indian people and of the Indian Government demands that a law which permits or helps such indignities to be heaped on Indians should be at once abolished. Nothing that has been said by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle would justify the continuance of such a law for one moment. I will not take up the time of the Council by repeating all the charges that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has brought against the system. These prove that the system cannot, while it lasts, be separated from the evils to which he has drawn attention; and as it cannot be mended, the best thing is that it should be ended, and that without delay.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle referred to certain advantages which he says have resulted to Indians who have gone to foreign lands. What would the whole world avail the emigrant if he lost his soul by going to those lands? He is subjected to moral degradation; he is subjected to national degradation; he is utterly demoralised, placed under conditions in which he has to live a life of sin and shame; in which he ceases to be a free man and virtually becomes a slave—a slave of the worst type? That he can save Rs. 30 a year or so under such a system is not a consideration worth urging in support of it. Let him starve, if he must, in his own country, a free man, but not be subjected to these servile restraints and inhuman indignities to save a petty sum of Rs. 30 a year. India can yet afford employment for all her sons and daughters; they will certainly not starve if they are not induced or inveigled to migrate out of the country. The evil lies in the system being what it is, and the remedy lies in its total abolition. The point of complaint that has been raised is that, without the aid of Government, the system cannot last for one moment. If it was left to Indians—coolies or non-coolies—to contract freely according to their own choice to go to foreign lands, the evil will soon be remedied. The system will fall to pieces to-morrow if the Government withdrew its own aid and assistance, and as it is owing to the Government that it is enabled to exist, it is the duty of the Government to do all that it can to eradicate its evils. But as the evils cannot be eradicated, the best thing is to abolish the system. The Government was pleased to recognise this duty last year in stopping indentured labour to Natal. It has recognised it in deciding to abolish the system of indentured labour in Assam. I hope that the motion which has been brought forward by my Hon'ble friend will commend itself to the Government and receive its whole-hearted support, and that this evil system will be abolished before many days are passed."

The Hon'ble Malik Umar Hayat Khan: "Sir, I only get up as I have to get up to-day. This is a Resolution for a popular cause and it does require sympathetic treatment. To argue at length to make a case and then to argue the same thing or argue for it straight off in the beginning comes to the same thing, and that is why I have not entered into the details. I think that the case has been clearly put by the Hon'ble Mover and others. It is useless to advance another set of arguments. I think there is sufficient field in India for labour and the dearth of it has begun to be felt. Men can get work easily. I think ignorant people go with a wrong idea. The first thing is that when they are told they will get such and such sum for their wages, they do not know the respective value of money in this and that country. Secondly, they do not know the respective value of the cost of living in the two countries. When Government has admitted that indentured labour was undesirable in one colony, why should they not have admitted that it would be wrong in others, as it is the principle of indentured labour which is to be blamed? When the people abroad cannot treat Indians properly, I think there is no use of letting them go there. Sir, there is another thing that I want to say. I think cent. per cent. Indians are all on the side of Mr. Gokhale, and when we are cent. per cent. on one side and it is our Government, our Government must be on our side, because otherwise it will not be our Government. I want to say one thing. You have chosen all of us here. There are certain rules framed that we all should come into the Council in such and such a way. Either that rule that has chosen us is wrong or we are all wrong; and if we are right, and are opposed to it, it means that the one side which opposes it is not perhaps so much in touch with the other, because we are born and die with our people; at any rate we know

something about them. And as it is, there is very great difficulty for the ordinary labourer to get his complaint heard by them. I support Mr. Gokhale.^{to}

The Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu: "Sir, I rise only to associate myself with the Resolution that my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has proposed. It is needless for me to go into the history of the legislation which he has brought up for discussion. Even a cursory examination of the ways in which that legislation has been worked will show that without any delay it should be removed from the Statute-book.

"There is only one matter in this connection to which I wish to draw the attention of Government. There was a Committee which sat in 1906 about the Assam Labour Emigration Act and which recommended that in five years' time that Act should be withdrawn from the Assam Valley Districts. That five years' time has now expired and the public is anxious to know when the Government will announce the date on which operation of that Act would cease in the Assam Valley."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "Sir, the Hon'ble Member who has moved this Resolution has made it abundantly clear that on moral, social and political grounds alike, he objects to indentured emigration in any form for his countrymen, and he has argued his case with a vigour and eloquence which we have learnt to expect from him in this Council. With much that he has said, I am, if not in agreement, at any rate in sympathy, but I think he will admit that he does not approach this question with an unbiassed mind (with which of course I have no quarrel), and also that he has not put it before Council from an entirely unprejudiced point of view. I hope I am not misrepresenting anything he stated, but I am almost sure that he did not think it necessary even to mention the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of 1908. That was a very important Committee, an impartial one, and they found in favour of continuing the system. I must say I think it is curious that the Hon'ble Member should have omitted this point in his strong indictment. I will give one more example of the attitude with which he has approached the subject. He has mentioned three points in the history of indentured emigration on which he considers that this system should be condemned. First, that the system takes the place of slave labour; secondly, that the system was one under which the negro would not work; and, thirdly, that the fact that there had been so many inquiries shows that the conscience of the Imperial and the Indian Governments is uneasy about it. As to the third—I will take them in inverse order—it is the custom of Government to inquire before they take any action, and if the Hon'ble Member chooses to place this interpretation upon their inquiries, it is not of much use my arguing the matter with him. But the second is a very extraordinary statement. Surely every one knows that the reason why Indian labour was required for the Colonies was that as soon as the negro was emancipated, he refused to work at all under any conditions, and therefore to say that he objects to work under the indentured system, which was not then in force, seems to me a most extraordinary piece of logic. What I have said in the second case explains the first. The Indians came to these Colonies to take the place of the negro who would not work. It is true that previously the work had been done by slaves, but what degradation is it to the Indian who has been doing agricultural work in India to do the same kind of work in the colonies? Is it merely because the man who did it before was a slave before the system of slavery was abolished? I fail to see any connection between the two. The other Hon'ble Members who have dealt with this question have spoken with great force, but I venture to think that they have laid too much stress on what for want of a better term I can only describe as the sentimental aspect of the question. I hope Hon'ble Members will not think that I am using that term in any offensive or unsympathetic sense. Nothing could be further from my intentions. We are on common ground in wishing to see the rights of the Indian labourer duly safeguarded and also, I take it, in wishing to see full freedom of opportunity given to him; and the rest should be mainly a question of fact whether or not the system of indenture is such as to fulfil these requirements. I do not mean to say that the other aspect of the case—the undoubted feeling which

exists against indentured labour in itself—can be disregarded; but surely the point of prime importance is the practical issue of how the system affects those who are employed under it—what the drawbacks of it are and what advantages it confers; and it is from this practical standpoint especially that I propose now to deal with the question.

“The Resolution falls into two parts, dealing with indentured labour in India and with indentured emigration to the colonies. I think it will be convenient if I dispose of the Indian question first, because that is relatively a small matter. In India the indenture system only survives in four or five districts in Northern Assam, and there, as the Hon'ble Member has told us, it is moribund. It only survives in these districts and is there under sentence of death. It dates back from the early days of the tea industry, when Assam was a little known country and very difficult of access. As the country developed and communications became more easy, it became less and less necessary to use the penal provisions, and in some districts, in the Surma Valley, for instance, they had practically fallen into desuetude by 1906. Only two per cent. of the coolies there were recruited under indenture and 98 per cent. were recruited otherwise than under indenture. In the same Resolution in which the Government of India announced their determination to withdraw the labour district provisions of the Act from the Surma Valley, they announced the appointment of a Committee to consider the whole question of recruitment of labour for the tea gardens in Assam. They called attention to the increasing difficulty in securing an adequate supply, and expressed their view that having regard to the importance of the interests involved, the matter required investigation by a strong Committee before further action could be taken. The Committee reported in 1906, and in 1908 the Government of India announced in a Resolution based on the report that, while they did not consider that it would be fair to the industry in the Brahmaputra Valley to withdraw at once the labour district provisions of the Act which had already been withdrawn from the Surma Valley, they proposed to take up the question again in two years, and in the meantime they advised the tea industry to consider how best they could adapt themselves to the changed situation, which would then be created. Various causes contributed to delay the question being dealt with until last year when Government informed the Indian Tea Association that they proposed to withdraw the provisions from the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley as from 1st July 1913. When this withdrawal has been carried into effect, indentured labour will have ceased to exist within the limits of the Indian Empire.

“As the system will so soon have come to an end, it is hardly necessary for me to examine its merits and demerits at any length, but there are one or two points which it is of importance to emphasise in connection with the present Resolution. The marked unpopularity of employment in Assam which led directly to the appointment of the 1906 Committee is undoubted, and it is equally beyond question that the penal clauses were a contributory cause to that unpopularity; but they certainly were not the only or even the main cause. The Committee, to quote their own words, ‘placed in the forefront of the reasons for the unpopularity of Assam, the strong resentment which exists among all classes of the people against the malpractices of the *free* emigration system which existed under Act I of 1882.’ In a case like this the grounds of unpopularity are no bad index of where abuse really lies. Undoubtedly malpractices in the recruiting districts before the Act of 1901 were very serious. Sir Charles Rivaz in his speech in Council in 1901 stated that the consequence of this system was ‘that a horde of unlicensed and uncontrolled labour purveyors and recruiters sprang into existence who, under the guise of assisting *free emigration*, made large illicit gains by inducing, under false pretences, ignorant men and women, chiefly from the backward districts of Bengal and the Central Provinces, to allow themselves to be conveyed to Assam, and by practically selling these people to the planters for the purpose of being placed under labour contracts in that Province.’ It is only since the Act of 1901 came into force that the recruiting areas have been restricted and placed under better supervision, with the result that the objection to Assam labour has been gradually, if slowly, dying out. No doubt, as the Committee

also say, the penal contract has been a further bar to recruitment. Reports of the compulsory powers vested in the planters before the abolition of the right of private arrest added to the suspicion with which Assam was regarded; but the primary cause was beyond question the malpractices in the recruiting districts. It has to be remembered—a point which I shall have to insist upon later—that there are two sides to the labour contract; it helps the employer by binding down the labourer to work on certain terms, and it protects the labourer by ensuring him regular work at fixed wages and by enforcing on the employer the provision of the necessary safeguards for the labourer's health and material welfare. It is only fair to the planters to say that the Committee found, after touring the districts, that the material condition of the coolie was good and that his welfare was well looked after; that he was provided with good lodgings, good water, and that the conditions of labour were not such as a man of ordinary strength could not well comply with, while they gave him an opportunity at certain times of the year of earning money, without excessive additional labour, over and above his pay.

“The Government of India, since the Resolution of 1908 was issued, have never wavered in their view that the time has come when the penal contract should go. But what has primarily influenced them in arriving at this decision is that, with the improvement of communications, they consider—and the Committee supported this view—that this portion of the Act is no longer required for the protection of the labourers, and they hold strongly that free labour will eventually benefit the industry. Of one thing I am convinced, and that is that the tea industry will never have done for good with their troubles in regard to the supply of labour, until we have managed to secure free labour and free recruitment. Free recruitment must be a matter of some time, especially as the industry have not yet made up their mind that they can do without the contractor; but at least the first necessary step is the removal of that penal contract, and that is now about to be done. Labour under penal provisions has become an anachronism in districts within the limits of India itself, under the direct control of the Indian Government, and now no more difficult of access than many other outlying parts of the country.

“I turn now to what is in the circumstances the more crucial question, that of the recruitment of Indian labour for employment under indenture in British colonies. First of all, let us be clear as to exactly what the scope of contract emigration to the colonies is. Emigration under a contract of indenture can only take place under the Emigration Act of 1908 to certain specified colonies. These are now Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica, Mauritius and British Guiana. Ceylon and the Straits Settlements are in different position and are not affected by the Act. From time immemorial, there has been a regular flow of free labour, chiefly from districts from the south of India, to those colonies, and the greater part of that emigration has been free. As the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale told us, there has been some indentured emigration to the Straits Settlements, and there has been in certain cases regrettable mortality on unhealthy estates. I quite admit that, but I do not attach very much importance to it because the system there is practically dead. The Government of that colony has taken up the question, and although we have not heard definitely that they have put an end to it, it is generally understood that they are very soon going to do so. In the Malay States, where great mortality had occurred, they have actually stopped it altogether. That the coolie even in the Malay States does not feel the weight of his chain very heavily, is shown by the fact that 80 per cent. of the indentured coolies in Perak offered themselves for service under the free contract when they were released.

“Returning to the list of colonies which I have mentioned, recruitment has also stopped for Mauritius, where, owing to the depression through which the colony has been passing, there is no longer any demand for labour, and the Government of India have under consideration the desirability of prohibiting it to that colony altogether. Thus we have only to take into consideration emigration to the four colonies of Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica and British Guiana. Indentured labour for Natal, I need hardly remind the Hon'ble Member who took so deep an interest in the matter, was put an end to from July of last year.

“I cannot help thinking, Sir, that some of the feeling which has grown up against indentured labour is owing to the nature of the contract not being clearly understood. It is very far from being, as is sometimes supposed, a contract solely in the interests of the employer. The interest of the employer in the matter is, of course, clear. He has brought the coolie a great distance over sea at considerable expense to a country where *ex hypothesi* labour is scarce; and the indentured system guarantees that on his arrival the coolie will have to work and will not be tempted away by the offer of better wages or pleasanter conditions elsewhere. The advantage to the labourer is no less real. The system now in force secures him protection in recruitment; on the voyage; on his arrival in the colony, and during the term of his indenture; it secures him, according to the colony concerned, either his passage home or substantial assistance towards it. But I will avoid generalities, and in order to make the matter clear will put briefly before Council the obligations and rights imposed respectively on the two parties by the contract of indenture and by the operation of the Indian Emigration Act of 1908 and the Colonial Immigration Laws; and Hon'ble Members can then judge for themselves. I should explain that there are slight differences in the requirements in the various colonies, but these are not sufficiently substantial to affect my argument. First of all, as to the obligations upon the coolie. The coolie is bound to his employer for a period of five years. He has to reside on the plantation, and if absent without a pass, is liable to arrest, and can be arrested without warrant; he is liable to fine for such absence. If he is absent without leave for a certain number of days, he is considered to be a deserter and may be fined or imprisoned; he is liable to punishment if he refuses to go to hospital when ill and also for refusing to perform his work, or hindering, molesting or persuading any other emigrant from doing his work; and he is also punishable with a fine or imprisonment for offences against discipline. I turn now to what is done for him by the requirements of the contract and of the law. In the first place, his recruitment is hedged in with safeguards. No person is entitled to recruit labour unless he is licensed by the Protector of Emigrants appointed by the Indian Government at each port from which emigration is lawful. The terms which the recruiter is authorised to offer are submitted to the Protector, who countersigns a written or printed copy, and the recruiter is permitted to give only a true copy of this statement to the persons he invites to emigrate. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale laid very great stress on the question whether the coolie knows about penal provisions. It is perfectly true there is not a requirement in the Act that the terms of the contract are to contain the fact that if he does not carry out his contract or commits the other offences I have mentioned, then he is to incur imprisonment or fine. That is so; it is not made clear in the contract. It is a point on which I propose to have inquiry made. I think there is a great deal of force in the contention that he ought to know exactly what he is in for, not only the actual requirements of work, and so on, but that he should know the exact terms of the penalties. But there are one or two considerations which I should like to bring before the Council. In the first place, there is good reason to suppose that most of them know perfectly well what is going to happen. Then the coolie, it must be remembered, in India, is generally tied down in some form or another. The coolie going to Ceylon is bound down by a load more or less of debt. He is recruited by a person called the 'kangani,' who advances him money, and when he arrives in the colony he is not really free until he has paid off his debt. The coolie, therefore, when he engages himself to do work, expects, as a rule, that something will happen to him if he does not do it. Then I should like to point out another thing. The assumption is that when a man enters into a contract, he means to carry out the contract. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's assumption is that he does not understand the contract properly, and when he gets to the colonies he will wish to break it, and then it is very hard on him that he should suffer a penalty for breaking it. I do not think that is a fair way of looking at it at all. The coolie has signed a contract of which the terms have been most carefully explained to him, and it is only reasonable to suppose he has understood that he has to work well, and that he means to carry out his contract; and if he refuses, he at any rate is not likely to be surprised at finding himself punished. There are clauses in the Indian Penal Code which provide for something not unsimilar at the present moment.

“Every agreement to emigrate must be executed in the presence of a registering officer. The registering officer is required to examine the intending emigrant apart from the recruiter, in order to ascertain whether he is willing and competent to emigrate and understands the terms of the contract, or whether he has been induced to execute the agreement by any coercion or undue influence or mistake. Before embarkation the emigrants are kept in a depôt, in which they are examined as to their physical fitness to undertake a voyage. If the Protector finds that any emigrant is physically unfit or that any irregularity has occurred in his recruitment or in his treatment, he may return him to the place of registration at the expense of the recruiter. The next step is the voyage to the colony. The Emigration Act and the rules framed under it make elaborate provision for the safety, comfort and proper treatment of emigrants during the voyage. Emigrant ships have to be equipped and provisioned according to the scales laid down in the rules, and every such vessel has to provide a duly qualified medical officer. The ships cannot sail without an examination by Government officials as to their seaworthiness and the quality and quantity of food, medicines, accommodation and equipment. When the emigrant arrives in the colony of his destination, he is provided for by the law in force in that colony for the regulation of indentured immigration, and it should be remembered that emigration is permitted to no country from India, unless the Governor General in Council is satisfied that that country has made such laws and other provisions as are sufficient for the protection of immigrants during their stay therein. For a certain period after arrival rations are supplied on a scale and at a cost prescribed by the law—a cost which does not exceed 4 annas a day in the case of a male adult. Suitable dwellings, medicines, medical attendance, hospital accommodation and proper diet during sickness have all to be provided for the immigrant free of cost. The hours of work are laid down in the immigration laws and do not exceed 7 hours in the field and 10 hours in the factories, which is, I may point out, a very low figure compared with factory labour in this country, and a minimum wage is prescribed. Protectors of immigrants are appointed who are empowered to visit plantations, to require the production of emigrants, to enquire into complaints made by the labourers, and so on. The Protector may cancel the indentures of immigrants if they are ill-used, or for any breach of contract on the part of the employer, or may institute an action in a Court on behalf of any labourer. Inspectors are also appointed to visit the estates at regular intervals to assist the Protector, and Medical Inspectors also go round to inquire into the labourers' state of health, the sanitation of the plantation, etc. Lastly, grants of land are made to emigrants who resign their right to repatriation and wish to settle in the colonies. If they do not wish to settle they receive from British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica assistance towards their passage back to India and from Fiji a free return.

“I think, Sir, that if we are to consider this matter fairly, we ought to set against the penal provisions the advantages conferred by the various provisions which I have just enumerated. Let Council consider for a moment what would happen if there were no contract hedged in as this contract has been with the most meticulous safeguards. The coolie from a district such as the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle has described to Council is not likely to be a skilful bargainer, and on the other hand may well be tempted without much difficulty from his native land. He would have no security for any proper provision on the voyage. On landing he would find himself in a strange country where he would find difficulty in securing food and dwelling. He would be at the mercy of his employer, and if he were turned off, there would be no alternative for him but to work at any wage, however small, or to starve. It is scarcely possible that he would be able to save money, and his chances, therefore, of ever returning to his native land would be infinitesimal.

“The critics will no doubt say that these provisions are all very well, but what guarantee have we that they work properly in practice—one of the points which Mr. Gokhale took up and pressed with some vigour? The question is most pertinent, and I fully agree that the justification of the entire system depends upon the answer. Fortunately we have the necessary material ready at our hand, for the whole problem of indentured emigration to British colonies has been recently reviewed by a Committee appointed in England in

March of 1909. No one can question the impartiality of the Committee. It was presided over by a distinguished ex-Civilian of the English Service. There were representatives of India in Lord Sandhurst, Sir James LaTouche and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who has spoken on the subject to-day. The Colonial Office was represented, and there were also on the Committee two Members of Parliament, one of whom, Sir George Scott-Robertson, is a strong Liberal, who, if he had any bias in the matter at all, would certainly not be disposed in favour of indentured labour in any form."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao: "Was there any Indian member?"

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "There was no Indian member. The report of the Committee was unanimous. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who was a member of it, has, I think, proved to Council how far-reaching were their inquiries and what care was taken to hear every side of the question. Although the Committee did not actually visit the colonies concerned, representatives of different shades of opinion were brought over at Government's expense to give evidence. The considered opinion of the Committee on the main issue is best quoted in their own words.

It can safely be said,' they write, 'that, notwithstanding some unfortunate occurrences at times now remote, the system has in the past worked to the great benefit not only of the colonies but equally of the main body of emigrants, and this is so still more in the present.' So far did they consider that the majority of emigrants undoubtedly prospered, that they wished steps to be taken by the Government of India to popularise emigration in India, relinquishing to this end the attitude which they have hitherto maintained of a strict neutrality. The Committee rejected unhesitatingly the imputation, which is still at times advanced, that the system of indentured labour, as it affects emigrants to British Colonies, partakes of the nature of slavery. They expressed the opinion, after examining the best and most authoritative evidence that they could obtain, that whatever abuses might have existed in the past, no such charge can be substantiated against the system as it at present exists, and as it has been in practice during the last twenty or thirty years.

"They considered that the restrictions placed on indentured emigrants are not in their practical operation excessive. They noted that the provisions as to arrest if a coolie is found without the passes which he has to use when he leaves the plantation seemed to be excessive and unnecessary, but they said on the whole that in actual practice they found that these provisions were not abused. They point out that outside the terms of the contract, the principal conditions of which have been twice explained to the coolie before he enters into it, he is for all purposes a free man whose rights are carefully watched over and guarded by a special staff of Government officials. Of course much must depend on the efficiency and rectitude of the Government officials, but as the Committee say, the system must in the last resort be judged by its results, and in the evidence before them they found a general concurrence of opinion that so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the emigrant, it in fact encourages in him the growth of an independence of character. There is an impressive passage in the evidence of Sir Charles Bruce, who was Governor of British Guiana, when Surgeon-Major Comins, then Protector of Emigrants in Calcutta, came to visit the colony on a tour of inspection. He quoted the following words which Surgeon-Major Comins had used:—

'No one,' he said, 'who knows the Indian coolie can fail to be struck by the great difference between the coolie in India and his children born in the colony.' * * *
Whatever be the cause, whether change of climate, better food, easy times, more responsible duties or position, the influence of travel, or freedom from the narrowness of caste prejudice, the result is very apparent. The children born in the colony of Indian parents revert to a higher type of civilization, and in appearance, manner and intelligence are so much superior to their parents that it is difficult to believe they belong to the same family. The boys and young men are stronger and better looking, and are able to turn their hand to anything at a moment's notice, with a smartness and knowledge of the world which would vastly astonish their grandparents in India; while the girls and young women have a beauty and refinement rarely seen in public in India, many having all the appearance of good birth and breeding usually associated only with families of the best blood. The daughters of men who do not require them to work, lead a happy life, free from the care and toil which aged their mothers before they had reached their prime.'

"In the same way another witness, the Rev. J. Morton, who lived 41 years in Trinidad—and a missionary I imagine is not a person who would take a biased view in this matter—found that the system worked better and induced a better and more independent type in the labourers that came over. I think in the face of such evidence it cannot be contended that indentured labour has an evil influence either on the physical condition or on the morale of the Indian emigrant. In connection with this question of physical condition, Hon'ble Members will recollect that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the considerable mortality which has taken place on occasions among indentured coolies during the last seventy-five years. He went back a long way, but I think he might have added a little more as to the present state of the figures of health. I have here the figures of mortality in this country and in the colonies. In British Guiana the death-rate of Indians on the estates under indenture averaged 26·6 per thousand over the last nine years, in Trinidad during the same period it ranged from 14·5 to nearly 20 per thousand, in Fiji in 1909 it was only 7·43 per thousand, and in Jamaica it is 23 per thousand: that is to say, the highest is 26 per thousand and the lowest is nearly 8 per thousand."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "In Jamaica it is higher than British Guiana. In Jamaica it is 33. It is higher than the general population."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "Among the indentured immigrants the death-rate is 23."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "In Jamaica the total rate for the Indian population is higher."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "I am not referring to the general population. The comparison I was going to make was between Indians in the colonies and in their native country. My point is that the death-rate is lower among the indentured immigrants than the death-rate in the United Provinces, from which a large number of these coolies are obtained, and where the death-rate was in 1909 37 per thousand and in 1910 52 per thousand. At the same time it is perfectly true that the sound working of the system depends upon a series of safeguards, and there are openings through which abuses can creep in. I will not deny that, and it is not surprising to find that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale and other speakers have called attention in the course of the debate to certain points referred to in the evidence before the Committee. The first of these is the question of Protectors and Magistrates. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale considers, I think, that these officers do not carry out their duties as efficiently as they ought to. He went a little further and hinted that some of them were inclined to favour the planter rather than the labourer. The most serious complaints contained in the evidence before the Sanderson Committee under this head were in connection with Trinidad. A Member of the Trinidad Legislative Council, the Hon'ble Mr. C. P. David, who gave evidence before the Committee, complained that the Protector was not sympathetic with the Indians; that he lived in the town at some distance from the estates; and that inspection was not as thorough as it should be. Similarly, Mr Fitzpatrick of Trinidad, who attended as a representative of the Indian community, gave evidence somewhat of the same tenor. On the other hand, Mr. Huggins, a Magistrate, who was in the colony for 25 years, gave entirely conflicting evidence, and said that the Protectors were very popular with the Indians, who came to them about any troubles however small. The Committee themselves arrived at the conclusion that while they considered that Mr. Fitzpatrick's views were not justified in the evidence brought forward, it was no doubt a matter which required watching. There was another complaint mentioned by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in connection with a certain Magistrate, Mr. Bateson, in Mauritius. But Mr. Bateson stated that he found difficulty in cases where a coolie brought an action against his master because the coolie could not state his case efficiently in Court, and Mr. Bateson did not feel that he as Magistrate entitled to assist him in any marked degree. The Committee in their comment on this evidence considered that Mr. Bateson

had taken too narrow a view of his duties, and that he might very well have made more efforts to assist the coolies, and I think this is a conclusion with which everybody must agree. These are the only two cases where the evidence points to anything like a shortcoming. I do not think therefore that there is any strong presumption of shortcomings, but at the same time I entirely agree with the conclusions of the Committee that the matter requires careful watching, because a great deal depends upon it.

"A more serious matter in my judgment is the large number of prosecutions that occur under the Act, and it is all the more serious because it can be substantiated by figures. In British Guiana, in 1907-1908, there were 3,835 complaints by employers against immigrants with an indentured population of only 9,784. The percentage of complaints to the indentured population was 39.2 and of convictions 20.6. In Trinidad, there were 1,869 convictions for offences against the labour law in 1907-1908 for a total indentured population of 11,506, or about 16.5 per cent., and in Fiji there were no less than 291 charges against labourers, of which over 90 per cent. resulted in convictions. In Mauritius, matters are much better; but, even there, at the time when Mr. Muir-Mackenzie visited the colony, there were 4,101 convictions as compared with the total number of indentured labourers employed of 52,247, giving an average of 7.8 per cent., although the average has since fallen to a little more than 3 per cent.

"Well, I think, there is no denying that these figures are disquieting. I think everybody will be glad that the Committee has recommended that the colonies in question should hold an inquiry into the matter. There are certain contributory causes which account in part for the large number of these convictions. Whatever the precautions taken in the recruiting districts, a certain proportion of men are accepted, who are not fitted for agricultural work, or who are idlers with no intention of working except under compulsion. These men swell the list of prosecutions and often come before the Courts again and again. The limitation of the area of recruiting suggested by the Committee should make for the elimination of this factor. In Trinidad, again, in order to prevent an employer encouraging or permitting his labourers to abscond when work is slack so as to avoid having to pay them their wages, he is compelled to prefer a charge against any deserter within 15 days of the offence; and an absence for three full days without leave constitutes desertion. The Indian labourer is not fond of continuous work, and it is probable that this fact would account for a good many of the prosecutions. But the case for inquiry is strengthened by the general tenor of the evidence which shows that, in the best managed estates, prosecutions are not much resorted to. It is very desirable, I think, that the inquiry should be held, and it is greatly to be hoped that the Colonial Governments will look into the matter and that estate managers will in the future be less ready to adopt this most unsatisfactory means of enforcing their strict claims against the immigrants. The Committee made several other recommendations dealing with defects which they considered to exist either in the laws in the colonies or in the arrangements for recruiting in this country. Those recommendations have been considered by the Government of India and we are now in correspondence on the subject with the Secretary of State. I, therefore, cannot make any definite statement about them, but I think I may say this much, that the Government of India are, generally speaking, in agreement with the great majority of the recommendations made. One of the most important of the matters dealt with is the question of re-indentures to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred. Now there is no question that re-indentures stand on an entirely different footing to indentures. The indenture system is necessary in the interests of the employer as ensuring him some return for the cost of the passage of the labourer whom he has imported from a great distance, and is necessary in the interests of the labourer because it ensures him work and proper housing, and so on, when he arrives in a new and strange country. Neither of these arguments can be brought forward in defence of re-indentures. When a coolie has finished his first indenture he has discharged his obligations to the employer in respect of the cost of his passage. On the other hand, he may fairly be expected to have found his feet and no longer to need special

protection. This matter, again, is one which is under correspondence with the others with the Secretary of State and I cannot say anything definitely about it; but undoubtedly there is much to be said for the recommendations of the Committee that in all colonies where the system still prevails, the duration of contracts of re-indenture should be limited to twelve months and that measures should be taken to abolish the practice within a reasonable time.

"I have now referred, Sir, to the principal points on which the Committee suggest improvements. The Colonial Governments, apart from there being no reason whatever for thinking that they would not in any case wish to protect the Indian immigrants to the best of their ability, have a very strong motive for doing so, since the continuance of emigration is of great economic importance to the West Indian colonies and the Government of India have powers to prohibit emigration to any colony where they are not satisfied, either with the treatment of the indentured immigrant or of settlers who have completed their indenture and elected to remain in the colony. I think, therefore, that there is very little reason to doubt that, when the Sanderson Committee's report is known to the several Colonial Governments, they will do their best to meet the points which have been raised. Although it is very important that any defects should be remedied, I do not think it can be said that in their sum total these various matters can be held—any more than they were held by the Committee—to constitute a condemnation of the indentured system. Of course I quite agree, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, that the Government of India have no special duty to consider the interest of colonies. At the same time the colonies are a part of the same Empire, and we certainly should not wish to do them harm, unless there were very strong grounds shown for doing so because the interests of our own people demanded it. I submit, Sir, that no such grounds have been shown. We have had before us the report of a strong and impartial Committee which recommends the continuance of this system. It is true, as Sir Vithaldas Thackersey says, that the system in so far as it takes away any labour from India effects a reduction in the available labour force of this country. It effects some reduction, but the reduction is so small that very little weight can be attached to the argument. In the last three years the average emigration to the four colonies which were still taking coolies was some nine thousand men, and considering the enormous population of India, that cannot be held to be anything but an infinitesimal proportion.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has referred to the difficult question of women in the colonies. It is certainly the case that the question of finding the statutory proportion of women presents difficulties and that the women sent are not always of a desirable class. The evidence shows that trouble has occurred in plantations from time to time both from the number of men being considerably in excess of the women, and from the women not always being of good character; but I am inclined to think that the Hon'ble Member's view has been perhaps too much influenced by a passage in the Government of India's despatch of 1877—that is, a despatch written now 35 years ago. Much greater care has been taken since to improve matters and to procure a better class of women emigrant; and special precautions are prescribed on registration to prevent wives emigrating as a means of leaving their husbands.

"Well, Sir, I have already referred to the evidence which shows that for coolies that go to the colonies emigration has resulted in a growth of independence of spirit and improvement in their physique and morale. They also make considerable profits by going. In 1910, savings brought back by coolies from Trinidad came to £1,600, from Jamaica £2,344, from Mauritius £4,099, and from British Guiana £9,252. Their remittances during the same time were, from Trinidad £3,990; Fiji £3,535; from Jamaica and Mauritius £390 and £690, respectively; and from British Guiana £2,269. It is scarcely possible that they could have done as well if they had stayed at home. Yet if the Hon'ble Member's Resolution were adopted, I do not see how it will be possible for coolies to go from this country to distant colonies. I have explained to the Council the obligations of the contract, and I have shown by contrast what would be expected to happen if the coolies were to go free and unprotected to a distant and to them a foreign country. Only the

Other day we had a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Consul at Colon telling us that certain coolies had gone out on the chance of getting work on the Panama Canal, and had been stranded there. If we accepted the Hon'ble Member's Resolution, we should have no alternative but so far as in us lies to prevent the overseas emigration of labour. I submit that no case has been made out for so extreme a step, for so harsh an interference with the liberty of the subject, and that we should be far wiser to maintain the attitude of neutrality which the Government of India has taken up in the past towards this question. This policy is well described in a despatch of 1877 from Lord Lytton's Government, in reply to a despatch from the late Marquis of Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, in which he suggested that it might be possible and advisable for the Government of India to afford greater encouragement to emigration, having special regard to the greatness of the Indian population and with the probability that the population would continue to increase. The Government of India held that any material departure from the permissive attitude which had hitherto been observed would be extremely impolitic. They did not base this opinion on the ground that it would be inexpedient to part with any portion of the population of the country, for they held, and history has amply justified them, that any amount of emigration that would be likely to take place could not have more than an infinitesimal effect upon the population. They objected on the grounds of the effect which a direct and active interposition of Government in such a matter would be likely to have on the minds of the people and on the difficulty and embarrassment in which Government would become involved by undertaking responsibilities towards the colonies on the one hand and towards the emigrants on the other, which it would be practically impossible for it to discharge in a satisfactory manner. They, therefore, proposed to maintain the policy which, as they put it, may best be described as one of seeing fair play between two parties to a commercial transaction and of acting as protector to the weak and ignorant in order to ensure that in the bargain which they have freely made with those who bid for their labour, they will not be molested or imposed upon.

"The Government of India see no reason to depart from that policy. They hold no brief for indentured labour. While explaining to Council their reasons for thinking that the system should not be discontinued, I have endeavoured to weigh the drawbacks and advantages as dispassionately as I can. Nor can they admit that there is any inconsistency in ending indentured labour in Assam and permitting indentured emigration to continue to British colonies. In the one case, the coolie is working at a relatively short distance from his home, under Indian law within the limits of the Indian Empire; in the other, he is being taken from his own country and placed amongst strangers in a distant colony. From the standpoint alike of his own interests and of his employers the situation is entirely different. There remains the sentiment that indentured labour bears the taint of slavery. It is based on a complete misconception, for in essentials the two differ fundamentally. The labourer under indenture has entered of his own free will into a contract the terms of which have been explained to him again and again, while the essence of slavery is that it is involuntary and forcible; and there is no resemblance in fact between the penalties applicable to an indentured coolie who offends against the labour laws, and the position of the slave who is the absolute possession and chattel of his master. I know that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's only motive in bringing forward this Resolution is his belief that the system is not in the true interests of his countrymen, and no one who has listened to his speech could question the absolute sincerity of his convictions. Yet I venture to think that he is mistaken. Hon'ble Members know the sources from which the greater number of these emigrants are drawn. They come largely from localities where the pinch of poverty is acutely felt, even if it is not always so oppressive as in those districts described by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle where men sell themselves into perhaps lifelong serfdom for the few rupees required to pay for a marriage festival. To my mind, Sir, there is no bondage so pitiless as the bondage of poverty and lack of opportunity. The indentured system at least affords to the more adventurous spirits their chance to open up a new life in another land; perhaps to settle there, in a condition of prosperity undreamt of in the environment from which they have emerged; or to return to their own

country with substantial savings, if they have been thrifty, or at least with a wider outlook and a new store of experience. I would not, Sir, for fear of this unreal phantom of servitude, deprive them of that opportunity.

“Government must oppose this Resolution.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: “Sir, the Council has heard two speeches against this motion, one from the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the other from the Hon'ble Mr. Clark; and I will first deal with what has fallen from Mr. Fremantle. The Hon'ble Member began by complaining—and in that complaint the Hon'ble Mr. Clark joined later on—that I had referred only in passing to the recommendations of the Sanderson Committee. Sir, it is quite true that I made only a very passing reference to the deliberations of that Committee. Shall I tell you why? It was because I was very much disappointed with some of the recommendations of that Committee. I think the whole standpoint from which the Committee approached the question was faulty. But the responsibility for that lay with the terms of reference. The Secretary of State had appointed the Committee, as the terms of his minute show, to consider—

‘the general question of emigration from India to the Crown colonies, and the particular colonies in which Indian immigration may be most usefully encouraged’ and so on.

“Thus the standpoint from which the members were invited to approach the question was not whether indentured emigration should be permitted from India but how Indian emigration should be encouraged to the Crown colonies. The Secretary of State started with the assumption, and the Committee took up the assumption, that Indian immigration was necessary for the Crown colonies, and the question to be considered was how it was to be encouraged. That being so, whatever was against indentured emigration was more or less lost sight of and whatever went to favour such emigration was prominently brought forward. Even so, there are statements in the report which go to show that if the Committee could have recommended the abolition of indenture, they would have gladly done so. One has only to read between the lines of the report to see that it is so. But being convinced that Indian emigration to the colonies was possible only under contract of indenture, and impressed with the idea that without such emigration the interests of the colonies would be jeopardized, the Committee could not but make the recommendations which it has made. Sir, the Hon'ble Member has told the Council that though the penal provisions of the contract are not stated in the agreements or explained beforehand, after all the coolies who go under the system understand what they are going to in the Colonies. This, coming from my Hon'ble friend, is surprising. Let me appeal in the matter from Mr. Fremantle, Official Member of this Council, speaking against my Resolution, to Mr. Fremantle, member of the Sanderson Committee. The report of the Committee, which the Hon'ble Member has signed, says :—

‘We have heard from many colonial witnesses who gave evidence before the Committee that Indian emigrants, when drawn from the agricultural classes, make excellent settlers and that a large proportion do actually settle down either on the sugar and other plantations or on holdings of their own. Yet it seems doubtful whether the majority of the emigrants leaving India fully realise the conditions of the new life before them or start with the deliberate intention of making for themselves a home in a new country. They go because they are uncomfortable at home and welcome any change of circumstances. They have quarrelled with their parents or their caste fellows, or they have left their homes in search of work and have been unable to find it. Many are not recruited in their own villages. The recruiters hang about the bazars and the high roads, where they pick up loiterers and induce them to accompany them to the depôts and agree to emigrate, by relieving their immediate wants and by representations, no doubt often much overdrawn, of the prospects before them. The male emigrant more often than not is unaccompanied by any member of his family, and, indeed, the family is frequently not even aware that he has left the country until (possibly some years afterwards) he re-opens communications. Since, except in times of scarcity or of famine, the supply of casual recruits of this kind is not likely to be large at any one place, the net of the recruiters has to be spread far afield, and we hear of their operations on Delhi, in Rajputana and in Bundelkhand, where there is certainly no congestion of population but, on the other hand, constant complaints of insufficiency of labour both for agricultural and industrial purposes. The same is the case in Calcutta, where about one thousand emigrants

are registered yearly, and still more so in Cawnpore, where the local Chamber of Commerce has on several occasions called attention to the prevailing scarcity of labour and deprecated the encouragement of emigration to the colonies."

"That shows, Sir, how much these poor people know about the life to which they are going, and how far the contract is a free contract.

"Then, Sir, my Hon'ble friend said that whatever abuses there might have been at one time, there were no serious abuses now. I will mention to the Council certain facts brought to the knowledge of the Committee by one of the witness, Mr. Fitzpatrick, to whom Mr. Fremantle has himself referred. Mr. Fitzpatrick mentions two cases of serious abuse and they are both of them really significant of the feeling which still prevails in the colonies on the right of indentured labourers to proper treatment. Both cases, it should be remembered, were tried in Courts, and in both cases convictions were obtained. This is what Mr. Fitzpatrick says :

'To put it briefly. Four overseers on Hermitage Estate, Trinidad, beat several indentured emigrants, and amongst them a woman. One of the male immigrants laid a charge of assault and battery and the overseers were fined 10 shillings each.

'One of the blows received by the female immigrant was on her abdomen. She being pregnant at the time, abortion immediately took place, thus endangering her life.

'The immigration authorities for so serious an offence were satisfied to lay a charge against the overseer for the minor charge of assault and battery. The Magistrate fined the accused £2 only and £3 as compensation.

'The charges for beating the other two immigrants were withdrawn by the Inspector. On the 29th September, four immigrants were charged for assaulting an overseer. They were not fined but sentenced to three months' hard labour.'

"I will leave it to the Council, Sir, to say, after this, if there are now no abuses under the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member says that serfdom exists even in India. If that is so, the Government should deal with that at once. I do not know of any instances of serfdom that may exist in this country. But if serfdom does exist here, by all means let it be put a stop to at once. We must distinguish, however, between the kind of serfdom that Mr. Fremantle mentions and the serfdom that the system of indenture impose upon indentured people. In the cases which the Hon'ble Member mentions, is there the right of private arrest? Are there imprisonments with hard labour for negligence, for carelessness, for impertinence, or for things of that kind? That really is the essence of my complaint about the system. The Hon'ble Member has told the Council that he could not understand why the non-official Members of the Council should make so much fuss about this matter. He did not say it in so many words, but that is what he meant. But practically the same thing was said when proposals to abolish slavery were first brought forward. The friends of the planters in the House of Commons, when the question was brought forward there, said that the slaves were contented and they could not understand why the abolitionists wanted to disturb the contentment and the harmony of their lives. The Hon'ble Member said that Indians in the colonies certainly would not thank me for bringing forward this Resolution. Sir, I am quite content that he should earn their thanks by opposing the Resolution. Be his the thanks which the champions of slavery expected to receive from those who were anxious to continue in slavery! Be mine the denunciation, with which the advocates of abolition were threatened by those champions at the hands of slaves, unwilling to be free!

"One more remark of Mr. Fremantle's I must notice. He mentioned the fact that 475 returned emigrants went back again last year, as evidence of the satisfactory conditions of life that prevailed in the colonies for indentured people. But 475 out of how many returned emigrants? If things were really attractive there, why should not a larger number go? I remember to have read in this report (Sanderson Committee's report) an explanation as to why a few men, after coming back to India, again return to the colonies. It is because these people, having stayed for a number of years in the colonies, find it impossible to get back into their old grooves of life in India, and after spending some time here and there, and not knowing what else to do when their savings are exhausted, they again go to the colonies in a

spirit of venture. The Protectors and the planters, however, do not want them. Indeed, their attitude towards such returned emigrants came out very well in the evidence of Commander Coombs. And curiously it was my Hon'ble friend, Mr. Fremantle, who, in his examination of Commander Coombs, brought out the fact that Protectors and planters do not like to receive returned emigrants, as it is feared that they know the system too well and are sure to poison the minds of other emigrants on the voyage. Mr. Fremantle summed up this attitude in these words:—

'It sounds rather as if you wanted to keep the people who come out in the dark as to the conditions in the colony if you discourage returned immigrants.'

"I am therefore surprised that he should mention the fact of these 475 returned immigrants going back as a sign that the system was satisfactory.

"Now, Sir, I will say a few words in reply to what the Hon'ble Mr. Clark has said. I am thankful to the Hon'ble Member for the promise that he has given of inquiring into why the fact of the penal nature of the contract is not mentioned in the agreements. I hope that the inquiry will be satisfactory and that this fact will be prominently brought out in all future agreements. The Hon'ble Member wondered how I could attach any importance to the fact that emancipated negroes scorned to come under the indenture system, and how from that I concluded that there was something servile about the system. Now, Sir, any man who goes through the third volume of Sanderson Committee's report will see what opinion the emancipated negroes have of the system. In Jamaica there is plenty of emancipated negro labour, but the emancipated negroes require higher wages than what are paid to indentured Indians, and the planters are not willing to pay them because their profits are reduced if higher wages are paid. And what is the result? The negroes are emigrating from Jamaica. The Baptist Union of that colony has pointed out in one of its representations that the emancipated negroes there are being forced to emigrate elsewhere for want of employment. They do not get the wages they want; they cannot be satisfied with the wages offered to them; and therefore they are compelled to emigrate from the places where they were born, and where they have spent all their lives. The Council will thus see that the emancipated negroes think that the indenture system is not good enough for them; and I am quite justified in drawing from this the conclusion that it is a system unworthy of free or even emancipated men, and I think that that is a sufficient condemnation of the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member said that emigrants might be ignorant of the conditions under which they would have to live, when they start, but things are explained to them when they land.

"What is the good of explaining things to them when they are ten thousand miles away from their houses? If they were explained before they started, then that would be something."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "The Hon'ble Member has misunderstood me. I said that the terms of the contract were explained to them when they were registered and again when they came to the depôt before they sailed."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I understood the Hon'ble Member to say that the things were explained to them when they reached the colonies. In any case the penal nature of the contract is not explained to them here, and that is my main argument. Then the Hon'ble Member told us that these laws of the colonies dealing with indentured labourers were laws which had received the assent of the Government of India."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "I am sorry to interrupt the Hon'ble Member again. Colonial laws do not receive the assent of the Government of India. What I said was that if we found that the laws and their operation were open to objection, we could always stop emigration."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I am sorry that I was not able to hear quite clearly what the Hon'ble Member had said, and I mentioned the impression left on my mind. However, I will mention one instance of how laws passed in the colonies are often approved by the Government of India, as a matter of course. The law in Natal which imposes the £3 annual tax on

ex-indentured Indians was passed in 1895, and it was approved by the Government of India. I am quite sure that the approval could not have been deliberate. There was then no separate Department of Commerce and Industry, and the thing must have gone through the ordinary routine, some Under Secretary saying that he saw nothing objectionable in the Act, and thus the Government of India's approval must have been notified to the colony. Well, that is the way in which laws are approved, and that is also the way their operations are watched from this distance. The Hon'ble Member also said 'there is a provision in the statutes for complaints being heard, that the Protector goes round in many places to hear complaints. Commander Coombs tells us that he visits the estates three times in the year. And what does he do? Before he goes, he sends a notice to the manager, and when he goes round, he is accompanied by him. Under these circumstances how many people will come forward, in the presence of the planter, to lodge complaints before the Protector, who visits an estate after giving proper notice to the manager and after the manager has had time to set everything right? Sir, the whole thing is on the whole a more or less make-believe sort of thing, and we cannot attach much value to it.

"Referring to the argument used by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey that India wants all her labour for herself and she cannot afford to lose those who emigrate to the colonies, the Hon'ble Member says that such emigration cannot appreciably affect the labour-supply of India. But if the reduction in the labour-supply is so small, the benefit that India gets from the remittances of emigrants is also trivial; so really both factors must be eliminated from our consideration of this matter.

"The Hon'ble Member holds that the colonies are a part of the Empire, and that, though the question of their interests does not directly concern us, it cannot be left out of account altogether on Imperial grounds. Well, Sir, if the colonies are a part of the Empire, we too are a part of the Empire. But do the self-governing colonies ever take that into account? What have they ever done for us and what obligation rests on us to take the interests of the colonies into our consideration and submit on their account to conditions which, in essence, are not far removed from the servile? Moreover, if the people of India and of the colonies belong to the Empire, so do the emancipated negroes. But what happens to them? It is a heart-rending tale which is told in the appendices to the Sanderson Committee's report—that of the manner in which these neglected people are driven to emigrate from the colonies in which they were born by want of employment.

Finally the Hon'ble Member objects to my comparison between this system and slavery. It is true that the system is not actual slavery, but it is also true that it is not far from it. The contract is not a free contract. You have here the right of private arrest, just as they had in the case of slavery. Moreover, the labourer is bound to his employer for five years and he cannot withdraw from the contract during that period. And there are those harsh punishments for trivial faults. Therefore, though the system cannot be called actual slavery, it is really not far removed from it.

"One word more, Sir, and I have done. The Government, it is clear, are not going to accept this Resolution; that being so, the Resolution is bound to be thrown out. But, Sir, that will not be the end of the matter. This motion, the Council may rest assured, will be brought forward again and again, till we carry it to a successful issue. It affects our national self-respect, and therefore the sooner the Government recognize the necessity of accepting it, the better it will be for all parties."

The Council divided :

Ayes—22.

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao, the Hon'ble Raja of Kurupam, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, the Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar, the Hon'ble Sir Gangadar Rao Chitnavis, the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy, the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi, the Hon'ble Khan Zulfikar Ali Khan, the Hon'ble Malik Umar Hyat Khan, the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhurgri, the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey, the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble

Nawab Abdul Majid, the Hon'ble Raja of Partabgarh, the Hon'ble Raja of Mahmudabad, the Hon'ble Maulvi Shamsul Huda, the Hon'ble Raja of Dighapatia, the Hon'ble Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, the Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, and the Hon'ble Mr Haque.

Noes—33.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the Hon'ble Sir Robert Carlyle, the Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Ali Imam, the Hon'ble Mr. Clark, the Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock, the Hon'ble Major General Sir M. H. S. Grover, the Hon'ble Mr. Maclagan, the Hon'ble Mr. Porter, the Hon'ble Mr. Sharp, the Hon'ble Mr. Enthoven, the Hon'ble Mr. Wheeler, the Hon'ble Mr. Brunyate, the Hon'ble Sir A. H. McMahon, the Hon'ble Mr. Lyon, the Hon'ble Mr. Saunders, the Hon'ble Sir James Meston, the Hon'ble Mr. Gordon, the Hon'ble Surgeon General Sir C. P. Lukis, the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, the Hon'ble Mr. Vincent, the Hon'ble Mr. Carr, the Hon'ble Mr. Arthur, the Hon'ble Mr. Madge, the Hon'ble Sir C. W. N. Graham, the Hon'ble Mr. Phillips, the Hon'ble Mr. Meredith, the Hon'ble Mr. Gates, the Hon'ble Mr. Slacke, the Hon'ble Sir Charles Stewart-Wilson, the Hon'ble Mr. Dempster, the Hon'ble Mr. Kenrick, and the Hon'ble Mr. Kesteven.

So the Resolution was rejected.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor General of India, assembled for the purpose of making Laws and Regulations under the provisions of the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 to 1909 (24 & 25 Vict., c. 67, 55 & 56 Vict., c. 14, and 9 Edw. VII, c. 4).

The Council met at Government House, Calcutta, on Monday, the 4th March 1912.

INDENTURED LABOUR.

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "Sir, I rise to move that this Council recommends to the Governor General in Council that the Government of India should now take the necessary steps to prohibit the recruitment of Indian labourers under contract of indenture, whether for employment at home or in any British Colony.

"Hon'ble Members will remember that two years ago this Council adopted a Resolution recommending that the Governor General should obtain powers to prohibit the recruitment of indentured labour in this country for the Colony of Natal. The Government, who accepted that recommendation, gave effect to it by carrying through this Council the necessary empowering legislation, and the new law was put into operation on the 1st July last against Natal. I respectfully invite the Council today to go a step further and recommend that the system of indentured labour should now be abolished altogether. It is true that the Resolution of two years ago was adopted by this Council principally as a measure of retaliation rendered necessary by the continued indignities and ill-treatment to which our countrymen were subjected in South Africa; but my own view, expressed even then in this Council, was that apart from the question of retaliation the system should be abolished because it was wrong in itself. I do not think it necessary to describe to this Council at any length what this system really is. Its principal features may roughly be stated to be six in number. Under this system, those who are recruited bind themselves, first, to go to a distant and unknown land, the language, usages and customs of which they do not know, and where they have no friends or relatives. Secondly, they bind themselves to work there for any employer to whom they may be allotted whom they do not know and who does not know them, and in whose choice they have no voice. Thirdly, they bind themselves to live there on the estate of the employer, must not go anywhere without a special permit, and must do whatever tasks are assigned to them, no matter however irksome those tasks may be. Fourthly, the binding is for a certain fixed period, usually five years, during which time they cannot voluntarily withdraw from the contract and have no means of escaping from its hardships, however intolerable. Fifthly, they bind themselves to work during the period for a fixed wage, which invariably is lower, and in some cases very much lower, than the wage paid to free labour around them. And sixthly, and lastly, and this to my mind is the worst feature of the system, they are placed under a special law, never explained to them before they left the country, which is in a language which they do not understand, and which imposes on them a criminal liability for the most trivial breaches of the contract, in place of the civil liability which usually attaches to such breaches. Thus they are liable under this law to imprisonment with hard labour, which may extend to two and in some cases to three months, not only for fraud, not only for deception, but for negligence, for carelessness and—will the Council believe it?—for even an impertinent word or gesture to the manager or his overseers. These, Sir, are the principal features of the system, and when it is remembered that the victims of the system—I can call them by no other name—are generally simple, ignorant, illiterate, resourceless people belonging to the poorest classes of this country and that they are induced to enter—or it would be more correct to say are entrapped into entering—into these agreements by the

unscrupulous representations of wily professional recruiters, who are paid so much per head for the labour they supply and whose interest in them ceases the moment they are handed to the emigration agents, no fair-minded man will, I think, hesitate to say that the system is a monstrous system, iniquitous in itself, based on fraud and maintained by force, nor will he, I think, demur to the statement that a system so wholly opposed to modern sentiments of justice and humanity is a grave blot on the civilization of any country that tolerates it. Let the Council glance briefly at the origin and the history of the system, and it will at once be struck by three facts which in themselves are a sufficient condemnation of the system. The first is, that this system of indentured labour came into existence to take the place of slave labour after the abolition of slavery. This is a fact admitted by everybody, and Lord Sanderson's Committee, whose report I have before me, put it in the very fore-front of its report. The second fact is that it is a system under which even the negro, only just then emancipated, scorned to come, but under which the free people of this country were placed. And thirdly what strikes one is that the conscience of Government—and by Government I mean both the Government of India and the Imperial Government—has been very uneasy throughout about this question, as may be seen from various inquiries ordered from time to time into the working of the system, its repeated suspension for abuses, and its reluctant resumption under pressure from planters. The first, and in some respects the most important, inquiry that was held was due to the action that the Parliament in England took at the very start in this matter. As I have already mentioned, the system came into existence about the year 1834, after the abolition of slavery. In 1837 the matter attracted the attention of Parliament, and in the debate on the question that followed the system was denounced in strong terms by Lord Brougham and Mr. Buxton, and other great Englishmen of that time. The result was that the system was discontinued at once and an inquiry was ordered into its nature and working. A Committee of four gentlemen was appointed, who sat in Calcutta and considered the whole subject. The Committee, after a very careful investigation, submitted a majority and a minority report. Three members out of four condemned the system altogether, and urged that it should not be allowed to come into existence again. Only one member expressed himself in favour of reviving the system under certain safeguards which he suggested. The matter went back to Parliament; but the Parliament, already exhausted by the great effort that it had made in connexion with the abolition of slavery and wearied by the constant wail of planters in regard to the ruin that was threatening them, ultimately followed in this case a somewhat extraordinary procedure and adopted the minority report of one member, as against the majority report of three members. And this was done in a very thin House, only about 150 members being present. As a result of this vote, the system was allowed to be revived in the year 1842. The conscience of the Government, however, has continued troubled, and there have been, since then, numerous other inquiries into the working of the system, resulting in its temporary suspension, followed unfortunately by its resumption again owing to the influence of the planters. I will give the Council a few instances. In Mauritius the system was introduced in 1834, was suspended in 1837 on account of the debate in Parliament, to which I have already referred, and was resumed in 1842, after that vote in the House of Commons. It was, however, suspended again in 1844, was resumed in 1849, and was finally stopped last year; at any rate, there is no more any indentured immigration into Mauritius. In British Guiana, the system was suspended in 1838 under the action of the House of Commons, it was resumed in 1844, was suspended again in 1848, and was resumed in 1858. In Trinidad, where it began in 1844, that is, after the Parliamentary action I have spoken of, it was suspended in 1848 and was resumed in 1851. In Jamaica it began in 1845, was suspended in 1848, resumed in 1860, suspended again in 1863, resumed in 1869, suspended once more in 1876 and was resumed in 1878. I am omitting the later suspensions and resumptions which were due to indentured labour not being temporarily required by the Colony. In Natal, the system began in 1860, it was suspended in 1869 and was resumed in 1872. Even in Assam, where the system was introduced in 1859, there were inquiries held in 1861, 1868, 1881 and 1895. I have not included in this list the last enquiry of 1906, because it was not undertaken to inquire into the abuses of the

system. Now, Sir, these facts clearly show that the Government has been torn throughout between two sets of considerations—one, a natural feeling of sympathy for the material interests of the white planters, and the other a regard for the humanitarian standards of administration which characterise all modern Governments.

“I have so far dealt with facts connected with this question that lie on the surface. I will now deal in greater detail with the principal objections to the system, and I will then say a word about the arguments used in its favour by its supporters. The principal objections to the system are roughly five. The first is naturally its utter inequity. Sir, whatever view one may take of the agreements into which these poor people are made to enter under the system, to dignify them by the name of ‘fair contract’ is to misuse the English language. For the stream is poisoned at its very source. It is significant that nobody has a good word to say for the professional recruiters who entrap and entice away these poor people. The recruiters are admittedly men who are generally ignorant and unscrupulous, and who, with the exception of perhaps a very few, have never been to the Colonies for which they recruit, and who, being paid so much per head, try by hook or by crook to get into their meshes as many persons as they can. The Government of India stand aside on the plea that it is a fair contract between the emigrant and his future employer! Sir, how can a contract be called a fair contract, the two parties to which are most unequally matched? How can it be a fair contract when one party to it is absolutely in a state of ignorance and helplessness, and the other party—the powerful party—takes care that it shall not know how much of it is undertaking to abide by. Take, for instance, the penal nature of the contract. The terms that are explained to the emigrants, when they enter into indenture, never include a statement of the penal nature of the law under which they have to live. Here, in volume III of the Sanderson Committee’s report the Council will find the agreements for the different Colonies reproduced. There is not a word here about the penal liabilities thrown on the poor creatures by the special laws under which they must live in the several Colonies. If this single fact is explained to them before they agree to emigrate, namely, that they would be placed in the Colonies not under the ordinary civil law for the enforcement of the contract but under a special penal law rendering them liable to imprisonment with hard labour even for trivial faults, I should like to see how many even of such ignorant, resourceless people agree to go to these distant places. I say, therefore, that the stream is poisoned at the source; that it is not a fair contract; that it is a contract between two parties that are absolutely unequally matched, a contract vitiated by the fact that most important facts in connection with it are kept from the knowledge of one party.

“In this country, Sir, the Government have from time to time enacted laws for the special protection of the peasantry. In the Bombay Presidency, for instance, we have the Dekkhan Agriculturists’ Relief Act. In the Punjab some time ago legislation was passed restricting the right of the agriculturist to alienate land. The theory that underlies such legislation is that persons who are ignorant and resourceless, do not stand on terms of equality with those who are well to do and who possess knowledge, and that a contract between two such parties is not necessarily a fair contract. The State, therefore, has a right to look into such contracts carefully, to go behind them, so to say, for the purpose, and then decide how far they should be enforced. If this is the case where only civil liability attaches to contracts, how much more should that be the case where penal liability is thrown on one party—and that the weaker party—under the contract? I therefore say that this system is altogether iniquitous. The apologists of the system, however, urge that there are safeguards provided, to prevent hardship and injustice to the emigrants when they go to their respective colonies; two such safeguards are specially mentioned; one is that in every colony there is an officer known as the Protector of Emigrants, specially to look after the interests of indentured immigrants. And secondly, there are the Magistrates to give the protection of the law to the immigrants against any cruelty that may be practised on them by their employers. Sir, these safeguards look all right on paper; in actual practice, however, both are found to be more or less illusory. These men—the Protectors and the Magistrates—are officers of the Colonial Governments.

They belong to the same class to which the planters belong. They are generally one in sympathies and in interests with the planters; and it is not in ordinary human nature that they should care to displease those with whom they have to live, with whom they have to mix socially,—and all this for granting protection to the poor, ignorant people from a distant land, in whom their interest is purely official. Sir, if the Council has any doubt in the matter, let it turn to the evidence that is contained in the second volume of the Sanderson Committee's Report. I invite the Council to go through the evidence of a Protector named Commander Coombes; I must also ask you to read the evidence of another witness who had once been a Protector, named Mr. Hill; and I lastly ask you to go through the evidence of a Magistrate from Mauritius, a gentleman named Mr. Bateson. Commander Coombes was Protector of Immigrants in Trinidad in the West Indies; Mr. Hill was a Protector in the Straits Settlements, that is, on this side nearer home; and Mr. Bateson was a Magistrate in Mauritius. Of the three witnesses, Commander Coombes is frankly a friend of the planters; he makes no secret of the fact that he is there nominally as a Protector of the immigrants, but really to see that they do the work for which they are taken to the colony. It comes out in the cross-examination of this gentleman that he is himself a planter, and one can easily see where his sympathies must be on account of his position as a planter. Of course he takes care to say that he himself does not employ indentured labour, but he is obviously very much alive to the difficulties of the planters in that place. This gentleman uses the word 'we' when he has occasion to speak of the planters. Thus in explaining how he deals with coolies, who complain that they cannot do the work, he says: '*We* send for them, and *we* tell them that they have been brought to this colony for doing their work; and if they do not choose to do so, they will have to do work for Government for nothing in jail; and it is left for them to choose either the one or the other!' The whole evidence of this witness shows an attitude of complete identification with the interests of the planters and of hostility to the interests of the immigrants, and it is an irony that he should have the title of Protector of Immigrants. The other Protector I have mentioned, Mr. Hill, is of another type altogether—a very rare type, but a type that does honour to the English name. In spite of the fact that socially and in other ways his life was bound up with that of the community in whose midst he was placed, he stood up boldly in defence of the interests of the immigrants and thereby incurred the serious displeasure of the planters. And what was the result? He was removed from his office before his term had expired. He found that the mortality among the indentured population in the Straits Settlements in his time was very high, and he drew the attention of the planters to that and insisted on their carrying out strictly the terms of the ordinances concerning the health of indentured labourers. The answer of the planters was to remove him from his office, and to appoint another in his place, even before the expiry of the time for which his appointment was made. And because he was a strong man, who would not take such treatment lying down, the Colony had to pay him £2,500, being his salary for the unexpired period for which he should have held office. They paid him the full salary for the unexpired period, because they thought that that was a smaller evil to them than his being there to protect the interests of the immigrants. The third witness, to whose evidence I call the attention of the Council, is a Magistrate from Mauritius—Mr. Bateson. I have already told you how these poor creatures are liable to be punished with hard labour for the most trivial faults—even for an impertinent word or for an impertinent gesture. Mr. Bateson speaks out strongly against this. It is impossible for me with the limited time at my disposal to read to the Council any portions of this important evidence, but I must ask Hon'ble Members to mark specially two or three of Mr. Bateson's statements. In one place, he says, 'the system resolved itself into this—that I was merely a machine for sending people to prison.' In another place he says, 'there is absolutely no chance of the coolie being able to produce any evidence in his own favour; the other coolies are afraid to give evidence; they have to work under the very employer against whom they may be called upon to give evidence.' He says that even if a coolie came before him with marks of physical violence on his body, it was practically impossible to convict the person charged with assault

for want of corroborative evidence. Then he says, 'it was a most painful sight to him to see people handcuffed and marched to prison in batches for the most trivial faults.' Well, I do not wish to dwell at greater length on this evidence; but those who will go through it will know what value to attach to the statement that the presence of the Magistrate in these Colonies is a safeguard to the coolie against ill-treatment. So much then about the illusory nature of the safeguards. My third objection to this system is the vast and terrible amount of suffering that it has caused during the 75 years that it has been in existence. Sir, it is difficult to speak in terms of due restraint on this point. Even the hardest heart must melt to think of this phase of the question. I will not speak now of the imprisonments with hard labour endured for trivial faults; I will not speak of personal violence which in some cases has been proved and very many cases could not be proved, though alleged. I will not speak of the bitterness engendered in the minds of thousands when they realised that they had been deceived, that they had been entrapped, and that there was no escape for them. I will not speak of the homesick feeling, destroying their interest in life. These are all serious matters that could be charged against the system. But more serious even than these is the heavy mortality that has prevailed in the part in all colonies under the system, a mortality which has been examined from time to time by Commissions of Inquiry and which has been established beyond doubt—a mortality for which indentured emigration was prohibited to Federated Malay States only last year, and which even to-day is admitted to exist in certain districts of Assam amongst the statute labourers. Then the numerous suicides which have resulted from the system—poor, innocent people preferring death with their own hands to life under it—are a ghastly feature of the system. And, Sir, last, but not least, the unutterable tragedy and pathos of men and women, at a distance of thousands of miles from their homes, knowing full well that the vast sea rolled between them and their native country, starting actually to *walk* back to their country, imagining in their simplicity and ignorance that there must be a land route somewhere, and either caught on their way and forcibly taken back to the life from which they were fleeing or else devoured by wild beasts or perishing of hunger and cold; all this, Sir, constituted a sum total of human misery which is appalling to contemplate, and which will be a standing witness against the system for all time. It is true that things are somewhat better now, but they cannot be very much better under a system which has inherent characteristics such as those that I have described. Moreover, as Lord Curzon said in this Council in 1901, 'even if such cases have occurred only in a few instances, the very fact that such cases can occur under the system constitutes a severe condemnation of the system.'

"Sir, my fourth objection to the system is the frightful immorality that is inseparable from it. This is a fact which has been admitted by everybody, among others by the Government of India and by the Sanderson Committee. The Committee, who deal with all other phases of the indenture question, carefully avoid making any recommendation as to how the frightful immorality involved in the system may be remedied. Under the law, every hundred male indentured labourers must be accompanied by 40 females. Now very few respectable women can be got to go these long distances; our men themselves do not really care to go, much less do the women. The statutory number, therefore, is made up by the recruiters, and, as admitted by the Government of India in one of their despatches to the Secretary of State, by including in it women of admittedly loose morals, with results in the colonies which one had better leave to the imagination of the Council than describe. Sir, this frightful immorality has characterized the system from the very first. As Mr. Jenkins, who was afterwards first Agent General of Canada, said in 1870, 'the women are not recruited for any special work, and they certainly are not taken there for ornamental purposes.' He also speaks of the immoral relations existing not only between many of these women and the men for whom they are taken from this country, but also between them and some of the planters themselves and their overseers. It is a shocking affair altogether, a considerable part of the population in some of these colonies being practically illegitimate in its origin.

"My last objection to the system is that it is degrading to the people of India from a national point of view. I do not think I need really say much on this aspect of the question. Wherever the system exists, there the Indians

are only known as coolies, no matter what their position may be. Now, Sir, there are disabilities enough in all conscience attaching to our position in this country. And I ask, why must this additional brand be put upon our brow before the rest of the civilized world? I am sure, if only the Government will exercise a little imagination and realise our feeling in the matter, it will see the necessity of abolishing the system as soon as possible.

“ I will now turn for a moment to the arguments which are usually adduced in favour of this system. Briefly they are three. First of all it is said that without this system of indentured labour, the sugar and other industries in many of the colonies will cease to exist; the second argument is that, under the system of indenture, a certain number of Indians make remittances to this country and thus a certain amount of money is received here; and thirdly, that a number of these men, after completing their indenture, settle down in the colonies, become prosperous and attain a status which they could never attain in this country. Now, Sir, so far as the first argument is concerned, I may brush it aside at once; it does not concern us nor does it concern the Government of India, who are here to promote *our* interests. If the planters cannot carry on their sugar or other industries without a continuance of this pernicious system, the sooner those industries cease to exist, the better. As regards the remittances made, or the amounts brought to this country by returned emigrants, considering that these people have been for five years under indenture, the savings are really very small. The average savings brought to India are about R150 per head; in a few cases, the amount may be higher, R200 or so, but the average is about R150. Now R150, saved in five years, means only R30 a year or R2-8 a month. This is not very much after all. The mill-hands in Bombay, for instance, can save much more than that. Again, what about those who save nothing, are broken down in health and spirits, and either perish in the colonies or else are sent back to this country, mere wrecks of their former selves? Finally as regards those who settled down in the Colonies and prosper in the first place, the number of such persons is very small; and secondly, even they have to go through a system with which are associated all the degradation and misery of which I have spoken. When these things are considered, it must be admitted that even if a few persons prosper under that system after the completion of their indenture, the price that has to be paid for such prosperity is far too great.

“ Sir, I will now briefly refer to the extent of this evil, as it exists at the present moment. I will not deal with the case of those colonies where indentured labour once flourished but has now been stopped. In four French colonies and one English colony, it has been stopped on account of abuses; in one English colony it has been discontinued for economic reasons, and in another it has been prohibited as a measure of retaliation. But the system still prevails in three British colonies in the West Indies, namely, British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica, and in one Dutch colony named Surinam, about which, however, under our rules I am precluded from saying anything. Then it exists in Fiji, a Crown colony in Australasia; there is also a small supply of indentured labour to the Straits Settlements; and last, there are four or five districts in the Upper Valley of Assam where the system is still in force. The annual supply to the different colonies comes to a little less than 2,000 in the case of Fiji; about 600 to Jamaica; and nearly 3,000 to Trinidad; and about 2,200 to British Guiana. In Assam the whole labour force is about 800,000, of which the indentured labourers are now only about 20,000. Now taking Assam first,—and here I would like to express my obligations to the Hon’ble Mr. Clark for his courtesy in having a note on the subject specially drawn up for me in his office, giving me up to date information on the subject—I understand that the Government have decided to stop the system of indenture altogether there from next year. The Hon’ble Sir Charles Bayley stated the other day in one of his speeches in East Bengal that, from July 1st of next year, this system would cease to exist in Assam. Probably the Hon’ble Member in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry will also make a statement on the subject to-day. As the system will be discontinued from next year in Assam, I do not wish to say anything more about that here. I would, however, like to point out that the Committee, appointed in 1906, recommended

the complete stoppage of indentured labour in Assam in the course of five years. They would have liked to stop it earlier, but they did not want to inconvenience the planters, and therefore they suggested an interval of five years. According to that, the system should have been discontinued in 1911. And I should like to know why it has been allowed to go on for two years more. That is, however, comparatively a small matter. But, Sir, if the Government has decided to stop the system in Assam, where its working can be watched under its own eyes, I cannot see why it should be allowed to continue in the case of distant colonies, where there can be no such supervision. The position of those who urge the abolition of the system becomes now all the stronger on account of the Government contemplating its abolition in Assam.

“ Then, Sir, there is the question of re-indenture in three colonies—in Natal, to which indentured emigration has now been prohibited, in Mauritius, where it has stopped of itself owing to economic causes, and in Fiji, where it is still allowed to continue. This re-indenture is one of the most vicious parts of the system, because though a man may indenture himself at the start only for five years, by means of repeated re-indenture he could be kept in a state of perpetual servitude. And this has become a most serious question now in Natal. There the Government of the colony imposes an annual £3 tax on all ex-indentured labourers who want to settle there as free persons. All those who have been emancipated since 1901—males about 16, and females above 13—have to pay this £3 tax. Now see how it works in practice. Take a family of husband and wife and four children—two daughters of 13 and 15, and two boys below 13. The family must pay the tax for four persons—father, mother and the two daughters—or £12 a year, that is, £1 a month. The man can earn an average wage of about 25 shillings a month, and the wife and the two girls may earn among them about 15 shillings extra, that is, which means a total income of 40 shillings or £2 a month for the family. Of this, half or £1 has to be paid as license-tax. Then there are other taxes; and there is house-rent. The Council may judge how much can remain after deducting these expenses for food and clothing for six persons. Is it any wonder that this tax has broken up homes—as has been admitted by prominent Natal men—that it has driven men to crime and women to a life of shame? Sir, there is no doubt whatever that the tax is nothing less than a diabolical device to drive the poor Indians either into re-indenture or else out of the colony. It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost importance that the Government should take the earliest possible steps to bring this miserable system of re-indenture to an end. I may mention that the Sanderson Committee has strongly recommended the stoppage of re-indenture.

“ One word more, Sir, and I will bring my remarks to a close. Sir, this is a question which really throws a great responsibility upon the Government. I am aware that the Government of India have from time to time taken up the position that they maintain an attitude of neutrality in this matter, that they do not themselves encourage indentured emigration, but that if people choose to accept certain terms and go, it is not for them to interfere. I would only ask the Council to contrast this attitude with the attitude which the Government have adopted in regard to the peasantry of the country, in legislating on lines to which I have already referred. I do not think that the Government can absolve themselves from their responsibility in this manner. In the first place, the recruiters are granted licenses to recruit by District Magistrates. That, in itself, imposes a responsibility upon the Government, because, by granting licenses to these persons, the Government make themselves to a certain extent responsible for the representations by which these men secure recruits. Then the Magistrates, before whom the poor emigrants are taken and made to enter into agreements, are the servants of Government. The third and last point is that, though the fact about the penal nature of the contract has been carefully kept out of all agreements all these years, the Government have so far taken no steps whatever to remedy this. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Member, when he rises to reply, why this has happened, and how the Government explain their inaction in the matter. If a penal liability is not necessary to the system, I shall gladly with-

draw the greater part of my objection to the system. If you are prepared to abolish the penal nature of the contract under which these labourers have to work, the rest would be comparatively a very simple question, and I shall not press this motion to a division; but, as I understand it, penal provisions are the very essence of the system; without them the system cannot be worked. If penal liability is thus indispensable, I ask why the Government have not taken steps all these years to see to it that this nature of the contract is explained to the emigrants before they enter into their agreements? Sir, this is really a most serious question, for whatever the Government may say, as a matter of fact, everybody in the country believes that without the countenance of Government, the system could not have gone on so long. India is the only country which supplies indentured labour at the present moment. Why should India be marked out for this degradation? The conscience of our people, unfortunately asleep too long, is now waking up to the enormity of this question, and I have no doubt that it will not rest till it has asserted itself. And I ask the Government not to make the mistake of ignoring a sentiment that is dear to us, namely, the sentiment of our self-respect. We have no doubt plenty of differences between the Government and the people in regard to the internal administration of this country; but those are matters which stand on a different footing. Outside the country, the Government of India must stand up for us on every occasion; must stand up for our dignity, for our honour, for our national pride. If they will not do this, to whom else can we turn? I feel, Sir, that though this system has been allowed to exist so long, yet its days are really numbered. It will soon cease in Assam, and then it cannot last very much longer in the case of the colonies. And I am confident that a people who have spent millions upon millions in emancipating slaves, will not long permit their own fellow-subjects to be condemned to a life which, if not one of actual slavery, is at any rate not far removed from it. Sir, I beg to move the Resolution which stands in my name."

The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey: "Mr. President, I rise to support the motion moved by my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. Only last week the Hon'ble Home Member, in opposing the Bill brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Basu, argued that one of the principles on which the Government would act would be that any practice was an outrage upon humanity. I maintain, Sir, that this practice of indentured labour, so graphically described by the Mover, is an outrage upon humanity. Apart from this question, may I ask why this practice is permitted? Would our labourers starve if Government stopped this practice? I say, no. Without being charged with vanity, I may claim to know something about Indian labour. I was a member of the Factory Commission in 1908, and in that capacity I went round along with my colleagues throughout India to see for ourselves at first hand the conditions of labour, their habits, their ideas, and about their home life and their work. We were at work on this special mission practically every day for six or seven hours for seven months; and what did we see? Instead of starving, exhausted, servile workmen, we saw independent, healthy, well-paid workmen. The result of the deliberations of the Factory Commission are recorded in the report issued in 1908, and with your permission, Sir, I will read a few lines from the same. On page 19 the Commission says:—

'The position of the operative has been greatly strengthened by the fact that the supply of factory labour undoubtedly is, and has been, inadequate, and there is, and has been, the keenest competition among employers to secure a full labour supply. These two main causes—the independence of the Indian labourer, owing to the fact that he possesses other and congenial means of earning a livelihood, and the deficient labour supply—govern the whole situation.'

"Then further it goes on to say—

'We have also been impressed with the fact that employers are greatly disposed to concede promptly all reasonable demands made by their workers, and, even where the demands are unreasonable, to treat them as proposals which it is desirable to accede to, if possible. Great nervousness is frequently displayed by employers of labour as to the effect even of trivial changes on the workers; numerous expedients are adopted to conciliate them, and the attitude of the employers throughout appears to be based on the knowledge that the operatives are in fact the masters of the situation.'

"This is the deliberate opinion of the Commission, expressed after due inquiry and seven months of hard work. Well, Sir, this is the position of our Indian labour, and in spite of that the Government of India felt itself justified to interfere, and in this Council brought forward the Bill and carried it through, legalising a maximum of twelve hours for these workmen; and we have to remember that these workmen are free men, free agents, and if the work in the factory was not congenial to them or they find it distasteful, they were quite at liberty to leave the work and go away elsewhere. Then, why should we allow this recruitment, which, according to the description of the Mover, and according to all the facts that we know, is nothing more, nothing less, than practical slavery? It has been said and mentioned also by the Mover of this Resolution that if the penal contract was not allowed, the labourers would not get the work and the colonies would not employ them. My reply is—so much the better for India and for the labourers themselves. India can provide work for all these labourers that are going there, and for more than that. Then he said that they are better paid. They are getting a shilling a day or Rs. 22 a month (Mr. Gokhale tells me the average is Rs. 12 a month). The Factory Commission says on page 22—'That ordinary hands in card and frame departments earn from 7 to 18 rupees, head spinners from Rs. 25 to Rs. 35, mill-hands up to Rs. 16, and weavers from Rs. 18 to Rs. 35 a month'. These are the wages at present paid in India against an average wage of Rs. 12 in the colonies to these indentured labourers. But Sir, even if we grant that these people are slightly better paid, are we to allow people to barter the freedom of our men and women for a few coppers? It has been already said by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale that it was the English nation that spent millions and millions of pounds sterling to eradicate slavery. Now, India is going to sacrifice about 7 to 10 crores of rupees every year out of the opium-revenue, in order to save a foreign nation, the Chinese, from the harm that the use of opium does them. This amount, if capitalised at only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, would mean about 300 crores of rupees for us. If India can afford to sacrifice such a large amount for the foreign nation, certainly, if need be, it can provide food for the few that are going to our colonies. Then Mr. Gokhale has also said that it is not only the question of hard work to these labourers, but it is a question of dignity to us. When we find nations all over the world pointing out a finger to India as the only country in the world where this practical slavery of their men is tolerated, it boils our blood, if I may be permitted to use the sentence.

"Sir, I would only mention this in conclusion, that it is an irony of fate that we in this Council should have any occasion to approach the Government of India, and through the Government of India the British nation, to abolish this practical slavery—a nation which has, as I have said, spent millions and millions in the past, and a nation that to-day is willing to risk the prosperity, the great hardship to the poor, and the very defence of the country, rather than interfere with the freedom of the coal miners by legalizing them to work and be reasonable. Sir, I think the time has come when the Government of India might accept this proposition, and do away with the practice."

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle:—"Sir, I have been appointed to this Council for a special purpose which, with the passing of the Co-operative Credit Societies Act, has now been fulfilled; so I feel that some justification is due for my intervening in the debate to-day. That justification is that I was a member of the Committee which sat, less than three years ago now, to consider the case of the subject of emigration to the Crown Colonies and Protectorates. My interest in the subject of over-seas emigration did not begin with the constitution of that Committee, nor did it end with its dissolution. In the year 1905, I was on special duty inquiring into scarcity of labour, and in the course of that inquiry visited a large number of emigration depôts in Bengal and the United Provinces. In subsequent years, during the course of my tours as Registrar of Co-operative Societies, I have seized every opportunity which availed itself of visiting those depôts again, and I have talked to the coolies assembled there both those who were going to the colonies for the first time and those who had been there before. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale made a very passing allusion to the Committee which sat in 1909. I think it should be known that that Committee made very careful inquiries

into this particular system of indentures. Among its members were Sir James LaTouche, who is well known as being one of the most sympathetic Lieutenant-Governors who has ever ruled an Indian Province, and Sir George Scott Robertson, a Liberal Member of Parliament, who was not the least inclined, when that Committee began its sittings, to regard the system of indentures in a favourable light. The Committee sat for 71 days, and examined 83 witnesses. Every opportunity was given to the opponents of indentured labour to come forward and say what they had to say. Government went so far as to pay the expenses of Mr. Richards, the Chairman of the Workingmen's Association of Trinidad, to go over to England to give evidence on the Committee. The view put forward by these gentlemen was that Indian emigration should be discouraged on the ground of the competition with native West Indian labour. The Hon'ble Mr. C. P. David, a Member of the Legislative Council of Trinidad, and Mr. Summerbell, a Labour Member of the Imperial Parliament, also put forward a similar view. There was also an Association called the People's Association of British Guiana, which put forward the same view. With these exceptions, no voice was raised before the Committee against this system of indentured emigration. On the other hand, there was a very large body of opinion in its favour. I do not mention the planters and employers of labour, who are naturally prejudiced in such questions. There were, however, many Governors of Provinces of established reputation, some of them men who had retired and given the greater part of their subsequent career to writing on public questions, such as Lord Stanmore, formerly Sir Arthur Gordon, and Sir Charles Bruce, and there were also Sir John Anderson, and Sir Sidney Olivier, the present Governor of Jamaica. Besides these gentlemen, there were many independent witnesses. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says that the Magistrates who deal with offences against the Immigration Law are prejudiced in the planters' favour. That may be or may not be. Sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. The description certainly does not apply to some of those who appeared before the Committee. One example the Hon'ble Mover has himself given. As regards that example, it is that of Mr. Bateson, a Magistrate from Mauritius: it was discussed I may say by the Committee in paragraph 99 of their report and the Committee were of opinion that he did not take a proper view of his duties, or else he would have been able to do very much more good, as no doubt he wanted to do, to the Indian indentured cooly. Besides these independent witnesses such as Magistrates and doctors, there were also several missionaries who gave evidence, and they could not be considered to be prejudiced. There were also some well-known men. One was Sir Rupert Boyce, who was specially sent out by the Colonial Office to the West Indies to inquire into the prevalence of yellow fever, and he made special inquiries, while there, into the condition of the Indian indentured labourer. There was also a gentleman named Mr. Alleyne Ireland, an American publicist who had spent the greater part of his life in inquiries into political, social and economic questions of that character. All these gentlemen were in favour of the system. The report concerning this says, 'there is a general concurrence of opinion that the system as actually worked, so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the Indian, has in fact encouraged the growth of independence of character'; and it says also that the general effect of the bulk of the evidence was to show the excellence of the arrangements made for the immigrants and the prosperity to which the majority attained after they had become free citizens.

"The Hon'ble Mover has stated that indentured coolies do not get adequate help from the Inspectors of Immigrants, and that the latter were men recruited from the same class as the planters, and in fact in some cases have regarded themselves as planters. Now I think anyone who has studied the subject will admit that in those colonies which have a large number of indentured labourers, such as Trinidad, British Guiana and Fiji—these are the only three which have now a large number—the legal and administrative arrangements made for the benefit of the immigrants are very complete. In each colony there is a Protector of Immigrants, or an Agent-General who is assisted by medical men and also by a staff which consists of 4 Inspectors in British Guiana, 3 in Trinidad and 5 in Fiji, where communications are very difficult. Now it is

the sole duty of the Protector and this considerable staff to look after the immigrant population, whether indentured or unindentured; and it is in pursuance of those duties that they are constantly visiting the plantations to see that the immigrants are properly housed and treated and get the wages to which they are entitled. There is also a special provision in the law for a man who wants to leave the estate to make a complaint. Temperaments vary, and some officials are more sympathetic than others when it comes to the point of inquiry into grievances which may be more or less sentimental, but it is quite certain that under the present system no serious abuses can remain unredressed. Sir, no human institution is perfect, and I am not concerned to state that the indenture system is any exception to this rule. No doubt there are defects in it. Several of these defects have in fact been pointed out by the Committee, and they are at present under the consideration of the Colonial Governments concerned. That they are not considered very serious by the people most concerned can perhaps be indicated by the fact which I saw stated in the report of the Protector of Emigrants, Calcutta, that last year no less than 475 coolies who had already been to the colonies re-indentured themselves to serve a further term. The Hon'ble Member drew a picture for us which depicted the artifices of the recruiters and stated that it was not a fair contract because the conditions were not known to the people recruited. Now for that portion of the recruiting district with which I am well acquainted, and which extend from Gonda and Fyzabad to Basti and Gorakhpur and Benares, I can say that the people there are very well acquainted with the conditions of service in the colonies. As I stated at the beginning of my remarks, I have spoken to a large number of them, and I have never found one who has gone to the colonies without knowing the conditions prevailing there. Each man goes because his own people or relations have been there and knows perfectly well the conditions under which they work."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : "Including the penal nature of the contract ?

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle : "Of course, they know something about the penal nature of the contract : it has not done them any damage."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale : "It is not in the agreement."

The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle : "They know perfectly well, I maintain, the conditions under which they are going. I do not say that for all the would-be emigrants recruited, but it is true for that very large number of them which comes from the main recruiting districts such as those which I have stated. But surely, as the Committee state in paragraph 100 of their report, the system must, like other systems, be judged by its results, and as to its results, I submit there is very little room for doubt. The statistics we find in the report will prove certain facts, such as that Indians in British Guiana own property averaging £2 per head for each man, woman and child in the community; that in Trinidad in 14 years 70,000 acres of Crown lands have been bought by the Indians; that in Fiji between the years 1898 and 1908 the land held by Indians, whether on leasehold or freehold terms, increased from 6,000 acres to 46,000 acres. 46,000 acres would be 17 acres per head for every man, woman and child in the free community of Fiji. And I think that Indians now in the colonies have some right to be heard on the subject. I do not know how far the Hon'ble Mover has consulted them, but two gentlemen gave evidence before the Committee—two young Indians,—their names were Mr. Francis Edward Muhammad Hussain and Mr. George Fitzpatrick. They were themselves the sons of indentured immigrants who had gone to the colonies under this degrading system which the Hon'ble Mover has painted to us. They were born and educated in the colonies and had come to England at that time for the purpose of being called to the Bar. These two gentlemen, although they pointed out certain defects, as they appeared to them, in the system of indentures, were emphatic in their approval of the continuance of emigration of Indians. Mr. Hussain, for instance, says of the indentured coolie, 'I think they are very well

treated,' and when asked whether the mass of the coolies, after having served their indenture, are prosperous, he replied, 'The prosperity of the colony itself is evidence of that.' And Mr. Fitzpatrick, who was specially appointed as the representative of the Indian community to give evidence before the Committee, said clearly that the community he represents are in favour of the continuance of emigration. He further stated in his memorial which he submitted to the Committee as follows: 'The East Indians, after their term of indenture, have proved themselves to be desirable colonists. As agriculturists, they have aided materially in the development of the colonies; they have purchased Crown lands, and have successfully opened up the country; they undertake cane-farming, kitchen-gardening, and on them the colony is largely dependent for vegetables, &c. They become skilled labourers and are employed by the local road boards, municipalities, railways, etc. They and their descendants become proprietors, merchants, shopkeepers, contractors, teachers, etc., all of whom are most loyal and patriotic, thus forming an important factor in the colony.'

'Now, I submit, this hardly fits in with the Hon'ble the Mover's description of the Indian in the colonies as 'always a coolie.' The Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey has stated in his remarks that there can be no necessity for helping coolies to go to the colonies when they have such excellent opportunities in the mills and factories. Well, he claimed to be of some authority on the subject of the Indian labour-supply. I think, perhaps, I may claim the same. And if the Hon'ble Member will read the report which I issued in 1905, he will perhaps see some reason why agriculturists do not desire to go and work in those mills and factories. On the other hand, they are very glad to get agricultural labour even though it may take them some considerable distance from their homes. The wages of agricultural and non-agricultural labour, as every Member of this Council knows, are very different. I have here the Gazetteer of Gonda in Oudh, which was published in the year 1905, and this is what it says about agricultural wages in that district. I may say that this district and the adjoining district of Basti sent to the colonies last year 3,490 men, that is to say, one-third of the total number that went to the colonies from the port of Calcutta. The Gazetteer says, 'the labourer receives either a cash wage of two and a half rupees a month, though the constant complaint of the landlords is that the rate is rising to two annas per diem, with a blanket in winter and perhaps two local maunds of grain at harvest, or else a grain wage of four or five kachcha seers of coarse grain daily. The system of *sáwak* labour, so common in the adjoining district of Bahraich, is still well known in Gonda. The *sáwak* is a member of the lower castes such as Koris, Chamars or Lunnias, who for a fixed sum of a money, almost invariably required for marriage expenses, binds himself in serfdom to the zamindar until the loan be repaid—a contingency which hardly ever occurs in actual experience. The consideration varies with the necessities of the borrower but rarely exceeds one hundred or is less than twenty rupees. A man in this position receives the ploughman's customary share in the produce, supplemented by contributions from his master, which are converted at the market rate and added to the principal.'

"Only last week I read in the *Statesman* about a class of serf-tenants in the vicinity of Giridih who in return for a loan of from Rs. 20 to Rs. 40 practically sell themselves into perpetual servitude. It is said, indeed, that the position becomes hereditary, the son taking over the burden of his father's debt. Well, that is some indication of the position to which these poor labourers, with their dependants numbering some 46 millions in this Indian Empire, may fall, and I think that a class of men who are exposed to such economic conditions and who are liable to fall into a state of lifelong hopeless servitude will hardly object to a five years' indentureship and to a free life to come; and I think that they will not thank the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale for the attempt which he is now making to cut away the ladder to becoming proprietors of land and self-respecting citizens of the Empire."

The Hon'ble Mr. Muhammad Shafi: "Sir, I have listened with the closest attention to the speech which has just been delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, and I confess that, in spite of the close attention which I have

been able to give to it, the Hon'ble gentleman has failed to convince me that the position taken up by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale is not the correct one. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale gave a graphic description of the circumstances under which these contracts of indentured labour are entered into. He described the ignorance of the coolies, on the one hand, and all the tricks played by those who have the task of engaging these coolies, on the other. He pointed out that undue advantage is taken of the ignorance of the coolies, and some of the facts most material to the validity of the contract are kept concealed from them. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not deny the facts as alleged by Mr. Gokhale. In fact, as I understood him, he admitted that the penal laws under which these coolies have, after their emigration to and settlement in these colonies, to live are actually concealed from them at the time these contracts are entered into. Well, as I have understood Mr. Gokhale's position, the main complaint of the Hon'ble Mover was that in concluding these agreements, this, the most vital portion of the whole affair, was actually concealed from these coolies; and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle has not been able to deny that. Therefore, it seems to me that the most serious portion of the indictment brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, so far as this aspect of the question is concerned, remains absolutely unanswered. Then the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale described in detail the results which these coolies have to face upon their arrival in these colonies, the sort of life they live, and the kind of punishments which are meted out to them upon the most trifling defaults, and even for what is said to be impertinent gesture on their part they receive imprisonment in jail. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his reply to the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has again left that portion of the indictment absolutely unanswered. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the evidence which had been given by three gentlemen, each one of them representative, as I understand, of the class of persons who had to deal with these coolies in the colonies, and justified his statements upon the authority of the evidence given by these witnesses before the Commission. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle did not controvert the facts which were stated by these witnesses, and indulged in what I cannot help regarding as general statements not corroborated by any evidence upon which one could lay one's hands. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle pointed out that there were Protectors and Inspectors who looked after the interests of these coolies. Well to my mind, in the first instance, the very necessity of appointing these Protectors shows that there is something against which protection is needed. That is to say, there are causes and circumstances existing in these colonies which necessitated the appointment of these Protectors in order to prevent the coolies who go to the colonies from being maltreated. But the point of the argument of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale was that the evidence of one of these Protectors showed that they were Protectors rather of the interests of the planters than of those of the coolies who had to work under these hard circumstances. Well, Sir, the evidence of that Protector, some portions of which were read out by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, remains uncontroverted, and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle in his speech has not referred to anything which can take away from the weight of that evidence and render the statements put forward by that witness and by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale here to-day as statements not worthy of consideration—aye special consideration—of this Council.

“Sir, when discussing the provisions of the Hon'ble Mr. Basu's Special Marriage Bill the other day, the Hon'ble the Home Member pointed out that the Government of India does not feel itself justified in undertaking legislation unless two conditions exist—one that there is, on the part of the Indian people in the country, an almost unanimous demand for undertaking that legislation, and the other is that the circumstances resulting from a given state of things constitute an outrage upon humanity. Well, the second argument has already been referred to by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey. So far as the first condition precedent to undertaking legislation referred to by the Hon'ble the Home Member is concerned, I need only mention that so far as the Indian people in this country are concerned, there is a complete unanimity of opinion in support of the demand which has been made by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his speech to-day.

"Only yesterday at the meeting of the All-India Moslem League held in the local Town Hall a Resolution was unanimously adopted urging upon the Government the necessity of stopping indentured labour. So far as the Muhammadan community is concerned, therefore, the fact that the Resolution was unanimously adopted by the League at its anniversary is, in itself, conclusive evidence of the fact that the Muhammadan community demands that the recommendation put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution moved to-day should be accepted by Government. And, so far as the Hindu community is concerned, not only has the National Congress adopted this Resolution, but the Hindu representatives present here in Council are, I believe, absolutely unanimous in this demand. Therefore, I submit that the two conditions laid down by the Hon'ble the Home Member in reference to legislation of this kind being there, the Government of India ought to accept the recommendation which has been put forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale in his Resolution to-day, and I have great pleasure in giving my hearty support to that Resolution."

The Hon'ble Sir Gangadhar Rao Chitnavis : "I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has moved. It has much to commend it to the acceptance of Hon'ble Members apart from any point which the unsatisfactory condition of Indian settlers and the treatment which they receive in South Africa may give to the appeal. I do not believe in indentured labour; the free workman is a far more productive agent than any one working under contractual conditions. Even from the employer's point of view, the present system of indenture is undesirable. It is antiquated, and is not required in a world remarkable for its progressive arrangements for inter-communication. I endorse the opinion expressed by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey about the increasing dearth of labour and the rise in wages in India. I expressed some such views on the subject at Jabalpur in 1905 when presiding over the Provincial Conference there, and the subsequent labour conditions in India have only confirmed those views."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao : "I may be permitted to express my surprise at the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the attitude which he has taken towards this question. He has described in rather glowing colours the conditions under which indentured labourers, specially in Trinidad, live. He says that there is practically no cause of complaint with regard to the way in which labour is recruited and the way in which labourers are treated in the colonies, and he wants us to believe that there is no debasing or degrading influence upon the people concerned, and that there is no complaint coming from the parties who are chiefly subject to this system. I may say at once that he has lost sight of one important consideration in this matter. We may concede all that he has stated; we may even hold with him that what the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has described is not correct. The question still remains: how does this indentured system affect the country at large? Has it a debasing and degrading influence upon India in the estimation of the outside nations? What is the attitude of those people who receive these coolies towards India as a whole? I think the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle must admit that on account of this system India has fallen in the estimation of the civilised world. Therefore, Sir, the important question that centres around this Resolution is this: whether the present system does not vitally affect our national honour, our national self-respect, in fact, our national existence as an integral part of the British Empire. I submit, Sir, that this is the question which the Council has to take into consideration and the Government has to consider. A speech like that of the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle's if delivered some ten years ago might have passed unchallenged. Much water has flowed since then under the bridge. There has been rude awakening of our national consciousness. We feel, Sir, that we have taken things lying down. We do not blame any one for this state of things. We have allowed things to go on in this way; we have not asserted our dignity to be treated like other civilised nations. But times have changed, and we now ask why India, alone among all the countries of the world, should be subjected to this indignity."

We urge, Sir, that the system of indentured labour should be abolished at once. We are all familiar, how in Natal, for instance, the best and most cultured of Indians are treated as coolies. Why is that? The simple reason is that South Africa has come into contact with India in the shape of coolie labour, and she only knows India as a vast recruiting ground of menial labour, and therefore whoever goes from India is naturally looked down on as a coolie, and no better than a coolie. Similarly, women who first went to Burma from the East Coast happened to be women of ill-fame, and were called Coringa women from the place whence they came. Even now women of ill-fame, no matter from what part of the East Coast they come, are still called Coringa women. That name has stuck to these people and it has come down to this day. Therefore, Sir, we cannot be too careful as to the way in which we open our relations with other countries. It is a great misfortune to India that this indentured system should ever have been introduced at all and the Emigration Act should have been placed on the Statute-book. Well, there is no use of regrets for what has taken place. We have now to repair a great wrong done to India. Two years ago the Government of India, by accepting the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale regarding the prohibition of immigration to Natal, has earned the thanks of the public. By amending the Emigration Act, they took the first step to repair a great wrong done to India, and I venture to submit that they would be doing the right thing by going a step further, by prohibiting altogether the emigration of indentured labour to different parts of the world. If any other course be adopted in this matter, I venture to say, Sir, that the action of the Government would be viewed by the Indian public with deep disappointment. No doubt, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, it is a question of time when this system would be abolished. I submit that the Government of India would do well to take time by the forelock, by paying heed to the popular sentiment and by coming forward at once to prohibit this kind of emigration. I don't care to discuss the merits or demerits of the present system. I know several cases where people were inveigled by recruiters to go to a foreign country by describing it as a land flowing with milk and honey. I shall only say this. The system is vicious in itself, stunting the moral growth of the people concerned, and labour should not be prostituted to promote the industries of a few. Leaving all these questions aside, we have got this broad fact, that this question strikes at the root of our national self-respect, our national honour, and national existence. I appeal to the Government of India that in a matter of this kind they should not run counter to the sentiment of the people at large. On this question, Sir, all classes of people are unanimous, and I submit that the Government should be with them in repealing the Emigration Act. I do not wish to say more. I heartily support the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mazharul Haque : "Sir, in 1910, when Lord Minto was presiding over the deliberations of this Council, I had the honour to lay my views about indentured labour. Then I said :

'The whole system of indentured labour is vicious in principle; it brutalises the employer; it demoralises the employed. It perpetrates the worst form of slavery in the guise of legal contract; it is bad in its inception, inhuman in its working and mischievous in its results, and ought to be done away with without any further delay.'

"Two years ago these were my views. I hold these views now and abide by them. Sir, I condemn indentured labour on the higher ground of the freedom of man. God created man free, and this divine right has been taken away by human laws. Labour should be free as man should be free in conscience and in action. My Hon'ble friend, Mr. Shafi, has brought to the notice of this Council the fact that the people of India are unanimous on this subject. He has reminded it that only yesterday the great organisation of the Muhammadans of India, the All-India Moslem League, passed unanimously a Resolution in favour of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's Resolution. I believe my Hindu brethren are also unanimous. Then what is in the way of the Government which prevents them from accepting this Resolution? Sir, we are helpless in the matter. You, the members of the British Government, are the trustees of our good name, of our dignity and of our honour; and I appeal to you, all

Englishmen in India, to come and help us in this matter and try to save our honour in the eyes of the nations. The people of India feel very keenly about it. They think that they are disgraced in the eyes of other countries inasmuch as India is the only country, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has reminded this Council, which supplies indentured labour. It is certainly nothing else but a very bad form of slavery. Sir, I invite the Council to help us and accept the Resolution of the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale."

The Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar : "Sir, I will speak a few words only to show that the sentiment is general in this country, that the system of the recruitment of indentured labourers in India is degrading and against the principal dictates of humanity. Sir, I do not wish to repeat, after the very graphic description which my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has given, the circumstances in which such labour is recruited and the state of things which exists in the countries to which these indentured labourers are sent. I do not wish to say anything on that aspect of the question. We are indeed told by a gentleman—by an Hon'ble Member who occupied a position of authority (because he was a member of the Sanderson Committee of 1908)—that the Committee considered that there was nothing in the system which demanded its removal. Sir, assuming, for the sake of argument, that there were none of the hardships which have been pointed out by witnesses—and in regard to them I might remark parenthetically that no decisive reply has been given to the very specific charges which Mr. Gokhale has brought—I say, assuming that in the majority of cases there was no real hardship, still we Indians have a right to protest against India being made a recruiting ground for a system which is not far removed from slavery.

"Sir, the indentured system of labour has been devised for the purpose of supplying labour for places where free labour scorns to come or where free labour has not sufficient attractions. If the prospects which are afforded in British Guiana, in Trinidad and elsewhere are so alluring as they are stated to be, where is there any necessity at all of having this system of indentured labour? There is the market open; let them go and recruit their labourers in the open market and take them wherever they like. Why should the authority of Government be utilised for the purpose of supplying these plantations with the labour which they require? And above all why should India be the one unfortunate country where this kind of system is to be allowed? Have we no voice in the matter whatsoever? Are our feelings not to be consulted? Are our sentiments to receive no recognition from Government? This is a matter in which there is a very deep feeling entertained in the country. It may be that at the time when that inquiry was made, this feeling which is now springing up all over the country amongst all classes of the people, amongst Muhammadans and Hindus alike, had not received that articulate form which it has now received; but it is there. And I would implore Government to pay heed to it and not to allow the system to go on, which is justly considered as an outrage upon Indian sentiment and Indian self-respect."

The Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Majid : "Sir, I beg to give my hearty support to the Resolution moved by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. My reasons are that the general sentiment in this country is that this indentured labour should not be allowed to continue. Only yesterday, as the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi has reminded this Council, an unanimous Resolution was passed at the Annual Session of the All-India Moslem League, that this indentured labour system should be abolished in this country altogether."

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya : "Sir, I beg to support the motion which has been brought forward by the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale. The criticisms which have been offered by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, tending to favour the system, do not touch the points that have been raised by Mr. Gokhale, and I think that it is desirable that the important aspects to which attention has been drawn by the Hon'ble Member should be borne in mind. I hope that the Government will bear them in mind and decide the question upon them. There are two aspects of the question which deserve consideration. There is

the human aspect and there is the national aspect. As regards the human aspect, the inherent evils of the system to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has drawn attention show that the system is not far removed from slavery; that the contract or agreement into which the emigrant is led to enter is anything but fair. Other considerations apart, the fact that the emigrant is not informed of the special penal laws to which he becomes subject by entering into a contract of indenture, entirely condemns it as an unfair transaction. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle said in answer to Mr. Gokhale that the coolies who return from the colonies to India must have told their fellows who were going out for the first time what these penal laws were. There is nothing to show that this is done. And by the very nature of things, such information cannot reach the great bulk of those who are induced to go out. Besides, that is no answer to the charge that the penal clauses have been kept back from the people. I do not agree with the opinion that these clauses have been actively concealed. I think if it was brought to the notice of the Magistrates who registered the emigrants, that it was unfair to the emigrants to keep back such important information from them, they would probably have drawn the attention of the would-be emigrants to those clauses. Probably attention was not drawn to it. But it is undeniable that the penal clauses have not been explained to the persons who have been most vitally affected by them. And the labourers who indenture under the system have been placed in a very unfortunate position, in a position of pitiable helplessness. The object of the Government in passing the Emigration Act was, as was explained by the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert in 1883, that those who wished to take Indian labourers outside India to employ them should not be hampered by unnecessary restrictions or impeded by unreasonable prejudices, and to protect the emigrants against being entrapped or deluded into unfair bargains or carelessly or oppressively dealt with after they have left their homes. The first of these objects has been more than fully secured under the Act. Since the system was introduced, it has brought into existence the recruiter. He receives a license from the District Magistrate to go about the country to induce persons to indenture. It is his profession, his business, to get hold of as many persons, men and women, as he can, by fair means or foul, and he gets hold of them oftener by foul means than fair. As the system prevails, once a man is caught hold of by the recruiter, he is taken to the depôt. In that depôt he is kept supplied with food and other necessaries of life until he is taken before the Magistrate in that place. But he is during all the time under the control of the recruiter and his agents. It is extremely difficult for him to get out of that control even when he wishes to do so. I have on more than one occasion tried to rescue some of these unfortunate persons who had been taken to these depôts. Twice in Allahabad, I attempted, either directly or through some of my friends, to render some assistance to the coolies who had been taken to the depôt and who were not able to come out of it when they wanted to do so. I was foiled in the attempt. On one occasion I was nearly charged with having trespassed into the depôt, though I had taken care to have a sub-inspector of police and an Honorary Magistrate with me. On another occasion I had secured a writ from the Joint Magistrate for some persons to go into the depôt; but I was even then baffled in my attempt, because the system is so practised and kept up that it is impossible for a man who is an outsider to find out where the person who is unwilling to go is. Even when you can gain admission into a depôt, you ask for a certain person, and a certain person is brought before you who is said to be that person. You have often no means to find out whether the right person has been brought before you or not. Then there is another reason why persons who are taken to the depôt find it extremely difficult to come out of it. They are given some money by the recruiter to meet their expenses, and if they want to get out they are required to refund the money. They are seldom in a position to do so while they are shut up in the depôt. The other day in Calcutta, a Marwari gentleman having heard that some of those who were going to be shipped to a certain colony were in such an unfortunate plight, offered to pay Rs10 each for every person who was not willing to go and who wished to purchase his release. But he was not able to get the necessary assistance, and he had to

bear the sorrow of seeing, or at least believing, that a number of his brothers and sisters had to go out of their country against their wishes. Further, these recruiters often practise a great deal of fraud. It appears from the *Venkatashwar Samachar* of Bombay of the 9th ultimo that in December last two young ladies of respectable families who went from Lucknow to Cawnpore to see a relation got into a conveyance and asked the driver to take them to a certain place which they named. The driver, who was evidently in the employ of the recruiting agents there, took them about for the whole day and in the evening put them into the emigration depôt, where they were kept in wrongful restraint, subjected to much ill-treatment, and after they had been thus sufficiently prepared to say what they had been tutored they were presented before the Magistrate to be registered as indentured labourers. One of these ladies was made to say that she was a prostitute. Her appearance and demeanour roused the suspicions of the Magistrate, who started an inquiry with the result that the driver and the recruiting agent are under trial and the ladies have been rescued and restored to their freedom. But for one such case in which the fraud is detected there may be, probably are, many in which it is successfully carried out. I submit, therefore, that the system is inherently bad. If you let loose a number of recruiters armed with licenses from District Magistrates to get hold of persons by persuasion to go to distant countries and supported with the sections of the Emigration Act which provide a great deal of support to these recruiters, it must in nine cases out of ten be very difficult for those who have been inveigled by them and caught in their hands to get out of their control. It is obvious that the system would not be in existence but for the support of Government. Without such support the recruiter would not be free to get hold of many persons and to put them in the emigration depôt and to constrain their will. For the protection of the emigrant, the Government has no doubt provided that he or she shall not enter into an agreement without being brought before a registering officer, often a Magistrate, and until he or she shall have been asked whether he or she was going out with a knowledge of the nature of the agreement and with a free will or otherwise. But we have seen that this object, is not fully secured under the Act. But even if it were, the law does not provide beyond it to ensure that the emigrant shall be fairly dealt with in the colonies. In speaking on the Emigration Bill in 1883, the Hon'ble Mr. Ilbert said:—

'Thus every reasonable precaution is taken which our law can enforce that the emigrant should be properly treated from the time when he leaves the place where he is recruited to the time when he lands in the colony for which he is bound. Further than this our law cannot follow him, and after this point we can only provide indirectly for his welfare by such influence as we can bring to bear on the Government of the country in which he has established himself.'

"It is clear from this that whatever protection is provided by the Government for the emigrants is provided from the time when they start from the place of their recruitment until they land in the country for which they have embarked. After that they are left at the mercy of the special laws which prevail in that country, and my friend the Hon'ble Mover of the Resolution has graphically depicted the conditions to which they are subject under those laws. I submit therefore that the human aspect of the case requires that the contract which is entered into under such conditions—conditions which are intrinsically and inherently bad in the one place in not letting the penal nature of the laws known to those who will be subjected to them under the indenture for labour, and secondly in admitting of such penal clauses to be put in force against any human being—such a system of contract should be put an end to, and as long as these penal clauses exist in the system, no contract which has been entered into under the Indian Emigration Act which subjects any emigrant, man or woman, to those clauses, ought to receive the smallest countenance from the Government of India.

"Then there is the national aspect. I submit, Sir, that it is a matter of the greatest reproach to us all, Europeans as well as Indians, that our fellow-subjects, those whom Lord Morley described as 'our equal fellow-subjects,' should be subjected to such inhuman penal clauses which reduce them to the condition of serfs. It is a matter of deep shame and pain that any one of them, man or woman, should be subjected to those indignities and cruelties which, it has been proved, have been heaped upon Indians in many of these colonies. The

honour of the Indian people and of the Indian Government demands that a law which permits or helps such indignities to be heaped on Indians should be at once abolished. Nothing that has been said by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle would justify the continuance of such a law for one moment. I will not take up the time of the Council by repeating all the charges that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has brought against the system. These prove that the system cannot, while it lasts, be separated from the evils to which he has drawn attention; and as it cannot be mended, the best thing is that it should be ended, and that without delay.

"The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle referred to certain advantages which he says have resulted to Indians who have gone to foreign lands. What would the whole world avail the emigrant if he lost his soul by going to those lands? He is subjected to moral degradation; he is subjected to national degradation; he is utterly demoralised, placed under conditions in which he has to live a life of sin and shame; in which he ceases to be a free man and virtually becomes a slave—a slave of the worst type? That he can save Rs. 30 a year or so under such a system is not a consideration worth urging in support of it. Let him starve, if he must, in his own country, a free man, but not be subjected to these servile restraints and inhuman indignities to save a petty sum of Rs. 30 a year. India can yet afford employment for all her sons and daughters; they will certainly not starve if they are not induced or inveigled to migrate out of the country. The evil lies in the system being what it is, and the remedy lies in its total abolition. The point of complaint that has been raised is that, without the aid of Government, the system cannot last for one moment. If it was left to Indians—coolies or non-coolies—to contract freely according to their own choice to go to foreign lands, the evil will soon be remedied. The system will fall to pieces to-morrow if the Government withdrew its own aid and assistance, and as it is owing to the Government that it is enabled to exist, it is the duty of the Government to do all that it can to eradicate its evils. But as the evils cannot be eradicated, the best thing is to abolish the system. The Government was pleased to recognise this duty last year in stopping indentured labour to Natal. It has recognised it in deciding to abolish the system of indentured labour in Assam. I hope that the motion which has been brought forward by my Hon'ble friend will commend itself to the Government and receive its whole-hearted support, and that this evil system will be abolished before many days are passed."

The Hon'ble Malik Umar Hayat Khan: "Sir, I only get up as I have to get up to-day. This is a Resolution for a popular cause and it does require sympathetic treatment. To argue at length to make a case and then to argue the same thing or argue for it straight off in the beginning comes to the same thing, and that is why I have not entered into the details. I think that the case has been clearly put by the Hon'ble Mover and others. It is useless to advance another set of arguments. I think there is sufficient field in India for labour and the dearth of it has begun to be felt. Men can get work easily. I think ignorant people go with a wrong idea. The first thing is that when they are told they will get such and such sum for their wages, they do not know the respective value of money in this and that country. Secondly, they do not know the respective value of the cost of living in the two countries. When Government has admitted that indentured labour was undesirable in one colony, why should they not have admitted that it would be wrong in others, as it is the principle of indentured labour which is to be blamed? When the people abroad cannot treat Indians properly, I think there is no use of letting them go there. Sir, there is another thing that I want to say. I think cent. per cent. Indians are all on the side of Mr. Gokhale, and when we are cent. per cent. on one side and it is our Government, our Government must be on our side, because otherwise it will not be our Government. I want to say one thing. You have chosen all of us here. There are certain rules framed that we all should come into the Council in such and such a way. Either that rule that has chosen us is wrong or we are all wrong; and if we are right, and are opposed to it, it means that the one side which opposes it is not perhaps so much in touch with the other, because we are born and die with our people; at any rate we know

something about them. And as it is, there is very great difficulty for the ordinary labourer to get his complaint heard by them. I support Mr. Gokhale.

The Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu: "Sir, I rise only to associate myself with the Resolution that my friend the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has proposed. It is needless for me to go into the history of the legislation which he has brought up for discussion. Even a cursory examination of the ways in which that legislation has been worked will show that without any delay it should be removed from the Statute-book.

"There is only one matter in this connection to which I wish to draw the attention of Government. There was a Committee which sat in 1906 about the Assam Labour Emigration Act and which recommended that in five years' time that Act should be withdrawn from the Assam Valley Districts. That five years, time has now expired and the public is anxious to know when the Government will announce the date on which operation of that Act would cease in the Assam Valley."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "Sir, the Hon'ble Member who has moved this Resolution has made it abundantly clear that on moral, social and political grounds alike, he objects to indentured emigration in any form for his countrymen, and he has argued his case with a vigour and eloquence which we have learnt to expect from him in this Council. With much that he has said, I am, if not in agreement, at any rate in sympathy, but I think he will admit that he does not approach this question with an unbiassed mind (with which of course I have no quarrel), and also that he has not put it before Council from an entirely unprejudiced point of view. I hope I am not misrepresenting anything he stated, but I am almost sure that he did not think it necessary even to mention the conclusions arrived at by the Committee of 1908. That was a very important Committee, an impartial one, and they found in favour of continuing the system. I must say I think it is curious that the Hon'ble Member should have omitted this point in his strong indictment. I will give one more example of the attitude with which he has approached the subject. He has mentioned three points in the history of indentured emigration on which he considers that this system should be condemned. First, that the system takes the place of slave labour; secondly, that the system was one under which the negro would not work; and, thirdly, that the fact that there had been so many inquiries shows that the conscience of the Imperial and the Indian Governments is uneasy about it. As to the third—I will take them in inverse order—it is the custom of Government to inquire before they take any action, and if the Hon'ble Member chooses to place this interpretation upon their inquiries, it is not of much use my arguing the matter with him. But the second is a very extraordinary statement. Surely every one knows that the reason why Indian labour was required for the Colonies was that as soon as the negro was emancipated, he refused to work at all under any conditions, and therefore to say that he objects to work under the indentured system, which was not then in force, seems to me a most extraordinary piece of logic. What I have said in the second case explains the first. The Indians came to these Colonies to take the place of the negro who would not work. It is true that previously the work had been done by slaves, but what degradation is it to the Indian who has been doing agricultural work in India to do the same kind of work in the colonies? Is it merely because the man who did it before was a slave before the system of slavery was abolished? I fail to see any connection between the two. The other Hon'ble Members who have dealt with this question have spoken with great force, but I venture to think that they have laid too much stress on what for want of a better term I can only describe as the sentimental aspect of the question. I hope Hon'ble Members will not think that I am using that term in any offensive or unsympathetic sense. Nothing could be further from my intentions. We are on common ground in wishing to see the rights of the Indian labourer duly safeguarded and also, I take it, in wishing to see full freedom of opportunity given to him; and the rest should be mainly a question of fact whether or not the system of indenture is such as to fulfil these requirements. I do not mean to say that the other aspect of the case—the undoubted feeling which

exists against indentured labour in itself—can be disregarded; but surely the point of prime importance is the practical issue of how the system affects those who are employed under it—what the drawbacks of it are and what advantages it confers; and it is from this practical standpoint especially that I propose now to deal with the question.

“The Resolution falls into two parts, dealing with indentured labour in India and with indentured emigration to the colonies. I think it will be convenient if I dispose of the Indian question first, because that is relatively a small matter. In India the indenture system only survives in four or five districts in Northern Assam, and there, as the Hon’ble Member has told us, it is moribund. It only survives in these districts and is there under sentence of death. It dates back from the early days of the tea industry, when Assam was a little known country and very difficult of access. As the country developed and communications became more easy, it became less and less necessary to use the penal provisions, and in some districts, in the Surma Valley, for instance, they had practically fallen into desuetude by 1906. Only two per cent. of the coolies there were recruited under indenture and 98 per cent. were recruited otherwise than under indenture. In the same Resolution in which the Government of India announced their determination to withdraw the labour district provisions of the Act from the Surma Valley, they announced the appointment of a Committee to consider the whole question of recruitment of labour for the tea gardens in Assam. They called attention to the increasing difficulty in securing an adequate supply, and expressed their view that having regard to the importance of the interests involved, the matter required investigation by a strong Committee before further action could be taken. The Committee reported in 1906, and in 1908 the Government of India announced in a Resolution based on the report that, while they did not consider that it would be fair to the industry in the Brahmaputra Valley to withdraw at once the labour district provisions of the Act which had already been withdrawn from the Surma Valley, they proposed to take up the question again in two years, and in the meantime they advised the tea industry to consider how best they could adapt themselves to the changed situation, which would then be created. Various causes contributed to delay the question being dealt with until last year when Government informed the Indian Tea Association that they proposed to withdraw the provisions from the districts of the Brahmaputra Valley as from 1st July 1913. When this withdrawal has been carried into effect, indentured labour will have ceased to exist within the limits of the Indian Empire.

“As the system will so soon have come to an end, it is hardly necessary for me to examine its merits and demerits at any length, but there are one or two points which it is of importance to emphasise in connection with the present Resolution. The marked unpopularity of employment in Assam which led directly to the appointment of the 1906 Committee is undoubted, and it is equally beyond question that the penal clauses were a contributory cause to that unpopularity; but they certainly were not the only or even the main cause. The Committee, to quote their own words, ‘placed in the forefront of the reasons for the unpopularity of Assam, the strong resentment which exists among all classes of the people against the malpractices of the *free* emigration system which existed under Act I of 1882.’ In a case like this the grounds of unpopularity are no bad index of where abuse really lies. Undoubtedly malpractices in the recruiting districts before the Act of 1901 were very serious. Sir Charles Rivaz in his speech in Council in 1901 stated that the consequence of this system was ‘that a horde of unlicensed and uncontrolled labour purveyors and recruiters sprang into existence who, under the guise of assisting *free* emigration, made large illicit gains by inducing, under false pretences, ignorant men and women, chiefly from the backward districts of Bengal and the Central Provinces, to allow themselves to be conveyed to Assam, and by practically selling these people to the planters for the purpose of being placed under labour contracts in that Province.’ It is only since the Act of 1901 came into force that the recruiting areas have been restricted and placed under better supervision, with the result that the objection to Assam labour has been gradually, if slowly, dying out. No doubt, as the Committee

also say, the penal contract has been a further bar to recruitment. Reports of the compulsory powers vested in the planters before the abolition of the right of private arrest added to the suspicion with which Assam was regarded; but the primary cause was beyond question the malpractices in the recruiting districts. It has to be remembered—a point which I shall have to insist upon later—that there are two sides to the labour contract; it helps the employer by binding down the labourer to work on certain terms, and it protects the labourer by ensuring him regular work at fixed wages and by enforcing on the employer the provision of the necessary safeguards for the labourer's health and material welfare. It is only fair to the planters to say that the Committee found, after touring the districts, that the material condition of the coolie was good and that his welfare was well looked after; that he was provided with good lodgings, good water, and that the conditions of labour were not such as a man of ordinary strength could not well comply with, while they gave him an opportunity at certain times of the year of earning money, without excessive additional labour, over and above his pay.

“The Government of India, since the Resolution of 1908 was issued, have never wavered in their view that the time has come when the penal contract should go. But what has primarily influenced them in arriving at this decision is that, with the improvement of communications, they consider—and the Committee supported this view—that this portion of the Act is no longer required for the protection of the labourers, and they hold strongly that free labour will eventually benefit the industry. Of one thing I am convinced, and that is that the tea industry will never have done for good with their troubles in regard to the supply of labour, until we have managed to secure free labour and free recruitment. Free recruitment must be a matter of some time, especially as the industry have not yet made up their mind that they can do without the contractor; but at least the first necessary step is the removal of that penal contract, and that is now about to be done. Labour under penal provisions has become an anachronism in districts within the limits of India itself, under the direct control of the Indian Government, and now no more difficult of access than many other outlying parts of the country.

“I turn now to what is in the circumstances the more crucial question, that of the recruitment of Indian labour for employment under indenture in British colonies. First of all, let us be clear as to exactly what the scope of contract emigration to the colonies is. Emigration under a contract of indenture can only take place under the Emigration Act of 1908 to certain specified colonies. These are now Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica, Mauritius and British Guiana. Ceylon and the Straits Settlements are in different position and are not affected by the Act. From time immemorial, there has been a regular flow of free labour, chiefly from districts from the south of India, to those colonies, and the greater part of that emigration has been free. As the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale told us, there has been some indentured emigration to the Straits Settlements, and there has been in certain cases regrettable mortality on unhealthy estates. I quite admit that, but I do not attach very much importance to it because the system there is practically dead. The Government of that colony has taken up the question, and although we have not heard definitely that they have put an end to it, it is generally understood that they are very soon going to do so. In the Malay States, where great mortality had occurred, they have actually stopped it altogether. That the coolie even in the Malay States does not feel the weight of his chain very heavily, is shown by the fact that 80 per cent. of the indentured coolies in Perak offered themselves for service under the free contract when they were released.

“Returning to the list of colonies which I have mentioned, recruitment has also stopped for Mauritius, where, owing to the depression through which the colony has been passing, there is no longer any demand for labour, and the Government of India have under consideration the desirability of prohibiting it to that colony altogether. Thus we have only to take into consideration emigration to the four colonies of Trinidad, Fiji, Jamaica and British Guiana. Indentured labour for Natal, I need hardly remind the Hon'ble Member who took so deep an interest in the matter, was put an end to from July of last year.

“I cannot help thinking, Sir, that some of the feeling which has grown up against indentured labour is owing to the nature of the contract not being clearly understood. It is very far from being, as is sometimes supposed, a contract solely in the interests of the employer. The interest of the employer in the matter is, of course, clear. He has brought the coolie a great distance over sea at considerable expense to a country where *ex hypothesi* labour is scarce; and the indentured system guarantees that on his arrival the coolie will have to work and will not be tempted away by the offer of better wages or pleasanter conditions elsewhere. The advantage to the labourer is no less real. The system now in force secures him protection in recruitment; on the voyage; on his arrival in the colony, and during the term of his indenture; it secures him, according to the colony concerned, either his passage home or substantial assistance towards it. But I will avoid generalities, and in order to make the matter clear will put briefly before Council the obligations and rights imposed respectively on the two parties by the contract of indenture and by the operation of the Indian Emigration Act of 1908 and the Colonial Immigration Laws; and Hon'ble Members can then judge for themselves. I should explain that there are slight differences in the requirements in the various colonies, but these are not sufficiently substantial to affect my argument. First of all, as to the obligations upon the coolie. The coolie is bound to his employer for a period of five years. He has to reside on the plantation, and if absent without a pass, is liable to arrest, and can be arrested without warrant; he is liable to fine for such absence. If he is absent without leave for a certain number of days, he is considered to be a deserter and may be fined or imprisoned; he is liable to punishment if he refuses to go to hospital when ill and also for refusing to perform his work, or hindering, molesting or persuading any other emigrant from doing his work; and he is also punishable with a fine or imprisonment for offences against discipline. I turn now to what is done for him by the requirements of the contract and of the law. In the first place, his recruitment is hedged in with safeguards. No person is entitled to recruit labour unless he is licensed by the Protector of Emigrants appointed by the Indian Government at each port from which emigration is lawful. The terms which the recruiter is authorised to offer are submitted to the Protector, who countersigns a written or printed copy, and the recruiter is permitted to give only a true copy of this statement to the persons he invites to emigrate. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale laid very great stress on the question whether the coolie knows about penal provisions. It is perfectly true there is not a requirement in the Act that the terms of the contract are to contain the fact that if he does not carry out his contract or commits the other offences I have mentioned, then he is to incur imprisonment or fine. That is so; it is not made clear in the contract. It is a point on which I propose to have inquiry made. I think there is a great deal of force in the contention that he ought to know exactly what he is in for, not only the actual requirements of work, and so on, but that he should know the exact terms of the penalties. But there are one or two considerations which I should like to bring before the Council. In the first place, there is good reason to suppose that most of them know perfectly well what is going to happen. Then the coolie, it must be remembered, in India, is generally tied down in some form or another. The coolie going to Ceylon is bound down by a load more or less of debt. He is recruited by a person called the 'kangani,' who advances him money, and when he arrives in the colony he is not really free until he has paid off his debt. The coolie, therefore, when he engages himself to do work, expects, as a rule, that something will happen to him if he does not do it. Then I should like to point out another thing. The assumption is that when a man enters into a contract, he means to carry out the contract. The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's assumption is that he does not understand the contract properly, and when he gets to the colonies he will wish to break it, and then it is very hard on him that he should suffer a penalty for breaking it. I do not think that is a fair way of looking at it at all. The coolie has signed a contract of which the terms have been most carefully explained to him, and it is only reasonable to suppose he has understood that he has to work well, and that he means to carry out his contract; and if he refuses, he at any rate is not likely to be surprised at finding himself punished. There are clauses in the Indian Penal Code which provide for something not unsimilar at the present moment.

“Every agreement to emigrate must be executed in the presence of a registering officer. The registering officer is required to examine the intending emigrant apart from the recruiter, in order to ascertain whether he is willing and competent to emigrate and understands the terms of the contract, or whether he has been induced to execute the agreement by any coercion or undue influence or mistake. Before embarkation the emigrants are kept in a depôt, in which they are examined as to their physical fitness to undertake a voyage. If the Protector finds that any emigrant is physically unfit or that any irregularity has occurred in his recruitment or in his treatment, he may return him to the place of registration at the expense of the recruiter. The next step is the voyage to the colony. The Emigration Act and the rules framed under it make elaborate provision for the safety, comfort and proper treatment of emigrants during the voyage. Emigrant ships have to be equipped and provisioned according to the scales laid down in the rules, and every such vessel has to provide a duly qualified medical officer. The ships cannot sail without an examination by Government officials as to their seaworthiness and the quality and quantity of food, medicines, accommodation and equipment. When the emigrant arrives in the colony of his destination, he is provided for by the law in force in that colony for the regulation of indentured immigration, and it should be remembered that emigration is permitted to no country from India, unless the Governor General in Council is satisfied that that country has made such laws and other provisions as are sufficient for the protection of immigrants during their stay therein. For a certain period after arrival rations are supplied on a scale and at a cost prescribed by the law—a cost which does not exceed 4 annas a day in the case of a male adult. Suitable dwellings, medicines, medical attendance, hospital accommodation and proper diet during sickness have all to be provided for the immigrant free of cost. The hours of work are laid down in the immigration laws and do not exceed 7 hours in the field and 10 hours in the factories, which is, I may point out, a very low figure compared with factory labour in this country, and a minimum wage is prescribed. Protectors of immigrants are appointed who are empowered to visit plantations, to require the production of emigrants, to enquire into complaints made by the labourers and so on. The Protector may cancel the indentures of immigrants if they are ill-used, or for any breach of contract on the part of the employer, or may institute an action in a Court on behalf of any labourer. Inspectors are also appointed to visit the estates at regular intervals to assist the Protector, and Medical Inspectors also go round to inquire into the labourers' state of health, the sanitation of the plantation, etc. Lastly, grants of land are made to emigrants who resign their right to repatriation and wish to settle in the colonies. If they do not wish to settle they receive from British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica assistance towards their passage back to India and from Fiji a free return.

“I think, Sir, that if we are to consider this matter fairly, we ought to set against the penal provisions the advantages conferred by the various provisions which I have just enumerated. Let Council consider for a moment what would happen if there were no contract hedged in as this contract has been with the most meticulous safeguards. The coolie from a district such as the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle has described to Council is not likely to be a skilful bargainer, and on the other hand may well be tempted without much difficulty from his native land. He would have no security for any proper provision on the voyage. On landing he would find himself in a strange country where he would find difficulty in securing food and dwelling. He would be at the mercy of his employer, and if he were turned off, there would be no alternative for him but to work at any wage, however small, or to starve. It is scarcely possible that he would be able to save money, and his chances, therefore, of ever returning to his native land would be infinitesimal.

“The critics will no doubt say that these provisions are all very well, but what guarantee have we that they work properly in practice—one of the points which Mr. Gokhale took up and pressed with some vigour? The question is most pertinent, and I fully agree that the justification of the entire system depends upon the answer. Fortunately we have the necessary material ready at our hand, for the whole problem of indentured emigration to British colonies has been recently reviewed by a Committee appointed in England in

March of 1909. No one can question the impartiality of the Committee. It was presided over by a distinguished ex-Civilian of the English Service. There were representatives of India in Lord Sandhurst, Sir James LaTouche and the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who has spoken on the subject to-day. The Colonial Office was represented, and there were also on the Committee two Members of Parliament, one of whom, Sir George Scott-Robertson, is a strong Liberal, who, if he had any bias in the matter at all, would certainly not be disposed in favour of indentured labour in any form."

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao: "Was there any Indian member?"

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "There was no Indian member. The report of the Committee was unanimous. The Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, who was a member of it, has, I think, proved to Council how far-reaching were their inquiries and what care was taken to hear every side of the question. Although the Committee did not actually visit the colonies concerned, representatives of different shades of opinion were brought over at Government's expense to give evidence. The considered opinion of the Committee on the main issue is best quoted in their own words.

It can safely be said, they write, 'that, notwithstanding some unfortunate occurrences at times now remote, the system has in the past worked to the great benefit not only of the colonies but equally of the main body of emigrants, and this is so still more in the present.' So far did they consider that the majority of emigrants undoubtedly prospered, that they wished steps to be taken by the Government of India to popularise emigration in India, relinquishing to this end the attitude which they have hitherto maintained of a strict neutrality. The Committee rejected unhesitatingly the imputation, which is still at times advanced, that the system of indentured labour, as it affects emigrants to British Colonies, partakes of the nature of slavery. They expressed the opinion, after examining the best and most authoritative evidence that they could obtain, that whatever abuses might have existed in the past, no such charge can be substantiated against the system as it at present exists, and as it has been in practice during the last twenty or thirty years.

"They considered that the restrictions placed on indentured emigrants are not in their practical operation excessive. They noted that the provisions as to arrest if a coolie is found without the passes which he has to use when he leaves the plantation seemed to be excessive and unnecessary, but they said on the whole that in actual practice they found that these provisions were not abused. They point out that outside the terms of the contract, the principal conditions of which have been twice explained to the coolie before he enters into it, he is for all purposes a free man whose rights are carefully watched over and guarded by a special staff of Government officials. Of course much must depend on the efficiency and rectitude of the Government officials, but as the Committee say, the system must in the last resort be judged by its results, and in the evidence before them they found a general concurrence of opinion that so far from exercising any depressing or debasing influence on the emigrant, it in fact encourages in him the growth of an independence of character. There is an impressive passage in the evidence of Sir Charles Bruce, who was Governor of British Guiana, when Surgeon-Major Comins, then Protector of Emigrants in Calcutta, came to visit the colony on a tour of inspection. He quoted the following words which Surgeon-Major Comins had used:—

'No one,' he said, 'who knows the Indian coolie can fail to be struck by the great difference between the coolie in India and his children born in the colony.' * * * Whatever be the cause, whether change of climate, better food, easy times, more responsible duties or position, the influence of travel, or freedom from the narrowness of caste prejudice, the result is very apparent. The children born in the colony of Indian parents revert to a higher type of civilization, and in appearance, manner and intelligence are so much superior to their parents that it is difficult to believe they belong to the same family. The boys and young men are stronger and better looking, and are able to turn their hand to anything at a moment's notice, with a smartness and knowledge of the world which would vastly astonish their grandparents in India; while the girls and young women have a beauty and refinement rarely seen in public in India, many having all the appearance of good birth and breeding usually associated only with families of the best blood. The daughters of men who do not require them to work, lead a happy life, free from the care and toil which aged their mothers before they had reached their prime.'

“In the same way another witness, the Rev. J. Morton, who lived 41 years in Trinidad—and a missionary I imagine is not a person who would take a biased view in this matter—found that the system worked better and induced a better and more independent type in the labourers that came over. I think in the face of such evidence it cannot be contended that indentured labour has an evil influence either on the physical condition or on the morale of the Indian emigrant. In connection with this question of physical condition, Hon’ble Members will recollect that the Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale referred to the considerable mortality which has taken place on occasions among indentured coolies during the last seventy-five years. He went back a long way, but I think he might have added a little more as to the present state of the figures of health. I have here the figures of mortality in this country and in the colonies. In British Guiana the death-rate of Indians on the estates under indenture averaged 26·6 per thousand over the last nine years, in Trinidad during the same period it ranged from 14·5 to nearly 20 per thousand, in Fiji in 1909 it was only 7·43 per thousand, and in Jamaica it is 23 per thousand: that is to say, the highest is 26 per thousand and the lowest is nearly 8 per thousand.”

The Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale: “In Jamaica it is higher than British Guiana. In Jamaica it is 33. It is higher than the general population.”

The Hon’ble Mr. Clark: “Among the indentured immigrants the death-rate is 23.”

The Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale: “In Jamaica the total rate for the Indian population is higher.”

The Hon’ble Mr. Clark: “I am not referring to the general population. The comparison I was going to make was between Indians in the colonies and in their native country. My point is that the death-rate is lower among the indentured immigrants than the death-rate in the United Provinces, from which a large number of these coolies are obtained, and where the death-rate was in 1909 37 per thousand and in 1910 52 per thousand. At the same time it is perfectly true that the sound working of the system depends upon a series of safeguards, and there are openings through which abuses can creep in. I will not deny that, and it is not surprising to find that the Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale and other speakers have called attention in the course of the debate to certain points referred to in the evidence before the Committee. The first of these is the question of Protectors and Magistrates. The Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale considers, I think, that these officers do not carry out their duties as efficiently as they ought to. He went a little further and hinted that some of them were inclined to favour the planter rather than the labourer. The most serious complaints contained in the evidence before the Sanderson Committee under this head were in connection with Trinidad. A Member of the Trinidad Legislative Council, the Hon’ble Mr. C. P. David, who gave evidence before the Committee, complained that the Protector was not sympathetic with the Indians; that he lived in the town at some distance from the estates; and that inspection was not as thorough as it should be. Similarly, Mr Fitzpatrick of Trinidad, who attended as a representative of the Indian community, gave evidence somewhat of the same tenor. On the other hand, Mr. Huggins, a Magistrate, who was in the colony for 25 years, gave entirely conflicting evidence, and said that the Protectors were very popular with the Indians, who came to them about any troubles however small. The Committee themselves arrived at the conclusion that while they considered that Mr. Fitzpatrick’s views were not justified in the evidence brought forward, it was no doubt a matter which required watching. There was another complaint mentioned by the Hon’ble Mr. Gokhale in connection with a certain Magistrate, Mr. Bateson, in Mauritius. But Mr. Bateson stated that he found difficulty in cases where a coolie brought an action against his master because the coolie could not state his case efficiently in Court, and Mr. Bateson did not feel that he as Magistrate entitled to assist him in any marked degree. The Committee in their comment on this evidence considered that Mr. Bateson

had taken too narrow a view of his duties, and that he might very well have made more efforts to assist the coolies, and I think this is a conclusion with which everybody must agree. These are the only two cases where the evidence points to anything like a shortcoming. I do not think therefore that there is any strong presumption of shortcomings, but at the same time I entirely agree with the conclusions of the Committee that the matter requires careful watching, because a great deal depends upon it.

"A more serious matter in my judgment is the large number of prosecutions that occur under the Act, and it is all the more serious because it can be substantiated by figures. In British Guiana, in 1907-1908, there were 3,835 complaints by employers against immigrants with an indentured population of only 9,784. The percentage of complaints to the indentured population was 39.2 and of convictions 20.6. In Trinidad, there were 1,869 convictions for offences against the labour law in 1907-1908 for a total indentured population of 11,506, or about 16.5 per cent., and in Fiji there were no less than 291 charges against labourers, of which over 90 per cent. resulted in convictions. In Mauritius, matters are much better; but, even there, at the time when Mr. Muir-Mackenzie visited the colony, there were 4,101 convictions as compared with the total number of indentured labourers employed of 52,247, giving an average of 7.8 per cent., although the average has since fallen to a little more than 3 per cent.

"Well, I think, there is no denying that these figures are disquieting. I think everybody will be glad that the Committee has recommended that the colonies in question should hold an inquiry into the matter. There are certain contributory causes which account in part for the large number of these convictions. Whatever the precautions taken in the recruiting districts, a certain proportion of men are accepted, who are not fitted for agricultural work, or who are idlers with no intention of working except under compulsion. These men swell the list of prosecutions and often come before the Courts again and again. The limitation of the area of recruiting suggested by the Committee should make for the elimination of this factor. In Trinidad, again, in order to prevent an employer encouraging or permitting his labourers to abscond when work is slack so as to avoid having to pay them their wages, he is compelled to prefer a charge against any deserter within 15 days of the offence; and an absence for three full days without leave constitutes desertion. The Indian labourer is not fond of continuous work, and it is probable that this fact would account for a good many of the prosecutions. But the case for inquiry is strengthened by the general tenor of the evidence which shows that, in the best managed estates, prosecutions are not much resorted to. It is very desirable, I think, that the inquiry should be held, and it is greatly to be hoped that the Colonial Governments will look into the matter and that estate managers will in the future be less ready to adopt this most unsatisfactory means of enforcing their strict claims against the immigrants. The Committee made several other recommendations dealing with defects which they considered to exist either in the laws in the colonies or in the arrangements for recruiting in this country. Those recommendations have been considered by the Government of India and we are now in correspondence on the subject with the Secretary of State. I, therefore, cannot make any definite statement about them, but I think I may say this much, that the Government of India are, generally speaking, in agreement with the great majority of the recommendations made. One of the most important of the matters dealt with is the question of re-indentures to which the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale referred. Now there is no question that re-indentures stand on an entirely different footing to indentures. The indenture system is necessary in the interests of the employer as ensuring him some return for the cost of the passage of the labourer whom he has imported from a great distance, and is necessary in the interests of the labourer because it ensures him work and proper housing, and so on, when he arrives in a new and strange country. Neither of these arguments can be brought forward in defence of re-indentures. When a coolie has finished his first indenture he has discharged his obligations to the employer in respect of the cost of his passage. On the other hand, he may fairly be expected to have found his feet and no longer to need special

protection. This matter, again, is one which is under correspondence with the others with the Secretary of State and I cannot say anything definitely about it ; but undoubtedly there is much to be said for the recommendations of the Committee that in all colonies where the system still prevails, the duration of contracts of re-indenture should be limited to twelve months and that measures should be taken to abolish the practice within a reasonable time.

“ I have now referred, Sir, to the principal points on which the Committee suggest improvements. The Colonial Governments, apart from there being no reason whatever for thinking that they would not in any case wish to protect the Indian immigrants to the best of their ability, have a very strong motive for doing so, since the continuance of emigration is of great economic importance to the West Indian colonies and the Government of India have powers to prohibit emigration to any colony where they are not satisfied, either with the treatment of the indentured immigrant or of settlers who have completed their indenture and elected to remain in the colony. I think, therefore, that there is very little reason to doubt that, when the Sanderson Committee's report is known to the several Colonial Governments, they will do their best to meet the points which have been raised. Although it is very important that any defects should be remedied, I do not think it can be said that in their sum total these various matters can be held—any more than they were held by the Committee—to constitute a condemnation of the indentured system. Of course I quite agree, as the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale says, that the Government of India have no special duty to consider the interest of colonies. At the same time the colonies are a part of the same Empire, and we certainly should not wish to do them harm, unless there were very strong grounds shown for doing so because the interests of our own people demanded it. I submit, Sir, that no such grounds have been shown. We have had before us the report of a strong and impartial Committee which recommends the continuance of this system. It is true, as Sir Vithaldas Thackersey says, that the system in so far as it takes away any labour from India effects a reduction in the available labour force of this country. It effects some reduction, but the reduction is so small that very little weight can be attached to the argument. In the last three years the average emigration to the four colonies which were still taking coolies was some nine thousand men, and considering the enormous population of India, that cannot be held to be anything but an infinitesimal proportion.

“ The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale has referred to the difficult question of women in the colonies. It is certainly the case that the question of finding the statutory proportion of women presents difficulties and that the women sent are not always of a desirable class. The evidence shows that trouble has occurred in plantations from time to time both from the number of men being considerably in excess of the women, and from the women not always being of good character ; but I am inclined to think that the Hon'ble Member's view has been perhaps too much influenced by a passage in the Government of India's despatch of 1877—that is, a despatch written now 35 years ago. Much greater care has been taken since to improve matters and to procure a better class of women emigrant ; and special precautions are prescribed on registration to prevent wives emigrating as a means of leaving their husbands.

“ Well, Sir, I have already referred to the evidence which shows that for coolies that go to the colonies emigration has resulted in a growth of independence of spirit and improvement in their physique and morale. They also make considerable profits by going. In 1910, savings brought back by coolies from Trinidad came to £1,000, from Jamaica £2,344, from Mauritius £4,099, and from British Guiana £9,252. Their remittances during the same time were, from Trinidad £3,990 ; Fiji £3,535 ; from Jamaica and Mauritius £390 and £690, respectively ; and from British Guiana £2,269. It is scarcely possible that they could have done as well if they had stayed at home. Yet if the Hon'ble Member's Resolution were adopted, I do not see how it will be possible for coolies to go from this country to distant colonies. I have explained to the Council the obligations of the contract, and I have shown by contrast what would be expected to happen if the coolies were to go free and unprotected to a distant and to them a foreign country. Only the

other day we had a telegraphic report from His Majesty's Consul at Colon telling us that certain coolies had gone out on the chance of getting work on the Panama Canal, and had been stranded there. If we accepted the Hon'ble Member's Resolution, we should have no alternative but so far as in us lies to prevent the overseas emigration of labour. I submit that no case has been made out for so extreme a step, for so harsh an interference with the liberty of the subject, and that we should be far wiser to maintain the attitude of neutrality which the Government of India has taken up in the past towards this question. This policy is well described in a despatch of 1877 from Lord Lytton's Government, in reply to a despatch from the late Marquis of Salisbury, then Secretary of State for India, in which he suggested that it might be possible and advisable for the Government of India to afford greater encouragement to emigration, having special regard to the greatness of the Indian population and with the probability that the population would continue to increase. The Government of India held that any material departure from the permissive attitude which had hitherto been observed would be extremely impolitic. They did not base this opinion on the ground that it would be inexpedient to part with any portion of the population of the country, for they held, and history has amply justified them, that any amount of emigration that would be likely to take place could not have more than an infinitesimal effect upon the population. They objected on the grounds of the effect which a direct and active interposition of Government in such a matter would be likely to have on the minds of the people and on the difficulty and embarrassment in which Government would become involved by undertaking responsibilities towards the colonies on the one hand and towards the emigrants on the other, which it would be practically impossible for it to discharge in a satisfactory manner. They, therefore, proposed to maintain the policy which, as they put it, may best be described as one of seeing fair play between two parties to a commercial transaction and of acting as protector to the weak and ignorant in order to ensure that in the bargain which they have freely made with those who bid for their labour, they will not be molested or imposed upon.

"The Government of India see no reason to depart from that policy. They hold no brief for indentured labour. While explaining to Council their reasons for thinking that the system should not be discontinued, I have endeavoured to weigh the drawbacks and advantages as dispassionately as I can. Nor can they admit that there is any inconsistency in ending indentured labour in Assam and permitting indentured emigration to continue to British colonies. In the one case, the coolie is working at a relatively short distance from his home, under Indian law within the limits of the Indian Empire; in the other, he is being taken from his own country and placed amongst strangers in a distant colony. From the standpoint alike of his own interests and of his employers the situation is entirely different. There remains the sentiment that indentured labour bears the taint of slavery. It is based on a complete misconception, for in essentials the two differ fundamentally. The labourer under indenture has entered of his own free will into a contract the terms of which have been explained to him again and again, while the essence of slavery is that it is involuntary and forcible; and there is no resemblance in fact between the penalties applicable to an indentured coolie who offends against the labour laws, and the position of the slave who is the absolute possession and chattel of his master. I know that the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale's only motive in bringing forward this Resolution is his belief that the system is not in the true interests of his countrymen, and no one who has listened to his speech could question the absolute sincerity of his convictions. Yet I venture to think that he is mistaken. Hon'ble Members know the sources from which the greater number of these emigrants are drawn. They come largely from localities where the pinch of poverty is acutely felt, even if it is not always so oppressive as in those districts described by the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle where men sell themselves into perhaps lifelong serfdom for the few rupees required to pay for a marriage festival. To my mind, Sir, there is no bondage so pitiless as the bondage of poverty and lack of opportunity. The indentured system at least affords to the more adventurous spirits their chance to open up a new life in another land; perhaps to settle there, in a condition of prosperity undreamt of in the environment from which they have emerged; or to return to their own

country with substantial savings, if they have been thrifty, or at least with a wider outlook and a new store of experience. I would not, Sir, for fear of this unreal phantom of servitude, deprive them of that opportunity.

“Government must oppose this Resolution.”

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: “Sir, the Council has heard two speeches against this motion, one from the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle and the other from the Hon'ble Mr. Clark; and I will first deal with what has fallen from Mr. Fremantle. The Hon'ble Member began by complaining—and in that complaint the Hon'ble Mr. Clark joined later on—that I had referred only in passing to the recommendations of the Sanderson Committee. Sir, it is quite true that I made only a very passing reference to the deliberations of that Committee. Shall I tell you why? It was because I was very much disappointed with some of the recommendations of that Committee. I think the whole standpoint from which the Committee approached the question was faulty. But the responsibility for that lay with the terms of reference. The Secretary of State had appointed the Committee, as the terms of his minute show, to consider—

‘the general question of emigration from India to the Crown colonies, and the particular colonies in which Indian immigration may be most usefully encouraged’ and so on.

“Thus the standpoint from which the members were invited to approach the question was not whether indentured emigration should be permitted from India but how Indian emigration should be encouraged to the Crown colonies. The Secretary of State started with the assumption, and the Committee took up the assumption, that Indian immigration was necessary for the Crown colonies, and the question to be considered was how it was to be encouraged. That being so, whatever was against indentured emigration was more or less lost sight of and whatever went to favour such emigration was prominently brought forward. Even so, there are statements in the report which go to show that if the Committee could have recommended the abolition of indenture, they would have gladly done so. One has only to read between the lines of the report to see that it is so. But being convinced that Indian emigration to the colonies was possible only under contract of indenture, and impressed with the idea that without such emigration the interests of the colonies would be jeopardized, the Committee could not but make the recommendations which it has made. Sir, the Hon'ble Member has told the Council that though the penal provisions of the contract are not stated in the agreements or explained beforehand, after all the coolies who go under the system understand what they are going to in the Colonies. This, coming from my Hon'ble friend, is surprising. Let me appeal in the matter from Mr. Fremantle, Official Member of this Council, speaking against my Resolution, to Mr. Fremantle, member of the Sanderson Committee. The report of the Committee, which the Hon'ble Member has signed, says :—

‘We have heard from many colonial witnesses who gave evidence before the Committee that Indian emigrants, when drawn from the agricultural classes, make excellent settlers and that a large proportion do actually settle down either on the sugar and other plantations or on holdings of their own. Yet it seems doubtful whether the majority of the emigrants leaving India fully realise the conditions of the new life before them or start with the deliberate intention of making for themselves a home in a new country. They go because they are uncomfortable at home and welcome any change of circumstances. They have quarrelled with their parents or their caste fellows, or they have left their homes in search of work and have been unable to find it. Many are not recruited in their own villages. The recruiters hang about the bazars and the high roads, where they pick up loiterers and induce them to accompany them to the depôts and agree to emigrate, by relieving their immediate wants and by representations, no doubt often much overdrawn, of the prospects before them. The male emigrant more often than not is unaccompanied by any member of his family, and, indeed, the family is frequently not even aware that he has left the country until (possibly some years afterwards) he re-opens communications. Since, except in times of scarcity or of famine, the supply of casual recruits of this kind is not likely to be large at any one place, the net of the recruiters has to be spread far afield, and we hear of their operations one Delhi, in Rajputana and in Bundelkhund, where there is certainly no congestion of population, but, on the other hand, constant complaints of insufficiency of labour both for agricultural and industrial purposes. The same is the case in Calcutta, where about one thousand emigrants

are registered yearly, and still more so in Cawnpore, where the local Chamber of Commerce has on several occasions called attention to the prevailing scarcity of labour and deprecated the encouragement of emigration to the colonies."

"That shows, Sir, how much these poor people know about the life to which they are going, and how far the contract is a free contract.

"Then, Sir, my Hon'ble friend said that whatever abuses there might have been at one time, there were no serious abuses now. I will mention to the Council certain facts brought to the knowledge of the Committee by one of the witness, Mr. Fitzpatrick, to whom Mr. Fremantle has himself referred. Mr. Fitzpatrick mentions two cases of serious abuse and they are both of them really significant of the feeling which still prevails in the colonies on the right of indentured labourers to proper treatment. Both cases, it should be remembered, were tried in Courts, and in both cases convictions were obtained. This is what Mr. Fitzpatrick says :

'To put it briefly. Four overseers on Hermitage Estate, Trinidad, beat several indentured emigrants, and amongst them a woman. One of the male immigrants laid a charge of assault and battery and the overseers were fined 10 shillings each.

'One of the blows received by the female immigrant was on her abdomen. She being pregnant at the time, abortion immediately took place, thus endangering her life.

'The immigration authorities for so serious an offence were satisfied to lay a charge against the overseer for the minor charge of assault and battery. The Magistrate fined the accused £2 only and £3 as compensation.

'The charges for beating the other two immigrants were withdrawn by the Inspector. On the 29th September, four immigrants were charged for assaulting an overseer. They were not fined but sentenced to three months' hard labour.'

"I will leave it to the Council, Sir, to say, after this, if there are now no abuses under the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member says that serfdom exists even in India. If that is so, the Government should deal with that at once. I do not know of any instances of serfdom that may exist in this country. But if serfdom does exist here, by all means let it be put a stop to at once. We must distinguish, however, between the kind of serfdom that Mr. Fremantle mentions and the serfdom that the system of indenture impose upon indentured people. In the cases which the Hon'ble Member mentions, is there the right of private arrest? Are there imprisonments with hard labour for negligence, for carelessness, for impertinence, or for things of that kind? That really is the essence of my complaint about the system. The Hon'ble Member has told the Council that he could not understand why the non-official Members of the Council should make so much fuss about this matter. He did not say it in so many words, but that is what he meant. But practically the same thing was said when proposals to abolish slavery were first brought forward. The friends of the planters in the House of Commons, when the question was brought forward there, said that the slaves were contented and they could not understand why the abolitionists wanted to disturb the contentment and the harmony of their lives. The Hon'ble Member said that Indians in the colonies certainly would not thank me for bringing forward this Resolution. Sir, I am quite content that he should earn their thanks by opposing the Resolution. Be his the thanks which the champions of slavery expected to receive from those who were anxious to continue in slavery! Be mine the denunciation, with which the advocates of abolition were threatened by those champions at the hands of slaves, unwilling to be free!

"One more remark of Mr. Fremantle's I must notice. He mentioned the fact that 475 returned emigrants went back again last year, as evidence of the satisfactory conditions of life that prevailed in the colonies for indentured people. But 475 out of how many returned emigrants? If things were really attractive there, why should not a larger number go? I remember to have read in this report (Sanderson Committee's report) an explanation as to why a few men, after coming back to India, again return to the colonies. It is because these people, having stayed for a number of years in the colonies, find it impossible to get back into their old grooves of life in India, and after spending some time here and there, and not knowing what else to do when their savings are exhausted, they again go to the colonies in a

spirit of venture. The Protectors and the planters, however, do not want them. Indeed, their attitude towards such returned emigrants came out very well in the evidence of Commander Coombs. And curiously it was my Hon'ble friend, Mr. Fremantle, who, in his examination of Commander Coombs, brought out the fact that Protectors and planters do not like to receive returned emigrants, as it is feared that they know the system too well and are sure to poison the minds of other emigrants on the voyage. Mr. Fremantle summed up this attitude in these words:—

'It sounds rather as if you wanted to keep the people who come out in the dark as to the conditions in the colony if you discourage returned immigrants.'

"I am therefore surprised that he should mention the fact of these 475 returned immigrants going back as a sign that the system was satisfactory.

"Now, Sir, I will say a few words in reply to what the Hon'ble Mr. Clark has said. I am thankful to the Hon'ble Member for the promise that he has given of inquiring into why the fact of the penal nature of the contract is not mentioned in the agreements. I hope that the inquiry will be satisfactory and that this fact will be prominently brought out in all future agreements. The Hon'ble Member wondered how I could attach any importance to the fact that emancipated negroes scorned to come under the indenture system, and how from that I concluded that there was something servile about the system. Now, Sir, any man who goes through the third volume of Sanderson Committee's report will see what opinion the emancipated negroes have of the system. In Jamaica there is plenty of emancipated negro labour, but the emancipated negroes require higher wages than what are paid to indentured Indians, and the planters are not willing to pay them because their profits are reduced if higher wages are paid. And what is the result? The negroes are emigrating from Jamaica. The Baptist Union of that colony has pointed out in one of its representations that the emancipated negroes there are being forced to emigrate elsewhere for want of employment. They do not get the wages they want; they cannot be satisfied with the wages offered to them; and therefore they are compelled to emigrate from the places where they were born, and where they have spent all their lives. The Council will thus see that the emancipated negroes think that the indenture system is not good enough for them; and I am quite justified in drawing from this the conclusion that it is a system unworthy of free or even emancipated men, and I think that that is a sufficient condemnation of the system.

"Then, Sir, the Hon'ble Member said that emigrants might be ignorant of the conditions under which they would have to live, when they start, but things are explained to them when they land.

"What is the good of explaining things to them, when they are ten thousand miles away from their houses? If they were explained before they started, then that would be something."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "The Hon'ble Member has misunderstood me. I said that the terms of the contract were explained to them when they were registered and again when they came to the depôt before they sailed."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I understood the Hon'ble Member to say that the things were explained to them when they reached the colonies. In any case the penal nature of the contract is not explained to them here, and that is my main argument. Then the Hon'ble Member told us that these laws of the colonies dealing with indentured labourers were laws which had received the assent of the Government of India."

The Hon'ble Mr. Clark: "I am sorry to interrupt the Hon'ble Member again. Colonial laws do not receive the assent of the Government of India. What I said was that if we found that the laws and their operation were open to objection, we could always stop emigration."

The Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale: "I am sorry that I was not able to hear quite clearly what the Hon'ble Member had said, and I mentioned the impression left on my mind. However, I will mention one instance of how laws passed in the colonies are often approved by the Government of India, as a matter of course. The law in Natal which imposes the £3 annual tax on

ex-indentured Indians was passed in 1895, and it was approved by the Government of India. I am quite sure that the approval could not have been deliberate. There was then no separate Department of Commerce and Industry, and the thing must have gone through the ordinary routine, some Under Secretary saying that he saw nothing objectionable in the Act, and thus the Government of India's approval must have been notified to the colony. Well, that is the way in which laws are approved, and that is also the way their operations are watched from this distance. The Hon'ble Member also said 'there is a provision in the statutes for complaints being heard, that the Protector goes round in many places to hear complaints. Commander Coombs tells us that he visits the estates three times in the year. And what does he do? Before he goes, he sends a notice to the manager, and when he goes round, he is accompanied by him. Under these circumstances how many people will come forward, in the presence of the planter, to lodge complaints before the Protector, who visits an estate after giving proper notice to the manager and after the manager has had time to set everything right? Sir, the whole thing is on the whole a more or less make-believe sort of thing, and we cannot attach much value to it.

"Referring to the argument used by the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas Thackersey that India wants all her labour for herself and she cannot afford to lose those who emigrate to the colonies, the Hon'ble Member says that such emigration cannot appreciably affect the labour-supply of India. But if the reduction in the labour-supply is so small, the benefit that India gets from the remittances of emigrants is also trivial; so really both factors must be eliminated from our consideration of this matter.

"The Hon'ble Member holds that the colonies are a part of the Empire, and that, though the question of their interests does not directly concern us, it cannot be left out of account altogether on Imperial grounds. Well, Sir, if the colonies are a part of the Empire, we too are a part of the Empire. But do the self-governing colonies ever take that into account? What have they ever done for us and what obligation rests on us to take the interests of the colonies into our consideration and submit on their account to conditions which, in essence, are not far removed from the servile? Moreover, if the people of India and of the colonies belong to the Empire, so do the emancipated negroes. But what happens to them? It is a heart-rending tale which is told in the appendices to the Sanderson Committee's report—that of the manner in which these neglected people are driven to emigrate from the colonies in which they were born by want of employment.

Finally the Hon'ble Member objects to my comparison between this system and slavery. It is true that the system is not actual slavery, but it is also true that it is not far from it. The contract is not a free contract. You have here the right of private arrest, just as they had in the case of slavery. Moreover, the labourer is bound to his employer for five years and he cannot withdraw from the contract during that period. And there are those harsh punishments for trivial faults. Therefore, though the system cannot be called actual slavery, it is really not far removed from it.

"One word more, Sir, and I have done. The Government, it is clear, are not going to accept this Resolution; that being so, the Resolution is bound to be thrown out. But, Sir, that will not be the end of the matter. This motion, the Council may rest assured, will be brought forward again and again, till we carry it to a successful issue. It affects our national self-respect, and therefore the sooner the Government recognize the necessity of accepting it, the better it will be for all parties."

The Council divided :

Ayes—22.

The Hon'ble Mr. Subba Rao, the Hon'ble Raja of Kurupam, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, the Hon'ble Mr. Mudholkar, the Hon'ble Sir Gangadar Rao Chitnavis, the Hon'ble Mr. Dadabhoy, the Hon'ble Mr. Shafi, the Hon'ble Khan Zulfikar Ali Khan, the Hon'ble Malik Umar Hyat Khan, the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhurgri, the Hon'ble Sir Vithaldas D. Thackersey, the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble

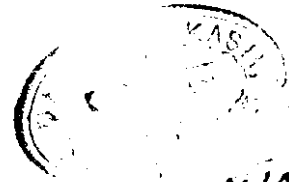
Nawab Abdul Majid, the Hon'ble Raja of Partabgarh, the Hon'ble Raja of Mahmudabad, the Hon'ble Maulvi Shamsul Huda, the Hon'ble Raja of Dighapatia, the Hon'ble Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, the Hon'ble Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, the Hon'ble Mr. Sachchidananda Sinha, and the Hon'ble Mr Haque.

Notes—33.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, the Hon'ble Sir Robert Carlyle, the Hon'ble Sir Harcourt Butler, the Hon'ble Mr. Syed Ali Imam, the Hon'ble Mr. Clark, the Hon'ble Sir Reginald Craddock, the Hon'ble Major General Sir M. H. S. Grover, the Hon'ble Mr. Maclagan, the Hon'ble Mr. Porter, the Hon'ble Mr. Sharp, the Hon'ble Mr. Enthoven, the Hon'ble Mr. Wheeler, the Hon'ble Mr. Brunyate, the Hon'ble Sir A. H. McMahon, the Hon'ble Mr. Lyon, the Hon'ble Mr. Saunders, the Hon'ble Sir James Meston, the Hon'ble Mr. Gordon, the Hon'ble Surgeon General Sir C. P. Lukis, the Hon'ble Mr. Fremantle, the Hon'ble Mr. Vincent, the Hon'ble Mr. Carr, the Hon'ble Mr. Arthur, the Hon'ble Mr. Madge, the Hon'ble Sir C. W. N. Graham, the Hon'ble Mr. Phillips, the Hon'ble Mr. Meredith, the Hon'ble Mr. Gates, the Hon'ble Mr. Slacke, the Hon'ble Sir Charles Stewart-Watson, the Hon'ble Mr. Dempster, the Hon'ble Mr. Kenrick, and the Hon'ble Mr. Kesteven.

So the Resolution was rejected.

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12/4/09

THE

THIRD UNITED PROVINCES CONFERENCE

HELD AT AGRA

ON THE

9TH AND 10TH APRIL

1909



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY

BABU GANGA PRASAD VARMA

392

THE THIRD UNITED PROVINCES CONFERENCE, AGRA.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

PERSONAL.

GENTLEMEN,

I thank you very much for the great honour you have done me by electing me President of this third United Provinces Conference. I am not so presumptuous as to think that I, in any way, deserve the distinction which it has pleased you to confer on me. I have accepted it in the spirit in which a member of the rank-and-file would accept the duty of leading a detachment when called upon to do so in an emergency. It was your strong desire, more so mine, that the place where I am standing to-day should have been occupied by one than whom a more earnest, patriotic, and sincere worker in the cause of progress these Provinces have not produced—I refer to my dear and distinguished friend, Pt. Bishun Narain Dar. It is a grievous misfortune for these provinces that this noble, selfless patriot, this devoted scholar, and statesman has been confined by a cruel illness to bed during the eventful period through which we have passed when his powerful pen and voice should have been so beneficially employed in the country's cause; and I am sure, we shall all join in sending up a fervent prayer to Providence that our esteemed friend should soon be restored to health and be spared for many years to serve and glorify our motherland.

THE LATE BABU BANSI LAL SINGH.

Gentlemen, when we assembled last year at Lucknow we had not the benefit of the presence in our deliberations of one who so lovingly and wisely led and guided us in our patriotic labours for a quarter of a century. Though lying in bed suffering from a long ailment, Babu Bansilal Singh was watching over our proceedings with keen interest, his good wishes were with us. But alas! this patriotic soul—a man who did not know what ambition was, whom to know was to love him, whose every moment was spent in some good work, done quietly and unostentatiously, is no more and these Provinces are greatly poorer owing to his sad death—a death which had taken from us one of our oldest and most trusted leaders.

Leaving aside these personal references which cannot but be painful to me, when we come to consider the events which transpired within the last 12 months we find that many expected and unexpected things have taken place since we met last. Events have happened in the country which have set even the most indifferent amongst us a thinking and made them curious to know what will happen next.

PARTITION AND ITS SEQUEL.

As a direct consequence of that great political blunder, I mean the Partition of Bengal, none greater than which, as has been aptly said by Lord MacDonnell, has not been committed by the British in India since the Battle of Plassey, we found a fiery wave of extremism passing over neighbouring provinces which gathered strength from the extreme indifference shown by the Bengal Government to the unanimous voice of the people and even to the opinions of those whose good will towards Government was never questioned. This wave of intense feelings and wild ideas which passed over Bengal produced a conflagration and all of us have witnessed with pain some of its dire consequences. The prosecutions in Bengal, the persecutions of the supporters of the Boycott movement, the Hindu and Mahomedan riots and the weakness shown by a few officials of Government in some cases did affect, to some extent, the minds of the more excitable amongst us. Blood is thicker than water is a good old saying; and the prosecutions in Bengal could not but rouse feelings of indignation and resentment in some young men in these Provinces.

LOYALTY OF THE PEOPLE.

This feeling was fortunately confined only to a fringe of the population and did not go beyond an expression of indignation and resentment. Every one who is in touch with popular feeling will bear me out when I say that there never was any active sedition in these provinces nor did any section of the community harbour seditious feelings towards the State. It is unfair to the province that mischievous telegrams should have been sent to England conveying the notion that

schools in some parts of the province were hot-beds of sedition, that an organised effort was being made here to sow the seed of sedition, and that messengers from some society were going about travelling in railway trains instilling into the hearts of the ignorant masses feelings of disaffection. Disseminators of these mischievous reports in their eagerness to condemn certain sections of the people have been guilty of a serious wrong to the State, in as much as they impressed the people with the idea of some sort of weakness on the part of the Government officials by inducing them to attach undue importance to trifling events. There was, no doubt, a keen feeling of sympathy at least among a section of the educated Indians with the Bengalis in the wrong inflicted on them by the partition of their province in defiance of public opinion; but, there never was any desire to condone crimes against the State, and it is a matter for deep regret to all admirers of Bengal that there should have occurred, at a critical time, in the history of that Province, crimes which have been humiliating to her and not a little to those who had sympathized with her in her troubles.

SEDITION SCARE.

Moreover, there was a desire to further the cause of the Swadeshi movement, not inaugurated with the partition of Bengal, but in existence for at least 30 years in these Provinces. The movement, however, as a concomitant of the Boycott never found any large number of supporters among responsible men in these Provinces. Even those who sincerely believed that without creating hatred against foreign goods, it was not possible to push on the Swadeshi were checked in their ardour by the indiscretions of the more violent advocates of Boycott movement. If demonstrations were not held oftener, if the educated community did not take particular care to let the nearest Magistrate know that they had nothing but contempt for disturbers of the public peace the reason was plain. They felt demonstrations of loyalty in a province which has been free from any outbreak of violence were against their ideas of self-respect; they are loyal to the Government, not because they feel that angels have been sent to administer their affairs for them, not because they feel the administration to be altogether blameless, not that no improvement is possible, but because they feel that

with all its defects and shortcomings the British administration is the best in the present state [of the country]. To believe that there ever was any section, worth mentioning, of the Indian community in these provinces actuated by any feeling other than loyalty is to question the very sanity of the people. There never [was any danger of peace in these provinces being disturbed either by influences at work in sister provinces or by any under-current of feeling prevalent in the minds of the people. It has been said in certain quarters that emissaries came to these provinces to tamper with the loyalty of the people or of the troops. One specific instance was mentioned to me. I made all possible enquiries in that connection and found that some over-zealous Indian officers had told their superiors altogether unfounded stories. In other cases our friends of the police managed to cook stories to suit the palate of their superiors. We know how, not long ago, a story was manufactured to the effect that a member of the Judicial service who, one day, happened to join a private party at the house of one of his castemen, had addressed a public meeting with a view to help Lala Lajpat Rai during his exile from India; we know how Khalil Ullah had well-nigh managed to get the Hindu officers of Government and the Raies of Etawah arraigned in the prisoner's dock to answer the heinous charge of waging war against the King. We know how innocent men are being shadowed by the Police, in a most transparent manner. Only the other day two youngmen happened to be at Aligarh. The police managed to manufacture a story that they were anarchists and half the town was frightened by the presence of the supposed anarchists in the town. These young men came from highly respectable families but their credentials were of no use and they were made to feel humiliated, because some of the officers of the place had sedition on their brain. A few more instances of similar false reports made against our peaceful countrymen some of whom happened to be in the service of the Government, to prejudice the minds of high officers came to my notice. These must have gone far to create a deal of misunderstanding to which I attribute the existence of a feeling in certain quarters that there is a large number of people within these provinces ready to condone crime or to conceal criminally



inclined people. It is the duty of the people to close their doors against men of suspicious character, but it is also the duty of the State to see that events like those which happened at Agra and Benares are not repeated and people highly respected by their countrymen and honoured by Government are not humiliated on the mere excuse that there was a police report against them. Every precaution should be taken to see that no peaceful citizen is unjustly molested simply because he happened to have relatives whom the police had seen in suspicious company.

PROSECUTIONS FOR SEDITION.

It is a matter of regret that the Government of these provinces should have been put to the necessity of inaugurating criminal proceedings against certain newspapers and men. Some of these papers were conducted by people who came from other provinces and whose publications were meant for outside consumption. The action of the local Government, in giving warning before actually starting prosecution against the erring editors who had merely been guilty of using language which was likely to create hatred against Government, was much appreciated. It was, however, unfortunate that a similar warning was not given to the editor of 'Urdu-i-moalla', Aligarh. But there are limits to the patience of a newspaper editor also. If at times he fails to keep his feelings under restraint, those who resent violent and irresponsible writing should also note, that in no part of the world, is a journalist placed in the embarrassing position in which the editor of an Indian newspaper finds himself at times. He is surrounded by Anglo-Indian journalists many of whom conduct their papers in the interests of the bureaucracy. These papers often publish highly objectionable and provocative articles against the children of the soil, which can result in nothing but inciting the hatred of the dominating class against the people, inciting the hatred of the powerful against the weak. This they do with impunity. If an Indian newspaper in commenting on such articles loses its self-restraint or adopts the very language which they use against Indians the engines of section 124A. of I. P. C. and section 153A of Criminal Procedure Code are set in motion against him. It is to his credit that under such circumstances the Indian editor often manages to control his temper. I hope and trust that when

the present tension of feeling is over and the Government is assured that there is no risk of its generosity being misunderstood and misconstrued it will be pleased to grant an amnesty to those misguided persons who have been guilty of breaking the law of the land, but whose writings have not produced any disturbance of the peace in the Province. As to the accused in the Aligarh sedition trial, I will, with due deference to Government, say that those who allowed him to stay in their homes at Agra or Aligarh, must have done so without any knowledge about his seditious intentions. Hoti Lal first came to the notice of the public as an editor of a Hindi paper, then a reporter of a Punjab paper, and afterwards he was known as a traveller in foreign countries. In none of these capacities, he received any consideration at the hands of the public. Even the ever-vigilant C. I. D. had also no information about his intentions. On return from foreign lands, he fell into the hands of anarchists. If people even after his connections with the anarchists gave him shelter, it could not be with the knowledge of his intentions, but it must have been quite innocently, in obedience to a time-honored custom of the East, that is, not to deny shelter to a guest. The fact that Hoti Lal found shelter in Aligarh or Agra does not prove that there was really any seditious spirit in these towns. People had not fully realised what Hoti Lal meant. Had they known his intentions, they would have shunned him as they do shun every criminally inclined person. But I need not dwell on this point further as His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor is himself satisfied that there was no disloyalty even in districts where Hoti Lal was active. Speaking on the Budget the other day, His Honour said:—"The great mass of the people have shown the most commendable feeling towards the Government, and I rely with the utmost confidence on the continuance in the future of the same good feeling that has been shown during the past year."

REFORM SCHEME.

In the rejoicing that will follow the inauguration of the new era of reforms as foreshadowed in Lord Morley's Scheme and those which will be the outcome of the Decentralisation Commission's Report, I hope both the Government and the people will forget the "painful memories of the troublous

times through which they have passed. That the reforms initiated by Lord Morley and Lord Minto have been received with feelings of great satisfaction in the country without any dissentient voice at least from the educated community, is in accordance with the spirit of appreciation for all that is done by the State to ameliorate the condition of the people. This, it must be admitted, is the characteristic of educated India. Of course, Lord Morley's Reforms have not brought the millenium, have not fulfilled all the desires of the people, whose dream of the Parliamentary system of Government has not yet come within the range of the practical politics of Lord Morley. But even the most adverse and hostile critic of these measures will admit that they constitute a real and substantial advance over the present system of administration and that they are the outcome of a genuine and earnest desire to improve the political condition of India.

ORGANISED OPPOSITION.

The scheme is an important recognition of the aspirations of the educated Indian community whose duty it is to see that nothing is done which is least likely to strengthen the hands of those persons who were so eager to hamper the work of the reformers. Days before the last Congress met such avowed opponents of the movement as the Nawab of Dacca blessed the Scheme, and no dissentient voice was heard in any part of India. But hardly had a fortnight elapsed after the receipt of the English Mail containing Lord Morley's memorable speech, a different tune was struck up throughout India. Evil-tongued persons were not wanting who alleged that the National Congress welcomed the scheme because the Government was practically transferring the Councils of the Empire to the exclusive possession of the Hindus. Those who shuddered at the idea of agitation were awakened from their sleep; they seriously took to agitation and all sorts of exorbitant demands began to be made in the name of the Mohamedan community. The Conservative Press was ready to take under its protective wings the Moslem League. Anglo-Indian officials on the retired list whom India had well-nigh forgotten were roused from their slumber. The cry of the State being in danger was raised; and under the standard of revolt unfurled against Lord Morley assembled together a motley crowd of people whom the

circumstance of all-consuming contempt toward the Hindus brought together. Not content with abusing the Congresswala, the whole Hindu community was vilified, and dubbed as ungenerous, unpatriotic, full of ill-feeling towards the Mohamedans. The Hindus who had hitherto been considered as divided by caste jealousies, were taken to be unanimous in one respect, namely, the desire to drive the Mohamedans out of India and to establish exclusive Hindu Swaraj. Arguments were produced to show that if there was any community in India which could be neglected it was the Hindu. Many an Indian editor has been deprived of his liberty for inciting class-hatred; one wonders whether there exists some law which can touch, if not the person, at least the pension, of men sitting in London who have adopted the dubious tactics of sowing discord and hatred between the two great communities of India. It is difficult to foresee what the consequence will be of the gospel of hatred being preached from the housetops by some persons whose preachings have so far succeeded in creating a feeling of pessimism in some quarters; and people have begun seriously to question whether the reforms will be worth anything if they have to be purchased at the price which the country is asked to pay for them in the shape of constant racial bitterness between Hindus and Mohamedans. One's estimate of the patriotism of an Englishman which one has been taught to form is lowered when one witnesses highly-placed Anglo-Indians coming out of their retirement and joining in an unholy alliance with Anglo-Indian newspapers to obstruct a scheme of reform over which the heads of the Government in India and in England have bestowed so much labour, and which, as conceived by the Secretary of State, was likely to give satisfaction to all reasonable claims and put a stop to all agitation for further expansion of the Councils for a decade or two to come. But unfortunately for us the scheme has undergone changes and has come out of the House of Lords in such a mutilated form that it is now shorn of one of its most important clauses.

Executive Council
 Class Representation

Lord Morley has, unfortunately, yielded to the pressure brought upon him in the matter of communal representation and the Bill has been deprived of Clause 3 against

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his Lordship's will. Thus has been taken away from the scheme a feature which made it acceptable to all even with its present limitations. The speeches delivered at the Second and Third readings of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords go to prove that their Lordships, the so-called custodians of all knowledge about India, are jealous of Indians taking any real share in the administration of their own country. We are not concerned here how the proposal of giving the Executive Council to the "major" Provinces originated, whether Lord Minto had with him his Council or not, although Sir Harvey Adamson's recent speech at the Viceroy's Council leaves no doubt on the subject, or whether Lord Morley forced his view on the Indian Government; but we are prepared to contradict the statement made by one whom we have lovingly looked upon as a friend of our aspirations but who has sorely disappointed his admirers by lending his weight to forces against the aspirations of educated Indians, to the effect that Indians never wanted councils for the "major" Provinces or Indian members for the Supreme Executive Council. So early as 1886 the National Congress gave expression to the desire that people should be admitted into the highest Council of the Empire. Indian witnesses before the Decentralisation Commission had almost unanimously suggested that in the provinces where there existed Boards of Revenue Executive Councils should be created and members of the Board absorbed in them. If Bengal has not been crying for a Council for the last 4 or 5 years, what else has it been asking for to meet the grievances of the people? Then to say that capable Indians cannot be found to discharge the duties of the members of the Executive Councils is to add an insult to injury. The manner in which the appointment of Mr. S. P. Sinha has been hailed with delight in all parts of the country, the way in which it has evoked the gratitude of both the Hindus and Mohamedans of this land and the comments of the Anglo-Indian Press which had the justice to acknowledge that Mr. Sinha is in every way fit to enjoy the confidence which the King-Emperor has been pleased to repose in him, gives a direct lie to the utterances of those who thereby neither did justice to the system of English education nor to the people when they said that India did not yet produce

even one man who could sit on the Executive Council of the Empire. If Indians have proved so capable Judges of the High Court, officiating Chief Justices, Divisional Commissioners, Vice-Chancellors of Universities, Ministers of Native States, as to gain the approbation of the Government, does it require any special proof to convince that given an opportunity the Indian will prove as successful a member of the Executive Councils as he has been in other spheres of activity and responsibility. The question before British statesmen is not, whether Indians fit to take up a particular portfolio of the Government of India or of the Provincial Government can be found, but whether an Indian can be admitted into the secrets of the Empire. If he can not, then all talk of confidence in him and of co-operation on his part in the administration of his own country is simply meaningless. If the Lords insist on not allowing the insertion of Clause 8 in the Indian Councils Bill and if the Government succumbs to the opposition the only impression left on the minds of the people will be that the majority of those in power are not prepared to trust Indians and that they are ready to frustrate all attempts at giving them a share in the administration. Some of them unfortunately will not hesitate to persuade the Mohamedans to set up an opposition and if the bait is caught even only by a limited number they will not hesitate to have recourse to dubious tactics to discredit the Indian. It is these tactics which create deep discontent. Lord Morley has, as far as lay in his power, discredited the party of the cavillers of India, he has done much to strengthen the faith of Indians in the British sense of justice, he has raised British statesmanship in the estimation of the people, a performance which neither British soldiers nor armaments could achieve. But whatever may be the outcome of the action of the Lords the faith of Indians in the desire on the part of Liberal statesmen to honour the promises made by the Sovereign will be strengthened and people will be convinced that even Indian subjects of the British Sovereign have no limit to be put to their political aspirations. Lord Morley has thus done more to broaden the Empire on the peoples' will and contentment than what the galaxy of the Viceroys now arrayed in the House of

Lords against us did when individually placed in charge of the destiny of 300 millions of their fellow-subjects.

CLASS REPRESENTATION.

It is, however, really unfortunate that Lord Morley should have so easily yielded to the pleadings of the Moslem League and should not have seen the hands of those very men who have wrecked the part of his scheme referring to the Executive Councils in this opposition set up by the Moslem League. The Hindu and Mohamedan question raised in this controversy will be dealt with in detail by you in considering the Indian Councils Bill. But I may make a few observations on some of the salient features of the question. One of the writers in the *Times* and in magazines, a late satrap of these Provinces who perhaps first witnessed the signs of 'overbearingness' on the part of Hindus when he was for a short period placed in charge of its administration apprehends that if the proposed measures are carried out they will put power into the hands of the Hindus and in all probability of the professional classes, as if it is India alone in the whole world on which such a dire calamity is likely to fall. His apprehension is that this change will be attributed to the fear "which the outrages of the anarchists have inspired in the British Government." But I would ask, what the impression of the people will be if his obstructive tactics succeed, if Lord Morley is frightened by the threats of Mohamedan discontent, which one of their over-zealous advocates went so far as to suggest "will not be confined to the limits of the Law." What will be the impression of the people if the scheme is so mangled that it becomes unrecognisable after it has passed through the Parliament or becomes a source of constant friction between Hindus and Mohamedans by setting 75 per cent. of the population by their ears? Those who glibly talk with contempt of the stalwarts of the Hindu nationalist party as though they are not at all to be taken into consideration, forget that it is this supercilious contempt which has been responsible for the bad blood created in the past and which more than anything else will make the work of administration [difficult in the future. The people will look for guidance to "the national stalwarts" rather than to the agents of bureaucracy

in the shape of Police Inspectors or Magistrates, and what the stalwarts begin to think to-day, the masses will think to-morrow. So it is neither good taste nor sound policy to falsely accuse them of entertaining hostile feelings towards the Mohamedans. No body is anxious and "the nationalist party" is the last to desire that any section of the community should be deprived of its fair share of privileges in the expanded Councils. The Hindu is eager to live in peace with the Mohamedan, because on this depends the realisation of his dreams of having a united India under the aegis of the British Government. It is not the interest of the Hindu nationalist to do anything that is likely to rouse the suspicion of his neighbours. The past conduct of Congressmen and of the Press under their control, in all questions dealing with the sectional differences, belies the accusation that they would, when given power, deprive their Mohamedan brethren of their privileges. There is no province in India where the Hindus have not done their best to promote the education and political interests of their Mohamedan countrymen. Local self-government is not a plant of yesterday's growth. It has worked for over a quarter of a century in these provinces. We have the authority of Government records in saying that the Hindus never sacrificed the interests of the Mohamedan minority. Of over 70,000 electors on the voters' list of the Municipalities of the United Provinces the proportion of Mohamedans and Hindus is not what is represented by the members of each community sitting on the Boards. There is hardly one Municipality in these Provinces where Mohamedan voters predominate over the Hindus and yet Hindus gave away to Mohamedans 271 seats out of 936 elected seats, 99 being occupied by Europeans. Had the Hindus been narrow-minded and intolerant as they are represented to be, and had they combined among themselves they would have thrown out every Mohamedan candidate for the civic honour. Will Sir Bamphyde Fuller who is not a stranger to these provinces have the hardihood to allege that these 271 Mohamedan Municipal Commissioners are looked upon as renegades by their co-religionists? There can be no greater slur on the honesty of these Mohamedan gentlemen than to say that they have sold their conscience to the Hindus. Then

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it is often urged that the Mohamedan population in the United Provinces is mostly urban. In the villages the proportion of the population is not even 14 per cent. Yet out of 617 members of District Boards 160 are Mohamedans. There are some District Boards in which Mohamedan representation is as high as 48 per cent. Is this a proof of want of fair-mindedness and regard on the part of Hindus for Mohamedan interests? It has been said that the interests of Mohamedans will suffer at the hands of the Hindu majority. Now, there is no such thing as Hindu and Mohamedan interests. Admitting for argument's sake that Hindu interests are separate from those of the Mohamedans. I challenge the Moslem League to produce a single instance from the records of well-known Municipalities in these provinces in which Hindus in a body have voted against Mohamedan interests, one instance where Hindus have combined against the Mohamedan members in Board, one in which European and Mohamedan members had to vote against the Hindu majority. I deny the charge of Hindus proving false to the trust reposed in them is base calumny and the result of personal spite and jealousy against them. It is true that no Mohamedan was returned to the Provincial Council. This I attribute generally to the unwillingness of Mohamedans to offer themselves as candidates and to the smallness of the number of seats open for election. Only two years ago a Mohamedan candidate made a serious effort to enter the Council at the election held by the first group of District Boards. He was successful in securing ten votes against the Hindu candidate and the election ended in a tie. Of the ten who voted in favour of Mohamedan candidate against his Hindu rival four were Hindus. On three occasions these provinces returned a Mahomedan member to the Imperial Council though the majority of voters consisted of Hindus. The charge that Mohamedans have no chance of being elected by Hindus to the Council and those, if elected, must be bound to support Hindus is simply false and malicious. In the face of these facts, how can it be said that Hindus have proved false to the trust reposed in them or are oblivious of the interests of their neighbours? Speaking of Mohamedan representation in Municipal and Rural Boards. Sir J. Hewitt in his despatch to the Government of India said, "It would

be a pity to disturb the generally amicable relations at present existing between Hindus and Mohamedans by introducing religious distinction into the electoral system."

If separation of Hindus and Mahomedans in the minor Boards is likely to disturb the amicable relations at present existing between the two communities how much more will these be disturbed if the communal elective principle be introduced into the higher Councils? The introduction of this principle will be fruitful of serious trouble. We have seen the results of the working of separate electorates in the Punjab. We know how Hindus and Mohamedans are divided there and there is hardly any movement social, educational, or industrial in which the two communities work together. One has as little concern with the affairs of the other as people living in different countries. In the Punjab Hindus and Mahomedans do not join even in loyalty demonstrations. They combine now and then in worshipping a rising or a setting sun in the official fermament; otherwise they are living, if not as enemies occupying opposite camps, certainly as rivals actuated ordinarily by narrow motives and ready to injure each other. One has only to read the vernacular papers of the Punjab from week's end to week's end to be convinced of the strong feeling of racial bitterness prevailing in that Province. The same will be the outcome of the policy of separation and exclusiveness in these Provinces. This is a view which is shared by the Hindus of all grades in these Provinces. A number of Indian gentlemen, not in the same proportion as in the Punjab or Madras, were consulted by the Local Government about the proposal of separate electorates for the return of Mohamedan members. Of those consulted the Hindu gentlemen have given expression to one and the same feeling. They held that class representation would tend to widen the gulf between Hindus and Mohamedans and that it would be a departure from the old time-honoured and sound policy of British neutrality in this country of various creeds and races.

These apprehensions are not based on mere sentimental grounds but are the result of deliberate consideration. Various arguments in support of special representation have been advanced. I will not detain you in examining these grounds. I shall

say that every Upper India Hindu who has given the least thought to these matters views the introduction of communal elective principle in Indian politics with serious misgivings and every one who can speak and think for himself has given expression to these feelings. Mohammedan gentlemen whose vision is not obscured by the thought of an immediate or temporary gain or to whom the good will of some highly placed Anglo-Indians does not mean all in life and who know Mohammedans and Hindus equally well, feel that all Hindus are not of an angelic temper and if constantly insulted and bored by all sorts of baseless insinuations, will be less than men if they do not resent such conduct. They protest against the recognition of a principle which will create iron walls between the two communities. This principle of separate representation is a principle which has not been tried anywhere, on a scale on which it is going to be tried here, not even in the Transvaal where the British population may reasonably claim special treatment with some show of reason, on grounds of Imperialism. It seems particularly unfortunate that at the present moment when the Turks are fraternising with their Christian subjects under the newly proclaimed Constitution our Moslem friends in this country should be thirsting after communal representation. Lord Morley has not yet given out the details of separate representation; we do not know how the wishes of the Moslem League are likely to be met. The granting of the League's claim to separate representation is assured. But how is the other claim for excessive representation to be met without causing serious irritation to the Hindus? What constitutes the special claims of the Mohammedans to a larger number of seats apart from the common claims based on number, education and property—no body has yet been able to define. It is referred to in a vague and indefinite way, even by its most ardent advocates. Is it claimed that Mohammedans deserve special treatment because they rule in certain Asiatic and European countries? If so, it may be said that the reorganisation of the constitution of the Indian Councils with an eye at Constantinople is both unfair and politically unwise. If side glances are to be cast on Constantinople then I urge that these are much more neces-

sary for Sir Eldon Gorst, the British Viceroy in Egypt. To ignore the claim of Mahomedans in Egypt and at the same time to award them special treatment in India is, to say the least, disingenuous. Is it claimed that the Mahomedans deserve special treatment because they were rulers of India before the English came out? What about the Sikhs in the Punjab on that very ground? What about the Rajputs and the Maharattas who ruled the whole of western, central and not an inconsiderable part of northern India immediately before the English appeared on the scene? And what about the Shias though in a minority among Indian Mohammedans, yet have the Royal House of Lucknow among their ranks? Is it claimed that the Mahomedans are more loyal than the Hindus? If so, some tangible proof of ultra loyalty beyond the one given in the organisation of loyalty meetings or in the delivery of set speeches against Congress proposals should be produced before this claim can be considered. If it is urged that the anarchists of Bengal who have been the source of anxiety to the Government are Hindus, may it not be urged by the other side that Wahabis who created trouble in Patna and the Pathan raiders who daily disturb the peace of the Frontier and wage Jihad from time to time are Mohammedans? The plain fact of the matter is that beyond the three tests, viz. number, education, and property no other test can be reasonably introduced into the consideration of the question. All the same, though such a claim for special consideration has been put forward, the Moslem League has not defined the exact proportion in which Mohammedans should claim seats in different parts of India.

It has often been asked, why should the Hindus object to class or communal representation? If the Mohammedans want to have the power to elect their members where is the injury to Hindu interests? It is no doubt true that if Hindu interests were separate from Mohammedan interests, a separate electorate would not prove injurious to Hindu interests provided that the Hindus were not humiliated by the feeling that they had been deliberately insulted and that political importance is given to their fellow-subjects on grounds which could not bear examination. The first mischief which

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these separate electorates are likely to do will be defeating the Hindu dream of a United India. Besides, it will give undue influence to men of intolerant views. It will prevent the return to our Councils of members of the type of the late Mr. Justice Bader-ud-din Tyebji, Mr. Sayani, or of the type of the Hon. Syed Mohammad. They will have to make room for men of intolerant views who shall have to justify their presence by special pleadings and by saying hard things against rival communities and magnifying small differences. Acts of Government officers done to favour one community will be construed into acts of injustice to the other; questions will be raised in the Councils which will rouse the feeling of one section against another. For instance, the other day a leading Aligarhian politician wrote in a newspaper article that he wants class representatives in the U. P. Council in order to show that the cause of secondary education is not progressing among the Mohamedans because the majority of teachers in the Government Schools happen to be Hindus and because Hindu teachers are partial to Hindu students and do not encourage Mohamedan boys. So the effect of having Mohamedan representatives would be to urge that the education of Mohamedans should be placed in the hands of Mohamedans and altogether separated from that of the Hindus. Then there are departments of the Government in which the Mohamedans are not, in his opinion, fully represented. It will be the duty of Mohamedan representatives to claim many more appointments in the Opium Department and urge for the opening of the P. W.D. for Mohamedan claimants. Yet, such a course, on the other hand, will lead to the scanning of pages of the Civil List and a Hindu representative holding intolerant views would question the justice of a larger number of appointments being given to Mohamedans out of all proportion to their number in population. He will point out that out of some 600 gazetted appointments held by Indians 268 or 42% have fallen to the share of Mohamedans. He will ask why there should be a partiality in filling up the appointments of Deputy Collectors, and Tehsildars. Why should, out of 247 Deputy Collectors, there be only 127 Hindus against 83 Mohamedans and 32 Christians? Why should the number of Tehsildars be so unequally divided that for 84 Mohamedan Tehsildars there should only be, 93 Hindu Tehsil-

dars? Why should more Mohamedan Sub-Inspectors and Head Constables of Police be appointed in districts mostly populated by Hindus and why are complaints against police oppression not heeded to. People are heard saying that when the one cause which is likely to create friction between Hindus and Mohamedans is removed, they will live in peace. But such has not been the experience of either the Punjab, or of the United Provinces, in the matter of the separation of Hindus and Mahomedans at least in their educational activities. On the other hand, both sections will feel that they have nothing left in common. All restraints of public opinion will be removed and every one will adopt a line of policy having regard only to its immediate loss and gain, irrespective of the influence of such action on the interests of their neighbours. There will be no place for organisations like the Indian National Congress. There will be no common platform even for industrial activities. To meet the arguments of each other, sectarian Defence Associations will be started and the entire province honeycombed with sectarian organisations. This will be the sad state of things and Government cannot commit a greater blunder at this stage of Indian history than lend its support to this separatist policy; any departure from the time-honored principles of impartiality and neutrality, as far as class interests are concerned, will lower the British prestige. People will never be convinced of the necessity of separation and they will ever consider this as an outcome of the divide and policy of rule. Those who say that the Mohamadans should be given larger representation in order that they may, with the help of the official minority, act as a counterpoise to the Hindus, do not see that the Councils are not being transferred to the Indians. There will always be besides Hindus and Mohamedans, a third party which will never allow itself to be carried away by any momentary feeling of excitement. It is true that there will be a non-official majority in the Provincial Councils, but this majority will not consist of Hindus alone. Unless it was expected that the Hindus, official and non-official and Europeans will combine to injure Mohamedan interests, one does not see why there should be any serious nervousness on the part of any

minority. Why should the retired Provincial satraps incite Mohamedans against the scheme and why should a threat be held out of a "strike" in loyalty meetings and demonstrations on the next opportunity when a detestable crime is committed?

Those of us who know the real Mahomedan feeling in the matter—to say that a Hindu neighbour does not understand the feeling of his Mahomedan neighbour is to deny the Hindu even his power of observation,—know well that there is no danger that the Mohamedans will commit disturbances in case the Government declines to agree to separate representation. The fact is that the few who sing loudly to the tune of interested Anglo-Indian writers may find their occupation gone. The bulk of the community will live in peace as it has lived so long. Lord Morley has not to guard himself against any apprehensions from Mahomedans. If there is danger it is from the side of irresponsible extremists belonging to the greatest service of the world who may wreck the scheme, by exciting the fears of Englishmen, sow the seed of dissention and racial bitterness, and succeed in adding to the causes of friction between Hindus and Mahomedans so that instead of having only two occasions for exhibiting racial bitterness in the year, *viz.* Bakrid and Moharram, they may have a perpetual one in connection with representation on the Councils. It is this danger against which I feel bound, by my duty to my country and the State, to raise my humble voice of warning. The Government may pass over this danger signal and create fresh difficulties, or it may show its strength and statesmanship and thus solve the problem so as not to lose the good will of either community. The situation is delicate but the whole country has high regard for the consummate statesmanship of Lord Minto and Lord Morley who, we may hope, will be able to tide over the present difficulty.

In the course of the next few weeks the principles of the scheme will be finally laid down; but it is the details of the scheme the settlement of which will occupy great time and attention. I hope that the public will be fully taken into confidence and before final settlement takes place every opportunity will be given to all parties to have their say on the scheme.

One does not know how far the scheme of election of members submitted by the Government of India and local Governments to the Home Government will undergo changes and in what shape it will be finally presented to the public after the passing of the Indian Councils Bill.

U. P. GOVERNMENT'S REFORM SCHEME.

The scheme of the U. P. Government as given in the Blue Book is open to certain serious objections of which two only I will mention to you. One refers to the double voting given to Zemindars and to Mahomedans and the other to the combination of the electorate of the Municipal and District Boards. This will, if carried into effect, give few opportunities to non-Zemindars to enter the Councils. The District Boards, as the Government admit, consist mostly of Zemindars, an interest which finds large representation in the Municipal Boards also, as shown by the figures cited in Sir John Hewett's dispatch. In the electorate where the votes of the District Boards are larger than those of the Municipal Boards the result of combination will be that the representatives elected will almost invariably be Zamindars. For instance, in the Lucknow Division 12 votes have been accorded to the District Boards and 10 to Municipal Boards. It is not quite unlikely that the majority of twenty-two votes would go to Zamindars. The Council may thus become 'a sealed book' to the lawyer, the banker; and of course, the journalist will have no place in it. In the very interests of the Council and of good government such should not be the case. If Mahomedans are going to have separate voting and a separate register of electors, the best plan will be to give to District Boards and Municipal Boards of every Division separate representation and thus have 16 representatives including the Kumaon Division whose District and Municipal Boards may have one representative. The rest of the seats will have to be filled up by special interests. If, however, the Government were to have only one common register both for Hindus and Mahomedans, the plan to secure proper representation of all classes, which commends itself to me, will be to unite two or three neighbouring divisions and ask them to send a fixed number of representatives to the Council, of whom a given number should be Mahomedans. The plan can be

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easily worked ; and while securing, say, four Mohamedan members out of twenty elected members to the Provincial Council—a representation in excess of what the Mohamedans can claim according to their population in population the interests will be fully represented on it. It will be for you, brother delegates, to present a constructive scheme to the Local Government which, I trust, will give it the due weight it deserves. One thing, however, you must make clear namely, that it is not to serve any particular interest that you want a general electorate, and that the Government will, by the grant of any representation in excess of the numerical proportion to Mohamedans, create a feeling of bitterness; and that even those who were silently watching the distribution of public patronage, not strictly on the lines of impartiality, will keenly feel the humiliation and that nothing will give a ruder shock to the belief in the impartiality of the Government than the provision of double voting. Separate voting may be tolerated, but double voting and excessive representation will never be. It is better for you to make the matter plain to all whom it may concern.

A WORKABLE SCHEME.

From the few details of the scheme given by Sir Harvey Adamson in his speech which has received the assent and approbation of our trusted leader and spokesman Mr. Gokhale in his Budget speech, one sees the line of representation which is likely to be adopted in the interests of minorities. The Mohamedans will be at liberty to contest seats on the Councils from the general electorate and will also be provided with a number of seats to be contested by them alone. This arrangement will be open to the objection that the total number of seats which the Mohamedans should have in the Council will not be determined by the Government and shall be left to the whole electorate. This is not likely to satisfy the Mohamedans; because if once the Mohamedans are given separate representation no incentive will be left to the non-Mohamedans to send Mohamedan members to the Councils. But I must say that this scheme of supplementary elections appears to be more workable than those suggested by the supporters of separatist claims. While strongly objecting to the principle

of excessive representation I disclaim all sympathy with that school of thinkers which would rather forego the Reforms of Lord Morley than agree to any plan of reasonably modified separate representation acceptable to all people in the present circumstances. Lord Morley's Reforms open out great opportunities to the children of the soil to associate themselves more closely with the Government of their country, to participate more directly in its administration, and ultimately to prove to Government that we are quite fit for greater confidence and more substantial co-operation in the management of the affairs of the State. Our political activities during the last 25 years seem to have convinced our Mohamedan brethren of the need of political work to secure their ends and of giving up the habit of aloofness. Who knows that after some time when the present separatist spirit subsides they may come to recognise the blunder of demanding exclusive and excessive representation for their co-religionists which, in my humble opinion, will do great harm to their interests rather than do them any substantial service?]

MUNICIPAL AND DISTRICT BOARDS.

The subject of Local self-Government is a most important one to which increasing attention will have to be given by educated Indians. Not only are the local affairs managed by District and Municipal Boards but they play a large part in the election to the Legislative Councils. Whether the electorate for the expanded Councils consists mainly of Municipal and District Board members as at present or includes on its registers all persons possessing property qualifications or having Degrees of the University. The Municipalities and District Boards are bound to continue to play an active part in sending the majority of members to the Council. Hence it is necessary that the constitution of the District and Municipal Boards should be improved and a better class of men introduced into these bodies who may be able to fully realise the seriousness of their responsibilities. This is not possible without an improvement in the electors' list and in the mode of election. We welcome the pronouncement made by the Local Government that in future the electors for the District Boards will no more be nominees of the District Officers, or, in other words,

of the Tehsildar, but that every person living within the District and possessing certain qualifications will, as a matter of right, be entitled to a vote. We welcome the change which the Government is going to propose in the system of election of municipal members. Let me, however, urge on the attention of Government that it is not necessary to take away from the Municipal Boards all authority for preparing ward-rolls. These can be improved without depriving the Boards of their right in their preparation. If the Government however, think it necessary that the District Magistrate should have larger powers in the preparation of ward-rolls, a joint committee consisting of municipal members and officers selected by the District Magistrate may be appointed to supervise the preparation of these rolls. I would further suggest that the time has come when the Government should insist that none but a literate person who can put his signature on the ballot paper in one of the vernaculars of the province should have the power to vote. At least this rule should be enforced within municipal areas in order to prevent to a large extent evils which considerably viciate election in the municipalities. Above all, it is necessary to see that the elections both in the Municipal and District Boards are free from official pressure or interference. To make the Municipalities realise their responsibility and make it possible for them to carry out the desire of Lord Morley, namely, that the Municipal Boards should be presided over by non-officials, the Government should not content itself with merely making provision in the Act. Such powers are vested in all but seven Boards of these provinces; these can elect their Chairmen, a privilege which the Municipalities in these provinces with the exception of one do not enjoy. I refuse to believe that the majority of the districts cannot find capable men to perform the Chairman's functions. The fact is that because the District Magistrate is ever ready to offer himself as Chairman of the Municipal Board, few people can dare stand in opposition to him. In this connection I may as well draw the attention of Government to a very wise recommendation made by the Decentralization Commission in their Report when they remark "that officials should be prohibited from offering themselves for election." I

think the Government should, in a case where the Municipal Board fails to elect non-official Chairmen, nominate a non-official to that office and should appoint the District Magistrate as a Chairman if only it fails to find a capable non-official to efficiently discharge the duties of the chairman. If Fyzabad can manage to administer its municipal affairs with a non-official head, I do not see why other municipalities should not be able to find capable and efficient non-official chairmen to carry on their functions to the satisfaction of all parties concerned.

THE MUNICIPAL TAXATION COMMITTEE.

In order to make the municipal administration more efficient the local Government has appointed a Committee under an experienced and painstaking officer to overhaul the question of taxation. The proceedings of the Committee are watched with keen interest and I can only express a hope that its labours will prove fruitful and that the people living within Municipal areas will be saved from the vexatious and harassing octroi-tax. Having seen how trade-centres, like Lucknow once prosperous, have been ruined by this duty which has increased almost 100 per cent., within the last two decades, and having witnessed how the population has decreased for want of employment and how the people have lost all commercial spirit, I cannot but strongly condemn a mode of taxation which, in the main, is responsible for the ruin of old marts. One cannot read the memorial submitted the other day by the Traders' Association of Agra to the Government and the very exhaustive pamphlet containing the traders' replies to the questions sent up by the Taxation Committee, without sympathising with them in the wrongs and troubles to which they are subjected. The octroi-duty yields about thirty-six lakhs of rupees a year to the Municipalities. On a rough estimate half the amount can be realised by the Boards by levying terminal tax and toll. The remaining half, if it cannot be realised by some direct taxation, should be contributed at least for some time by the Provincial Exchequer. There is no better means of checking the extravagance of the Municipal Boards, than by returning to them right sort of men and making taxpayers realize hardships of growing burden of taxation. In prosperous years the Government has done some thing to relieve the over-taxed Zamindars of these provinces.

They have been relieved of the Patwari cess and there has been reduction in canal water charges, and the choukidari cess has been removed. All these measures have been appreciated by the Zemindars; but nothing has been done to relieve the burden of the non-Zemindars; no remission has taken place in the taxes paid by this class of the people living in urban areas. Is it too much for us to expect that the 18 lakhs out of 36 Rs. lakhs paid by them in the shape of octroi a year, be remitted and provided for by transferring some head of Provincial revenue in the interest of population living within Municipalities of these Provinces? Our Municipalities are always in an insolvent condition. Since the introduction of water works and drainage schemes our taxes have doubled. But few citizens care to know if they are properly administered or their representatives have the efficiency and capability to properly administer them. If the Octroi is considered indispensable, then we have at least this much right to expect that its mode of collection will be considerably simplified and that means will be devised to protect people from harassment.

HONOURARY MAGISTRATES AND MUNSIFS.

Improvement in the constitution of the Municipal Boards is needed not only in the interest of the Municipalities themselves but also because of the fact that it is from the body of the Municipal and District Board Members that two classes of honorary officers are selected. Unless better men are sent to these Boards we cannot secure better Honorary Magistrates and Munsifs. These offices have hitherto been regarded as posts meant for rewarding good service done in the districts. I think the time has come when the rules for the appointment of Honorary Magistrates and Munsifs should be revised. These should be no more conferred on people for mere honour's sake, but regard should be had for the efficiency of the person who is invested with such powers and in no case should a man, however high he may be in official estimation, be entrusted with powers which he is likely to abuse when his own interests come in conflict with those of the others to whom he is expected to mete out justice. Big landholders and their agents, often come in conflict with their tenantry. Is it just that the landholder or his agent, besides possessing all the influence

of a Zemindar, should also have magisterial powers in his *ilaka*, a privilege which he may misuse with impunity? Men for these offices should be selected with full regard to their capability, but in no case should they be made to sit singly within the limit of their own *ilaka*. Complaints against the incompetency of Honorary Munsifs are not rare and at some places village Munsifs are even suspected of corruption. If the proper sort of men cannot be found, in any particular district, it is better that people should have to travel long distances to have justice at the hands of stipendiary Munsifs, rather than they should be harassed by incompetent men. Village Munsifs have proved a failure and this owing to the fact of the wrong men being selected and the want of proper control over their work.

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS.

But it is not only the honorary officers in the administration whose work is not giving entire satisfaction. The complaint against the combination of judicial and executive powers in one and the same officer is no where more keenly, though silently felt, than in these provinces where the Revenue Officers have to be on tour for a larger portion of the year than is the case in Bengal. A larger percentage of cases is disposed of by Magistrates in the United Provinces while they are at some distance from their head-quarters. If the separation of the two functions has to be tried tentatively, before it is definitely introduced throughout the country, it ought to be done so in the United Provinces, in the first instance.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE JUDICIAL SERVICE.

There has been improvement in the Subordinate Provincial Service, but the complaint that Indian Officials are over-worked continues and this affects the quality of the work done by them. The complaint is not confined to only one branch of the Service. On the civil side the grievance is that Subordinate Judges and Munsifs have generally such a heavy file that little time is left to them to make their knowledge of law up-to-date. They are always in a hurry and many a time in the disposal of cases they leave loopholes for fresh litigation. The

Munsifs and Sub-Judges do not feel at all encouraged when besides the heavy file which they have to clear off they have the knowledge that they have to work under superiors who have fewer opportunities to carry on the civil administration and many of whom are placed in charge of civil administration even without showing any aptitude for civil work. Dissatisfaction with the civil work done by District Judges is increasing and is bound to increase so long as the present system of recruitment continues. The discontent due to failure of justice is very keen indeed and the only way to remove it lies in the direction of better recruitment of District Judges. Lawyers of merit and long standing should be offered Sub-Judgeships and District Judgeships and before them should be placed the temptation of seats on the bench of the Judicial Commissioners. It should be made worth the while of a successful lawyer to accept a District Judgeship and by reserving one Judicial Commissionership in Oudh for an Indian, as has been done in regard to Puisne Judgeships in the High Court of Allahabad, a career should be opened to Indian lawyers of merit to aspire to. There has been some talk, for some time past of appointing an Indian on the Bench of the Oudh Court. I hope the time is near at hand when this hope will be fully realized. I hope also that a good percentage of District Judgeships will be thrown open to members of the Bar and that even in the higher grades of the Subordinate Service men with up-to-date knowledge of law will be introduced and the promotion of capable Officials will not be regulated on considerations of seniority or the number of cases disposed of by them, but on the quality of the work done.

EDUCATION.

The last year has been a year of much activity in matters educational. We are yet waiting for the Secretary of State's orders on the recommendations made by the U. P. Industrial Conference three years ago. The Government of Sir John Hewitt has not been idle since that time and it is a matter for satisfaction that the Government should have utilised its resources in founding a few schools at Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Tanda, Moradabad and some other places. The institutions at the first three places, will, it is hoped, be soon in working order. The teaching

of Science in Government Schools received special encouragement owing to the completion of the arrangements for preparing students for the School-leaving Certificate examination. In order to encourage this course, the local Government has laid down that in future the passport for Government Service will be the School-leaving Certificate and not the Matriculation. One would have wished that the Matriculation examination should not have been relegated to an insignificant position, as the order will result in serious discouragement of the University Examination. The majority of students will join the school-leaving certificate classes not on account of its special merits, but because of the greater value attached to it by the Government. One apprehends that this course will check the flow of students towards the colleges. Of the students trying to enter the University hardly ten per cent. will care to appear for the Matriculation. Of the 90% going for School-leaving certificate one does not know if 50% will care to enter the college. This may not happen for some years to come; but those who have studied the general tendency of students and their parents who mostly come from middle classes cannot but come to the conclusion that undue favour shown to the School-leaving certificate holders will affect the growth of collegiate education. In colleges much improvement has lately taken place. The Government help has been extended to aided colleges to bring them into line with Government Colleges. Our thanks are due to the Local Government for the aid it has given to such aided colleges as the Canning College and Agra College.

Abolition of Law Classes.

In making the grant to the Canning College a condition has been laid down that the arrangements for education of law should be abolished which I regret to say the Canning College Committee, with two dissentient voices have accepted. It is proposed that law classes attached to the colleges at Agra, Lucknow, and Meerut should be closed. Why Aligarh has not been included in the list is not quite clear. This pronouncement has caused a painful surprise to the people in Oudh. This will practically mean the cutting short of careers for their hopefuls in the legal profession to the most middle class men and in course of time the number of

law graduates will be as limited as is that of graduates from Roorkee College or is likely to be from the proposed Medical College. I cannot understand why the law classes at Agra and Lucknow should be abolished. The Agra College has the reputation of standing first in the law examinations. The results of Canning College have also not been bad. Both have produced lawyers who are an honour to the profession. I may perhaps add that Sir Antony MacDonnell in his Memorandum of 1886 on Technical Education pleaded for the encouragement of legal education and the opening of law classes in first grade colleges. Why should the law education be confined to the Law School at Allahabad or to Aligarh the arrangements at the latter place being no better than those which exist at Agra and Lucknow? If it is considered necessary that instead of one professor there should be two for the teaching of law the University may insist on this provision being made. If the law libraries of these two colleges are poor they may be enriched by additions. No case has yet been made out for the abolition of law classes in such large centres of population. There is nothing in the report of the University Inspectors against the arrangements for law education, and I cannot understand why the Government should, in the absence of any report from the University to the contrary, think of abolishing law classes against the wishes of the people. In this matter it is hoped that Sir John Hewett will show the same respect for public opinion as is shown by His Honour in carrying out other administrative reforms.

The best policy for the Government will be to let alone the law classes for some years to come and to strengthen the Law School at Allahabad and improve the education imparted by it. Ten years ago few under graduates would have thought it worth their while to go from Lucknow to Allahabad to study Science. But Science teaching in Allahabad has so much improved that many a student prefers going to Allahabad now to going anywhere else. In the same manner if the education at the Law School be of a superior quality, many students will prefer to go there. The time for breaking up law classes at Lucknow and Agra will be when the benches of these classes will almost be empty or will not contain suffi-

cient number students and when any action taken by the Government or at its instance by the college committees will not be apt to be misunderstood.

Restrictions on the number of Scholars in Schools and Colleges.

The recent orders of the Syndicate of the Allahabad University limiting the number of students of every College class from 45 to 60, and those of the Education Department fixing the number of students for every school class to 35 are open to serious objection. And the protest from no quarter is more loud than from the supporters of the Aligarh College. In the interest of discipline and efficient management of schools this limitation of students of a college and school to 400 may be an excellent thing but if this is to result in denying higher education and secondary education to such students as are eager to receive it, then I must say that we would rather wait for perfect efficiency till the Government has funds to provide additional accommodation and more professors. This limitation will cause an amount of trouble, and no class will suffer more than the Government servants who are constantly moving from one place to another owing to the exigencies of the Service. Some cases of hardships have actually been brought to the notice of the Department. As soon as stereotyped reply "no vacancies" begins to be given to even young men not desirous of entering into office but eager to acquire knowledge, simply because the State is not willing to increase the staff or accommodation in its educational institutions, it will become rather a source of discontent. With the separatist cry in the air the Government will soon be approached by a memorial to fix the proportion of Mahomedans and non-Mahomedans that are to be admitted into our schools. The life of Headmasters, whose unpleasant duty it will be to refuse admission to students will become unbearable and the educational authorities shall have one more duty not a little complicated added to their work of deciding who should and who should not enter the classes. This may lead soon to the question of raising fees. We say therefore that the Government for political reasons, desires to limit the opportunities of English Education may be meaningless, it will surely be unfair in the United Provinces where systematic proof has been given by Government of its solicitude for general educational progress and by none better than the present

head of the Government. But all the same it is the duty of the State to see that no unnecessary cause for alarm is given and in the present state of public feeling no ground should be given to strengthen the wrong belief that the Government afraid of seeing the results of higher education among the Bengalees and the Mahrattas is taking steps to restrict it in the United Provinces. It is a period when the greatest care should be taken in enforcing new rules which the public opinion is not prepared to support. In this connection, I am constrained to make one more observation. I think the Headmasters of Schools and Principals of Colleges are not acting fairly towards themselves and their boys in smelling sedition in small things. Boys are boys. If by mistake they attend a meeting which they should not have attended, if they are now and then found reading newspapers which certain Principals feel they should not read the way to treat and remonstrate with them lies not, in expelling them in and proclaiming to the world that they are enemies of law and order, but in the gentle way, which a father adopts towards his erring son, of persuasion and argument. It does not raise the Principal in the estimation of his students or their parents when he at the very first offence of breach of discipline expels a student from his college even without giving one chance of repentance, which even the Criminal Procedure Code permits the Magistrate to give to juvenile offender. Such harsh treatment leaves behind soreness not only in the minds of the boys so treated, but also in the public mind.

Medical College.

It is a matter for satisfaction that the plans of the Medical College have at last been finally approved by the Secretary of State and that he has sanctioned a sum of ten lakhs of rupees for the buildings which will be supplemented by a grant of two lakhs from the Provincial revenues. The College buildings; will not be ready within the next four years, so I think the Government without waiting for the completion of the college building may make arrangements for opening in 1911 the first year class of the Medical College in one of the Canning College rooms and have practical training of students in the Balrampur Hospital and thus make up for the loss of time incurred in settling the preliminaries.

Training Colleges.

The building for a second Training College for under-graduates to be opened in Lucknow is ready and classes are to be opened by the next session. The two Training Colleges will, it is hoped, meet the requirements of the province. So we shall not hear any more complaints about want of trained teacher and the Department will no more have any occasion for the employment of non-trained teachers to posts which could have very well been given to trained teachers. There have been of late many complaints of untrained men superseding trained men and of direct appointments being made to posts carrying better emoluments without regard to the services rendered by teachers on lower scales of pay. Nothing causes a greater disappointment than cases of unjust supersession and it should be the duty of the head of the Department to prevent their repetition. I am informed that the question of forming a graded Educational Service in the United Provinces is before the Secretary of State. On graded service and better emoluments depends the popularity of the Educational Department, and I hope both will be held out to attract our brilliant graduates to this branch of Public Service.

Female Education.

In the matter of female education the Department has taken a step in advance. Committees for Female Education have been formed consisting of officials and non-officials who have shown some active interest in the cause of female education. These committees will lead to the association of people with officers engaged in advancing female education and I am sure such a course will help the cause materially.

Right of Graduates to elect Fellows.

There is another agency through which the active sympathy and interest of educated classes with education should be enlisted I refer to the University. While every University, even that of the Punjab, has given the right of electing Fellows to its alumni that privilege is denied to the graduates of the Allahabad University. It is a pity that our University should be so backward. It is high time that the Chancellor of the Allahabad University recognised the claim which is both just and fair and allowed the graduates of the Allahabad University to elect at least two

Fellows every year. It is only by such recognition that the interest of graduates of the Allahabad University may be stimulated in its working and good relations between the University and its alumni established. In this matter the graduates should make persistent representations to the Government till such time that they convince the Government of the necessity of associating them in the election of Fellows and thus giving them a voice in the affairs of the University. It is a reform which cannot be long delayed. The graduates have only to convince the Government that they are really in earnest about it in order to secure the privilege.

HIGH PRICES OF FOOD STUFFS.

I know that no question is agitating the minds of the middle classes in these provinces more keenly than the question of high prices of food-stuffs, and we are yet waiting to see what steps the Government of India decides to take to investigate into the causes of these high prices. In the meantime Sir John Hewett with his usual foresight has taken the lead in the matter and has resolved to convene a Conference to enquire into the causes of the dearness of dairy products and deficient supply of "ghee". Nothing could have struck Sir John Hewett in his heroic efforts to combat the last famine—efforts which have roused the gratitude of the people so much as the paucity of horned cattle both for dairy and agricultural purposes. The proposed Conference will, it is hoped, be able to tell us where to look for the causes which have created a perpetual scarcity in articles of food, on which depends the improvement in the condition of the people. Sir John Hewett's efforts to improve the sanitation of the province, his readiness to help the large Municipalities to open out their congested areas, and his special efforts to stamp out malaria and plague, cannot be successful unless and until this complaint about high prices of food stuffs is removed and it is made possible for a man after day's labour to be assured of the subsistence for himself and his family by his earnings. All activities in this direction are watched with keen interest by the people.

THE LAST F. M. N. E.

On more occasions than one the people of these Provinces have given expression to their

feelings of deep gratefulness for what the Government did to save them from the dire consequences of the late Famine. I shall only in passing say that the feeling of thankfulness which is still green in the people's memory of what was done by Lord MacDonnell in the terrible famine of 1896-97, has been considerably intensified by the excellent administration of the last famine. Sir John Hewett's promptness in rightly reading the signs of the situation, his readiness to distribute Takavi with unprecedented liberality, his policy of remissions and suspensions of revenue, the arrangements for distributing relief to the respectable poor as also the helpless and the needy have one and all evoked hearty appreciation from all classes of people. No branch of the famine administration appealed so forcibly to the popular mind as the co-operation of the rulers and the people in this noble work. Frequent famines with which this unfortunate land is being afflicted have prepared the people to better organise their own relief measures. The Arya Samaj and the Brahma Samaj carried on organised work and there was not a famine stricken district where Lala Lajpat Rai's volunteers did not reach in time to substantially supplement the Government measures of relief. These organisations have impressed the people with feeling that their own countrymen are willing to help them in their hour of need. And now that the famine is over, I would wish that organisations in different countries will crop up to permanently carry on the work of relief to the poor, particularly widows and orphans so that the people when they are hard pressed may know whom to look for help.

NEED OF ORGANIZED WORK.

Gentlemen, these are a few of the topics which are at the present day agitating the public mind and which alone I could touch in the course of this address. There are many more which I could not review but which will form the subject matter of your discussion. Every division, nay, every district has its own topics requiring discussion, its own grievances to be remedied. But these seldom see the light of the day for want of proper organisation. People often suffer silently and as dumb animals, not because the officers of the Government are unwilling to help them out of their difficulties, but because

there is no organisation to make their views and aspirations known to those who can best help them. The machinery of the police and of the tehsil is the only connecting link between the District Officer and the people. If the orders of the Government are misunderstood in any particular instance, there is no private agency to remove the mis-understanding. The important link of a non-official agency is missing. Now and then cases of police oppression reach our ears; we hear of cases of Sub-Inspectors or Head Constables making the lives of well-to-do men miserable, cases of tehsil oppression in the matter of the supply of *rasad* and forced labour are not rare, but there is no agency to verify these cases and bring them to the notice of the Government. The Press in these Provinces is weak, because the people have not learned the advantages of organisation. It is true that often promoters of political organisations are misunderstood, but should this prevent us from doing our duty by the people and the State? It is true that often representations from District or Provincial Associations are not heeded, but that should not deter us from forming these associations and helping the building up of public opinion.

MESSAGE OF THE CONGRESS.

After all the new reforms which are about to confer new privileges and new responsibilities on educated Indians cannot bring with them happiness and comforts to the people unless the leading men among them realize their special responsibility in the matter and show their readiness to make some sacrifices to build up public life and take steps to properly guide the mass of the people. Yes, there is no greater responsibility which the members of this Conference can undertake than to endeavour to make, more and more, the sittings of these bodies representative, supported by District, and as time goes on, by Tehsil organisations. These organisations will infuse a new life into the people, make the work of the Government easier and establish those friendly relations between the officers of the State and the people on which so largely depends our future progress. At some places it is possible that difficulties might arise, but these will have to be surmounted in order to carry the message of hope and encouragement to the people and teach them that in their own hands lies the working of their own future. This is a message which the Congress has been delivering to the people, this quarter of a century.—a message which has so far been eminently successful.