

Gift from the

Bombay Provincial Congress Committee

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20 FEB. 1930

FOREWORD.

The Special Session of the Indian National Congress was held at Bombay on the 29th, 30th, 31st August and 1st September 1918. At the request of the All-India Congress Committee which decided upon the Special Session at its meeting of the 23rd February 1918 held at Delhi, the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee took up the work of organising the Special Session. A strong Executive Committee was formed and all the arrangements could be completed within two months.

The number of members of the Reception Committee exceeded all previous records, and the proceedings created unparalleled enthusiasm.

The total number of delegates can be classified as follows:—

Members of the Reception Committee	1,073
Bengal	157
{ Madras	202
{ Andhra	9
United Provinces	85
Central Provinces	180
Berar	351
Punjab	43
Behar and Orissa	19
Delhi and Ajmere-Merwara	26
Burma	10
South Africa	1
Sindh	149
Bombay	2,663
	<hr/>
	4,968

The number of delegates to this Special Session was the highest reached on record. A Special feature of this session was the attendance of a number of delegates (over fifty) from the Depressed Classes.

The best thanks of the Committee are due to the ladies and gentlemen who made the session a success, to Rao Bahadur Rajagopalchari for promptness and accuracy in reporting the proceedings, and to the volunteers, who were so diligent in keeping order.

D. D. S.

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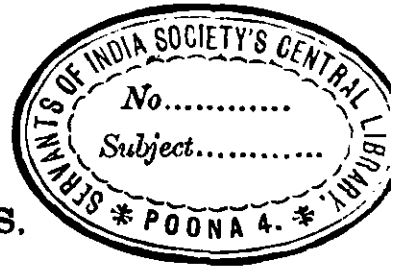


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INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

SPECIAL SESSION.

THURSDAY, the 29th August 1918.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST DAY.

The Special Session of the Indian National Congress assembled in Bombay on Thursday, the 29th August, 1918, in a spacious pavilion erected on the Marine Lines Maidan. The Special Session was originally arranged for Wednesday the 28th August 1918, but on the representation of the All-India Congress Committee, the Reception Committee of the Congress resolved to postpone the Congress for a day in view of a Conference that was being arranged to bring about a compromise between the two wings of the Congress; no compromise being however possible, the Special Congress held its sitting on the adjourned day at 1 p.m. The spacious pavilion was of an oblong shape capable of accommodating 10,000 persons—1,500 on the President's platform, 4,000 delegates and the rest visitors. The pavilion had a sloping roof of corrugated iron, covered over with tarpaulins as a precaution against rain, and well-ventilated on all sides. The ceiling was elegantly draped in spotless white, and the decorations of the pavilion were in red and green. The pillars supporting the pavilion were similarly draped in white and decorated in distinctive colours. There were a number of inscriptions hung up in the pavilion between pillars, amongst which were the following:—"India is enthralled and she is determined to be free"; "Franchise is the best weapon of political education"; "No taxation without representation"; "Of all forms of tyranny, I believe, the worst is that of a nation over a nation"; "Only a free nation can battle for the freedom of others"; "I would trust any nation with the custody of its own liberty, no nation with another's"; "Home Rule is the only eternal verity in politics"; "India sacrifices equal to all colonies together, why not then equality in treatment." Over the entrance to the pavilion was the inscription "God save the King"; while outside the pavilion and within the outer enclosure, the following inscriptions were displayed: "India claims equal partnership in the Empire"; "Best way of fitting people for franchise is to give them one."

The proceedings began at 1 p.m., but the pavilion long before the hour at which a start was made was filled with a large crowd of people, arranged in rectangular areas according to the Provinces, from which the delegates came. A large section of the seating accommodation in front of the President's dais was reserved for ladies which was taken advantage of to the full, there being no less than 500 lady delegates present. A broad aisle led from the pavilion main entrance to the foot of a wide deep platform, on which were seated the President of the Congress, the leaders of the Congress, and Members of the Reception Committee and distinguished visitors. A number of Congress volunteers clad in khaki uniform and badged with nationalist colours maintained order, directed ways clear.

Precisely at 1 p.m., Mr. Syed Hassan Imam, the President-elect, entered the pavilion in a procession headed by the volunteers and the secretaries of the Reception Committee, and followed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Reception Committee and some of the Congress leaders, including the President of the last year's Congress, As the President-elect passed through the pavilion, the whole assembly rose from their seat and vociferously cheered him as he ascended the platform and took his seat. Among those present on the dais were:—The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. Patel, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mrs. Annie Besant, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Hon'ble the Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad, Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. B. G. Tilak, the Hon'ble Mr. G. S. Khaparde, the Hon'ble Mr. K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar, Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, Mr. C. R. Das, Mr. B. Chakravarthi, Babu Motilal Ghosh, Mr. B. C. Pal, the Hon'ble Mr. M. Ramachandra Rao, Mr. N. Subba Rao Pantulu, the Hon'ble Mr. B. N. Sarma, Mr. B. P. Wadia, Pandit Harkishanlal, Mr. Hirendranath Dutta, the Hon'ble Mr. Yaqub Hassan Sahib, Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, Mr. B.G. Horniman, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, Mr. R. P. Karandikar, Mr. T. V. Muthukrishna Iyer, Mr. Jitendralal Banerjee, Mr. Abbas Tyabjee, Mr. S. R. Bomanjee, the Hon'ble Mr. B. V. Narasimha Iyer, Mr. A. Rangasami Iyengar Mr. T. Adinarayana Chetty, the Hon'ble Mr. Kamath, the Hon'ble Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas, the Hon'ble Mr. C. V. Mehta, the Hon'ble Mr. Abul Cassum, the Hon'ble Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. C. Vijagravachariar of Salem, the Hon'ble Mr. Harchandrai Vishindas, the Hon'ble Sir Dinsha M. Petit, the Hon'ble Mr. Upasani, the Hon'ble Mr. Garud, Mr. Ambalal Sarabhai, Mr. H. N. Apte, the Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Haq, the Hon'ble Mr. Wazir Husain, the Hon'ble Mr. K. K. Chanda, the Hon'ble Mr. Akil Chandra Dutt, Mr. C. Rajagopala Chariar Dewan Bahadur L.A. Govindaraghava Iyer, Mr. G. A. Natesan, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokarnanath Misra, Mr. S. Satyamurthi, Mr. Umar Sobhani, Mr. Syud Hossain, Mr. S. G. Banker, Mr. L. R. Tairsee, the Hon'ble Mr. Manamohandas Ramjee, Mr. Syed Nabiullah, Rai Jadunath Muzumdar, Mr. B. K. Labri, Mr.

I. B. Sen, Mr. Aswini Kumar Dutt, the Hon'ble Mr. Belvi, Mr. K. P. Khadilkar, Mr. Motilal N. Dalal, Mr. Mavji Govindji, Dr. G. V. Deshmukh, Dr. R. Rao, Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Dr. Velkar, Mr. U. K. Trivedi, Mr. Kanji Dwarkadas, Mr. Durgadas B. Advani, Mr. Jamshed N. R. Mehta, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Dr. D. D. Sathaye, Mr. M. S. Aney, Mr. N. R. Alekar, Dr. B. S. Moonje, the Hon'ble Mr. M. R. Dixit, the Hon'ble Rai Sahib C. M. Thacker, Mr. N. B. Vibhakar and others.

The proceedings began with the singing of the National Song 'BANDE MATARAM' by a number of young ladies, the sentiments of which were loudly acclaimed, the whole audience standing the while the song was sung. This was followed by the singing of some patriotic songs by a group of young ladies, who were students of the 'Gandharva Mahavidyalaya.'

ADDRESS

BY THE

CHAIRMAN OF THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. PATEL, the Chairman of the Reception Committee then stepped from his seat on the platform on to the rostrum projecting from it, wherefrom every speaker addressed the Congress, including the President. Mr. Patel, who was received with an outburst of applause, delivered the following address :—

On behalf of the Reception Committee of this Congress I tender you a cordial welcome. This is the thirty-third time that the Indian National Congress has met in session, and on the present occasion it has met in special session, convened for a single purpose which is a vindication and justification of this great national organisation. (Hear, hear). We are gathered here to-day under a profound sense of the gravest responsibility. In these thirty-three years of its existence the Congress has never had a weightier duty to discharge than the one that has been laid upon it at this special sitting, and you, the elect of the people, are here to decide an issue which may affect the future of our Motherland, one way or the other, for perhaps half a century.

THE CHANGE IN THE POSITION OF THE CONGRESS.

From the small nucleus of less than a hundred men who first met in this City in Christmas, 1885, the Indian National Congress has rapidly grown to be what it is to-day, a splendid *Bodhi* tree whose roots have reached down to the hearts of the nation, whose branches are the resting place of all patriotic thought, and whose shade is prophetic of the peace of the future when the destiny of this Ancient Land will have been fulfilled and the nation will have come into its own in the federation of the Empire. But from the day of its coming into being down to the present the Congress has ever been in the position of a claimant. It has formulated and repeated demands, and it has year after year reaffirmed its resolutions. It has been scoffed at and held up to contempt, but it has held its course unfaltering and unresting till the 'microscopic minority' of Lord Dufferin has grown into the irresistible majority of Educated India with the uneducated masses ranged behind them in a serried phalanx. (Hear hear) Yet the function that the Congress has for so many years performed has been that of knocking at the gate, iterating and reiterating the demand to be admitted into the hall of the nations and to be given a seat by their side. To use a familiar legal figure the Congress has so far and for so many years been in the position of the plaintiff and the Government has sat in the chair of

the Judge holding the right of decreeing or dismissing the claim. To-day for the first time, the position has been reversed. It is the Congress, it is you, the representatives of the people, who sit in the chair of the Judge to adjudicate on the merits of the case as stated in the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms prepared jointly by the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy of India. (Cheers, and hear, hear). I say, therefore, that a grave responsibility rests on each of us individually and on the Congress collectively to arrive at a right decision in respect of these reforms.

PROPOSED REFORMS DUE TO THE CONGRESS.

It may be unhesitatingly asserted that this scheme of reforms, such as it is, is the outcome, to a large extent, of our own endeavours. The steadily growing pressure exerted by the Congress, the widespread and persistent agitation by other bodies that have grown out of the Congress, the strength and weight of public opinion and the constructive character of constitutional agitation have made it impossible for the legitimate demands of the country to be denied any longer with prudence, and hence the mission of Mr. Montagu to India, the preoccupations of the war notwithstanding, and the Report which we have met here in this Congress to consider. I do not say this in any spirit of exultation, for indeed the time for exultation is not yet, but merely to point out that if we are true to ourselves now and in the future as we were in the past, and realise the gravity and importance of the issue that depends on our efforts we shall proceed in the right spirit and do our duty by our country and our people. (Hear, hear)

THE SEPARATISTS.

Brother Delegates, as you are all aware our responsibility has been very greatly increased by the decision of a few leading and other Congressmen to abstain from attending this special session of the Congress (shame, shame). I have no desire to utter one word of bitterness at this grave and critical juncture in the history of the Congress, but I must frankly regret this decision of some of our leaders and fellow Congressmen. They have assumed—an assumption for which I find no justification—that this special session of the Indian National Congress has been convened merely to reject the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme of reforms, that you have travelled long distances and have assembled here at considerable sacrifice for the sole purpose of denouncing the scheme by book, bell and candle, and that your deliberations will be concluded without the formulation of any constructive scheme. Now, whatever individual views may have been expressed on the proposed reforms they are certainly not binding on the Congress, nor is there any valid reason for anticipating as inevitable any decision of the Congress. It is not as if any section of the Congress, or, for the matter of that, any section of Indian public opinion is agreed that the

scheme as presented in the Report should be accepted by the country in its entirety, without challenge or qualification, or in a spirit of devout thankfulness. In no single instance has any Indian politician or patriot declared the scheme perfect or has recommended its acceptance without hesitation or question. The illustrious authors of the Report themselves have nowhere claimed that their scheme should be accepted as final. They have laid stress on the need for criticism and have invited it freely. They have even foreshadowed some of the possible objections to their scheme, which is fluid and transitional, and is not intended to crystallise and become permanent. This makes the attitude of the Separatists all the more difficult of comprehension because there may be a fundamental and radical difference of opinion on something which is positive and final, but such a difference of opinion is wholly unjustifiable on anything tentative and transitional (Hear, hear). After the publication of the Report the Right Honourable the Secretary of State has publicly declared that both he and Lord Chelmsford would gladly give up their scheme if a better one could be devised. In view of this fact, and the other equally important fact that there is no question of the wholesale acceptance or rejection of the Report there would have been no difficulty in finding out a *modus vivendi* if the few absentee Congressmen had agreed to a preliminary conference for an exchange of views and a comparison of notes, instead of incontinently running away from the Congress and seeking safety in the undefined region known as Nowhere. (Cheers) They have forgotten the rule in the constitution of the Congress that the minority have their rights as well as the majority. At the worst, they could dissociate themselves from the Congress if it utterly rejected the Reform scheme. In the plenitude of their wisdom they have not waited to do so. They have dealt Jedwood justice to the Congress; they have condemned it out of hand without waiting to see what it is going to do, and they have decided to hold a Conference—after this Congress has concluded its sittings (cries of shame). Should the unexpected happen and the Congress refuse to reject the Reform Scheme summarily what will be the position of those who have of deliberate purpose elected to sit on the fence? May I here crave leave to quote a sentence from the speech of the Hon. Sir D. E. Wacha as Chairman of the Reception Committee of the Congress in 1915? That sentence is itself a quotation from Buckle's "History of Civilisation":—"Men have recently begun to understand that, in politics, no certain principles having yet been discovered, the first conditions of success are compromise, barter, expediency and concession." Was this wise precept borne in mind by those who have refused to attend the Congress, and have rejected all suggestions for a compromise, or even a consideration of the resolutions that may be brought forward at the Congress? The Seceders have undoubtedly followed in their own way Buckle's teaching in declining all proposals of compromise, barter, expediency and concession.

THE BURDEN OF THE CONGRESS.

Speaking for myself, I should be quite content to accept the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's criticisms of the scheme and to demand that it should be recast in the light of those criticisms. Where, then, is the line of cleavage between those who have left the Congress and those who are still loyal to it? Brother Delegates, events move in cycles and incidents, small and great, like history, repeat themselves. Speaking from this Chair, which I am not worthy to occupy, the late Sir (then Mr.) Pherozshah Meherwanji Mehta said in 1889:—"In a country so vast and varied as India, it would be impossible, it would be unnatural to expect an absolute unanimity. It is no wonder that we have our halt, our lame, and our blind, and that they should hobble off to what I may call the Indian political cave of Adullam at "the call of——" well, names are better not mentioned and still better forgotten. I shall not have the impertinence to suggest that the proposed Conference of a few Moderates, which will be timed to wait upon the deliberations of the Congress, will be another cave of Adullam, but I shall respectfully venture to ask whether any Conference of Moderates or Immoderates can serve as a counterpoise to the Indian National Congress, and whether any assembly claiming to hold all the wisdom in the country can be a fulcrum of the magnitude of the Congress and exert the same leverage. We have come to the parting of the ways, but I do not see either in the near or the distant future any prospect of the two paths commingling, and running out straight and wide to the goal we are striving to reach. If some have declined to bear their share of the burden we must broaden our backs to bear the additional weight, and resume our march along the road that leads to full responsible government within the Empire. (loud cheers).

THE APPLE OF DISCORD.

Turning from what to most of us must be a somewhat painful subject I come to the actual work before us, the call of the country and the nation that has brought you here at an unusual time, without allowing twelve months to intervene between two sessions of the Congress. This special session, however, has not been sprung as a surprise on the country, for at the time the Right Hon. Edwin S. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford were engaged in receiving addresses and granting interviews to the representatives of all shades of public opinion in India, Indian and non-Indian, it was announced that the Report issued by them on Indian Constitutional Reforms would be considered at a session of the Congress specially convened for that purpose, and that would be the only business transacted at that Congress. All parties were united as regards the special session of the Congress, and no one had the remotest suspicion that the Report itself would prove a veritable Apple of Discord. And

this discord is all the more extraordinary since the apple is not a Golden Apple, and though some have nibbled at it gingerly and meticulously, I have seen no attempt anywhere to swallow it entire, and everybody wants to exchange this particular apple for another. (cheers).

The genesis of the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme of reforms is to be found in the Congress-League Scheme. That scheme embodies the carefully weighed and considered opinion of the whole country, and has been accepted by the thinking portion of the entire community. The two great national organisations, the Indian National Congress and the All-India Moslem League, which represent Educated India and contain the best national forces of the country, have drawn up the scheme in collaboration, and much careful and anxious thought has gone to the elaboration of the details. In order to satisfy to some extent the aspirations of the country and allay agitation any scheme of reforms that may be formulated by the highest authority must take into account the Congress-League Scheme on which the country takes its stand, and which is the first step towards the realisation of progressive responsible government in India. (Hear, hear) Chapter VII of the Report which we have met to consider is devoted to an examination of the Congress-League Scheme, some principles of which are accepted by the distinguished authors of the Report and the rest are rejected. An examination of the Report will show that the essentials of the Congress-League Scheme have been rejected and only the non-essentials have been accepted.

THE REPRESENTATION OF THE TEN.

In this connection I may be permitted to refer to the Note justifying and supplementing the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms prepared by the Hon. Sir Dinsha Wacha and nine others, and submitted to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy while the inquiry into the question of Indian Constitutional Reforms was in progress. Referring to the announcement made in the House of Commons on August 20th, 1917, by the Secretary of State for India on behalf of His Majesty's Government the Note stated:—"If the goal announced is not "to be a mere pious wish but is to be treated as an end attainable within "a reasonable time and to be strenuously striven for, the immediate substan- "tial steps to be taken in that direction, at the close of the war, can scarcely "fall short of the essential features of the Congress-League scheme, which "contains devolution of powers, especially those relating mainly to financial "matters, from the Secretary of State to the Government of India and those "relating to legislative, financial and administrative matters of a provincial "character from the latter to the provincial Governments so as to create sta- "tutorily autonomous Provincial units federated under the Government of "India as the central authority exercising general supervision over them,—this

"devolution of powers being necessarily accompanied by a reform of the
 "Legislative and Executive machinery of the Government of India and of the
 "Provincial Governments, so as to invest,—subject, in all cases to a reasonably
 "restricted veto of Government,—the elected representatives of the people
 "with effective control of the administration *in so far only as domestic*
 "*matters are concerned*, leaving altogether untouched the present powers
 "of the Government of India in regard to the 'direction of the military affairs
 "and the foreign and 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' 'and tributes from
 "Indian States'; that is to say, confining popular control, under proper safe-
 "guards, to matters of internal administration only, leaving unimpaired the
 "authority of the central executive Government to hold the country in sub-
 "jection and to protect it against external aggression. A careful and dispassion-
 "ate consideration of the proposals embodied in the Congress-League scheme
 "will thus show that there is nothing in them to cause alarm to those who are
 "anxious to preserve intact the power of the Government of India to maintain
 "law and order within, and avert aggression from without, the borders of
 "India." If in the Report there had been an approximation to the Congress-
 League Scheme there would have been a greater likelihood of its acceptance
 generally by the country. As it is the scheme adumbrated in the Report will
 have to be radically and materially modified before it can be made acceptable
 to the country. (Hear, hear).

NEED FOR FISCAL AUTONOMY.

Brother Delegates, I should be encroaching on the inaugural address of
 the President and your own deliberations if I were to attempt an exhaustive
 or elaborate review of the proposed reforms which have been sponsored by the
 Secretary of State and the Viceroy of India. At the same time, considering
 the important and unique nature of the object for which we have assembled
 here I think I may claim your indulgence for a brief expression of opinion on
 the scheme as set forth in the Report. It is obvious that it has failed to satisfy
 the country and has proved disappointing, (cheers), and if the assent of Edu-
 cated India is essential to its success even as a transitional measure important
 modifications will be necessary. The first thing absolutely needed for even
 a beginning in responsible government is Fiscal Autonomy, (hear, hear), but
 the scheme makes no provision for it anywhere. In a letter dated the 24th
 November, 1917, and addressed to the Political Secretary to the Governmen
 of Bombay for being forwarded to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy the
 Hon. Sir Ibrahim Rahimtoola, who was not at that time a Member of the
 Bombay Executive Council, laid particular stress on the urgent need of grant-

ing full fiscal autonomy to India to make it self-contained and self-reliant. After elaborating an argument for an Indian Army and Navy sufficiently powerful to prevent all apprehensions of aggression from outside India Sir Ibrahim wrote:—"It ought not to be difficult, with the unrestricted powers of her Government, to organise means to bring about the industrial development of India which will result not only in supplying to a large extent her own requirements, but also enable her to export her manufactured goods to other countries. For this purpose full fiscal autonomy is necessary." It is necessary for all purposes if the substance and not the shadow of responsible government is to be conceded to us, but, as I have said, the scheme makes no provision for fiscal autonomy of any kind.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

The authors of the scheme have chosen the province as the unit for the progressive realization of responsible government. They recommend no alteration at present in the responsibility of the Government of India to Parliament. We contend—and on this point there is no difference of opinion anywhere (hear, hear)—that the progressive realization of responsible government must proceed in the Government of India simultaneously with the Provinces and the two must synchronise. Unless the whole fabric of the administration from the foundation to the top is informed and influenced by the new idea the isolation of the Government of India and its complete detachment from all popular influence and control will inevitably tend to make it more centralised and case-hardened, and progressively diminish its amenability to popular control in future. This tendency will be accelerated by the creation of a Second Chamber, or the Council of State, which will not be a representative assembly in the sense of the Legislative Assembly, but which will hold all real power, including that of emergency legislation, which will be passed without reference to the Legislative Assembly and will be merely reported to it as an accomplished fact. The Legislative Assembly would be reduced very much to the position of what the Canadian Assembly was when the Earl of Durham was commissioned to report on it. The Legislative Assembly of the proposed scheme will be reduced to a state of impotence more marked than the present Legislative Council.

THE PROVINCES.

In the provinces also the Legislative Councils will be shorn of real power by the provision made for Grand Committees in which the Government will have a majority and which will practically have the same status and powers as the Council of State in the Government of India. A Bill passed in Grand

II

Committee will run the gauntlet of the Legislative Council unchallenged since no amendment may be made except on the motion of a member of the Executive Council and the Legislative Council will have no power to reject a Bill passed in Grand Committee. In fact, every proposed reform is hedged round with so many safeguards that it looks as if a system of barbed wire fencing had been set up to keep out an interloper or an enemy. (Loud cheers.)

DISTRUST OF THE PEOPLE.

Mr. Montagu has publicly denied that distrust of the people of India has inspired the Report. We must accept his disclaimer, but if that is so, part of the Report should never have been written. As it is the Report is full of distrust of the people of India. (Hear, hear) In Chapter VI. of the Report are collected and enumerated all the familiar and oft-repeated shibboleths of those who are opposed to the legitimate aspirations of the people of this country. The cumulative effect of all this is to make out a case against the granting of responsible government to India. Considerable stress is laid on the poverty, ignorance and helplessness of the people of India. Prominent attention is drawn to the cleavages of religion, race and caste. After emphasizing the difficulties and complexities of the problem facing them the authors of the Report expressly declare that a great majority of the people do not ask for responsible government, and are not yet fit for it. No wonder therefore that the proposed first step towards responsible government instead of being firm and bold is feeble and faltering, while along the path of progress there are a number of pitfalls which it will be difficult for us to escape. (Hear, hear.) Not only is the beginning of responsible government confined to the Provinces but it is distinctly stated, to guard against any possible misunderstanding, that the proposal for the appointment of a Commission does not imply that complete responsible government in the Provinces will have been established by that time. As regards the Government of India there is not the faintest suggestion of a beginning of responsible government, and the authors of the Report make no mention of the possibility of making that Government amenable to popular control in the enumeration of the functions of the Commission to be appointed ten years after the first meeting of the new legislative bodies. In these circumstances, he must be a very bold prophet who could venture to fix the approximate or probable date when full responsible government will be granted to India under the proposed scheme of reforms. In fact, the distinguished authors of the Report themselves have not given the remotest indication of any time-limit for the attainment of complete responsible government in India. Is India prepared to accept this scheme, without revision and modification, as the first substantial step towards the progressive realisation of responsible government? (Cries of No, No.)

MODIFICATIONS.

Passed through the alembic of public opinion the proposed reform scheme will have to shed several ingredients if it is to form a basis of mutual trust and co-operation between the Government and the people. Full responsible government must be given to advanced provinces at the outset; (hear, hear), in other provinces reserved subjects should be as few as possible and provision must be made for their automatic transfer within a period of, say, five years. A substantial beginning of responsible government must be made in the Government of India at once, (hear, hear), and that Government should come within the purview of the periodic commissions appointed by the approval of Parliament, at intervals of less than ten years. A time limit must be fixed for granting full responsible government to India and that limit should not exceed fifteen to twenty years. Full fiscal freedom must be given to India at once. If these and other alterations that will doubtless be suggested by the Congress are accepted by the Government a substantial step will have been taken towards the progressive realization of responsible government in India. (Loud and continued applause).

THE WORLD-WAR.

In concluding their Report the Right Hon. Edwin S. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have referred to the world-war and have rightly said 'it is upon the battle field of France and not in Delhi or Whitehall that the ultimate decision of India's future will be taken.' The struggle in the West is a travail of the world, the Creation-old conflict between Light and Darkness, the ordeal of blood and fire for every nation, great and small, to live and to be free. The issue of this long-drawn and deadliest of campaigns is the submergence or emergence of Liberty. If the Central Powers were to prevail Liberty would vanish and the whole world would be in one red ruin blena. But Freedom's battle, though baffled oft, is ever won. Brother Delegates, the longest lane has a turning and the highest tide has an ebb. There is reason to think that the prayer of the whole civilised world has been heard, and the tide of the battle has definitely turned. Marshal Foch, the greatest soldier living, has justified his selection as Generalissimo of the Allied Armies and his brilliant strategy is steadily driving back the Germans all along the Western front. We may take it that the German offensives have been spent and will not be resumed, and with the steady influx of the heroic American troops the war will soon enter on its last phase, and the world will finally emerge from it, bleeding and battered, but free—freed from the blood-sucking tentacles of the octopus of Prussian Militarism. (Loud and continued cheers.)

Gentlemen, I call upon you now to ratify the election of the President, who has been already elected to preside over your deliberations by the unanimous vote of the All-India Congress Committee.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. PATEL :—I now call upon Mrs. Besant to propose the formal resolution requesting the President-elect to take the chair.

Mrs. BESANT, who, on rising, was received with an ovation said :—Fellow delegates, friends: I am glad to have been given the honour of proposing the ratification of the election of our President-elect, because I was the President of our last Congress and the President of the All-India Congress Committee during the year; so it is a great pleasure and a great honour to me to propose for presiding over this great assembly Mr. Syed Hassan Imam (Applause). It was here, in your city of Bombay that you laid the foundation of that union between the Congress and the Muslim League (Hear, hear), which made them work together all through 1916, and present to the Congress of 1916 in Lucknow the Congress-League Scheme. Since that date, when with the assent of the Muslim League, you ordered the two bodies, to work together to prepare the scheme of Educated India, the understanding between the two has grown deeper and larger. Side by side working for the common interests as Indians, are Mussalmans and Hindus, Parsees and Christians—men of different faiths are working together; and here in this critical moment of India's destiny the National Congress is electing a Mussalman brother as its President (Hear, hear and applause) in order that Great Britain may understand that the *entente* is a real union, that it is growing stronger, not weaker, as the years pass by, and that before long we shall not know in politics the name of Mussalman and Hindu, but the one name of the citizen of India. (Hear, hear and applause.) If you really desire our President-elect to preside over our deliberations, it is because, as you know, he has occupied the Judge's seat in the High Court of Calcutta, and on an occasion like this, when difficult questions are to be discussed, when vital pronouncements are to be made, whom could we put better in the chair than an Indian Judge who has held up the dignity of India on the judicial bench and who has now come as it were from the High Court of His Majesty the King-Emperor, to the High Court of the People (Hear, hear and applause), to place at their disposal a trained intellect, deep and full of learning and understanding and that calmness of mind, that accuracy of thought which, we know, always distinguish our Indian Judges? Therefore, without any fear I propose, with the heartiest good wishes, Mr. Hassan Imam to our Presidential chair (Applause); and I know that that proposal will meet with unanimous acclaim, and that under his wise and sober guidance the Congress will reach its goal to the manifestation of the national will towards self-determination. (Applause.)

The Hon'ble the RAJAH OF MAHANUD ISAD (Lucknow) who, on rising was received with loud and continued cheering seconded the resolution in a short Urdu speech. He said that Mr. Hassan Imam was one of the ablest sons of India. The Congress could congratulate itself on having him to guide their deliberations. The speaker heartily commended to their acceptance the election of Mr. Hassan Imam as their President.—("The Bombay Chronicle").

The Hon'ble PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA (Allahabad):—I beg to support the resolution.

The Hon'ble Mr. M. A. JINNAH: (Bombay):—I also beg to support the resolution.

The Hon'ble Mr. KHAPARDE (Berar):—I have great pleasure in supporting this resolution.

Dewan Bahadur L. A. GOVINDARAGHAVA IYER (Madras):—I beg to support this resolution.

The Hon'ble Mr. DUNI CHAND (Lahore):—I beg to support this resolution.

The Hon'ble Mr. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS (Karachi):—I beg to support this resolution.

Mr. B. CHAKRAVARTI (Calcutta):—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates,—I think the Chairman of the Reception Committee has placed upon my shoulders a duty which is somewhat in conflict with my position with regard to my relationship with Mr. Hassan Imam. Mr. Hassan Imam has been a personal friend of mine for several years; and I have had the honour and privilege of practising before him when he was a Judge of the Calcutta High Court. Therefore it is somewhat difficult to dissociate myself from the extremely friendly relations that I have had with him. Categorically, I will place before you the grounds on which I consented to support his election as the President of this national assembly.

The first ground to my mind is this: he is not a place-hunter nor a title-hunter (Hear, hear). If he desired to have a place, he had as good a place as anybody may desire to have. One of the ambitions of a member of the bar is to become a Judge of the High Court; but he chose to abandon that post and come back to the humbler post which I have the honour to enjoy now as a member of the bar—that is he returned to the bar. If he had continued as a Judge of the High Court, he would have got the ribbon and the star so dear to the heart of many of our countrymen. He declined to have that ribbon and the star; and he has consented, to my mind, to wear what is greater than the ribbon and the star, the badge of the national assembly (Applause)—the Presidential badge of this Indian National Congress, the national assembly of India.

The second ground on which I support his election is this : there is the report on Indian Constitutional Reforms which is particularly tender, particularly nervous, about the maintenance of law, order and good government (Laughter). In putting Mr. Hassan Imam as the President of this assembly, we have, to a certain extent, to my mind, done away with the apprehension, because we cannot expect that a man who administered law, order and justice and was a party to good government, that he was going to advise us to commit breaches of law, order and good government.

Gentlemen, the third ground to my mind is that he is a member of the great Mussalman community. It is necessary to emphasise the fact that there are no sectarian people at all, that sectarianism has disappeared and that we are all Indians. It does not matter whatever may be our social customs and social ideals, whatever may be our personal views on religion and things of that sort, in political matters, we are Indians and we want to emphasise that fact ; and when we want to emphasise this fact, we are not going to tolerate an oligarchy, whether it be an oligarchy of Brahmins or an oligarchy of non-Brahmins.

The next point I wish to make in connection with his election is that he comes from Bihar. Trouble has arisen in Bengal ; there has been a difference of opinion in Bengal ; there has been a difference of opinion in Madras and there has been a difference of opinion in Bombay ; but so far as I have gathered from newspapers and from information received from friends, there is no trouble at all in Bihar (Applause).

Another point in his favour is that it has been suggested by some of our friends that we are such a rude people that we would not allow anybody to make himself heard in point of fact, if he chooses to discuss some matters which cannot be pleasant to us all. In the case of Mr. Hassan Imam, there is no possibility of that doubt, and I can assure you that I have often worried him when he was a Judge with very unpleasant remarks, but he never lost his smile or his temper. Even now, my other friends who have till now abstained from attending the Congress will find in Mr. Hassan Imam a gentleman who would not allow any disorderly behaviour.

The next matter to which I wish to draw your attention is the sobriety of judgment of Mr. Hassan Imam. He is much younger than I am, but with regard to very many matters, I would rather defer to his opinion and to his judgment, than rely upon my own. I sincerely hope gentlemen, that you will carry this resolution with acclamation.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. PATEL :—The resolution has been duly proposed, seconded and supported. Is it your pleasure that I should declare the resolution carried? (Cries of 'yes, yes'). Then, I declare this resolution carried unanimously. I ask Mr. Hassan Imam to take the chair. Mr. Hassan Imam was then duly inducted into the Presidential Chair amidst vociferous cheers and cries of 'Bande Mataram.'

TELEGRAMS AND LETTERS.

Dr. Sathaye (General Secretary) :—I have a bundle of letters and telegrams from various Provinces and from different corners of India. I am not going to read all, but I am simply going to read a few and give the names of those that have sent the telegrams and letters.

Dr. Sir Rash Behari Ghose, an ex-President of the Indian National Congress, says :—"I hope and believe that under your guidance, the deliberations of the "Congress will be conducted with wisdom and moderation, and will show "that our friends who have abstained, and who raised the cry to abstain, are "mistaken."

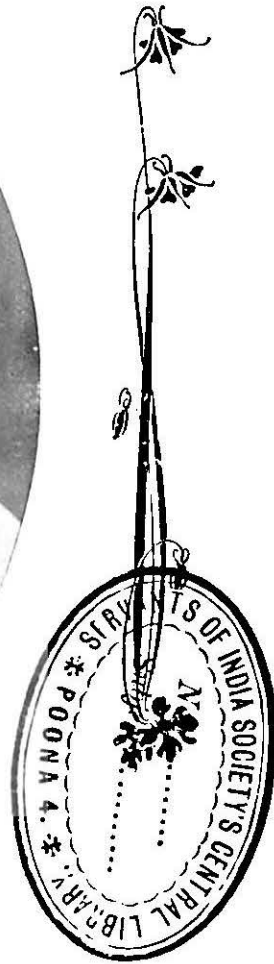
The second letter is from our revered leader, Dr. Sir S. Subramania Iyer, which says :—"In acknowledging the receipt of your telegram, whilst "thanking you for your most cordial invitation, I feel compelled to deny "myself the privilege of being present at the Special Congress owing to ina- "bility to travel. Furthermore, my sight is also so dim as to make it very "inconvenient for me to move about," etc.

The General Secretary then mentioned the names of several gentlemen who had sent letters and telegrams of sympathy from the following places :— Calcutta, Bankipur, Darjeeling, Kamptee, Cuddalore, Vizagapatam, Madura, Mirzapore, Chittagong, Jalgaon, Hyderabad, Gorakpur, Mussorie, Benares, Mandalay, and other places.

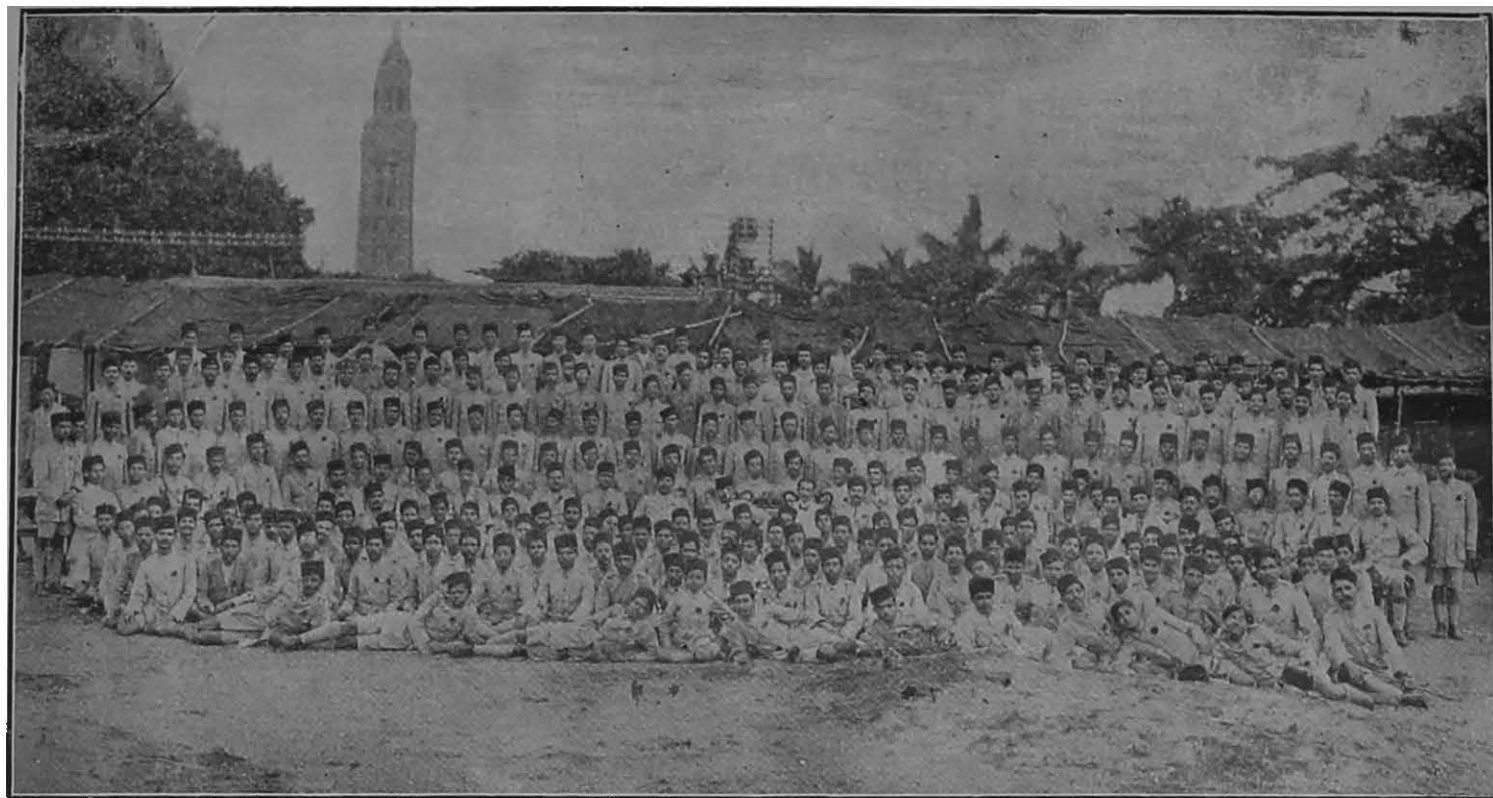


SYED HASAN IMAM, ESQ.,
President,
Special Congress, Bombay, 1918.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.



HON. MR. V. J. PATEL,
Chairman of the Reception Committee,
Special Congress, Bombay, 1918.



SPECIAL CONGRESS VOLUNTEERS, Bombay, 1918.

s leading to the present situation—the illustrious declarations, furnished strength to our demand for which we have been fighting for the third of a century in spite of much discouragement, at times attendant ridicule. When we read in the Report a passage remember too that the educated Indian has come; he has seized the education which we offered him advantages; and it is he who has advocated and pressed. All this stands to his credit. For the last proposed in his Congress and latterly in the Muslim conferences which express his ideals. We owe him the credit conceived and pursued the idea of managing his Englishman can fail to respect,” our memory natural. The contemptuous phrase of Lord Dufferin’s “microscopic concession to the Congress when that noble Marquis was not to educate Indians a recognition. Time has justified us in the principles of our demand where we did thirty years ago (applause).

On the 20th August 1917 declaring the policy of His Majesty confirms to the correctness of our demand and that our demand conceived is indirectly acknowledged in the Report in the following passage: “It is no longer sufficient to administer to satisfy her political aspirations; and because of the changing cognizance of the changes that were occurring because there is leeway to make up.” The Report recognises the merits of our claim and if acknowledgements do not satisfy us the need for us to meet in this

It is when we come to the proposals themselves that we are disappointed. (Hear, hear). The Secretary of State and the Viceroy, have made their proposals with a genuine regard for us the right of governing ourselves and not to be ruled but the proposals in themselves seem to be afraid to comprise any such real measure of reform as we should realize the difficulty of their delicate task, placed between conflicting bureaucratic and Indian interests. The proposals appear to me to be due not to any intention on the part of the Government from us what we should have, but to a spirit of support of the bureaucrats. It, therefore, behoves us to respond in a spirit of sympathy and not of mere carping. The demand is the Congress-League Scheme (Hear, hear), the essentials of that, we should with all the emphasis

that we can command, make our protest; but we demand the rejection of the proposals. Opinion in the country on the subject of the acceptance or the rejection of the proposals of a small section of political thinkers that advocate the proposals. I treat their views with respect, for their attitude is a political sagacity of not allowing a consent to be given and upon the political philosophy that national rights are not merely to be received as gifts, (Hear Hear). Undoubtedly the desire to continue the struggle for freedom is the desire that the severer the struggle the greater the victory. In the hands of the Government there is another class of our political thinkers who are in favour of the proposals with the proviso that we should not give up (Cries of shame.) The country, however, is against the proposals, certainly do not embody the essentials of our demand. It is calculated to satisfy our just aspirations. (Hear, Hear). To point out, there seems to me no material difference between those who advocate rejection and those that advise acceptance. The object of both is to continue the struggle till our rights are secured. It is not combat but victory is the object to be pursued, not to take it would be to abandon what we are fighting for. The Viceroy and the Secretary of State in their Report have not put our heads together in constructive statesmanship. At this crucial juncture in our political history we need a calm which is necessary for the building of a great

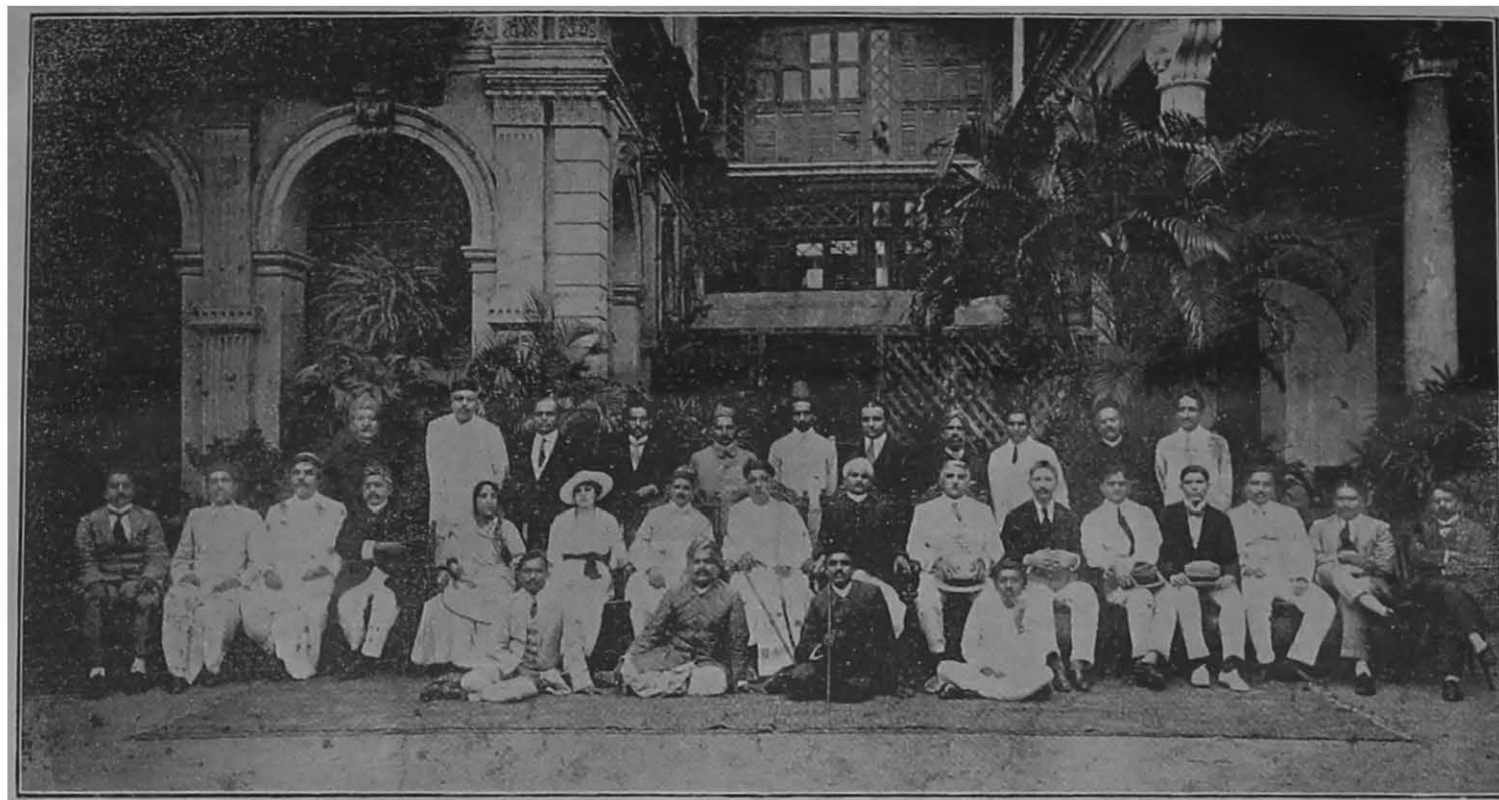
The proposals have placed us under a great deal of difficulty. The essentials of our demand are acknowledged and conceded in substance. Under disappointment we are prone to be occupied with the evil that disturbs us. We are in calmly finding out the means to remove the evil. This is a history of patient constitutional struggle. The proposals of the present generation have inherited from those of the past. The essentials of this great national organisation are of perseverance in the face of tremendous opposition, and to-day it stands for the rights of the Indian people. Those traitors who cherish them. We know no extremists and we know that have been devised by “our enemies” to divide us. We have only one cause and we have only one purpose. The demand of a United India. (Appaluse). and so we shall continue the struggle,

“Unchained in soul—though manacles

“Unwarped by prejudice—unawakened

“Friends to the weak and fearless

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS, SPECIAL SESSION, Bombay, 1918.



EXECUTIVE WORKERS,

Photo by JAYKAR

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President then left the chair and stepped forward into the restrum wherefrom he delivered his address. As he stepped into the rostrum he was received with tremendous cheering and cries of *Bande Mataram*, which took several minutes to subside, and then he delivered the following address :—

BROTHER DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

With history looking on us, our labors to-day may well strike sympathy in the hearts of those who have the refinement to feel the agony of a race that, conscious of its rights, is struggling to realize them. The struggle is arduous, every step of it is laborious but our purpose is firm and our courage is enduring. We are earnest and we mean to achieve our object, and it is at such a moment that you have called me to a duty that is most responsible, most onerous. I would not be human if I did not feel the honor you have chosen to confer on me—the greatest that you had in your gift—and I would be less than human if I did not express to you my deep sense of gratitude for the high privilege so generously conferred. But while I am expressing to you my gratitude, I am not, I fear, quite unselfish in my acknowledgment, for to be thankful for a favour is to lay out for another. (laughter). I have much indulgence to ask of you to overlook my deficiencies and to assist me in conducting the proceedings of this great Congress of a nation struggling for freedom, to a successful end. This Special Session of the Congress is of exceptional importance and therefore of exceptional difficulty. Our task is burdensome for we have to discuss the proposed constitutional reforms as emanating from a Secretary of State and a Viceroy who, at least in their declarations, have not been wanting in a spirit of sympathy towards Indian demands. Their frank acknowledgment of the justice of our claim to equal civic rights with the rest of the British Empire lends to their proposals a sincerity ; which it is difficult to question. But in a matter so grave as the laying of the foundation of our constitutional structure the duty of analysing and sifting the proposals outweighs all considerations of mere courtliness or thanksgiving. (Hear, hear.) While acknowledging the high purpose of the British Cabinet in directing an investigation into the present Indian situation and in desiring to find a solution thereof and while rendering the fullest tribute of praise to Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford for the single-mindedness with which they have collaborated in formulating their proposals, we yet, as the persons most affected, have to examine the proposals on their merits. Reading their joint Report it will strike any observer that in the first portion of it—which I regard as a

historical survey of events leading to the present situation—the illustrious authors have by their declarations, furnished strength to our demand for that charter of liberty for which we have been fighting for the third of a century through the Congress, in spite of much discouragement, at times attended with unseemly and indecent ridicule. When we read in the Report a passage such as this: “We must remember too that the educated Indian has come to the front by hard work; he has seized the education which we offered him because he first saw its advantages; and it is he who has advocated and worked for political progress. All this stands to his credit. For the last thirty years he has developed in his Congress and latterly in the Muslim League, free popular convocations which express his ideals. We owe him sympathy because he has conceived and pursued the idea of managing his affairs, an aim which no Englishman can fail to respect,” our memory naturally goes back to the contemptuous phrase of Lord Dufferin’s “microscopic minority,” used in reference to the Congress when that noble Marquis was not in a mood to accord to educated Indians a recognition. Time has justified us and to-day we stand on the principles of our demand where we did thirty-three years back (Loud applause).

The announcement of the 20th August 1917 declaring the policy of His Majesty’s Government certifies to the correctness of our demand and that our claim was not prematurely conceived is indirectly acknowledged in the Report in the following noteworthy passage: “It is no longer sufficient to administer India; it is necessary also to satisfy her political aspirations; and because we were all too slow in taking cognizance of the changes that were occurring the task is all the heavier because there is lee-way to make up.” The Report is full of generous acknowledgements of our claim and if acknowledgements alone could not merely gratify but satisfy us the need for us to meet in this Congress would not exist. It is when we come to the proposals themselves that disappointment meets us. (Hear, hear). The Secretary of State and the Viceroy, it has to be admitted, have made their proposals with a genuine desire to ultimately secure for us the right of governing ourselves and determining our own future, but the proposals in themselves seem to be afraid of themselves and do not comprise any such real measure of reform as we had a right to expect. We realize the difficulty of their delicate task, placed as they have been between conflicting bureaucratic and Indian interests. The deficiencies of the proposals appear to me to be due not to any intention on their part to withhold from us what we should have, but to a spirit of compromise to secure the support of the bureaucrats. It, therefore, behoves us to consider the proposals in a spirit of sympathy and not of mere carping criticism. Now our criterion is the Congress-League Scheme (Hear, hear), and, if the proposals lack the essentials of that, we should with all the emphasis

that we can command, make our protest ; but we must guard against a hasty rejection of the proposals. Opinion in the country is more or less divided on the subject of the acceptance or the rejection of the proposals. There is a small section of political thinkers that advocates a rejection of the proposals. I treat their views with respect, for their attitude of mind is based upon the political sagacity of not allowing a consent decree to be passed against them and upon the political philosophy that national rights have to be won and not merely to be received as gifts, (Hear Hear). Underlying their principle of rejection is the desire to continue the struggle for freedom and every one will admit that the severer the struggle the greater the vigor of the race. On the other hand there is another class of our political thinkers that stands for the acceptance of the proposals with the proviso that we must go on asking for more. (Cries of shame.) The country, however, is agreed that the proposals, as they stand, certainly do not embody the essentials of our demand and are not calculated to satisfy our just aspirations. (Hear, hear.) If you will permit me to point out, there seems to me no material difference between those that advocate rejection and those that advise acceptance, for the common feature of both is to continue the struggle till our rights are won. In politics as in war, not combat but victory is the object to be pursued and where ground is yielded, not to take it would be to abandon what you have won. The Secretary of State and the Viceroy in their Report have earnestly exhorted us to put our heads together in constructive statesmanship and I have no doubt that at this crucial juncture in our political history we shall preserve that deliberative calm which is necessary for the building of a great project.

The proposals have placed us under a great disappointment for, though the essentials of our demand are acknowledged in theory, they have not been conceded in substance. Under disappointment our mind would naturally be prone to be occupied with the evil that disquiets it, but true wisdom lies in calmly finding out the means to remove the evil. The history of our Congress is a history of patient constitutional struggle. The traditions that we of the present generation have inherited from those that founded and established this great national organisation are of perseverance in the face of even tremendous opposition, and to-day it stands acknowledged as the champion of the rights of the Indian people. Those traditions are dear to us and we cherish them. We know no extremists and we know no moderates, names that have been devised by "our enemies" to divide us. (Cheers.) We know only one cause and we have only one purpose in view. Our demand is the demand of a United India. (Appaluse). and so long as our rights are denied to us we shall continue the struggle,

"Unchained in soul—though manacled in limb—

"Unwarped by prejudice—unawed by wrong,

"Friends to the weak and fearless of the strong."

Coming now to a discussion of the details of the reforms our attention must be first directed to the terms of the declaration of policy as announced on the 20th August last year. That declaration lays down the policy to be:—

- (1) "The increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration."
- (2) "The gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

Towards the fulfilment of the above policy the decision is stated in the announcement, "that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible." The Secretary of State in making the announcement stated that "progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages." He further explained that "the British Government and the Government of India on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance." The policy as enunciated is a pledge to the Indian people that they shall be raised from their present abject position to one of dignity and honour as a nation, and it is worthy of the freedom-loving British race. But it is when we examine the cautious qualifying phrases of the Secretary of State that we come to suspect the length of time that we may have to wait before there is fruition of that policy. The successive stages may be distant stages as the Reform proposals clearly demonstrate and "the time and measure of each advance" may prove illusory, dependent as it is declared to be on the "extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their (Indian people's) sense of responsibility." The decision that substantial steps in the direction of the policy should be taken as soon as possible brought the Secretary of State to us, but where do we find the "substantial steps" in the proposals? (Hear, hear) I shall now venture to place before you, as briefly as I can, my estimate of the proposed reforms.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

The Imperial Legislative Council is to be replaced by (1) a Legislative Assembly of India consisting of about hundred members and (2) by a Council of State consisting of about fifty members. The Legislative Assembly is to have an elected majority of two-thirds of its total strength, but the Assembly is to have no power and must remain content with exercising that shadowy stuff, "Influence." To render that ineffectual a Council of State has been designed. It is to have a large majority of official and nominated members and it will be the supreme legislative authority for India on all crucial questions and the revising authority upon all Indian legislation. It will have the right

to over-rule all the work of the Legislative Assembly in the matter of legislation, budget allotment and financial proposals, and even pass them at the bidding of the Governor-General over the head of the Legislative Assembly. There is no element of popular will in this, nor is the pretence made that there is any. Apart from the objection that the people's representatives in the Legislative Assembly will be over-ridden by a body of men not representative of the people, the mischief of the proposals is accentuated by according to the members of the Council of State the status of a class by themselves. I see in that the danger of a division of our people, the formation of a new caste. (Hear, hear). This will no doubt further strengthen the already existing arbitrary powers of the Government of India and, considering that it is proposed that British control over the Government of India should be relaxed, the danger of reckless irresponsibility in the Central Government will be enhanced. Our demand is for the amenability of Provincial and Central Governments alike to the people's wishes, but instead we are being given a Central Government more autocratic than ever. The joint Report admits that the bureaucratic system that has prevailed hitherto is no more suited to our needs, but the Second Chamber that is proposed and which is to have the decisive voice is to consist of bureaucrats and their nominees with a powerless minority of elected members. It would be, to my mind, the perpetuation of the bureaucratic rule that we have been striving to remove. We cannot give our willing assent to a packed Second Chamber created to render in-operative what the people's representatives decide. The proposal is reactionary in its character and by no manner of means can it be described as a reform intended to increase popular control. The creation of such a Second Chamber is a confession of the distrust of the people—a distrust that is visible in the proposals as a whole (Hear, hear.)

Describing the legislative procedure the nervousness of the authors of the Report is made manifest. I quote from the Report. "A Government Bill will ordinarily be introduced and carried through all the usual stages in the Legislative Assembly. It will then go, in the ordinary course, to the Council of State and if there amended in any way which the Assembly is not willing to accept, it will be submitted to a joint session of both the Houses by whose decision its ultimate fate will be decided. This will be the ordinary course of legislation. But it might well happen that amendments made by the Council of State were such as to be essential in the view of the Government if the purpose with which the Bill was originally introduced was to be achieved, and in this case the Governor-General-in-Council would certify that the amendments were essential to the interests of peace, order or good government. The Assembly would then not have power to reject or modify these

amendments, nor would they lie open to revision in a joint session." Not content with this the Report proceeds :—"Further, there may be cases when the consideration of a measure by both chambers would take too long if the emergency which called for the measure is to be met. Such a contingency should rarely arise ; but we advise that in cases of emergency so certified by the Governor-General-in-Council, it should be open to the Government to introduce a Bill in the Council of State, and upon its being passed there merely report it to the Assembly." Similar, but even more cautious safeguards are provided for non-official members' bills. These extraordinary provisions to protect the Government against the people's representatives are particularly noteworthy when we find provided for the Government of India the power of making Ordinances for emergent purposes. Reading the proposals contained in Chapter IX of the Report dealing with the so-called reforms in the Government of India, the impression is left on the mind of the reader, that the Central Government had been in the past the object of much tyranny and oppression by the people and special measures were needed to protect that Government. It is difficult to estimate the political reasons that have induced the illustrious authors of the Report to treat the Government of India and the people of India as two combatants constantly pulling in opposite directions—the Government of India being always right and the people of India always wrong. The ideal that we have always set before us is that the Government of India should be so constituted that that Government should be the Government of the people. So long as these extraordinary safeguards are devised and exist, it would be but natural for us to feel that those that carry on the Government are removed from us and as human beings, subject to human failings, will subordinate the people's interest to theirs. No one can conceal the facts that the interests of the bureaucrat, whatever his services may have been, have been widely different from the interests of the people and if the same bureaucrat is to shape the destinies of India, even at this juncture, the reason for the special safeguard is obvious. The cardinal principle of our demand is that Indian interests are not any more to be subservient to the interests of others, and if the proposed reforms are intended to restore to us what we have lost then the reformation of the Government of India should not be and must not be on the lines of the proposals but on those that would secure to the people at least an effective voice in the governance of the country. The Congress-League Scheme has been discarded as unworkable in practice. It may not be artistic in its features, it may have the defects of inexperience of actual administration, it may even appear to be crude in form. But we do not attach ourselves to the externals of the scheme but to the true spirit of it. We insist on the essentials being left untouched, we demand their incorporation in the reforms that may hereafter be ultimately decided on. (Hear, hear.)

The proposal that in the Council of State the Ruling Princes should be associated with the Government of India for the purpose of deliberation on matters of what have been vaguely described 'common concern,' is neither happy for us nor happy for them. By the very nature of their relations; with the Suzerain Power the Princes are in a state of subordination to the Governor-General as representing the King-Emperor. Their task in their own principalities is difficult enough and it will only add to their burden to be invited to take part in the Council of State in British India. Then again there may be complications hereafter if the pledge of full responsible government to us comes to be fulfilled, as we hope and trust it will be in the near future. The Council of State with its present proposed constitution spells to me the dread that the Government of India will at no time entertain a popular Assembly whose voice will be listened to, for if that were to be so the introduction of the Princes into the Council of State would be incompatible with their sovereign rights. Supposing that at a future date the Council of State becomes a representative body of British Indians, would it suit the Princes to descend from their high state to seats in a people's assembly and would it suit us to have them in our midst? What is the special need of the presence of the Princes in the Council of State? Is not that Council, if established, strong enough, even without them, to protect the Government of India against the people?

Dealing with fiscal legislation we are frankly told that the budget will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly but the Assembly will not vote it. Resolution upon budget matters, as indeed upon all other questions, will continue to be merely advisory in character and will stand on record as the considered opinion of the Assembly. This clearly is no advance upon the existing system. It no doubt is consistent with the safety of the constitution of the Government of India as proposed, but our protest is against such a constitution and our protest is against a budget that has not received the sanction of the people's representatives. It is certainly not in the direction of the Government of India that the illustrious authors of the Report propose to apply their considered opinion that "because we were all too slow in taking cognizance of the changes that were occurring the task is all the heavier because there is lee-way to make up."

The distrust of the people is further made manifest when the introduction of the Indian element into the Executive Council of the Governor-General is limited to but two. Our demand has been that at least half the number of the Executive Councillors should be Indians. In the proposals, while recommending the appointment of a second Indian member, the illustrious authors of the Report say that they do not think it necessary to argue the expediency of enabling the wishes of India to be further represented in the cabinet of

the country. The reason of this illiberality is not explained and we are left to judge for ourselves. It is admitted that the presence of an Indian Member in the Executive Council has proved of value in enabling the Government to have first-hand acquaintance with Indian opinion. Lord Morley's policy of appointing an Indian member to the Executive Council created a feeling of assurance amongst the people that at last the Government's attitude was to hear, if not to listen to, the people. Our claim to a larger increase in the Indian element of the Executive Council is based not merely on our just rights but also on the efficient and loyal performance by the Indian Members of their duties. I appreciate that the numerical strength of the Executive Council under the new constitution has not been disclosed and it may be that the existing number may, with changed conditions, be reduced, in which event the two Indian members, as proposed, will constitute a much larger proportion of the Indian element in the Executive Council than is the one Indian member in a Council of eight as at present. Judged by comparison even an illiberal increase of the Indian element in the Executive Council will mark a stage in India's political development. But is that enough? (Cries of "No. No.") We want a declaration of the proportion and that proportion to be half, as that will give us in some degree an assurance of the intentions of the Government regarding the establishment of responsible government in this country. We are now no more content with promises. (Hear, hear.) The illustrious authors of the Report themselves remark that "there is a belief abroad that assurances given in public pronouncements of policy are sometimes not fulfilled." I would say, not "sometimes" but "seldom" fulfilled. The Morley-Minto Reforms were hailed by the whole country as ushering in a new era of political progress, but when they were brought into actual operation the bureaucratic framers of the rules and regulations succeeded in nullifying the liberal policy of Lords Morley and Minto. After our sad experience of the Reforms of 1909 our faith in promises and pledges stands much shaken to-day. Just as we are told to realize that India's political future is not to be won merely by fine phrases, so we ought to make it clear to Government that a whole fifth of the human race cannot be kept loyal to foreign rule by mere promises. (Applause.) The days of fine phrases and hollow promises have equally passed and if we are to be kept within the great British Empire, our confidence must be won, our affection must be secured. To the Secretary of State and the Viceroy we are grateful for the genuine desire their Report demonstrates for the political progress of our country, but to be perfectly frank, we are not without just apprehension that in much of their work their good intention will be frustrated by those to whom the carrying out of the policy will be entrusted in this country and it is for this reason that our demand for the Indian element in the Governor-General's Executive Council must be insistent on being half of the total strength.

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS.

In regard to the Provincial Governments we are more liberally treated than in the Government of India. The proposals start with two postulates:—

- (1) Complete responsibility for the Government cannot be given without inviting a break-down.
- (2) Some responsibility must be given at once if the scheme stated in the proposals is to have any value.

These governing conditions are to be satisfied by a bifurcation of the functions of the Provincial Government into two branches, *vis.*, one subject to popular control and the other in official hands. The subjects of popular control are to be called "Transferred Subjects," and those in the hands of the officials are to be designated "Reserved Subjects." It follows, of course, from the above division that the Executive Government must also consist of two parts. The proposal is that one part is to comprise the head of the Province who will be known as Governor and an Executive Council of two Members, and the other is to consist of a Minister or Ministers, according to the number and importance of the Transferred Subjects, chosen by the Governor from amongst the elected members of the Legislative Council. It is gratifying to observe that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have noticed the unreality that characterizes the existing Councils, the cause of which they ascribe to the system of indirect elections. They consider that that indirect system should be swept away to give place to direct election on a broad franchise. We welcome this real step towards reform but it is right to point out that the unreality of the existing Councils has not been due so much to the indirect systems as to the rules framed under which the members of the Councils were permitted to work. When the Reforms of 1909 were inaugurated the defects of the indirect system were pointed out but we were told then, as we have been told so many times in regard to all progressive demands, that the country was not fit for any better. While the indirect system was deliberately introduced, rules were also so framed as to reduce the usefulness of the members to zero. Now it is proposed that there shall be in each province an enlarged Legislative Council differing in size and composition from province to province with a substantial elected majority, elected by direct election on a broad franchise with such communal and special representation as may be necessary. The members' right to ask supplementary questions and to move resolutions is enlarged and concession is made that the resolutions on the budget, except in so far as they trench on the Reserved subjects, may be binding. So long as certain subjects remain reserved the policy of keeping them unaffected by the popular wish is in keeping with the principle on which the Central Government is to be based. It has, therefore, been found necessary in regard to the Reserved Subjects to institute a Grand Committee within the Provincial Legis-

lative Council to serve the purposes for which the Council of State, is designed in the Central Government. The illustrious authors of the Report say :— “For the purpose of enabling the Provincial Government to get through its legislation on Reserved Subjects, we propose that the head of the Government should have power to certify that a Bill dealing with a Reserved Subject is a measure essential to the discharge of his responsibility for the peace or tranquillity of the province or of any part thereof or for the discharge of his responsibility for the Reserved Subjects.” The effect of such a certificate will be that, if no reference to the Central Government is made for their decision, the certified Bill will be automatically referred to a Grand Committee of the Council. Similar procedure is proposed for controlling non-official Bills, amendments and clauses. The Grand Committee is to consist of forty to fifty per cent. of the total strength of the Council and comprise members partly elected to it by the elected members and partly nominated to it by the Governor who will have the power to nominate a bare majority, exclusive of himself. Of the members, so nominated, two-thirds may be officials. The procedure laid down for the passage of a certified Bill is through the Grand Committee and it seems to me that the Legislative Council has but a nominal place in it. Here again is the same spirit of distrust of the people as in the Constitution of the Central Government though it has to be acknowledged that it is not so manifest. Talking of the politically-minded Indian the Report says :—“He has made a skilful and on the whole a moderate use of the opportunities which we have given him in the Legislative Councils of influencing Government and affecting the course of public business, and of recent years he has by his speeches and in the press done much to spread the idea of a united and self-respecting India amongst thousands who had no such conception in their minds.” If that is so, then may we not ask to be a little more trusted in these great reforms? I am alive to this that in the provincial administration a considerable advance upon the existing system is proposed and I believe that if the proposals are carried into effect the journey to self-government in provincial matters will be sure, though long. No one amongst us wishes a breakdown and we would, as the party most interested, be ourselves most anxious to see the success of the reforms that promise us the Pisgah view of the Promised Land. It is not impatience in us, it is not any desire to force the pace, that makes us ask for greater rights and, therefore, greater duties in provincial administration. Our submission is that greater responsibility should be cast on us so that our training towards self-government may be the earlier commenced in that proportion which may correspond to the magnitude of the work before us. No one can question the true objective of the Report. The realisation of responsible government in provincial administration is the anxious care of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, but towards the attainment of that end are their proposals not lacking in bold courage? (Hear, hear.)

After all, our past does not justify so many safeguards in the reforms. These same safeguards in the hands of a "strong man" may be turned into effective weapons for the destruction of the reforms themselves. (Hear, hear.) It is true that periodic Commissions are suggested for the purpose of re-surveying the political situation in India and of re-adjusting the machinery to the new requirements from time to time and no doubt it would be within the province of the Commissions to investigate into the course of constitutional development in the country and a "strong man" will have the fear of his acts being examined and judgment passed thereon by a Commission that would derive its authority from Parliament itself. But it has to be borne in mind that these Commissions will be at distant intervals and however much credit one may be disposed to give to them for their anxiety to make a thorough investigation, the lapses of the "strong man" are bound to escape scrutiny when time has dulled the directness of perception. Without referring to any particular "strong man," we naturally get apprehensive when we find an administrator of a province indulging in wholesale denunciation of the politically-minded Indians, as men engaged in sowing distrust and in propagating vile propaganda. The latest pronouncement of one such "strong man" is that such of us, as ask why these restrictions, reservations, safeguards, this machinery for saving the authority of the Government and why this distrust, are those that spend their time in spreading sinister influence over the people and he explains that it is not the mistrust of the people but the distrust of the sinister influence of those whom he calls the extremists that renders it necessary to include in the new constitution safeguards, restrictions and reservations. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford may well piteously cry: "Save us from our friends." Throughout the Report on the reforms no such suggestion for the distrust has been expressed by its illustrious authors and whatever distrust that is noticeable could be ascribed to cautious steps being warranted by the want of experience of the Indian people in matters administrative; but this commentator on the Report, if his exposition be correct, rouses us to a just resentment. This same "strong man" talks of an unbridled and defamatory press when he of all persons ought to know that the press legislation in India, of all measures, has been the most destructive of legitimate public criticism and has secured for the "strong man," as also even for the milder bureaucrat, an unimpeded passage to the fulfilment of his arbitrary will. It is such "strong men"—and this unfortunate land has many of this breed—against whom we, the people, require special measures of protection. (Hear, hear.)

In the Reserved Subjects are included the important heads coming under maintenance of law and order, Civil Justice, Land Revenue, Industrial matters, business concerns and the like. The subjects proposed to be transferred to popular control are as numerous as those of the Reserved class. I believe that the transferred subjects will afford to us sufficient opportunities of ad-

administrative training in the first few years to enable us to qualify ourselves for the transference of all the subjects to popular control. The objection to the scheme, as a whole lies, however, in the proposal that at the end of a period of five years the Reserved Subjects are not to come automatically under popular control but it will be open to the Central Government to hear applications from either the Provincial Government or the Provincial Council for the modification of the Reserved and the Transferred subject lists of the province, and it will be upon the recommendation of the Central Government that the Secretary of State is to approve the transfer of further subjects. While this method of devolution of power has the merit of providing the incentive to the peoples' representatives for earnest and statesman-like discharge of their duties, it has the demerit of withdrawing the stimulus that they would have if they were now assured that at the end of five years the responsibility of the entire provincial administration would devolve upon them. In the language of the Report itself, advance can only come through previous failures and exercise of responsibility calls forth the capacity for it.

The financial arrangement provided for effecting the administration of the two branches of the Government appears to me to be exceedingly unsatisfactory. The first charge on provincial revenues will be the contribution to the Central Government and after that the Reserved Subjects will have priority in the matter of supply; the residue, after meeting the above charges, will be available to the Ministers for the purposes of the Transferred Subjects. The provision is made that if such residue is insufficient for their requirements the Ministers can suggest additional taxation within the schedule of permissible provincial taxation or outside the schedule by obtaining the sanction of the Government of India. The question of any fresh taxation will be decided by the Governor and the Ministers and the Executive Government as a whole will not bear the responsibility for the proposal. Considering that the Governor is not expected to refuse, ordinarily, assent to the proposals of the Ministers, it is apparent that the responsibility of a fresh taxation will in effect rest upon the Ministers. It is admitted that the new developments which are to be anticipated will necessitate fresh taxation. Thus it comes to this that the odium, which is inseparable from a new levy, is to be borne by the Ministers alone, the sequel to which may be the engendering of a repugnance in the people against popular government. The responsibility for administering Transferred Subjects will be the Minister's, while the power of deciding what part of the revenue shall be allotted for the discharge of that responsibility will be retained in official hands! The Legislative Council under the proposed constitution will be bound to submit to the proposals of the Governor-in-Council with regard to expenditure on Reserved Subjects and it is more than likely that the reaction of their disability in the matter

of the Reserved Subjects will operate prejudicially on the Minister's proposals for new taxations for Transferred Subjects. The proposed arrangement, it strikes me, is unfair. It is giving to the popular side of the Government an unsatisfactory start. The collective responsibility of the Executive Government in matters of fresh taxations is necessary for the success of the reforms. The obvious defects of the system proposed are so many that I think it is our duty to insist upon modifications that may insure to the Transferred Subjects a fairer and a more equitable treatment. It is worthy of note here that of the departments proposed to be transferred to popular control several are of vital importance to the progress of the country and they have been the most starved under official regime. The duty of constructing them and developing them will devolve upon the people's representatives but without sufficient provision for them. The subjects of Education and Sanitation, involving as they do the building up of healthy mind and healthy body in the people, are of supreme importance as upon them will rest the creation of healthy electorates. If the franchise, on which Responsible Government is to be based, is to be broad and extensive, due provision has to be made from now to secure its expansiveness as time grows, and towards that end it will not do to treat those two subjects with stint.

As regards the appointment of Ministers the Governor is to exercise his choice from among the elected members of the Legislative Council. They are to hold office for the lifetime of the Legislative Council. They will be members of the Executive Government but not of the Executive Council. The portfolios dealing with the transferred subjects are to be committed to them and in respect of those subjects they with the Governor will form the administration. No provision is made for the Ministers to resign if they lose the confidence of the House. Our proposal that Indian members of the Executive Government should be elected by the Council has been based on our experience that Government have in the past chosen men not because they were sound but because they were, according to bureaucratic view, safe. This has been noticed by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in their observation: "We are aware that in the past the nominations made to the executives have not always given satisfaction. There has been a disposition to regard the men appointed as chosen because they are safe and not likely to give Government trouble; and if legislature and executive are to work smoothly together it is, we agree, necessary to make appointments which command confidence and insure efficiency and ability." The election of Ministers is disapproved but no injunction is laid that the nominations should be of persons who had the confidence of the Legislative Council. The justification for our proposal of election lay in our apprehension arising out of bureaucratic methods. If we can be assured that really capable men will be chosen for appointment as colleagues of the Gover-

nor our scheme of elected members of the Executive will not require to be pressed, for our demand is for capable men only. Our objection however to the irremovability of Ministers stands. It has been stated that it is not contemplated that from the outset the Governor should occupy the position of a purely constitutional Governor bound to accept the decisions of his Ministers. That may be so, but in that proposal I do not see any justification to give to the Ministers a place above the will of the representatives of the people. What we have to guard against is a too ready submission on the part of the Ministers to the wishes of the Governor. Under the constitution proposed the Governor will occupy a predominant position, and if at any time he chooses to disapprove of a measure he should be made to take the responsibility of refusing his assent instead of securing by methods of powerful suasion the acquiescence of Ministers. The scheme if carried into effect will be demoralizing for the Ministers themselves. Some method should be devised whereby the responsibility of the Ministers to the representatives of the people should not be diminished while their harmonious co-operation with the Governor may be maintained. I suggest that it be made incumbent upon every Minister on his appointment to seek re-election, failing which his appointment will automatically cease to operate. A further condition of his office should be that he should continue to enjoy the confidence of the House. Should the House, as a body, express its want of confidence in him he must resign his office as a matter of course. This suggestion that I make does not in any way reduce the position of the Governor, nor his powers under the proposed constitution.

Dealing with the subject of Ministers I must refer to their exclusion from the Executive Council. While they are permitted a place in the Executive Government they are not wanted in the Executive Council. The reason of such exclusion seems to be their unconcern with the Reserved Subjects. Here again the distrust of the people in the proposed reforms raises its venomous head. Ample safeguards for the protection of the Reserved Subjects have been provided and the hands of the Governor have been more than strengthened by restrictions and reservations. I realize that the inclusion of the Ministers in the Executive Council is not free from danger to popular aspirations as such inclusion is more likely, than not, to create a natural bias in the mind of the Governor to choose a safe man as his Ministers, but I would sooner take that risk and have the Ministers within the Executive Council than out of it. Whatever the underlying policy of two compartments of the Government may be and whatever its justification, I am decidedly of the view that a total unconcern of the Ministers in the Reserved Subjects is not desirable, for the objective being the ultimate realization of Responsible Government, the association of Ministers in some form or other with the administration of the Reserved Subjects will the better prepare them, for the ultimate devolution of power on the people. If expediency does not permit that they should have an active voice

in the Executive Council they should at least be given a place therein of more or less advisory character, as additional members. The constitution as proposed is open to the very serious objection that until actual transference takes place the people's representatives will have but little touch with subjects of the Reserved class ; while at some future date, and let us hope not a distant date, it is they that will be asked to assume charge of the administration of those subjects. Another point in connection with the subject of Ministers is that of their dignity in the Executive Government. The Report says that the illustrious authors of it do not make any recommendation in regard to Ministers' emoluments. This gives a faint idea that their salary may not be on the same scale as that of members of the Executive Council. I am not one to advocate expensive machinery of administration but when it comes to a distinction arising between Ministers of the people and Ministers *not* of the people I would sink all considerations of financial economy and insist on the Ministers enjoying the same salary as Members of the Executive Council. I consider it as affecting their dignity but if economy has to be effected it must be effected by reducing the salary of the Members of the Executive Council to the level of the salary that may be proposed for Ministers. In this connection I may be pardoned for referring to what will appear to be trivial, but my excuse is that the illustrious authors of the Report have concerned themselves with details of the honorific designation of members of the several legislative bodies. At present the advent of a Member of an Executive Council, whether Provincial or Imperial, is attended with a noisy salute of guns that does no one any good. It is merely reminiscent of the age of vanity in which the bureaucrat lived and thrived. The days of catching the imagination of Indians by noise and din are passed and we have now learnt to appraise the value and worth of men by their work and not by their tinselled trappings. Let these salutes be discontinued and powder saved from unmeaning waste. (Hear, hear.)

The proposal to appoint additional members of the Executive Council, if the Governor chooses, does not seem to me to be open to any serious objection as no portfolio is to be assigned to them and their functions will be merely consultative and advisory. So long as the additional members continue to discharge the functions of their substantive appointments and draw merely the pay attached to those appointments, and no burden of additional expenditure is thrown on the Province, the proposal may be regarded as harmless. In respect of the Indian member of the Executive Council he is not to be elected, nor is the field of choice limited to the Legislative Council. The Governor will be free to recommend whom he wishes and to take into consideration the names of persons who have won distinctions whether in the Legislative Council or any other field. I admit that if the Governor is sympathetic and broad-

mind and works with a view to the ultimate realization of responsible government, chances are that his Indian nominee for the Executive Council will be a person acceptable to the people but the satisfactoriness of a nomination becomes conditioned on the tendencies of an individual and the fear may well be entertained that with the varying temperaments of individual Governors the search for a safe man may become common. Our proposal for the election of Indian Executive Councillors is no doubt open to certain objections but in the existing state of things if the Indian people are to be assured that the Indian element in the Executive Council will be truly Indian in aspiration there seems to be no other method but that of election whereby such an assurance can be given. It may be said that an Indian Executive Councillor holding his office by election may not work as harmoniously with his colleagues as one who holds his office by nomination. As we have not suggested that the elected Indian member should be removable at the will of the Legislative Council and his appointment being permanent for five years there is no reason to apprehend that he will indulge in unwarranted friction with his colleagues. What we want is that the Indian member in the Provincial Executive Council should be one to possess courage to present the Indian view of a question faithfully. (hear, hear) If the nominations, in the past, in the Provincial Executive Councils had been as satisfactory as, happily, the nominations have been in the Governor-General's Executive Council, our apprehension regarding the search for a safe man would never have come to exist.

MINORITIES.

Upon the subject of the representation of the minorities the Congress-League scheme provides special electorates for Musulmans for their representation in fixed proportions, varying according to several Provinces, while for the other minorities it proposes separate representation but not separate electorates. The proportions for Musulman representation were fixed after a discussion between the League and ourselves. This has given occasion to an observation in the Report that the compact shows the pressure under which the agreement was reached. Continuing in the same strain the illustrious authors of the Report remark that that the provision in our scheme concerning the discussion of measures affecting either community to proceed by leave of its representatives, measures the distance that separates the one from the other. The system of "divide and rule" is an acknowledged method in most alien Governments and it is nothing surprising if for the time being a feeling has existed between the two great communities of India that in some respects each has a special interest of its own but are not the signs of fusion abundantly present? While the Report dwells on "the difficulty with which the agreement between the two communities was reached" it fails to take notice of the lesson the agreement inculcates that those that had been artificially

parted have at last come to realize that a common motherland binds them together and in the unity of action they have commenced to see that natural ties, ties established by an all-wise Providence, cannot be torn asunder in spite of seductive arts. Is there not in the reunion of the Hindu and the Musulman a prophecy of the future? The Musulman has in certain Provinces asked for more than his proportionate share and we of the Congress have ungrudgingly yielded to his wish. Yet has not the Musulman, in Provinces where numerically he has the preponderance of population, of his own free will agreed to a lesser proportion of representation? Does this not show that whatever differences artifice had created have been, by the union of hearts and the conception of common interest, wiped out? But let us look into the proposal of the Report. The authors say that they are bound to reserve their approval of the proportions until they have ascertained what their effect will be upon other interests. While the above observation is made the Report proceeds that it welcomes the assent of the Muslim League that the Musulmans are not to participate in the general electorate when a separate electorate is accorded to them. I believe that the assent of the League was given on the basis of the proportions agreed upon between us and them and I am informed that they take objection to Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford interfering with the arrangement made between the two representative bodies of the country. As a criticism on the subject of the representation of minorities I do not desire to do more than quote from the Report itself: "The British Government is often accused of dividing men in order to govern them. But if it unnecessarily divides them at the very moment when it professes to start them on the road to governing themselves it will find it difficult to meet the charge of being hypocritical or short-sighted." I trust that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are not conscious that the reservation that they have made in regard to Musulman representation is liable to be construed into a policy of "divide and rule."

FISCAL POLICY.

The fiscal policy concerning India has not been stated in any detail by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. (Hear, hear.) They say that connected intimately with the matter of industries is the question of the Indian tariff. No one can doubt the defect of the existing fiscal policy so far as the interest of India is concerned. The subject is obviously excluded from discussion as it has been thought undesirable at this juncture to raise any question of the modification of the fiscal policy. The illustrious authors of the Report say that they have no immediate proposals to make but they are anxious that any decision which may hereafter be taken should be taken with full appreciation of educated Indian opinion. We have through our representatives in the Indian Legislative Council, by our speeches from public platforms and by the

medium of the press, expressed the Indian desire for a protective tariff. With growing expenditure on administration and expanding individual needs we look to protective tariff as a means of bringing relief. We believe that if industries are to be nurtured tariff must be adopted. We are told that our belief is wrong but so long as our error in calculation is not demonstrated our faith in protective tariff will remain. Our desire for fiscal autonomy is not based upon any hostility to British interest. No doubt the extent of Indian gain will mean a corresponding loss to the British merchant but in the larger economy of the Empire a strong and prosperous India is of much greater value than mere commercial gain to Great Britain. The need to strengthen the Empire is demonstrated by the present War and the necessity for the strengthening of every unit of the Empire is now beyond question. I do not think any one will dispute the statement that in the past Indian commercial interest was subordinated to British interest; but with a more spacious view of the Empire we expect greater attention to be paid to what will conduce to the prosperity of the country. Much of the political situation in India is due to economic forces that have been silently but surely working. It has often been said that foreign capital, which means British capital, has done much for the development of Indian resources. That is true if the development of resources as an abstract idea, detached from actual benefit, were regarded as a title of the British capitalist to the gratitude of the Indian people. The question is has the kind of development, that we have had, brought to the Indian the prosperity that he wants. The Indian has merely been the producer of raw materials for the benefit of British manufacturers who have purchased the materials from him at low prices and sold the manufactured articles to him at high prices. Industrially we have been left so utterly untrained that we have not been able to free ourselves from the importation of foreign manufactures, while the export of raw materials has continued on an ascending scale. Frankly stated our conviction has been that our industrial backwardness has been positively encouraged in the interest of British manufacturers (hear, hear.) This conviction is not based upon a mere prejudice that one race may have against another, but it is based upon facts of history dating from the time when the commercial development of the country was fostered by the Company as a matter of business. The traditions of the Company inherited by the Government under the Crown, we believe, have not been departed from and British commercial interests have had the same fostering care as in the days of the Company. The maintenance of the duty on cotton goods manufactured in the country has been unquestionably in the interest of Lancashire. The need for industrial development has been felt by us for a long time and it is at our solicitation that the Government now seems to be cognizant of it. We are glad to note that Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are agreed that if the resources of the country are to be develop-

ed the Government must take action. We have long urged that the Government ought to be alive to their responsibility for the industrial development of the country; we have been crying for scientific institutes and technical institutions; we have urged upon their attention the examples of Germany and Japan. Have the Government up to now responded to our call with that depth of sympathy that the circumstances demanded? The dearth of technical institutions in the country testifies to the correctness of the charge that the Government, contrary to their duty, are indifferent to our industrial growth. Until the Government come forward as guide and helper the charge will stand and we would be entitled to entertain the belief, as indeed at present we do, that in the policy of the Government the interest of India is but merely secondary. The political consequences of such a belief can be easily imagined, for no Government can afford to allow the impression to prevail and to spread that the ruled are being "bled white" for the profit of the rulers. The whole subject has been comprehensively put by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in language that is impossible to be excelled. They say: "After the war the need for industrial development will be all the greater unless India is to become a mere dumping-ground for the manufactures of foreign nations which will then be competing all the more keenly for the markets on which their political strength so perceptibly depends. India will certainly consider herself entitled to claim all the help that her Government can give her to enable her to take her place as a manufacturing country; and unless the claim is admitted it will surely turn into an insistent request for a tariff which will penalize imported articles without respect of origin. On all grounds a forward policy in industrial development is urgently called for not merely to give India economic stability; but in order to satisfy the aspirations of her people who desire to see her stand before the world as a well-poised, up-to-date country; in order to provide an outlet for the energies of her youngmen who are otherwise drawn exclusively to Government service or a few over-stocked professions; in order that money now lying unproductive may be applied to the benefit of the whole community and in order that the too speculative and literary tendencies of Indian thought may be bent to more practical ends, and the people may be better qualified to shoulder the new responsibilities which the new constitution will lay upon them."

THE PUBLIC SERVICES.

So far I have dealt with the proposals that come under that part of the announcement of the 20th August that relates to the gradual development of self-governing institutions. I now take up that part of the announcement that declares the policy of the increasing association of Indians in the administration.

The subject is of sufficient importance to have been accorded the first place in the declaration of policy. Happily the proposals of Mr. Montagu and

Lord Chelmsford neutralise the effect of the recommendations of the Royal Commission of 1912. The report of the Commission was unsatisfactory enough even for the time when it was prepared and it would be much more so now under present changed conditions, when volcanic events have caused an upheaval in our modes of thought. The Report on the Reforms as a whole bears testimony to the liberal and sympathetic inclination of its authors in treating Indian questions and we welcome their observation, in dealing with the subject of the public services, that an entirely new policy towards the Indian Government has been adopted which must be very largely dependent for success on the extent to which it is found possible to introduce Indians into every branch of the administration. The declaration of policy of His Majesty's Government ushers in a new era in the destiny of India and if that policy is worked out in its integrity, until responsible Government is established, within a reasonable period of time, the discontent that stalks the land will not have disappeared. The two great changes that the Secretary of State and the Viceroy—propose in respect of the public services are (1) the removal of all racial bars and (2) recruitment in India and England for services for which recruitment in England only is permitted at present. These changes will be a concession to the Indian demand that has been voiced from the Congress ever since its birth. It will not serve any useful purpose to refer to the past history of the exclusion of Indians from the superior services. The declaration of policy gives us a hope for the future and we are now concerned more with what the services are going to be than what they have been. No one minimises the record of the Indian Civil Service. From its inception that Service has comprised earnest and ardent workers of Great Britain and the Indian Empire of to-day is a production of Great Britain in which they have had a considerable, if not the main, part. Judged from our point of view their labours have not been altruistic, (hear, hear) but incidentally, while they have worked for their own country, they have helped us to ideas of freedom and liberty, of nationhood and political rights, which I treat as acquisitions of the greatest value for the up-building of that India which is our dream to-day and we hope will be our realization to-morrow. No question of gratitude arises in this as we have paid heavily for what we have received. It would be unjust to construe our demand for a larger share in the Services as denoting any hostility towards the members of the Services. The changes proposed in respect of the Public Services are merely steps towards the restitution of our rights and it is a gratifying feature of the changes that in the future there is to be between the official and the non-official more of partnership and less of dictation. The Royal Commission of 1912 had recommended that 25 per cent. of the superior posts of the Indian Civil Service should be recruited for in India but Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have raised the proportion to 33 per cent. and this percentage is to be increased by $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. annually

until the periodic Commission is appointed which will re-examine the whole subject. This means that if the periodic Commission comes at the end of 12 years the proportion of recruitment in India at the time will be a little more than 50 per cent. The method proposed is ascending. Our complaint that we have been shut out from practical experience of the problems of administration is acknowledged and it is towards the remedying of that defect that racial bars are to be removed and recruitment in India is desired. I for my part welcome the proposed changes for they, while assuring to us our purpose, do not carry with them the dangers of abruptness.

THE ARMY.

The policy concerning admission of Indians into Military Service has been enunciated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford in a spirit of sympathy towards Indian aspirations. The refusal to provide military training to the Indian people justly laid the Government open to the charge that their motive was to keep the Indian, down—in order to rule them. It is gratifying to note that the angle of view on Indian questions is changed and the policy of keeping India in a state of degrading subjection by emasculation of her people is altered. The promise of King's Commissions to Indians is a happy augury of the good time to come.

THE NON-OFFICIAL BRITISH COMMUNITY.

We have no quarrel with the non-official British community, (Hear, hear), nor do we desire to have any. Under the changed conditions if Responsible Government is really established in the land our attitude towards them should be of cordial friendliness for, whatever conflict there may be between interest of individuals, it would be in the higher interests of India that the co-operation of all inhabiting the land must be sought and secured. Towards the Anglo-Indian community our attitude must be equally friendly. Their position is peculiar in the economy of India and when a Government resting on the wishes of the people comes to be established the duty of protecting small communities will devolve upon those that are numerically superior. I am looking forward to the day when the Anglo-Indian community will feel that its interests are not different from the interests of the Indians and will drop that aloofness from us which unfortunately at present characterizes its attitude. We are asking for a free India and a necessary condition of such an India is the blending together of the large and small communities into one united nation. The unification of all interests is the task before us and lovers of the country no doubt realize that this is not the time, nor the occasion, to quarrel amongst ourselves. Those that are not in the fold must be brought into it. On the subject of social relations Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have given to all parties words of advice that we may all well take to heart. It would be useful to quote here the words of the illustrious

authors of the report. "If there are Indians who really desire to see India leave the Empire, to get rid of English officers and English commerce, we believe that among their springs of actions will be found the bitterness of feeling that has been nurtured out of some manifestation that the Englishman does not think the Indian an equal. Very small seeds casually thrown may result in great harvests of political calamity. We feel that, particularly at the present stage of India's progress, it is the plain duty of every Englishman and woman, official and non-official, in India to avoid the offence and the blunder of discourtesy: and none the less is it incumbent on the educated Indian to cultivate patience and a more generous view of what may very likely be no more than heedlessness or difference of custom."

CONDITIONS OF THE PROBLEM.

Leaving aside the historical survey of the past, facts have to be faced whether by British statesmen or by us. Macaulay has said: "Of all forms of tyranny I believe that the worst is that of a nation over a nation" (Loud cheers) and "the heaviest of all yokes is the yoke of the stranger." That is as true now as in the days of Macaulay and his observation applies as much to India as to any other country. To deny that India feels the yoke of the stranger is to shut one's eyes to fundamental facts. The apologists of British rule in India have asserted that the presence of the British in this land has been due to humane motives; that British object has been to save the people from themselves, to raise their moral standard, to bring them material prosperity, to confer on them the civilising influences of Europe, and so forth and so on. These are hypocrisies common to most apologists. (Laughter) The fact is that the East India Company was not conceived for the benefit of India but to take away her wealth for the benefit of Britain. (Cheers). The greed of wealth that characterized its doings was accompanied by greed for territorial possession and when the transference of rule from the Company to the Crown took place, the greed of wealth and lust of power abated not one jot in the inheritors, the only difference being that tyranny became systematized and plunder became scientific. (Loud Cheers.) The people know it, they feel it, and they are asking for a reparation for the incidents of the past. (Continued cheering.) If, as in the language of Mr. Asquith, the Empire is to be for us worth living in as well as worth dying for, that reparation must be made (hear, hear). The plea to resist our demand, is put forward by short-sighted people that India is not yet educationally fit. They ignore the fact that it is not in literacy that the knowledge of one's rights lies but in that intuitive capacity which is God's gift to all races. We are told that the educated Indian is removed from the masses and between them there is no bond of sympathy to unite them to a common purpose; that the educated Indian is not capable of representing his less fortunate brethren; that the interests of the uneducated classes can be best administered by the British officials. The charges against

us are unjust calumnies and the claims of the bureaucrat to represent the masses are arrogant assumptions (here, here). After more than a hundred years of uncontrolled sway over India the British administration in this country is not able to show a greater result in the spread of literacy than about six per cent. of the population. (Cries of shame.) Those that have kept the people in the darkness of ignorance are the very people who lay claim to the entrustment of the people's interest to them. It is we who have been crying for more education and it is they that have been trying to retard mass education. It was our representative Gopal Krishna Gokhale that introduced the Primary Education Bill and it was the bureaucrat that threw it out. It is we who have been trying to broaden the political basis and it is they who are trying to narrow it down. The interests of the rulers and the ruled have been not only apart but widely divergent. To the advocates of the patriarchal system of sheltered existence we raise our warning finger to point out the importance of facing facts. For India to remain within the Empire she must be freed from an unwholesome tutelage and unless she is accorded a place of honor and of dignity along side the self-governing units of the Empire, what is now a source of profit will assuredly turn into a source of peril. The present war has revealed the importance of cohesion, and unless that cohesion means to India her uplift, it is idle to expect her to work for an Empire in which her position is base and degrading. The sense of the unity of sentiment and consciousness of the identity of interest that now pervade all classes cannot now be checked and Indian progress cannot any more be resisted, and wise statesmanship dictates that in dealing with India Great Britain should adopt the noble policy of helping India to rise to the full stature and dignity of a Self-Governing member of the British Empire. (Loud cheers.)

Brother delegates, I have in this address to you purposely refrained from indulging in generalities, for I felt that I could more usefully engage your attention with the consideration of the reform proposals than abstract discussion of political philosophy. I have not dealt with every detail of the reforms but I have tried to touch upon, in brief, the more important of the proposals. The subject itself is vast, the atmosphere in which it has to be discussed has to be calm, heat has to be avoided, rhetoric has to give place to sound reasoning. To my countrymen I say "Press your demands forcefully and insistently and if you are not heard now, your cause being righteous you will prevail in the end." And to the great British nation I commend the warning words of their great liberal statesman, Lord Morley: "If Imperialism means your own demoralization, if it means lowering your own standard of Civilization and humanity then in the name of all you hold precious, beware of it." (*Bande Mataram*) !

On resuming his seat, the President was garlanded by the Chairman of the Reception Committee amidst enthusiastic cheering.

SUBJECTS COMMITTEE.

The President: Gentlemen, the next work to which we have now to proceed is to appoint the Subjects Committee. In connection with the appointment of the Subjects Committee, I am happy to be able to announce to you that the sister institution of the Muslim League has decided, after consulting some of the leaders, that in the Subjects Committee, there should be a conference in which the Council of the Muslim League might also be present. (Hear, hear.) The Muslim League will not thereby be bound to anything that we may decide; but it is a friendly conversation that we wish to have with the Muslim League in order that the resolutions that we may pass here so far as is possible, may be on lines similar to those that may commend themselves to the League. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, if all are agreed—and I trust that you will be agreed—upon this question, if you give me authority to give on your behalf a mandate to the Subjects Committee to arrange a conference with the All-India Muslim League Council for the purpose of drafting our resolutions I think at such a juncture a harmonious set of resolutions will be conducive to our interests. I take it that the sense of the Congress is that there should be such a conference. (Cries of 'Yes, yes'.)

We now proceed to the question of the election of the members of the Subjects Committee. The Secretary of the Congress will state to you what, the next procedure is.

Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer:—A petition has been handed to the President suggesting that the whole Congress should constitute itself into a Subjects Committee. But the President regrets that the suggestion made is against the rules and cannot therefore be complied with. (A voice: "who are the petitioners?") About 230 delegates. The next subject is the appointment of the Subjects Committee. According to the constitution, the Subjects Committee to be appointed at each session of the Congress to settle its programme of business to be transacted shall, as far as possible, consist of—

Not more than	14		representatives of Madras;
Do.	11	do.	Andhra;
Do.	20	do.	Bombay;
Do.	5	do.	Sindh;
Do.	25	do.	Bengal (including Assam);
Do.	25	do.	United Provinces;
Do.	5	do.	Delhi, Ajmere-Merwara and British Rajputana;
Do.	20	do.	Punjab (including N. W. Fron- tier Provinces);

Not more than	12	representative of	Central Provinces ;
Do.	20	do.	Behar and Orissa ;
Do.	6	do.	Berar ;
Do.	5	do.	Burma ;
Do.	5	representatives of	British Committee of the Congress ;
and additional	10	do.,	the Province in which the Congress is held.

It has been decided that the Bombay delegates should meet in this hall to elect their representatives for the Subjects Committee and the delegates from other Provinces will meet in the blocks respectively allotted to them for electing the members of the Subjects Committee. After the election is over, the Subjects Committee will meet in the Subjects Committee hall outside at 5. 30 p.m.

The Congress then rose for the day to re-assemble at 3 p.m., on Friday, the 30th August 1918.

SECOND DAY.

Friday, the 30th August 1918.

The Congress assembled at 3 p.m. The President was again conducted through the pavilion in a procession escorted by the volunteers and the office-bearers of the Reception Committee and took his seat amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the great gathering. The proceedings commenced with the singing, by the pupils of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, of the national song. 'Bandé Mataram.'

LOYALTY RESOLUTION.

The President who then stepped from his seat on to the rostrum and was received with loud and continued cheering, said:—Ladies and gentlemen, in beginning the proceedings of the Congress to-day, I am happy to inform you that the Subjects Committee have had the advantage of a conference with the members of the Council of the Muslim League, and after the conference with the Members of the Council of the Muslim League, we have three resolutions to put before you. The first resolution is one that I am asked by the Subjects Committee to place before you for your acceptance from the Chair.—The resolution runs thus:—

Resolution I.—“That this Congress tenders its most loyal homage to his gracious Majesty the King Emperor and has learned with great satisfaction of the recent successes of the Allies in the War now raging and sincerely prays for their early and decisive victory and the final vindication of the principles of Freedom, Justice and Self-determination.”

I take it, ladies and gentlemen, that this resolution is passed. (Cries of 'Yes, yes' and applause.)

I declare that this resolution is passed. (Applause.)

RESOLUTION ON SELF-GOVERNMENT.

The President:—The second resolution is also to be put from the Chair and it runs as follows:—

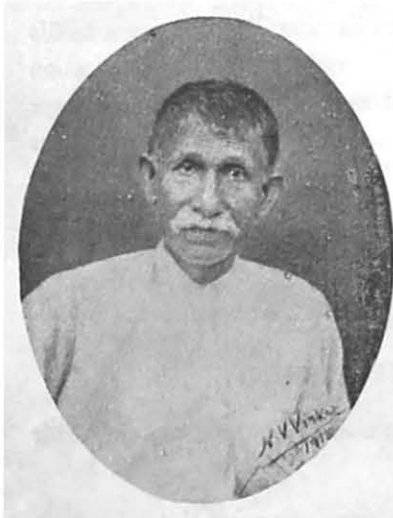
Resolution II.—“That this Congress re-affirms the principles of reform contained in the Resolutions relating to self-government adopted in the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League held at Lucknow in December 1916 and at Calcutta in December 1917 and declares that nothing less than self-government within the Empire can satisfy the Indian people and by



MRS. ANNIE BESANT,
Madras.



HON. THE RAJA SAHEB OF
MAHMUDABAD,
Lucknow.



MOTILAL GHOSH, ESQ.,
Calcutta.



HON. PANDIT
MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA,
Allahabad.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.



HON. SIR DINSHAW M. PETIT,
Bombay.



DEWAN BAHADUR
V. P. MADHAV RAO,
Tanjore.



LALA HARKISSEN LAL,
Lahore.



HARI NARAYAN APTE, ESQ.,
Poona.



HON. MR G. S. KHAPARDE,
Amraoti.



PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU,
Allahabad.



C. VIJARAGHAVA
ACHARIAR, ESQ.,
Madras.



B. CHAKRAVARTI, ESQ.,
Calcutta.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.



N. C. KELKAR, ESQ.,
Poona.



B. G. HORNIMAN, ESQ.,
Bombay.



G. A. NATESAN, ESQ.,
Madras.



C. R. DAS, ESQ.,
Calcutta.

enabling it to take its rightful place as a free and self-governing nation in the British Commonwealth strengthen the connection between Great Britain and India."

I take it, gentlemen, that this resolution is also passed. (Loud cries, of 'Passed, passed.')

I declare that this resolution is passed.

RESOLUTION ON RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

The President :—I now call upon Mrs. Besant to move the third resolution.

Mrs. Besant who received an enthusiastic and prolonged ovation on stepping forward to the rostrum, said :—Mr. President, fellow-delegates, friends: the resolution placed in my hands runs as follows :—

Resolution III.—(a) "That this Congress declares that the people of India are fit for Responsible Government and repudiates the assumption to the contrary contained in the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms.

(b) "That this Congress entirely disagrees with the formula contained in the said Report that the Provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps should be taken towards the progressive realisation of Responsible Government and that the authority of the Government of India in essential matters must remain indisputable pending experience of the effect of the changes proposed to be introduced in the Provinces and this Congress is of opinion that simultaneous advance is indispensable both in the Provinces and the Government of India."

The resolution naturally falls into two parts as I have read it. The first part is the declaration that the people of India are fit for responsible government. (Hear, hear.) In the report, the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State for India and His Excellency the Viceroy have remarked on the change of spirit which has come over the Indian nation during the last few years. I find there that, speaking of the war as one of the reasons for the change in the attitude of the nation, the illustrious authors of the report say : "The war is far from being won. Unless it is won, India's political aspirations are a vain dream. We would call the attention of Indian politicians to this obvious truth." I would like, speaking from this place, to call also the attention of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India and of His Excellency the Viceroy to the equally obvious fact, that, unless the Indian aspirations are satisfied, the war will take a very long time before it is ended. We have just spoken in our first resolution of the fact that we pray for decisive victory and the final vindication of the principles of freedom, justice, and self-determination, but the triumph of those principles means Self-Government in India, Applause), freedom in India, justice in India, not only in European coun-

tries or perchance in the African colonies of Germany. Hence, we ask these illustrious gentlemen to remember that it is true that the war and Indian aspirations are closely intertwined, and the more those aspirations are realised, in fact the swifter will the victory come and broad over the banners of the allied troops.

It is asked, dealing with this matter, "Is India fit for self-government?" Many reasons are given why she should not be regarded as fit for self-government. It is stated in Chapter VI of the report, "The Conditions of the Problem," (para. 131) that there are several serious defects which render India, at present unfit for responsible government. We are told that we must remember what the working of responsible institution involves. We are told "Electors send men to the councils, with power to act in their name, and the councils commit power to ministers, over whom they reserve control in the form of the power of removing them from office. The elector controls his Government, because if his representative in Council supports ministers of whom he disapproves, he can, at the next election, change his representative." Then it is argued that we have not sufficient electorates, that we have not developed the power of toleration in majorities and patience in minorities, and "these qualities are only developed by exercise; they are greatly affected by education, occupation and social organisation." (para. 132) It is because those qualities are only developed by exercise that India asks for a chance of developing them by the exercise of responsible government. (Hear, hear.) If they are only developed by exercise, then how are they to be developed here without exercise? If a man can only learn to swim by going into the water, can he learn to swim by remaining on the shore? (Cries of 'No, no'.) That is what these illustrious gentlemen suggest; you must not have responsible government, because you have not the qualities. The qualities are only developed by exercise, and you must not have exercise. Therefore you must not have responsible government, because" etc. That is arguing in a very vicious circle and we want to get out of it.

Our question is "Why do you say that we are not fit?" "Oh! because you are not educated." But England was not educated prior to 1833 (Hear, hear, and applause). England was not educated when she won her liberties in the great struggle between the Long Parliament and King Charles I. It is not a question of literary education and the percentage of illiterates, as compared with the educated. It is a question of manhood, it is a question of national dignity, a question of pride in your own people, and the traditions of your nation, that make you fit. (Applause.) When we are told here that the peasantry are illiterate, we say: "Yes, but if we get Self-Government, we will make them educated and literate in a short time." But education does not depend entirely on literacy. Education depends on what we some

times call culture, tradition, the inherited type of brain and heart that grows up in the midst of a great and free nation. The peasantry of India are not an uneducated people, although they are not literate in the ordinary sense of the term. And I appeal for that to history. Is it not from India that the nations of the West founded their self-governing institutions and established them as early as in the days of the Saxons? Has not Sir Henry Maine said that the common law in England, growing out of the Saxon village, is the very type of Aryan Self-Government that you find in Indian villages up to the time of Sir Thomas Munro, of which many a trace remains down to the present time? The villagers governed themselves for thousands of years. By the evidence of history, by literature, by tradition, by copperplate grants, by inscriptions graven on walls and pillars, we find not what they say here, that they have never used a vote, but you find the very contrary. You find the village people voting in the way they vote to-day. I can take you back to 400 years before the Christian era when the practice of voting was found among the Indian people. (Applause). When gentlemen who write the history of India have only studied it since the days of Clive, they naturally find it difficult to realise that the Indian peasantry managed their own affairs long before those days. But if you will look at their stories, if you will look at their regulations, if you will study, as I have done, their methods of making their councils and their popular assemblies, you will find that the Indo-Aryan, as he was called, was far, and long in advance of the Saxon younger Aryan in the West, of European lands. I ask you to remember that; there are records still to show that their methods of Council Government were generally far more advanced than what you find in the proposed reforms. Are you aware that in early India the king, as Manu stated, was not a ruler without a council around him? Are you aware that that council, sometimes called the *Sabha* was the executive of the Government that in addition to that, there was the popular assembly or *Samiti*? The two are found throughout the history of India. You find still up in Bihar many traces of the old popular assembly. You find halls still, where the people met in council, to decide questions of public policy. It is not only in the village you find self-government, but it is in tribal republics, it is in aristocratic republics, it is in monarchies, it is in empires, and in all these, you find elements of popular government coming in. And so true is that that it is declared that if a king governs badly, he may be deposed from the throne and another placed in his stead. And everywhere, through the course of Indian history, you find the people governing themselves, looking with care and intelligence into the problems of administration and of policy. Not only is that true, but when you find Mr. Montagu, or his amanuensis, probably Mr. Marris, writing the bureaucratic history of India—when you find him saying that the villager has caste panchayats, but that his mind has been made up for him by his landlord, or banker, or priest

or his relative, I say that is historically false. (Hear, hear). There are masses of evidence now available which, show that he has exercised his own mind on all these questions.

It is said that there are so many classes or divisions. It is said that the bureaucrat must protect the masses of the people against the tyranny of the higher classes. But how far have they defended them? Can men of alien blood and alien custom and alien ways of thinking,—can they, by any possibility, understand the necessities of the masses so well as their own countrymen, men of their own flesh and blood, the educated classes of the people of India? I know why they make this mistake; because it is they are foreigners. The man who dwells in the West End of London, the millionaire, the noble, the highly-placed, does not understand the man that lives in the slum separated from him by difference of birth and by miserable poverty. But the Indian is not divided like that in horizontal classes as in England. He is divided, I grant it, by caste, but one caste includes the Rajah, the noble, the landowner, the banker, the peasant, the cultivator. All these are found within the limits of a single caste. And as I heard Mr. Vijayaraghavachari say the other day of his own knowledge, and his own practice if there be a marriage, if there be a festival, all the relatives are called together, and no one says: "You are a poor man; you are a rich man; you are a Rajah or you are a peasant, a cultivator." They sit and eat together, they meet as brothers, and there is no distinction here between classes in that way, save that of education. There is the difference, that some from villages have become educated men, while the others have remained uneducated. If any one of you as a lawyer or barrister, coming back from England, has a father and mother in the village, or brothers or sisters or cousins who are in the village, do you lose your power of knowing their needs and of representing them, because you have got a certain amount of foreign education? You are not alien to your own people. You are their own and they belong to you, and you to them. (Hear, hear).

Hence I say, that, more than any other country, at the first dawn of self-government, India is fit to rule herself. She knows her own troubles, her own difficulties, her own wants, and in the National Congress since it first met, one of its preoccupations was to press for education, to press for industrial improvements, to press for the opening of technical schools, the lightening of income-tax on the poor, the getting rid of the salt-tax: all the things that were wanted for the helping of the people. These have gone out from the Congress pandals, and not from the offices of bureaucrats.

We ask, in the second part of the resolution, that the changes in the provinces and in the Central Government may go on side by side. There is no good in giving liberty in provinces, if you keep autocracy at Delhi and Simla.

It is idle to say that you give liberty to those who live in the provinces when you make the autocrat, who has power over all legislation, more strongly entrenched than ever in his power in the Central Government. And so it is that we ask that the changes may be simultaneous. You may make one longer than the other if you like. You may take five years for the provinces and 15 years for the Central Government. You may take more steps in the Central than in the Provincial Government, but there must be changes in both. Without that, it is like having a cart with one little wheel and one big wheel, with the result that the whole machine will turn from side to side unevenly and will not run smoothly. The two forms of Government cannot gear in together. With autocracy in one and partial liberty in the other, gradual autonomy in one and absolutism in the other, you can never drive this state coach with wheels of such unequal size. So we say: "Bring the whole Government on together: make your liberty or partial liberty, as it is in provinces, and also introduce similar liberty in the Central Government. Give that as your proposals, and we will gladly accept them. Give us the opportunity, if you will have it so, of making mistakes, for by making mistakes men grow wise." Unless you give them responsibility, unless you give them power, they will always remain children and not men. They will always remain in tutelage and not capable of managing their own affairs. So, when people come to you and say that you ask too much, when people declare that you are unfit and have no right to govern yourselves, say to them: "We are not children. We are a great nation and not a barbarous people. Our culture goes far, far back into the past. Long before you dreamt of culture in the West, India was a highly civilised, trading and prosperous nation." Appeal to your past to justify your hope of the future. Point to your past to show that you are fit to take your own. And this, I say, in conclusion, that there is no one nation, neither England, nor Great Britain, nor America nor any one of the allies, nor Germany nor Austria, who have a right to say to another nation: "You shall not be free. You are not worthy to be free. You must remain a subject people." That question is not to be decided on the battle-fields of France, but it has to be decided in India, in your Congresses in your Conferences, and wherever you gather together. No nation is made free by another nation. It wins its own freedom, and by the winning, it shows its fitness to be free. (Loud and continued applause).

Rai Bahadur Jadunath Muzumdar (Bengal), in seconding the resolution said:—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—You have already heard the resolution read to you. Therefore, I do not consider it necessary to read the resolution again. (Cries of 'Read it again please.') The resolution is in these terms:—(a) "That this Congress declares that the people of India are fit for Responsible Government and repudiates the assumption to the contrary contained in the Report on Indian

“Constitutional Reforms.” That is the first part of the resolution. The second part of the resolution is this:—(b) “That this Congress entirely dis-
 “agrees with the formula contained in the said Report that the Provinces
 “are the domain in which the earlier steps should be taken towards the
 “progressive realisation of Responsible Government and that the authority of
 “the Government of India in essential matters must remain indisputable
 “pending experience of the effect of the changes proposed to be introduced
 “in the Provinces ; and this Congress is of opinion that a similar and simul-
 “taneous advance is indisputable both in the Provinces and the Government
 “of India.” That is the resolution before you, ladies and gentlemen, to be
 considered. I ask you, responsible leaders of the country, whether you will
 accept the dictum that our people are not fit for Self-Government. Are you
 going to confess that you, the inheritors of the civilisation of centuries, are
 not fit for Self-Government? (Cries of ‘No, No’). Yet that is the assump-
 tion. I ask, “When did unfitness first begin?” Did our unfitness begin
 during the time of the Ramayana or the Mahabharata? Did our unfitness
 for Self-Government begin at the time of Asoka or Chandragupta? Did our
 unfitness for Self-Government begin in the time of Akbar? Did it begin in
 the time of Sivaji? (Cries of of ‘No, no’). When did it begin?? In my opinion,
 it began in the year 1757 (Laughter and applause) when the battle of Plassey
 was won by Lord Clive (Applause). When we were fit for Self-Government
 till then, all of a sudden this event proved our unfitness to manage our own
 affairs. It was that magic wand that made us unfit. It is very difficult to
 seriously rebut the suggestion contained in the Report that the united people
 of this ancient country, Hindus, Muhammadans, Parsees, Sikhs, Jains and
 Buddhists, are unfit to govern themselves. I ask the framers of the Reform
 Scheme to point out a single country in this broad and wide universe which
 is unfit for Self-Government. Their standard of administration may not
 come up to what they call the British standard of administration and many
 of us know what the British standard is. Yet, all the same, is there any
 country in this broad universe which is unfit for Self-Government? Self-
 Government is the birthright of every individual and every nation ; and any
 man or woman who comes forward and says that we are not fit for Self-Govern-
 ment, must admit that he or she is an unworthy person. A bird whispers
 into my ears that just about the time of Mr. Montagu’s visit, those estimable
 gentlemen including the Viceroy and the Provincial Governors who have the
 privilege of ruling over us, said that the people of India must prove their
 fitness for Self-Government ; Mr. Montagu had the good sense to tell them that
 they were proposing something which was impossible and that no people could
 prove their fitness for Self-Government until they had Self-Government. (Hear,
 hear). If any people, say, for instance the English people, are asked to prove
 it, suppose by some misfortune the people of India became the rulers of Eng-

land (Loud applause) and suppose we ask the English people to prove their fitness for Self-Government, would they be able to prove it? Can they prove it? I have no doubt that they will find it impossible to prove it, considering how divided they are into various sections such as Protestants, Catholics, Papists, Non-conformists, and so on. They are not willing to marry their own deceased wives' sisters and I can point out their numerous social difficulties, their prejudices and the unclean food they take. (Laughter). And I can prove by this means, their unfitness for Self-Government; and we can prove that in a hundred other ways. But, gentlemen, so far as Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford are concerned, their heart is in the right place but I think they are between the deep sea and the devil, I would not say the devil of bureaucracy, because, among the bureaucrats there are many true and good men, who are willing to live peacefully and honourably with us. But you know, gentlemen, that it is very hard for nations to be just and generous to other nations. Individuals may be what is called patriotic; they may be just and generous to other individuals; but when national interests are concerned, the individual becomes merged in the nation and the question is one of conflict of interests between England and India. But in this instance, if the English nation would carefully consider their own interests, they would perceive that they should, without any fear, at once grant responsible government to the people of India; for, it is only through that means, they can retain their connection with this vast, prosperous and ancient country and the moment they declare that responsible government is impossible for India, the ground under their feet would disappear and it would bring calamity to the Empire. (The President's gong was sounded). My time is over and therefore I must retire. (Cries of 'Go, on'). The President calls me back and I must obey the President.

Nawab Sarfraz Hussain Khan of Behar supported the resolution in a speech in Urdu. He said that they knew from the old records how their old Kings like Vikramaditya, Chandragupta and others ruled India, and how efficient their system of government had been. But only now they were told that they were unfit for any form of Self-Government. They were all fighting in Europe like dogs, but had anybody raised the question of any of those nations' unfitness for Self-Government? Then why did their enemies say that the Indians quarrelled among themselves? Was there any honesty in the excuses about the unfitness of Indians that had been put forward by their Government? (Applause)—(*Bombay Chronicle*).

Mr. Barkat Ali (Lahore,) in supporting the resolution said:—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—In speaking to a resolution, which practically touches and underlies the whole question of reforms within the short space of time that has perforce to be allowed to the

various speakers, taking part in the discussion of this question at the Congress, one's initial difficulty is that one does not really know where to begin, where to end, and what to select for the concentration thereon of the artillery fire of his individual criticism and comment. I must confess that my difficulty in this respect has been considerably alleviated by the fact that already the most important fact of the Resolution has been subjected to much constructive criticism by the speakers who have preceded me. The wealth of argument and eloquence which they have brought to bear upon the resolution has proved to the hilt the proposition that the people of India are as fit for Self-Government as the people of any other part of the globe; and particularly the wealth of information and eloquence with which this point has been proved by Mrs. Besant leaves very little for me or any subsequent speaker to add to what has already been said.

I, therefore, really do not intend to say much on that part of the resolution contained in part (a). I would not say much in connection with the other part of the resolution, too, but it is one of the conditions attaching to a speaker coming on this platform that he should say something and I do not therefore propose to make a departure from this well-established convention. Ladies and gentlemen, I just crave your indulgence for a few moments, while I place before you some of the observations that have occurred to me in connection with the scheme affecting the Government of India. As pointed out by my predecessors Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford propose to leave the Government of India practically untouched for the purposes of local responsibility, allowing to the representatives of the people in this country just the enjoyment of that precious commodity called influence which we already have in such ample profusion, thanks to Lord Morley's enlargement of the Legislative Councils. The history of the working of these Councils has abundantly shown to us that influence divorced from responsibility is quite inadequate to appreciably affect the conduct of a powerful and highly centralised bureaucracy. The authors of the Report themselves admit this. It is only the possession of power and not more influence which acts as a real and effective check on the actions of those who work the machinery of the administration. It is therefore, absolutely necessary that the representatives of the people of this country must have real power; for, influence, as we have seen, is absolutely valueless.

There is another point from which the position which Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford take in regard to the position of the Government of India can be attacked. We all know, gentlemen, that the Provincial Governments are but the agents and the subordinate functionaries of the Government of India; and if liberty and responsibility is at all to be introduced into the polity of this country, is there any reason why it should not be introduced in the very

centre,—the Government of India? The introduction of this principle in the constitution of the Government of India would *ipso facto* react as a check on the Provincial Governments and make them necessarily more popular. If you liberalise to some extent the Provincial Governments, leaving the supreme over-shadowing authority of the Government of India untouched, the result of it will be that that authority with its irresponsible character will react on the character of the Provincial Governments, and create a drag and a restriction upon the little of responsibility that you introduce in the area of Provincial Government.

Ladies and gentlemen, according to what I have submitted before you, you will agree with me that this plan of introducing responsibility in Provincial Governments while holding it back from the sphere of the Government of India has very little of logic or consistency in it. But I go further and submit that, the illogicality of the system apart, there is the stern fact confronting you that in this country the Government of India is the citadel of the bureaucracy, and if the pledge of a definite and substantial advance in the path of Responsible Government is to be redeemed it is necessary that this citadel should be broken into and tempered with responsibility, before we introduce responsibility lower down. Ladies and gentlemen, in this connection, with the permission of the President, I should like to invite your attention to an observation that has just come to my mind; it is the remark of Professor Lowell who says that in the modern world there are two autocrats, the Tsar of Russia and the Viceroy of India (Hear, hear), adding that even the Kaiser takes a back seat, but why go to Professor Lowell? Mr. Montagu himself in the speech he made on the Mesopotamian report, in the House of Commons in which he demolished the fetish of efficiency with which the Government of India had been buttressing itself, confessed that the Government of India was too wooden, too iron, too antediluvian, too inelastic, and too unsuited for the modern requirements of government. Gentlemen, after this pronouncement of Mr. Montagu, we should have expected that he would tackle the Government of India in the spirit of his great speech, and introduce some element of responsibility in its constitution but when he set about his business and went round this country, apparently the bureaucratic forces in this country proved too strong for him and all his high philosophy was swept away, in the tide of bureaucratic opposition. It is therefore our duty as the people most vitally interested to say that bureaucracy shall be transferred at its centres, that responsibility shall be introduced into the Government of India from which it shall flow to the other limbs of the body politic. It is said that the control of Parliament and of its agent, the Secretary of State would heal the situation, but what is the lesson that history teaches in this respect? Taking the case of India, the boasted contro-

exercised by Parliament and the Secretary of State meant nothing in the past except that the man-on-the-spot was given an absolutely free hand in disposing of the destinies of 300 millions of the people. If we look into the history of the self-governing dominions, what do we see? We find that truth went large that so long as the mother-country as represented in Downing Street, held in its hand the thread of power and control, all was confusion, discontent and trouble.

At this stage, some commotion was observed in the compartment reserved for the Madras delegates, and as the confusion did not subside, the speaker had to leave the rostrum abruptly. The next speaker, Mr. Syud Hossain, (Bombay) was called upon to support the resolution but as the confusion had not subsided the President had to intervene.

The President rose from his seat and after getting on to the rostrum amidst cheers, said :—If a little excitement has prevailed on account of a little personal inconvenience to any of the delegates in this pandal, I do expect, as one who looks to you for support in conducting the deliberations of this Congress (Hear, hear and applause) to help me in keeping that order which is required of you to prove that you are entitled to Self-Government. (Applause). Gentlemen, if you do not conduct your proceedings with decorum, you allow your critics the opportunity of saying that you who cannot manage a Congress, cannot manage a country. (Applause). Gentlemen, I appeal to you that if you want to establish your fitness for Self-Government, you must control your temper and it is as an humble servant of yours, I ask this of you. (Applause). I come from a distant part of the country, but I come to you as a brother and I ask you to help me to conduct the proceedings of this Congress with dignity and honour to yourselves. Gentlemen, I appeal to you not to show any manifestation of impatience. (At this stage, complete silence was restored). Gentlemen, I am indebted to you for the kindly attention you have paid to the few words that I have addressed to you. (Applause).

Mr. Syud Hossain (Bombay):—Mr. President and fellow-delegates,—it seems to me that, coming after the slight interval that we have had, it may be as well for me to remind you of the resolution that is before the House. Notwithstanding all that has been said in support of the proposition already, I would again request your attention to the terms of the resolution. It runs as follows :—

- “(a) That this Congress declares that the people of India are fit
 “for responsible government and repudiates the assumption to the
 “contrary contained in the Report on Indian Constitutional
 “Reforms. (b) That this Congress entirely disagrees with the

“formula contained in the said Report that the Provinces are the
 “domain in which the earlier steps should be taken towards
 “the progressive realisation of responsible government and that
 “the authority of the Government of India in essential matters
 “must remain indisputable pending experience of the effect of the
 “changes proposed to be introduced in the Provinces, and this
 “Congress is of opinion that simultaneous advance is indispens-
 “able both in the Provinces and the Government of India.”

Ladies and gentlemen, I do not know that any words of mine are needed to commend this resolution to you. We have already had a very exhaustive and a very penetrating treatment of the resolution at the hands of the speaker who have preceded me. At the same time, I cannot help reflecting, as I read the resolution, that the first part of it at any rate, is so true that it seems to me nothing short of amazing that it should be necessary for the Indian National Congress in session assembled solemnly to affirm that proposition—the proposition that the people of India are fit for responsible government. I certainly feel, ladies and gentlemen, that this proposition is an entirely superfluous one; at the same time, I recognise that having regard to the conditions in the midst of which Indians are called upon to exist at present, it may be useful to affirm the proposition and even argue it. Experts in the niceties of the political game, in whose sagacity I have every confidence, are convinced that to indulge in the solemn farce of participating in a discussion of this kind has a distinct utilitarian value. (Laughter). How is it that this question now arises,—the question whether Indians are or are not fit for Self-Government? It arises, ladies and gentlemen, from the fact that for the last 150 years, there has been a sedulous and extensive propaganda in this country directed to hypnotising Indians into believing that they are unfit for all the things that count in this world; all the things that make life worth living and worth dying for. And it is because of that propaganda that, at the present moment it is possible to find even some educated and otherwise right-minded people who are unhappily afflicted with doubts as to their own and their fellow-countrymen's fitness for Self-Government. It is that propaganda we have to meet by moving such a resolution as this. There is one important item of this propaganda which I think deserves some attention on our part. Not only the present but also the preceding generation of Indians have been brought up on a course of teaching in Indian history which is as amazing as it is inexact. I do not want to put it more harshly, because no good purpose will be served by it; and the fact is beginning to be sufficiently well understood. But ladies and gentlemen, it is just as well that once in a way we should remind ourselves of the fact that many of the Anglo-Indian text-books of Indian history on which successive generations of the youth of this country have been brought up constitute a travesty and nothing less of the facts of Indian history. What

is the prevailing or the predominant note of this history? The predominant suggestion sought to be conveyed by such teaching is that Indian history began more or less about the year 1857 (Laughter). The inference, of course is that the antecedent epochs of the history of this country constitute a vast blank in which riotous chaos alternated with barbaric splendour. I do not propose to traverse that interesting theory now. All I will say is that I don't know whether Indian history began in 1857, but some of us feel very strongly at times that Indian history came to an end in that year (cheers). On that assumption, we are passing through an interregnum at present, although there is good reason to hope that before long Indian history shall resume its course, in consonance with the national traditions of the past. Well, ladies and gentlemen, it is on such suggestions, ideas and caricatures of facts as I have indicated, that successive generations of Indian youths have been brought up. Is it therefore any marvel that there are to-day among our own people, some, who are consumed with acute misgivings that we are unfit to manage our own affairs,—unfit for all the things that really matter, and that give dignity and strength to national as well as individual existence? What we have therefore to do, ladies and gentlemen, is to meet that charge according to the political conventions of the day, and demonstrate that we are fit for Self-Government or Responsible Government. We have also got to cure our all-too-diffident, modest and mistrusting fellow-countrymen of their illusions. As you know, we have not been altogether idle in the discharge of this duty. There is no need for me to go into the history of all that has been done in this behalf. The history of the Indian National Congress for the last 30 years and more is a sufficient testimony to the fact that all that could be done in a rational way to meet any *bona fide* accusations of the kind to which reference is made in the first part of the resolution has been done. It is a melancholy reflection, however, that to-day after more than a generation, it would seem that we are not much nearer an effective refutation of the monstrous charge under which the Indian Nation has laboured so long. If that were not so, there should have been no occasion for this resolution.

That brings me to the second part of the resolution. As you are aware, the main object of the proposals of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford as contained in the report of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy as they themselves declare, is to devise a practical means of making a beginning towards Responsible Government in this country. We are to ascend the first rung of the ladder—an experiment of which the principle has been conceded by His Majesty's Government, who have also affirmed that they would like to see us reach the top eventually. What Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford set themselves to do was to devise a machinery, a means by which we shall be enabled to take the first step. And the chief item in their proposals is the arrangement

which is referred to in the second part of this resolution. What is sought to be laid down by the distinguished authors of the report is that the Provincial Government is the appropriate and right region in which the experiment in Self-Government may be permissible to the people of India. Equally definitely and simultaneously it is laid down that the experiment in Provincial Government, is not to be accompanied by any similar reform in the Government of India. The Government of India, which is the controlling agency over all the Provincial Governments is to be left intact, is to remain in that same unregenerate condition in which it has been for the last 50 years. Ladies and gentlemen, the object for which this resolution has got to be passed by the National Congress is no academic one. We have been offered on very high and responsible authority certain definite proposals, and it is for the Indian National Congress to declare on behalf of the people of this country whether or no they are prepared to accept these particular proposals. As you are aware the overwhelming sense of the community is against the admission of the principle which is thus sought to be laid down. One of the speakers has already reminded you that Mr. Montagu was one of those who denounced with striking conviction and force the constitution of the Indian Government, and its utter unfitness for all the purposes and requirements of modern life; and yet it is the same Mr. Montagu who, entirely unabashed, appears now before the people of this country with the plea that the Government of India should be maintained and supported and entrenched in its present obnoxious and impossible position, and continue unfettered to wield the powers of an ancient autocracy. (Cries of 'shame').

Apart from the general principle of the thing, I have to put to you as an essential and leading argument in the matter that for us to accept that proposal would be an act of suicidal folly, because, taken concurrently, the two proposals as embodied in the scheme, nullify one another. As a friend of mine, a friend who is both cynical and truthful, said in regard to the proposed reforms as a whole, what is given with the left hand is taken away with the right hand, the emphasis being on the "right" (cheers). Of that description we have got a complete illustration, ladies and gentlemen, in the proposal to which reference is made in the resolution before you. What they give you in the Provincial Government is something which taken by itself on its own intrinsic merits might be useful; but taken in conjunction with the fact that it is sought to keep up the despotic character of the Indian Government, and to maintain intact its irresponsibility to the Indian people, the proposal in regard to the reform of the Provincial Government simply drops to the ground. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, we can do no less than to declare, as we do declare in this resolution, that "this Congress entirely disagrees with the formula"—we must remember that it is a basic formula—"contained in

BEPIN CHANDRA PAL, ESQ.,
Calcutta.



MRS SAROJINI NAIDU,
HYDERABAD, (Deccan.)



C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER,
ESQ.,
Madras.



HON. MR. G. M. BHURGRI,
Karachi.



Hon.
A. K. FAZLUL HUQ,
Calcutta.



Dewan Bahadur
KESHAV PILLAY,
Madras.



JAMNADAS DWARKADAS,
ESQ.,
Bombay.



RAMBHUIJ DUTT
CHAUDHARI, ESQ.,
Lahore.



DR. D. D. SATHAYE,
Bombay.



M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQ.,
Bombay.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.

Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford's proposals that the Provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps should be taken towards the progressive realisation of Responsible Government." We have got to repudiate it. We have to make it perfectly clear to His Majesty's Government that whatever may be their intentions in regard to this matter, we for our part, cannot possibly accept the principle on which their proposals are based, at any rate, this part of their proposals is based, because, from our point of view it does not fulfil the first elementary condition, namely, that the proposed reform shall secure to the people of India a progressive realisation of responsible government. (cheers). I have great pleasure in formally supporting this resolution.

The President :—Ladies and gentlemen, the resolution having been duly moved, seconded and supported, I put it to you. If you accept it, I will declare it passed. (Cries of 'passed, passed' and loud applause).

I declare the resolution passed. (Applause).

The Proceedings of the Congress for the day have now come to an end. We shall again sit to-morrow at 10-30 in the morning. We are now going to sit in the Subjects Committee, and such of the delegates as are members of the Subjects Committee will please adjourn to the Subjects Committee hall. The members of the Moslem League will also come to the Subjects Committee hall.

The Congress then adjourned at 4-45 p.m.



HON. PANDIT
GOKARAN NATH MISRA,
Lucknow.



DR. M. A. ANSARI,
Delhi.



HON. MR. LALUBHAI
SAMALDAS MEHTA,
Bombay.



DR. B. S. MOONJE,
Nagpur.

BEPIN CHANDRA PAL, Esq.,
Calcutta.



MRS SAROJINI NAIDU,
HYDERABAD, (Deccan.)



Hon
A. K. FAZLUL HUQ,
Calcutta.



JAMNADAS DWARKADAS,
Esq.,
Bombay.



RAMBHUIJ DUTT
CHAUDHARI, Esq.,
Lahore.

C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYER,
ESQ.,
Madras.



HON. MR. G. M. BHURGRI,
Karachi.



Dewan Bahadur
KESHAV PILLAY,
Madras.



DR. D. D. SATHAYE,
Bombay.



M. R. JAYAKAR, ESQ.,
Bombay.

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GENERAL SECRETARIES,
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS SPECIAL SESSIONS, 1918.



Sitting left to right.

Photo by N. V. VIRKAR, Bombay, No. 4.

Mr. Gulabchand D. Javeri, Dr. A. S. Erulkar, Dr. M. B. Velkar, Mr. Jannadas Dwarkadas, Mrs. Besant,
Mr. Hasan Imam (*President*), Mr. Hansaraj P. Thakersy, Mr. N. B. Vibhakar, Mr. M. R. Jayakar, Dr. C. M. Desai.

Standing left to right.

Mr. Ratansy D. Morarji, Mr. Sherif Devji Kanji, Mr. Syed Husain, Mr. Mowji Govindji Seth, Dr. D. D. Sathaye,
Mr. R. G. Munsiff, Mr. Umar Sobani, Mr. Kani Dwarkadas, Mr. S. G. Banker.

THIRD DAY.

Saturday, the 31st. August 1918.

The Congress assembled at 10.30 a.m., as announced at the conclusion of the previous day's sitting, but the proceedings did not commence till 11.30, as the Subjects Committee had been engaged the night preceding and even till late that morning, with the consideration of the modifications to be suggested in the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme of Reforms.

The Proceedings commenced with the singing of a patriotic song, by Indian ladies.

The President :—Brother delegates, I declare the Congress open, and I call upon the Hon'ble Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra to move the resolution about the Declaration of Indian Rights.

DECLARATION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.

"The Hon'ble Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra (Lucknow) said :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, the resolution which I have been called upon to move reads as follows :—

"The Government of India shall have undivided administrative authority on matters directly concerning peace, tranquility and defence of the country, subject to the following :

DECLARATION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.

That the Statute to be passed by Parliament should include the Declaration of the Rights of the People of India as British Citizens :—

- (a) That all Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India are equal before the law, and there shall be no penal or administrative law in force in the Dominions, whether substantive or procedural, of a discriminative nature ;
- (b) That no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, of life, property, or of association, free speech or in respect of writing, except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice, and as a result of lawful and open trial ;
- (c) That every Indian subject shall be entitled to bear arms, subject to the purchase of a license, as in Great Britain, and that the right shall not be taken away save by a sentence of an ordinary Court of Justice ;

- (d) That the Press shall be free, and that no license or security shall be demanded on the registration of a press or a newspaper ;
- (e) That corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any Indian subject of His Majesty, save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects.

Ladies and gentlemen, the proposition which has been entrusted to me, I declare to be one of the gravest and of the most vital importance. Let the reforms enunciated in the report of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford come or not but the rights which we should enjoy and which we claim as British citizens must be conceded to us above all other reforms, because we find that as long as these rights are not conceded to us, we cannot consider ourselves as free British citizens and all the reforms which are promised to us are not worth the paper they are written upon. (Hear, hear and applause). What is the first thing which we ask in this resolution and which you consider that it is imperative for you to ask from the Government? We do not want, remember, ladies and gentlemen, any more promises, we do not want any more declarations. We emphatically say in this resolution that whatever is our birthright and whatever is our natural right and whatever is our right as British citizens must now be incorporated in a statute passed by Parliament in which this declaration of our rights should be included. Ladies and gentlemen, we have had many declarations, we have had many promises, but these have not been fulfilled : and as it has been said often from this platform, the history of India may well be said to be a history of unredeemed pledges. and unfulfilled promises. (Cries of 'Shame'). Therefore, we are going to say in this resolution that we shall not be satisfied unless these rights are actually embodied in a statute passed by Parliament (Applause).

Now, ladies and gentlemen, what are the rights, as I said, which we want now to be declared in this statute? The first right is that all the distinctions which have till now existed between the Indian subjects of His Majesty's Government and other subjects, by which we mean whether they belong to Europe or the Colonies, should be done away with. It is said that India, as a whole, is to be an integral part of the British commonwealth; and if India is to contribute to the strength of the Empire, by being treated as an integral part of the same, we cannot allow ourselves to be treated in any discriminative method nor can we afford to see that there should be one way of treatment accorded to Europeans or persons residing in any of the Colonies and a different way to Indians. I would only point out to you one or two examples to illustrate the proposition.

Ladies and gentlemen, you are perfectly aware that when a European is put forward before a Criminal Court of Law as an accused, what is the pro-

cedure that he is entitled to, claim for his trial what is it that he is entitled to demand as a matter of right? He is entitled to demand as a matter of right that he ought to be tried by a High Court; secondly, he ought to be tried by a jury consisting of his own countrymen (Cries of 'shame'). I do not think that it is any matter to cry shame about. We only want that the same procedure should be allowed to us, the Indians (Applause). We say 'Why should you make a provision in Law whereby a European can say to a Magistrate that he ought to be tried only by a jury consisting of his own countrymen and why should not that right be conceded to Indians also? My friend, the Hon'ble Mr. Wazir Hasan, moved about two years ago a resolution in the Legislative Council of the United Provinces to which I have the honour to belong a resolution that with regard to certain offences, in certain districts the system of trial by jury ought to be extended. The Government in opposing the Resolution quoted in its support the opinions of the Sessions Judges and of some of the officers, whose sole desire is always to see such treats from an executive point of view; it does not matter in many cases, whether a man is really guilty or not they say that for the purposes of administration, it is necessary that the man must receive punishment. (Cries of Shame'). We say that if we are going to try a man with regard to those offences about which we ask that there should be a trial by jury, that with regard to Sessions cases and offences of a major nature and a graver nature,—we say that the right of trial by jury ought to be extended to us the Indians as well. We cannot have one procedure for the trial of the Indians and another procedure for the Europeans. In many a Province of large dimensions, such a right has not been at all conceded, and we now consider that this reform is long overdue. It is from this Congress platform that the voice has gone forth for many years, that to the people of India must be conceded the privilege of trial by jury, when they are accused of certain offences triable by Sessions Courts. That is merely an illustration of what we mean. Therefore, in para (1) of the resolution, we now propose, and I hope you will agree with me that that what is contained in this part of the resolution must now go forth as the united voice of the Congress that before any reforms are conceded, Indians and Europeans and the people living in the Colonies must be put in the eyes of law upon the same level. (Hear, hear).

What is it, ladies and gentlemen, that you ask for in the second part of this resolution? In the second part of this resolution, you want that "No Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty of life, property, or of association, free speech or in respect of writing, except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice, and as a result of a lawful and open trial." Ladies and gentlemen, I would specially invite your attention to this part of the resolution. The history of the circumstances and of the events which have led us now to put forward this part of the resolution

from the platform of the Indian National Congress is, to a great extent, contained in the history of the Defence of India Act. Ladies and gentlemen, you are aware that when the war was proclaimed between the British and the Germans, it was thought that, as in England where they had what is called the Defence of the Realm Act, they ought to have here a similar statute, by means of which, certain powers were to be conceded to the Executive Government during the time of the war. What were those powers? The powers were of internment, of constituting special tribunals for the purpose of trying those persons who were considered to be guilty of heinous offences in connection with the war. When the Bill was introduced in the Imperial Council, many of the members, our elected representatives, pointed out to the Executive Government that this was a very grave step; and an assurance was given to us on behalf of the Government, that the powers under the Act will be exercised with great caution—an assurance which is always, in many cases, given not so much with the intention—pardon me for saying so—of carrying it out, but with the intention of taking away the opposition of Indian members to such a measure. It was also stated that such a measure was absolutely necessary, for carrying on the administration of the country during the time of the war. On that basis, support was given to the measure by the Indian Members of the Legislative Council. What did our members and representatives have in view when they gave their consent to a measure like that? They thought that if at any time a person was found carrying on correspondence or having in any other way connection with an alien Government with which the British Government was at war, such a person ought to be interned, that if a person was found guilty of an offence regarding the State, that man might also be interned; and that if a person committed an offence against the State during the time of the war, we should have a special tribunal, in which a shorter procedure was prescribed, whereby the trial was to be one of a summary nature. What was the position which had now been taken up by the Government since the passing of the Defence of India Act? May I now ask, ladies and gentlemen, whether the promise which was given to us at the time of passing the Act had been carried out and for what purposes have this Act been enforced? It is, as we all know, now being enforced for the purpose of hundreds and thousands of innocents in Bengal being interned (Cries of 'Shame'). Why interned? Interned merely on the police reports, merely upon suspicions, merely upon surmises, not upon the result of any open trial. They were not allowed even to know the nature of the particular charges against them and they were not allowed the right to put forward their reply to those charges. It was said that an officer of the Bengal Government who, mind you, was not a High Court Judge, but was said to be quite fit to be a High Court Judge—that such a man was put in charge of deciding whether

the persons reported on by the blessed C.I.D., (laughter) were to be interned or not. And the result of it was that many innocent persons, including some as regards whom the Government themselves conceded that they were innocent, were interned. I want to remind you of the case of a particular lady about whom there was a most foolish mistake committed. Some lady of a particular name was reported on by the C.I.D. against whom action was to be taken under the Defence of India Act. But another lady of the same name was caught hold of and interned (Cries of 'shame'). When the matter was brought to the notice of the authorities, they admitted their mistakes. Such a mistake could not have been committed if a person against whom an order of internment was to be passed, was subjected to open trial by an ordinary Court of Justice, and if he or she had been given the chance of stating his or her own case to the officer who had to pass the order of internment against him or her. We therefore say you have misused the power which you took under the Defence of India Act; you have exercised the power not with due care and discrimination; and if you have not exercised the power with that care and discrimination, we want it now to be incorporated in the statute that there shall be placed on Indians no restrictions with regard to liberty of life, property, or of association, free speech or in respect of writing, except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice, and as a result of a lawful and open trial.

Ladies and gentlemen, I now pass on to the third part of the resolution which requires no words from me to support it. It is a subject about which I spoke before you from this Congress platform at the sitting of the National Congress of 1915. That was the question of the right of Indian citizens to carry arms. No argument is necessary to be put forward in support of this right of ours beyond this, that it is a natural right, that it is the birthright of every individual to carry arms for the purpose of his or her self-protection and self-defence, and also for the defence of one's hearth and homes. What right have the British Government, or for the matter of that, any other Government, to try and impose restrictions upon Indians not to carry arms? I would only like to remind you of the time since when this restriction has been imposed on the people of this country. Prior to the Mutiny, there was no Arms Act, at all and after the Mutiny, there was also no Arms Act but the distrust which had been created in the minds of the European officials as the result of the Mutiny—that distrust was given expression to in what is called the Arms Act of 1878. In the earlier years of the Congress, I would remind you, ladies and gentlemen, this question of the repeal of Arms Act was taken up and a patriotic talukdar and landholder of the Province of Oudh, Rajah Rampal Singh, of Kalakankar then spoke out with prophetic force that the enactment of such a law was against the self-respect of the Indians and that it was emasculating the entire race, although at the time when such

an Act was passed, or for a number of years after that, the Government did not realise what they were doing ; but the war came in which our British Government was involved against the German Government and they now fully realised the mistake of such a measure. Do we not know that the enactment of that measure is standing very much in the way of a rapid and effective recruitment ? When we represent the matter to the Government of India, the Executive Government say that this matter is under consideration ; but no assurance is given that they are going to repeal the Arms Act or modify it in such a manner as it may be acceptable to us. Therefore, I want you to say from this Congress platform whether Mr. Montagu's reforms may come or may not come, or whether any other constitutional reform may come or may not come, we shall not now allow this disability to be saddled on our shoulders even for a minute longer. (Applause).

What is the fourth point that we press in our resolution ? We say that, our Press shall be free. You know ladies and gentleman what a sad history attaches to the Press Act of 1910. When the Act was passed, Sir S. P. Sinha then the Law Member of the Government of India, promised to us that the Act would be administered with care and discrimination ; but what has been the result of it ? We find the moment any paper takes up to write in a bold way about the grievances and complaints either of Indians in general or of Indians of a particular locality, the officials always look upon that action, upon that expression of opinion, with emphatic disapproval. And if the paper persists in its attitude the result is either security is demanded if the security has not been already taken ; or if security has already been taken, the security already paid is forfeited. (The President sounded the gong) Mr. President, in five minutes more I will finish my speech. (Cries of 'Go on'). The result is that that paper is closed. Was that not the fate of the "Comrade" of blessed memory, of the "New Era" of my city ? And the recent instances of action taken against three other Indian vernacular papers are almost sufficient to prove the proposition that we are laying down in this resolution. We now want you to say to the authorities "If you want to make your Government or your Empire stand on a solid basis, and if you "want us to be with you in affectionate bondage, please listen to us ; "do not consider that whatever we say and which you do not like is "necessarily seditious, and if we did not speak out what we feel, how will "you be able to know our thoughts and how can any Governor successfully "administer a territory under his charge unless he knows the mind of the "people under his control and charge" ? Therefore, gentlemen, we say that prior to the concession of the reforms, of the popular reforms, our Press must be made free, especially so because Responsible Government is now being given into our hands.

The last point, ladies and gentlemen, which is covered by this resolution is a point which you may say, creates in your mind a little bit of amusement. (Laughter). We say that, so far as Indians are concerned, they should not be subjected to corporal punishment except under circumstances under which the subjects of the other parts of the British Empire are also subjected to the same treatment. This part of the resolution speaks for itself. It does not require any very great explanation on my part. I therefore propose this resolution and ask you ladies and gentlemen, to pass this resolution and say with emphatic voice that before your reforms come, in order to make them successful or acceptable to the people and in order to make them productive of good, it is necessary that the declaration of rights must be embodied in a statute and the various disabilities under which Indians suffer must be removed, removed not merely by making promises or announcements, but by incorporating those rights in a statute of Parliament itself. With these words I commend this resolution to your acceptance. (Applause).

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who, on rising was received with an ovation, in seconding the resolution, said:—My friends, before I begin, I am going to make a declaration of personal right that you will be kind and that you will not ask me to speak louder, because I am ill to-day and it is only a sense of duty that brought me to second this important proposition.

That to-day in the twentieth century, when human civilization is supposed to have reached the zenith of its ideals, it should be necessary in the open Congress of the Indian Assembly to move a resolution like this fills me with a double sense of shame and misfortune. The shame is not ours, though the misfortune is ours. The shame belongs to those who insist so proudly that they represent the highest civilisation in the world. Shall we, who are the heirs of an immemorial civilization, who are the inheritors of the spiritual genius of India, be obliged in such abject terms to ask to-day for what is our inalienable right, not because we are Indians, but because we are human? Is there any law—I do not know but is there in the law of any race, or nation in the world's history that arrogant, terrible, tragic, criterion, discriminative criterion which has been created, because one man is of one colour and another man is of another colour? (Cries of 'shame'). Are these not arbitrary distinctions, arrogant differences? Do they not brand with shame, those who make us ask in open assemblage for a right which is every man's wherever he lives and which he bequathes to his heirs as the most priceless gift that humanity can possess or cherish? What is it that we ask for? We ask that the punishment might be equal, corporal punishment might be equal; that the Englishman does not feel more sensitively than the Indian; the blood drawn from the stripes on an Indian's back does not cry out with much less poignant agony than the blood drawn from the stripes on the back of a European criminal.

What is it that we ask for? We ask for freedom of speech. We, who are the guardians of our own generation, who are the custodians of our own past, who are the stewards of our own future, shall have liberty to say that this thing shall not be and that thing shall not be; that we shall have the right to say that we will not submit to this discriminating and degrading system of differences and divisions, that we have a right to say when our granaries are plundered, when famine is threatened, when our industries are destroyed, when our sons are degraded, and when our daughters are dishonoured, 'it shall not be and it cannot be.' (Applause). We want freedom to say that patriotism is no crime. We want to set the standards and measures of our own national ideals according to our own convictions, capacities and needs. We want to say that patriotism is our birthright, and dark dungeons are not the ultimate goal of our young dreamers of liberty. We want to say if a human law sanctioned by ages has been broken, punish the criminal according to every human standard of justice. But when in Bengal and in the Punjab one finds the youth of our nation, whose only crime is that they were idealists and lovers of freedom, rotting in jails with their young limbs grown weak, the youthful eyes that saw visions grown blind, the young lips that spoke the fiery words of the older generation stricken dumb, when we find their dreams borne like fire from their flaming breasts silenced into the tragedy of madness are we going to keep still, are we going to say: "You are our rulers."? No, we shall say, "You are tyrants." Do not mistake me when I say that. I do not use the word in the sense of ordinary dictionary English, but I do say that where there is tyranny, there must be a response of liberty; where there is justice, there must be a charter of liberty, inaugurated by the people as the people's gift to self-respect. When there is oppression, the only self-respecting thing is to rise and say 'this shall cease to-day, because my right is justice'. Freedom of the Press, freedom to meet together in assemblies, speaking with our full hearts, freedom to carry arms, are the immemorial, rights of manhood—the manhood that respects itself and defends the honour of its home and its women and its frontiers and its hearths. What is the use of the memories of Rajputs and Mussalmans, if they are not able to save us from further shame and further sorrows? The remembrance of lost privileges and the recollection of the rights that have been quenched, have stung the sons of the soil. Shall we to-day speak of freedom and yet our sons be not free to make good their claim to freedom? Shall the enemy come across the frontiers and the seas, and we, the children of India, we who bear the traditions of chivalry and valour, be defenceless and be left to the tender mercies of the Japanese or the Germans, Asiatic tyranny, or European oppression? Are these things we are going to submit to? No. 'We say we will not.' This resolution says that we should have freedom of speech, freedom of association,

freedom to be brave, freedom to be good patriots. It only asks for the common privilege to live not as chained and conquered brutes, but as men to whom God's air is as free in India as it is to those in far off England. Friends, there is before you the choice between life and death; the words of the resolution do not imply that, because words spoken in foreign languages, are always cold when printed and fall short of the agony of the human heart (and of the spoken demand.) I ask you in seconding with me, in supporting with me, in urging with me this resolution for a Declaration of Indian Rights, only to assert your human destiny and to be true to your own great traditions and at once determine and establish beyond all possibility of violence or violation, the spirit, the ideal, the legacy and the heir-loom of freedom and liberty for generations unborn to whom we have to give an account. (Applause).

Pundit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari (Punjab), in supporting the resolution in Hindi, said the least that a human being could ask for was that he should be allowed to speak as he liked and go where he liked. But what did they find? They found that Mr. Tilak could not speak in the Punjab (Cries of 'shame'), and that Mr. Pal or Mr. Nekiram could not speak at Delhi. (Cries of 'shame'): -It was the birthright of every subject of His Majesty to go to whatever part of the British Empire he liked and give expression to his views in whatever part of that Empire he liked. (Cheers). If the Government had allowed the people to bear arms, their appeal for recruitment would have met with a readier response. (*Bombay Chronicle.*)

Mr. T. V. Venkatarama Aiyar (Madras):—Mr, President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution that has been placed before you for your acceptance. I am glad to say that this demand for a declaration of rights comes from Madras. It was for the first time enunciated in the able and exhaustive address on constitutional reforms delivered before the Provincial Conference at Madras by one of our ablest public men, Mr. C. Vijayaraghava Chariar of Salem (Hear, hear). Gentlemen in asking you to accept this resolution, we are only asking that we should be guaranteed those rights of citizenship, which are inherent in and enjoyed by the inhabitants of every free and civilised country. Freedom of speech, freedom of person and freedom of property are the three things for which a Government ought to be responsible in any civilised country; and no Government can or ought to exist which does not guarantee these three things to its citizens. After the able and exhaustive speeches of Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra and Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhari, and with the eloquence and the poetry of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu still ringing in our ears, there is very little for me to say in order to commend this proposition to your acceptance.

I propose to confine my attention to a few only of the points mentioned in this proposition. The first point to which I wish to draw your attention is that we ask for the liberty of the person to be guaranteed, in a statutory enactment to be passed by Parliament. Gentlemen, ever since the promulgation of the Bengal Regulation of 1818 and of the corresponding Bombay and Madras Regulations it cannot be said that the person of His Majesty's Indian subjects has been free from arrest and imprisonment at the will of the Executive Government. We know that Lord Morley when he was Secretary of State for India said that he was against a law being permanently passed which would place the personal liberty of the Indian people at the mercy of those entrusted with the executive government in British India, but still we find that there is a demand now made in the report of the Rowlatt Committee to make permanent an enactment by which the liberty of the subject would be at the mercy of the Executive Government and we ought to protest in the strongest language possible against such a thing being done; and in order to enable us to do so, we should insist upon a Parliamentary enactment, guaranteeing to us personal liberty which will, at all times, be inviolable; unless and until after a due course of trial and in the ordinary courts of justice, you are convicted, of an offence known to the law your personal liberty ought not to be at stake.

The next point to which I wish to draw your attention is this. We must be placed in a position under which no law could be enacted which would injuriously affect our property; and that brings us to the question as to whether we are free from such laws at the present moment. The Press Law is a huge engine of oppression. In addition to circumscribing your liberty of speech it compels you to deposit security practically for your good behaviour and without giving you, a real, honest and adequate opportunity to meet the accusation made against you, it gives the Executive Government power to forfeit any security that you may have deposited. That law is a law for the early repeal of which we must persistently agitate. There is also the Seditious Meetings Act and there are various rules passed under the Defence of India Act which affect one or the other of the elementary rights of citizenship. It has been said that the Defence of India Act was intended to be temporary in its character and that it was passed for a special purpose; but it includes in its range every conceivable action which the Government may, if so disposed take for the purpose of curtailment of the liberty of the subject and of forfeiture of property. When an attempt is made as is now done by the Rowlatt Committee to justify a law like this, and to make it more rigid and to make it practically permanent, we must agitate against that attempt succeeding and we must use all our best endeavour in order to prevent any thing being done which will fetter our liberties for all time. Therefore this resolution asks that the rights and liberties referred to in the resolution should be permanently guaranteed to us in an

enactment passed by the British Parliament. It must be made quite clear that the jurisdiction of the Indian Legislature does not extend to pass any measure which will deprive a subject of the liberty of his person or the liberty of his property.

The only other point I wish to draw your attention to is that this resolution asks for the recognition of the elementary principle (at this stage the President sounded the gong), that every free nation should be in a position to bear arms in defence of its own country. Gentlemen, you may remember the words that were solemnly uttered at the Delhi Conference—that danger is being brought within our borders and that we should be in a position to meet that danger; when such a contingency arises is it not right that we should be able to fight our own battle and that we should not depend upon others for the safety of our own country? That is the reason why we emphasise that we should be in a position to bear arms in defence of our own Empire. Ladies and Gentlemen, I commend the resolution to your acceptance.

Mr. Srish Chandra Chatterjee (Dacca):—Mr. President and brother and sister delegates, I have been asked to support the resolution placed before you by the speakers who have already spoken. I need not detain you with any words of mine on the five items contained in the resolution. According to my opinion, they are elementary rights and they are the birthrights of every living nation. But for reasons best known to our rulers, these rights have been denied to us (Cries of 'Shame') We have been enjoying certain rights for sometime past by way of courtesy but the authorities are curtailing them. You remember the Regulation III of 1818; and then came the Defence of India Act of 1915. As if these were not sufficient to make repressive legislation complete, they formed a Committee known as the Rowlatt Committee (Cries of 'Shame'). It is a matter of great regret and a great shame that two of our countrymen (Cries of "Shame")—I am all the more ashamed that one of them is a Bengalee (Cries of 'Shame')—contracted an unholy alliance with three Englishmen to submit certain proposals, which I do not wish to place before you, as you all know them very well—proposals which are simply monstrous. The only thing the Rowlatt Committee had to go upon was the report of the C.I.D. and the statements of the civilians who were specially deputed to place them before the Committee. They placed before them only one side and placed nothing on the defence side. The Committee accepted every word of theirs as gospel truth and they forgot that there were two sides of the shield and they submitted their proposals. It is very funny that these gentlemen—these Patanas of British Government—consider that the commitment procedure laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code should be done away with in the interest of the accused. Gentlemen, are you prepared to permit the authorities

to play with your rights and liberties and to deny you the ordinary trial in ordinary Courts of Law? Will you allow the Police and our C. I. D. 'friends' to take away our countrymen without giving them an opportunity to know the charges made against them or without giving them an opportunity to rebut those charges? I think you will not allow this sort of nonsense any longer; we must not allow any repressive measures to be passed. Do you know what is done under the Defence of India Act? They carry away people and keep them in jail without any trial and it is reported that in jail all sorts of things are done. The President of the last Calcutta Congress, Mrs. Besant took up the cause of some of the oppressed unfortunate young men of Bengal and brought to the notice of the Viceroy the question of torture. The Viceroy ordered an enquiry and a committee was formed. On this committee also there was a Bengalee (Cries of 'who is that Bengalee?')—a brother of the Bengalee gentleman who sat on the Rowlatt Committee and a Knight. This gentleman, in alliance with a Civilian without examining the parties concerned properly came to the conclusion that the charges of torture were unfounded. You will find a book which is being sold outside this Pandal, containing statements in the handwriting of the ten men whose cause was taken up by Mrs. Besant, and there you will find what the torture was and how they were treated in the jail. After that will you accept the finding of these gentlemen? (Cries of 'certainly not'). At the time of enquiry when these young men were brought before the members some of them asked, "Are you Policemen"? At this the members did not make any statement. "Will you be able to protect us"? again asked the boys. As no reply was given they said "we are not going to tell you anything until we know that you are going to protect us." They refused to make any statements. After that the Committee made their report and declared that the charges of torture were unfounded.

I will now place before you the constitution of the courts of the Commissioners under Defence of India Act. Under the provision of the Act the court consists of 3 members of whom one is a Civilian who is supposed to decide cases on the Executive point of view. The second is a specially selected Deputy Magistrate, and the third man, sometimes a non-official gentleman, in whom the Government has confidence, sometimes a retired Munsif or Judge, or Sub-Judge. These are the three commissioners appointed to try people under the Act. (*At this stage, the President sounded the gong*). Can you expect any fair trial from such a court? What is the procedure generally adopted? I have known nine or ten cases. What is the procedure adopted? The accused is produced but does not know anything of the charges against him. Witnesses are produced to depose against the accused. The prosecution will not

give the names of witnesses, nor will they give the list of copies of documents exhibited but ask the accused to go on with his defence without these documents. They will say "when they are read you will hear them and prepare your case." This is the way how the cases are conducted. Is this a trial? Is this not a mockery of trial? The only important argument put forward by the prosecuting counsel is "my instructions are to ask for deterrent sentence" and these commissioners sentence the accused to 8, 10 or 12 years' imprisonment. (*At this stage, the President again sounded the gong.*) With these words, gentlemen, I beg to support this resolution.

Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas (Bombay), next supported the resolution in a Gujarati speech. He said it was the country's misfortune that they had to pass a resolution of this character. (*Hear, hear.*) It was a humiliation not only to this country, but to the British Government itself that this Congress should have to pass a resolution asking for rights which were considered the birth-rights of every nation in the world. (*Loud cheering.*) It was a humiliation to both India and England that India, a part of the British Empire, should have to ask for the very rights which Britain was shedding her blood to win for other nations and which rights Mr. Lloyd George had said would be guaranteed to Belgium, Serbia and other nations. (*Hear, hear.*) Referring to the last part of the resolution, Mr. Jamnadas asked if the white skin suffered more by corporal punishment than the dark skin. (*Hear, hear.*) Referring to the question of freedom of speech, he regretted that the representatives in this country of a nation, which was pouring out her blood for the freedom of other nations, should prevent Mr. Tilak, Mr. Pal and others from speaking in some parts of the country. The speaker repeated his regret that the national assembly of a civilised country should have to pass a resolution of this character. (*Loud cries of 'hear, hear'.*) It was a humiliation and a shame that this resolution should have to be passed by a country which was a part of the British Empire. (*Loud cheering.*) He heartily commended the resolution to the acceptance of the Congress.—(*Bombay Chronicle.*)

Mr. Vyas (the Berars) next supported the resolution in a Hindi speech.

Mr. Chellapati Rao (Ongole):—Mr. President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—the resolution that I am called upon to support does not concern itself with any advanced line of political status, political progression, and political consciousness of the people of this country. It concerns itself with the inalienable, indefeasible, primary and elementary rights of a man who is not a hewer of wood and drawer of water, liberty of speech, liberty of person and the liberty of the Press. As such, it is in the current language, the first charge on your attention and deliberations and it acquires a sort of political primogeniture for which I am given three minutes.

At a time when the rights of man are acquiring a political habitation and name, and are acquiring fresh political values, under the common denominator of freedom, justice, and self-determination, at a time when the dry-bones of the valley are getting instinct with a new political life, and pulsating with new political pulsations, under the fire of liberty, equality and fraternity, and when the handwriting on the wall is written with the blood of the allied army calling for self-determination, self-expansion and self-adjudication, that I should come before you with a resolution to reaffirm the common rights of humanity, is a sad and eloquent commentary on the methods of bureaucratic administration, which are responsible for the present state of things.

The war has wrought many evils, and not the least of it is the Defence of India Act; that "lawless law" which entrenches on the allegiance of the subject, and savours of the decrees of the Star Chamber, and lettres-de-catchet. It has been declared by a great German writer, Bernhardi, that the war is a biological necessity, and it seems to me that the Defence of India Act is a biological necessity to fetter the liberty of the people. What is it that made it possible to miss his fertile brain and his masterly resource to guide us in our deliberations as a towering strength, to-day,—I mean Mr. Mohamed Ali? It is the Defence of India Act. The Indian Penal Law is an artistic production of supreme significance and meticulous perfection providing for the whole gamut of human weaknesses from a venal loss of temper to a cold calculated murder. Every movement of human energy could be brought within its tentacles by an ingenious brain. We have got the recommendation of the Rowlatt Committee to act on confessions, on promises and so forth.

As regards trial by jury, it is a bulwark against executive arbitrariness concealed in the silken glove of judicial sanction. Many criminal trials are merely the exhibition of the mailed fist of executive authority under a judicial sanction. When you recall to your mind, how vast is the field, and how large is the scope provided for the exercise of arbitrary discretion in the security provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code, when you recall to your mind the definition of the word 'proved' as used in the Indian Evidence Act; when you recall to your mind the executive training and the temperament which characterises many of our trial Judges who are too ready to give the benefit of the doubt to the prosecution, when you recall, to your mind, the quadrilateral character of a certain Magistrate who combines in himself the irreconcilable positions of a judge, prosecutor, jury and the assessor, you would realise the silken string on which hangs the liberty of the subject. I proposed in my memorandum to the Secretary of State that no conviction should be given effect to unless confirmed on appeal, which is the only safety-valve. Gentlemen, one minute more and I have done. (*At this stage the President sounded the gong*). I beg to support this resolution.

Mr. Kesahriprasad Sena Rao (Behar) next supported the resolution in a Hindi speech.

The President :—This resolution has been duly proposed, seconded and supported. And I now have the pleasure of putting the resolution to your vote. I take that it is passed. (Cries of 'passed, passed'). I declare the resolution as passed.

I now call upon Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer to move the next resolution.

FISCAL AUTONOMY.

Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, who, on rising was received with cheers, said :—Mr. President, fellow-delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—the proposition with which I am charged runs as follows :—

“This Congress is strongly of opinion that it is essential for the welfare of the Indian people that the Indian legislature should have the same measure of fiscal autonomy which the self-governing dominions of the Empire possess.”

What is, it fellow delegates, that we desire to affirm in this resolution? We desire to affirm in this resolution that principle of economic life, for which we are struggling in conjunction with political life. In many respects this aspect of the matter is quite as important as any political matter. In fact it might be said that in regard to the essential well-being of this country there is no problem of more urgent and more insistent emphasis than the problem of fiscal autonomy. Consider the conditions of the problem during this War. Every country in the world has progressed and hastened along the path of fiscal greatness. Consider the greatness of Japan. What is the opportunity that Japan had during the last four years—thanks to the difficulties of transport aided by a wise State guidance? Japan has developed her trade and industries until she has grasped the Indian trade and has threatened to monopolise the world's trade in many commodities. Consider the position of Germany before the War. Insidiously and secretly but not less surely, Germany had monopolised the trade and commerce in many of the most essential commodities of human life and human luxury. What was the predominant position of the two countries due to? It was due to the fact that the State in those countries recognised that it was their function to stimulate and revive industries. It was because the State there thought that it was one of the primary functions of the Government to see that opportunities were given to trade and commerce being firmly retained in the hands of the people of the country itself. Here, unfortunately for us, outworn theories and shibboleths have prevailed and what is called the free trade theory clouded the minds of the administrators. What was the result? The result

was that in the race which was run between the grown-up man and the little child, the little child was not given a handicap. Consider the irony of situation created by a man of 30 and a child of 5 being asked to run a race from the same point. That is what exactly happened in our case. Our Indian trade and industry which was the pride and example to the rest of the world until the eighteenth century,—our Indian trade which flooded the European markets with goods, was ruined to develop the possibilities of the West. (Cries of 'Shame'). I say so deliberately and with a sense of responsibility, because if you run your eyes through the Statute book of England you have there discriminating statutes, prohibiting the import of Indian goods except under a tremendous handicap. English Statesmen who now and then preach the theory of free trade forget that for a hundred years England had done nothing except making strenuous efforts to prevent the import of Indian commodities into England and establishing themselves in a position of supremacy. They now turn and say that you must be true to that theory of free trade. We say 'no'; we say that our nascent industries, which were once great and powerful, have been crushed into nothingness, and we cannot compete freely and adequately with the progressive nations of the West until the ordering of the tariff is in our own hands, until the customs and industries of the country are in our hands, until State encouragement is afforded to our industries, until we are able both for revenue and for encouragement to levy duties especially on goods whenever we have a monopoly. Until all these things are conceded to us, we shall be nowhere.

Think what is going to happen after the War. The war of physical force may be over; but after the war we have been assured that the economic war, which will follow this war, will be greater, bitterer, tenser. Until the ordering of our destinies is in our hands, what shall we be? We shall be faced with new difficulties, we shall be faced with a new condition of things, in which five Nations may dominate us instead of one—Everywhere it is conceded that every colony should have representation on the Imperial Cabinet. We hear the talk of five free Dominions ruling the British Empire. Unless we have our way, unless the Indian Legislature can protect India against the incursions of trade rivals, we shall be crushed for ever. In the report on the Constitutional Reforms, presented by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford the same thing occurs in this matter as occurs in respect of many other matters. There are passages in the report dealing with India's industrial future which any one of us might have written, but the argument is all one way and the decision another way. The report recognises the value of industrial development, recognises that the theory of *laissez faire* is inapplicable to us and recognises the need for the encouragement of infant industry; it recognises the advantages of tariff policy. But when

we come to the recommendations, the Imperial Legislative Council is not given a shadow of authority over the ordering of our industries and customs. We seek to point out in this resolution that we shall be nowhere in the coming economic struggle, unless the fashioning of our industrial and economic destiny is in our own hands. (Applause).

The Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Kassim (Bengal):—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,—I rise simply to associate myself in full with what has fallen from our distinguished countryman Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer, and I only want to add one word of mine to what he said, and that is that often I have read in history that India was at any rate one of the richest countries in the world; but to-day we find that in the richest country in the world, which was known as the Granary of the East we find that in this country famines occur with the periodicity of the seasons. What are the reasons for these recurring famines? The chief reason for these recurring famines is to be found in the fact that we have not got fiscal autonomy, or at any rate the Government of India have got no power to control its own tariffs. We are forced to make our industries suffer for the sake of Manchester and Lancashire—not only of Lancashire and Manchester, but the whole world except India itself. (Cries of 'Shame'). We have been told that we are not practical men, but here speaking from this platform we say that the events have proved that we, the members of the Congress, are the wiser members in this country as compared with the Government. The war has presented great difficulties; but I can assure you that if the Government had taken care to follow the advice and recommendations that we voluntarily offered to the Government, year after year, these difficulties would have never occurred. We have been told of the difficulties about men and money. Now we feel ourselves in the position of having a cloth famine and famine in other commodities and we have been told by Mr. C. P. Ramasami Iyer what will happen after the war. Japan is gaining good ground in the trade of India and other countries. If the Government had only taken into account our recommendations and advice and had fostered our industries, all these difficulties would not have been possible; and the Government would not have found it necessary to issue ordinances and form committees and take other measures to relieve the difficulties that have been felt on account of want of cloth. You in Bombay had cloth mills; they were all able to compete with Lancashire and Manchester. But at the instance of the electors of the Members of Parliament in Manchester and Lancashire, the excise duty was imposed on our mill goods, (Cries of 'Shame'), and that excise duty has only been removed on account of the war when the situation became critical. Until and unless you get this fiscal autonomy, what guarantee is there that the excise duty would not be re-imposed, to please Lancashire merchants? We have seen some remarks made about the announcement of the 20th August

in the journals in my town and a journal which calls itself the "Statesman" and the "Friend of India"—I do not know why it calls itself the friend of India, because I fail to observe any friendly feelings towards my countrymen—observed that it was a mistake on the part of Mr. Montagu to have made the statement, and threatened him that the result of that announcement would be that mills would rise up in India and that Lancashire and Manchester would suffer, and it was stated that for the sake of Lancashire and Manchester it was necessary to undo that announcement. Therein lies the real point at issue between India and the rest of the Empire. If we can only foster our industries, we do not care what the result is in the other departments of the administration. With these words, I commend this resolution to your acceptance.

Mr. M. Subedar (Bombay):—Mr. President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in supporting the resolution moved by Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayer and so ably supported by the Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Kassim. I am doing so not as they have done from the legal and constitutional point of view but as a business-man. Gentlemen, I feel that the greatest problem in this country is the problem of the grinding poverty in which the people of this country are living at present. Throughout the country men are living under conditions that are intolerable and these conditions are becoming worse every day. The question of the poverty of the people is not a new one in this Congress. It had been taken up by the great Dadabhoy Naoroji (applause) and by Mr. Gokhale (applause). These great patriots seriously went into this question without ever being able to influence the economic policy of the Government. The question of fiscal autonomy is not a new question. It is a question very closely allied with the poverty of the people and the condition of the masses for whom Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu are holding a special brief. If this Congress of the educated people of this country cannot plead the cause of the masses who else can plead it? This Congress has always attempted to deal with this question and the Government has always shirked it. This question has been dealt with in the oldest Resolutions of the Indian National Congress in one form or another; but to-day we are approaching it from a different standpoint, because to-day the problem is imminent and we have got to reach a decision on it immediately. We have to show that the Indians know their own minds and must not permit this question to be dealt with in the half-hearted way as in the past. It has been declared in the Imperial War Conference that a decision on economic questions is going to be reached very soon, and one of the things that all parties in English politics are asking for and one of the things they are asking insistently is the control of the raw materials of the Empire for the use of the Empire. Now we say this, that it is not possible for us to concede this position until and unless we are enabled

to decide fully and finally what the Tariff System of this country shall be. We find from the proposals that have come for the Allied Economic Union before the Paris Economic Conference, that a great danger is threatening this country. Our experience in the past in all these matters has not been very happy. We have suffered in respect of the excise duty. In regard to the economic policy of the Government of India there has been very often discrimination against us. We find this reflected to-day in concrete grievances that we have in the matter of the Forms of Income Tax and we find that it is proposed now to penalise Indian cloth and to discriminate against it by leaving cloth from Manchester and Japan free. Ladies and gentlemen, it is not desirable that I should take up a lot of your time at this stage by detaining you with any further remarks, as we are all anxious to go to the meeting of the Muslim League; but I have again to urge that the power of exploitation over us which England has enjoyed in the past cannot be allowed to go on, consistently with the new self-respect and the new self-consciousness which we possess to-day. The cry of India for Indians is a cry which is very much more real in the economic field than in the political field. While we are out to get political emancipation of India we should also get at the same time entire control over the economic policy of this country. We have been told, and you will hear about this to-morrow, that we should get absolute control over several departments, the Department of Education, the Department of Industries and various other Departments on which much up-hill works has to be done, and that these should be transferred to us. I ask you, what you would do with these departments if you have not got the machinery to raise additional revenue, if you have not got a taxable surplus in the pockets of the people. This is impossible so long as we find ourselves under the economic heel of the foreigner. I say that alien interest has found in this country a dominant voice and this should not be allowed to continue. We are entitled in our own country at least to have absolute control over the development of our own resources and in the building up of our national life. It would be to England's interest to let us have this. There is a fear expressed in English magazines that if they were to grant fiscal autonomy to India she will at once penalise the colonies, penalise Japan and penalise England. But I submit that no such danger exists, and no such danger should be apprehended. The Indian Legislature which is going to be formed under the Reform Scheme will not be a body that will act hastily in any matter. We shall realise our responsibility fully. India knows where her real interests lie, and no one will be actuated merely by a feeling of revenge or retaliation. All that we want is that in the councils of this country India's interests alone should be placed to the fore-front.

I maintain, therefore, that the exploitation of weaker nations, against which England has been fighting in the name of the Empire, should stop in this country not only for the sake of the people of the Empire but for the sake

of England herself. Continuance of this system is as demoralising to England as it is to India. I say, the demand which we now make in this Resolution is a demand the granting of which will do credit to England. No scheme of political reforms unless it gives full and complete fiscal autonomy can be of any use or can cause that satisfaction, which English statesmen are striving to secure. There are vested interests opposing this grant and we shall have to fight them inch by inch. The demand for fiscal autonomy cannot be covered by a little concession in Civil Service here and a little concession in other matters there. This is a concession that touches the Englishman's pockets, and it is therefore, a question on which Englishmen will fight unto the end. England will not be in a hurry to make this concession to us and it is for this reason that on this question at least the united voice of India should proclaim its decision and it is on this question that we must concentrate our greatest efforts.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Aiyar (Lucknow) :—Ladies and gentlemen, I consider it a great privilege and an honour to address this audience on this important question. With fiscal autonomy are bound up the destinies of the teeming millions of our motherland. India is a poor country, the poorest country in the world and after years of British rule she has become poorer than ever: Time was when famine was unknown in this country, time was when the best products of Indian looms were welcomed all over the world; time was when alien nations came to this country to learn from us the art of manufacturing articles so essential to their existence. But those times are now gone. With the coming of the British to this country and with the introduction of free trade, cheap and showy foreign goods began to be dumped on the Indian markets; village industries, cottage industries, were crippled out of existence. The late Mr. R. C. Dutt (cheers) whose memory we recall with pleasure and pride, pointed out how the miserable clothing of the miserable Indian labourer earning less than 2½ pence a day, was taxed by "a jealous Government." The export of Indian manufactured articles, as pointed out by Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, was put down by prohibitive taxation unknown in any other part of the civilised world (shame). When the war was declared, our public men said that our industries should be resuscitated and that with the stimulation of industries India would prosper. The opportunity created by the war was not seized by the forelock by the British bureaucracy. Instead of helping old industries and nursing new ones, they appointed a Commission! What the result of that Commission is going to be, I shall not prophesy, but I must plainly point out that our faith in Commissions is very limited. (Hear, hear). They remind us of the proverbial 'mountain in labour bringing forth a mouse' (laughter). In this connection it is pertinent to mention what an Anglo-Indian writer in *Capital* of Calcutta said: he called our revered leader Madan

Mohan Malaviya (cheers) a "Sinn Feiner" (shame,) because, he said, the Pundit would not agree with the majority report of the Industrial Commission and "would eliminate at once if not sooner the exploitation of India by the foreigner—British or alien." Is it a crime to discountenance alien exploitation? Is it a political sin? I consider it a breach of journalistic etiquette and official honour to publish a fact that a particular member of a Royal Commission is going to write a minute of dissent before it is written and the report is published.

We want to come into our own to stand on our own legs industrially and politically. I hope and trust, brothers and sisters, that we shall not give up our political battle so long as we are not allowed to live a free life in this country just as Englishmen live in England. As for fiscal autonomy, I do not think there is much hope, judging from the bureaucratic attitude towards our industries and taking note of the fact that Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Bonar Law have declared themselves in favour of Imperial Preference. I hope we shall all in duty bound stand by this resolution and the Congress.

Mr. Mavji Govindji (Bombay) :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, —Like Mr. Subedar, I also belong to a community, which under ordinary circumstances believes only in rupees, annas and pies. (Laughter). But literally when things have come to a pass, when India has been bled white, when all over the world they are considering the problem of economic reconstruction, after the war and when committees and commissions are sitting in the United Kingdom and when Lord Balfour of Burleigh has made his report as to how to utilise, to the best, the raw products of the Empire, it is but right that at such a time as this a merchant like myself should come more into politics (cheers).

Ladies and gentlemen, it is a problem of the most vital importance even after the reforms. You look at the Reform Blue Book from cover to cover, and you will find only two lines about fiscal legislation. The illustrious authors of the report say: "Fiscal legislation will, of course, be subject to the procedure which we have recommended in respect of Government Bills." That is to say, if the Government of India are to be more autocratic, then after the Scheme our fate is sealed,—I mean the fate of all businessmen is sealed.

Even to-day, what are the conditions under which we live? We live in a time of war and it is notorious to what uses the Defence of India Act has been put in regard to the economic conditions of the country. Wheat has been controlled, coal has been controlled, rice has been controlled, railways have been controlled and every article has been controlled; we cannot make goods move as before from one Province to another even though

there be famine in the latter. Naturally there is a lot of economic unrest in the country, and in regard to the income-tax also the same conditions prevail. Now if according to the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee, the Defence of India Act is going to be made permanent (Cries of 'Shame'), where shall the businessmen of India be? At present the gates of Australia are closed, in South Africa we are not allowed to enter, and in Canada we have no place. Our businessmen cannot freely go to any portion of the Empire. The businessmen of the United Kingdom have been our exploiters up to to-day, and those of the Colonies also will be our exploiters hereafter. Are we going to allow that condition of things to come into existence? Therefore I submit, brother delegates, that we should have a controlling voice in the Government of India and we must get fiscal autonomy.

The President :—The resolution having been duly proposed, seconded and supported, I now put it to you for your vote. (Cries of 'Passed, passed'). I declare that this resolution is passed.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have now to announce that the sitting of this Congress for the day must now come to an end. We have to perform the most pleasing duty of attending the sitting of the Moslem League. The Moslem League sits at 2 p.m. It is already quarter past one; we have therefore to adjourn the sitting of this Congress till to-morrow at 8 O'clock. I have to announce that to-day the Subjects Committee will sit at 4.30 p.m., in the Subjects Committee hall.

The Congress then rose for the day at 1.20 p.m.

FOURTH DAY.

Sunday, 1st September, 1918.

The Special Session of the Congress resumed its sitting at 8 a.m., when there was the largest attendance. The Proceedings commenced with the singing of a patriotic song by Indian ladies.

The President :—Ladies and gentlemen, I declare that the Congress is now open, and resolutions will be placed before you as we proceed with the work. I have to inform you that the resolutions as printed have certain errors in them, not due to the fault of the Subjects Committee, but to the omissions of the press. Some mistakes have been committed by the printers. We shall now give you the copies of the resolutions as printed; but later on, you will get the corrected copies. Resolution IV should be read as resolution VI because resolution IV was passed yesterday. That is a mistake of the printer. In resolution VI, sub-clause (2), a whole passage has been left out in print. The passage that is left out is "subject to the Declaration of Rights in resolution IV and the administration of the departments directly affecting public peace, tranquility and the defence of the country," which should be inserted after the word "princes." Clause (3) has got to be deleted.

The next correction is that on page 3, under the head "provinces", the resolution should begin thus:—"From the commencement of the first Reformed Council, the principle of the responsibility of ministers to the Legislature shall come into effect." These are the corrections to be made in the printed copies just circulated.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

The Hon'ble Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad) who, on rising was received with enthusiastic cheering and cries of 'Bande Mataram,' moved the resolution on Responsible Government; and in doing so, he said :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, the resolution I have the honour to move runs as follows: I will read the resolution as corrected :—

"That this Congress appreciates the earnest attempts on the part of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State and His Excellency the Viceroy to inaugurate a system of Responsible Government in India, and while it recognises that some of the proposals constitute an advance on the present conditions in some directions, it is of opinion that the proposals are disappointing, and unsatisfactory (Applause) and suggests the following modifications as absolutely necessary to constitute a substantive step towards Responsible Government :

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

- (1) That a system of "reserved" and "transferred" subjects similar to those proposed for the Provinces shall be adopted for the Central Government.
- (2) That the "reserved" subjects shall be Foreign Affairs (excepting relations with the Colonies and the Dominions), the Army, the Navy and relations with the Indian Ruling Princes, and subject to the declaration of the rights already passed, matters directly affecting peace, tranquility and defence of the country; that all other subjects shall be "transferred."
- (3) The allotments required for the "reserved" subjects should be the first charge on the revenues.
- (4) The procedure for the adoption of the budget should be on the lines laid down for the Provinces.
- (5) All legislation shall be by bills introduced into the Legislative Assembly, provided that in the case of the "reserved" subjects the Legislative Council does not pass such measures as the Government may deem necessary, the Governor General in Council may provide for the same by regulations, such regulations to be in force for one year, but not to be renewed unless 40 per cent. of the members of the Assembly present and voting are in favour of them.
- (6) There shall be no Council of State, (Applause), but if the Council of State is to be constituted at least half of its total strength shall consist of elected members and that the procedure by certification shall be confined to the 'reserved' subjects (Applause).
- (7) At least half the number of the Executive Councillors (if there be more than one) in charge of the reserved subjects shall be Indians.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

- (8) The number of the members of the Legislative Assembly should be raised to 150 and the proportion of elected members should be four-fifths.
- (9) The President and the Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly shall be elected by the Assembly.
- (10) The Legislative Assembly should have power to make or modify its own rules of business, and they shall not require the sanction of the Governor-General.

- (11) There shall be an obligation to convene a meeting of the Council and the Assembly at stated intervals or on the requisition of a certain proportion of the members.

A statutory guarantee should be given that full Responsible Government should be established in the whole of British India within a period not exceeding 15 years. (Hear, hear, and Applause).

THE PROVINCES.

THE EXECUTIVE.

- (1) There should be no additional members of the Executive Government without portfolios.
- (2) From the commencement of the first Reformed Councils the principle of the responsibility of Ministers to the Legislature shall come into effect.
- (3) The status and the salary of the Ministers shall be the same as that of the members of the Executive Council.
- (4) At least half the number of the Executive Councillors in charge of reserved subjects (if there be more than one) should be Indians.
- (5) The budget shall be under the control of the Legislature subject to the contribution to the Government of India and during the life-time of the Reformed Councils to the allocation of a fixed sum for the reserved subjects and should fresh taxation be necessary, it should be imposed by the Provincial Government as a whole for both transferred and reserved subjects.

LEGISLATURE.

- (1) While holding that the people are ripe for the introduction of full provincial autonomy, the Congress is yet prepared with a view to facilitating the passage of the Reforms and to save time otherwise lost in controversy to leave the departments of law, police, and justice (prisons excepted) in the hands of the Executive Government in all Provinces for a period of six years. The Executive and Judicial departments must be separated at once.
- (2) The President and the Vice-President should be elected by the Council.
- (3) The proposal to institute a Grand Committee shall be dropped. The Provincial Legislative Council shall legislate in respect of all matters within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government, including law, justice and police, but were the Government not

satisfied with the decision of the Legislative Council in respect of matters relating to law, justice and police, it shall be open to the Government to refer the matter to the Government of India. The Government of India may refer the matter to the Indian Legislature, and the ordinary procedure shall follow. But if Grand Committees are instituted, this Congress is of opinion that not less than half the strength shall be elected by the Legislative Assembly.

- (4) The proportion of elected members in the Legislative Council shall be four-fifths.
- (5) Whenever the Legislative Assembly, the Council of State or the Legislative Council is dissolved, it shall be obligatory on the Governor-General or the Governor, as the case may be, to order the necessary elections and to resummon the body dissolved within a period of three months from the date of dissolution.
- (6) A dissolution of the Legislature shall take place by way of appeal to the electorate and the reason should be stated in writing counter-signed by the Ministers.

INDIA OFFICE AND PARLIAMENT.

- (a) The Council of India shall be abolished and there shall be two permanent Under-Secretaries to assist the Secretary of State for India, one of whom shall be an Indian.
- (b) All the charges in respect to the India Office Establishment shall be placed on the British estimates.
- (c) No financial or administrative powers in regard to the "reserved" subjects should be transferred to the Provincial Governments, until such time as they are made responsible regarding them to the electorate and until then the control of the Parliament and the Secretary of State should continue."
- (d) The Committee to be appointed to examine and report on the present constitution of the Council of India shall contain an adequate Indian element."

Ladies and gentlemen, I have read the resolution to you, and I am sure that from the manner in which you have received it, it is not necessary for me to say many words to commend it to your acceptance. I hope you will agree with me that the resolution has been very carefully prepared. (Hear, hear). What is sought to be done is to give expression, as far as we can judge

to the general sense prevailing in the country regarding the reforms. (Applause) There are two questions which arise before you, in this connection. One is that we acknowledge and appreciate the earnestness of the attempt made by Mr. Montagu and by His Excellency the Viceroy in making a beginning of Responsible Government which was promised in the announcement of August last—we recognise their earnestness and appreciate it. If we criticise the report, it is not that we do not feel grateful for the labour and the care with which they have dealt with these complicated questions. We recognise also that these proposals, very elaborate and very carefully prepared, mark an advance in some directions. As the resolution says, we recognise their attempt to inaugurate a system of Responsible Government and we recognize that some of the proposals made constitute an advance on the present conditions in some directions. I do not intend to detain you by dwelling upon the various aspects of the proposals. They have been so much studied and discussed that it is unnecessary for me to detain you with any lengthy remarks on them.

The Congress goes on to point out that it is of opinion that the proposals are disappointing and unsatisfactory (Applause), because they do not go far enough to meet the requirements of the country. (Applause). Our distinguished authors claim, and they can claim because they have earnestly laboured to produce the result, that they have complied with the terms of the announcement of August last. With great respect, I say that they have not given sufficient effect to the terms of that announcement. (Applause). What is it that the announcement promised? You must judge it from what you asked for. You asked for the introduction of self-government. You did not ask for a beginning to be made in some corner or parts of India (Applause). The House of Commons ratified the proposal of the Ministers that Responsible Government shall be begun in India as a whole. That is the wording before you. The announcement says: "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible." Now, that was the announcement made and that was the promise given. I submit—I do so with regret, but I must say it—that the distinguished authors of the report have not carried out the terms of that announcement. (Applause). What was further promised was that they had decided that it was necessary that substantial steps should be taken as soon as possible to give effect to this announcement. We say that the substantial steps, which we were led to expect would be taken, have not been taken. (Hear, hear).

I will not detain you very much longer on this point. The Government of India means primarily the Government of India as a whole. The Central Government is the heart of the constitution in India. It deals with the greatest problems, matters of greatest importance, matters which affect the life and liberty of the people, matters which affect legislation on all important subjects and matters which affect the happiness of the people in various ways. It is proposed to make a beginning of Responsible Government in the provinces. We are agreeable that a beginning should be made, but we say that it should not be confined to the provinces. It should be made also in the Central Government. (Applause). That is the first point. I personally feel that this matter does not require to be argued, because on this question there is a remarkable unanimity of feeling and opinion throughout the country. (Applause). I would ask you to do one thing before I proceed. If I or any other speakers refer to our differences, which have unfortunately arisen amongst us, I hope you will hear it without expressing any disapprobation of individuals or groups of individuals that may be referred to. I beg you to consider the question in one aspect. We have to work for the unanimity of our people. (Applause). Differences unfortunately have arisen to-day; and our whole duty should be to obliterate those differences and not to perpetuate them. Therefore, I say that though we differ from some friends, we must not withhold from them our respect which is due to them for their life-long labours in the cause of the country. What I was going to say was that on this question of making a beginning of Responsible Government in the Government of India, opinion is unanimous throughout the country. I do not know one single man of note who has not urged that the administration of the Government of India should be liberalized and that the popular voice should prevail in some part at least of the administration of the Government of India. I can only say that if His Majesty's Government do not accept our suggestions in regard to the liberalisation of the Government of India, the new scheme will not give satisfaction to the country. Agitation will continue, (Applause); agitation will only cease when we obtain what we consider to be absolutely necessary changes. (Applause).

With this preamble, I point out to you that certain subjects should be reserved in the Government of India and certain subjects transferred. I have read to you the list of reserved subjects, and let me draw your attention to the subjects which we think ought to be transferred. There is the question of the salt-tax, a thing which affects the humblest as well as the highest in the land. Is there any reason why on the question, whether the salt-tax shall be increased or shall not be increased, or shall be reduced or shall be cancelled, the united voice of the people should not prevail? There is no reason why the united voice of the people should not determine that question

and why its should be left to the Executive Government to decide it. Take the question of the Income-tax Act. We know that we have to find money to carry on the administration of the country. The whole world knows how willingly we have complied with the requirements of the present situation, (Hear, hear) created by the war, how we have put up with the super-tax and every other taxation that has been proposed to meet the situation. Is there any justification for assuming or insinuating that the representatives of the people will not rise equal to the requirements of any situation which may arise? (Cries of 'No, no'). When such an extraordinary situation arises, will you not allow the people to decide in what way they should raise the money required for the administration of the country? Why should you not let the voice of the people prevail in regard to income-tax and with regard to many other subjects? Then there is the question of railways. Railway rates have been increased without legislation and they affect the humblest in the land. Why should not matters like that be placed before the Legislative Council and come specially within its purview? Then there are three questions of most vital importance: there is the question of education, which is like the life blood to the people in their efforts at improvement (Applause). You have seen that the members of the Executive Government with all their honest and honourable desire to help the people have failed to promote education to the extent they should have done. (Cries of 'Shame'). Do not talk of shame. Shame is to me and to you; because we have not worked enough. We have claimed for a long time that they should allow us that power, but they have refused to give us that power. We say now, at any rate, let us have the power to deal with education. Then there is the question of industries. We know how our industries have collapsed owing to opposition and competition. We find how other countries have developed their industries. Japanese goods are chasing us in all directions, and there is a growing sense of humiliation in our minds that with all our great natural resources, with all the talent and skill of our people, with all the commercial aptitude of our people, we are not able to produce as much as the Japanese are producing. Then there is the question of tariffs on which the development of industries depends. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford recognise that in this matter, so long as the decision rests with the English Parliament, the feeling will remain in the minds of Indians that Indian interests will be subordinated to English interests. We say, let us have a chance, of doing for our industries what you, for no fault of any individual, but owing to the fault of the system and the policy that has prevailed, have not been able to do. I have just now indicated these points to show that these are subjects which the Government of India can very easily and without prejudice to public interests place under the influence of the representatives of the people. If they will do so, there will be greater progress,

greater prosperity, greater contentment, greater happiness to India and greater power to the Empire. If they refuse to do so, as I have already said, discontent will continue and unhappiness will continue.

We urge that there should be no Council of State. It is a matter on which opinion is fairly well divided among us. There are almost as many good, honourable, intelligent, well-informed people who are opposed to the Council of State as there are in support of it. Therefore you will see that the Congress has tried to mirror the views of the country. It says that there should be no Council of State; and it suggests another course with which all may or may not be in agreement. It says that if you insist upon a Council of State, then at least one half of its total strength must consist of elected members. Otherwise, what would happen? You give us the power in the Legislative Council to assemble in larger numbers and to speak for a longer time, but you take away from us the power which we have hitherto enjoyed; the power to legislate upon all important matters. We say, therefore that if you must constitute a Council of State, at least half of its members should be elected. This is not a new demand. It is as old as 1886 when the Congress first promulgated its scheme of reforms. There is one other question connected with the Imperial Council, but I will not take you through it.

You will see that in the Provinces we have said that the reserved subjects shall be as few as possible, namely that they should be confined to Police, Law and Justice. Ladies and gentlemen, I strongly feel that these subjects should be under the control of the representatives of the people. (Applause). There are many of us feel otherwise. I beg you to notice it that this resolution which I have the honour to lay before you may not, I fear, represent the individual opinions of many men and many women, but it represents the compromise we have arrived at in order to meet all important aspects of opinion in this country. It is therefore that we say "rather than lose time in a controversy, which may not lead to much, that power should be transferred fully to us, we agree that you shall have power to deal with law, police and justice for six years." Some people were willing to allow a longer time and some less time on this point over which we need not break up. It may be permissible for both sides to be right. What is contained in the resolution represents the results of a compromise for making progress. Rather than lose time in controversy in India and in England, we say that six years is not a long time in the history of a nation to remove your misapprehensions, and we agree to it. With regard to Grand Committees we say that they should not come into existence, because, you take away by means of Grand Committees, something from the importance, freedom and dignity of the Provincial Councils, and therefore we say, don't have them.' But, if you must have them—there again, it is a matter of small difference, it is a difference of one

vote, because they have said that they will have a bare majority ; we say that the difference is but one, two or three votes and we do not want Grand Committees, but if they must come in—we are willing to put up with them for a time. Those are the important points which arise in connection with this matter. I will not detain you longer. I hope that considering the items that have been laid before you, you will be able to give your whole-hearted support to the resolution as indicating and faithfully mirroring what I consider the general views which have prevailed in the country. (Applause).

Sir Dinshaw Petit (Bombay) who was received with continued cheering, in seconding the resolution said :—Mr. President and delegates to the Special Session of the Indian National Congress,—it gives me very great pleasure to second the proposition that is now before you. After the very lucid manner in which our great and esteemed friend and leader the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Applause) has put before you this resolution, and bearing in mind that I am to be followed by several very able speakers, amongst them being another great Pandit, my friend the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru, I, a layman, would not arrogate to myself before these pandits the task of dilating upon the several modifications that are embodied in this resolution. But I will content myself by making a few observations in support of this proposition. Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, when I say that it gives me great pleasure to second this proposition, I do not merely use the language of convention but I wish to convey to you my feelings of genuine pleasure at being able to stand here before you, this morning and associate myself publicly with this Congress. (Applause). My reason for deriving this pleasure is that this is a resolution which, while on the one hand it dispels the fear of some of our friends, it on the other hand shatters the hope of our enemies (Applause)—that the Congress was going to reject this scheme without discussing the merits or demerits of it and without proposing any amendments to it. (Applause). I was told over and over again that the Congress was going to throw out and reject the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme, without proposing any amendments to make it more acceptable to the people of this country ; but I refused to believe that the Congress would ever take such an unwise and unstatesman-like step, (cheers) and I am to-day proud to say that my confidence in the sound judgment of the Congress has been more than justified. (Applause). This impression which has happily turned out to be false, namely that the Congress was going to throw out the scheme, has worked on the minds of some of our friends to such an extent that they have formed a separate organization to express their own opinion and so carry out their object. (Cries of 'Shame' and 'Traitors'). Do not cry shame. People should not forget the great services that they have rendered to the Congress for so many years. And it does not grieve me in the least that they have formed a separate organisation, because

I have great trust in them and in their sense of judgment, and I have no doubt that they will move in the same direction as we do. (Applause). The only difference perhaps would be that what we are asking to-day they will ask to-morrow. (Laughter). But there is only one thing in connection with this organisation which grieves me, and it is this: that they have collected round them some people who never took part in politics except grind their own axes (Cries of 'Shame'). They never missed an opportunity to abuse the Congress and they many a time sneered at the very people whom they have now come forward to support. (Hear, hear). Any difference in our camp, is to be deplored at any time; but at this juncture it is more to be deplored than at any other time.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have been told and we have heard within the last few years over and over again that the angle of vision has changed on account of the war. If the angle of vision has changed, it has changed not so much on account of the war as because of the two great communities of India—Hindus and Mahomedans, having joined their hands together. (Loud cheers.) There are smaller communities which have some misgivings that their claims will not be recognised if the bigger communities have the powers that they are clamouring for. But I do not think that there is any foundation for them to entertain such misgivings. Look at the example of my own small community and see how they have fared all these years in the Native States. At one time or other there have not been Native States where there have not been Parsees who have not occupied very high and lucrative posts. Our late esteemed and revered leader the late Dadabhai Naoroji (applause) was once in the service of a Native State and so was Sir Mancherji Bhownagri, and to-day there are many a member of my community who are occupying very responsible offices in Native States. For example, in the biggest Native State in India to-day the most influential office is occupied by a member of my community who, as it were, is nothing short of the power behind the throne. Granting for argument's sake, though I do not admit it for a single moment, that these small communities may have to sacrifice some of their claims, does it not behove everybody who has the good of the country at heart to see whether Self-Government under British Rule, is not a step which would bring the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people? People have got to bear this in mind—whether they belong to small communities or big communities, whether they are Hindus or Mahomedans, whether they are Parsees or Christians—they must all put their weight in the scale on the side which they believe will bring the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people. (Applause). That being so, I have not the least doubt that the resolution that has been placed before you to-day is the one step which will bring you nearer to the goal, and I hope you will accept it. (Applause).

The Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru (Allahabad), in supporting the resolution said:—Mr. President, fellow-delegates, ladies and gentlemen, by the command of the President of this National Assembly, and in response to the kind invitation extended to me by my esteemed friend, Sir Dinshaw Petit, I stand before you as a practical illustration of the applicability of the principle of unity, a principle to which my friend the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has just appealed. I may tell you at once that the proposals which are now before you and which are the result of anxious deliberation in the Subjects Committee are proposals, to which as the Pandit has already told you, we did not all agree in every particular. But, ladies and gentlemen, concession and compromise are the soul of practical politics and if we do not get all that we desire but can secure unity among our ranks, I can assure you that we get more than we can possibly desire.

With this justification for my appearing before you, I shall very briefly deal with the proposition which has been entrusted to me. You will note that the resolution consists of a preamble and then follow the various modifications which we have decided should be incorporated in the reforms proposed by His Excellency the Viceroy and Mr. Montagu. The preamble divides itself as you will have observed, into three parts:—first, appreciation, second, recognition, and third, in plain English, condemnation, although the word is not used. (Laughter). You will wonder how the Subjects Committee have been able to perform the impossible feat of uniting all these three together in one resolution and in respect of one and the same document. Well, gentlemen, this feat has been really accomplished not by the Subjects Committee but by the illustrious authors of the Report themselves, because in one part of the document they undoubtedly extend to us a very generous recognition of what we have so far done in the Congress and outside it, they admit that the time has come for introducing Responsible Government in India and we cannot but appreciate that recognition; but when we come to what has actually been done in the way of introducing Responsible Government in India, it is there that we feel dissatisfaction and disappointment, to which the third part of the resolution gives expression. As the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has told you, there is no doubt that what was promised was real Responsible Government. I do not say complete Responsible Government, but whatever fraction of Responsible Government it was to be, it was a real fraction. I must candidly confess, that after reading the report and the proposals made by the illustrious authors, I do not find an iota of responsibility that they have parted with in our favour according to their own definition of responsibility. You will see that so far as the Government of India is concerned, it is said that the Governor-General-in-Council must retain "indisputable authority" in all matters relating to peace, good government and

maintenance of order. That is an all-embracing phrase. What is comprised in "good government" it is impossible to define. And it is equally impossible to say what is not comprised in it as anything could be brought under it. When the Congress-League Scheme was submitted to the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, they received it very kindly and they have devoted a whole chapter in their report to a criticism of it. We are taunted and told that there is no parallel in history for a production like the Congress-League Scheme. I plead guilty to the charge, but I say: "Are you able to point out a parallel in history for the conditions under which we live and have lived for a hundred and fifty years and more?" Are we not justified in retorting that while we cannot find an exact parallel in history to our case, you are acting in the teeth of the lessons of history? In one particular, namely, the retention of indisputable power in the Government of India, you are going against the lessons of modern history. Ladies and gentlemen, I was the other day reading a new book on Russia. It gave a short history of the reform movement there. It was in the year 1904 that the Czar's Government granted a manifesto to the people of Russia. That manifesto was very shortly worded and so concisely worded that in a manner it comprised all that we have asked for in the Congress-League Scheme and more. What was it? There were only two paragraphs. The first was that the Government of the Czar sanctioned the creation of a deliberative and legislative assembly without whose consent no new law should be passed. No such general thing was asked for by us; no Congress-League Scheme asked for it; and yet that was what was actually granted by the Government of the Czar to the people of Russia. The second was the granting of full rights of citizenship, the inviolability of person, freedom of conscience, freedom of the Press, the right of organising public meetings and founding associations. Now, ladies and gentlemen, within those two clauses, you have the whole of Responsible Government and much more than we ever asked for. Do you know what was the qualification? The qualification was that unlimited autocratic power of the Czar was reserved over the heads of all these things—all was subject to the unlimited powers of the Czar. Now it so happened that when this manifesto was received with acclamation by the populace throughout Russia, people expected that something would come out of it. But all that happened was that within the next two years, all the gaols in Russia were filled with political offenders. There was no room left to admit more. When an appeal was made to the Czar, his reply or rather the reply of his Government was a most characteristic one. The reply was that the Emperor had not withdrawn anything, he had merely not done what he never said that he would do, namely voluntarily abdicate his autocratic power. You see, ladies and gentlemen, there is no good giving you all the independence, all the freedom and all the liberty in the world with a reservation of absolute power in other hands than yours. The Government of India are to retain

that power which is fully reserved to them until such time as provincial governments advance on the lines laid down in the report, to such an extent as to become completely responsible. Some system of *quasi* responsibility is introduced in the Provincial Government, but I submit that it is giving nothing unless you limit the power of the Government of India in the manner in which we say in the resolution that it should be limited. If you do not do it, what may you expect? You have already had a fore-taste of what you may expect in the Rowlatt Committee Report that forms the subject of an independent resolution and will be very fully dealt with by the very able speakers in whose hands it is placed; and therefore I need not take up your time now in telling you what are the dangers ahead. But I may tell you that the repressive legislation which now disfigures the Statute book of India is nothing compared to the powers which the Rowlatt Committee have recommended the Government to take. Why and on what grounds? They say that there must be a judicial enquiry before the liberty of a subject is interfered with. But they take care to say what is the nature of the judicial enquiry and they have given their own definition of it. It is to be judicial in the sense that it must be "fair and impartial and as adequate as it can be." Ladies and gentlemen, I submit that you and I in our dealings with the outside world try to be fair and impartial and do adequate justice to the party we are dealing with, but that is not judicial, and to confine the definition to those requisities is, I submit, a travesty of all judicial conceptions. For the present, I would only say this about the Government of India.

Now let us see what they have done for us in the Provinces. We have proposed certain modifications but the proposals that are before you, I may at once say, do not go far enough according to my own opinion, but in a spirit of loyalty to the cause, loyalty to the country and loyalty to the opinion of the majority, (Hear, hear), I must submit to these and I cheerfully do so. We have had in our province an authoritative definition from the head of the provinceal Government of what the reforms ought to be. Sir Harcourt Butler, the Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces,—I will give it to you in his own words; which are here—says: "the cardinal condition of every reform first is that if any reform must be a real reform, it must not be put out of shape and substance by too many safeguards, checks and counter-checks. There is a canon of moral strategy that reform must not be afraid of itself." Ladies and gentlemen, I beg to take this opportunity to say that the illustrious authors of the report have made proposals which, as the President pointed out in his very enlightening speech, are afraid of themselves. They give certain powers with one hand and take them away with the other. What have we done? We have not gone the whole length of asking for Responsible Government, although we say that we are fully

qualified for it. We say that we will, for the sake of concession and compromise, for the present, remain satisfied with the few alterations which we propose and will not claim full provincial autonomy. I shall detain you only for a few minutes more by dealing with the more salient features of our proposals regarding the provinces.

The first is about the appointment of Ministers. You must have seen that the proposals give you a Minister, or in big provinces more than one Minister, who is to be nominated by the Governor in Council and who is not to be responsible to the Legislature. We recommend that the Minister should be made responsible to the Legislature from the very beginning. Unless that responsibility rests upon him, I do not see how and in what sense, he could be said to be responsible to the electorate. At least for the life of the Council his term of office is safe, and being the nominee of the Governor he owes no responsibility to the electorate. Therefore we say that the very least you can do is if you will keep the appointment in your own hands you should make the Minister you appoint responsible to the Legislature.

The most important subject, gentlemen, is the subject of the Budget (*at this stage the President sounded the gong*) and there are other matters also. But I do not think I will be justified in detaining you much longer in discussing these subjects. Before I sit down I would request you to take the proposals in the resolution as the result of mature deliberation, considered opinion and very anxious thought on the part of those who represented you in the Subjects Committee. I would only ask you to do one thing. Mr. Lloyd George in his appeal to the country and the Dominions and in fact to the whole British Empire on the last anniversary of the War said: "Hold fast and victory is yours." I say Hold fast to the essentials of your Congress-Muslim League Scheme and I prophesy that victory will be yours." With these words, gentlemen, I support this resolution. (Applause).

Diwan Bahadur L.A. Govindaraghava Iyer :—Mr. President, sister and brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—I have been asked to support this resolution and I do so with great pleasure. Within the limited time that is at my disposal, I do not think I can serve you better than by stating what in my humble view are the principles and the policy upon which the proposals now for your consideration have been based. Gentlemen, to me it appears that the proposal now for your consideration has proceeded upon the acceptance of the pronouncement of the Secretary of State on the 20th August 1917 as the foundation of the proposals. It may be that there are some of us who, if the enunciation of the policy contained in that pronouncement had been given to them, would have worded the pronouncement differently and declared a different policy. But that is not the principle on which this proposal has proceeded. We accept that pronouncement as the foundation of our proposals.

The second point on which also I wish to lay emphasis is that we shall have to be loyal, thoroughly and sincerely loyal, in the proposals that we make, to what we consider to be the cardinal principles of the Congress-League Scheme. (Applause). I venture to think that if the pronouncement is approached in the right spirit, as I claim that our present proposals have proceeded, (Hear, hear), it will be possible for us to bring about a reconciliation between the principles contained in the pronouncement and the principles on which the Congress-League Scheme is based.

Now, gentlemen, what are the principles on which the Congress-League Scheme is based? We have of course, suggested there a certain system, a certain kind of machinery by which those principles could be effectuated. What are the principles? The principles are the subordination of the executive to the legislature; the control by the people over the purse, and the deepening and the widening of the popular representation in our legislative councils. These, I consider, are the cardinal principles of the Congress-League Scheme. What are the principles that are at the bottom of the pronouncement of the 20th August 1917? I take them to be that there should be a gradual devolution to the people of the country of responsible government; and during the transitional stage whatever portion of Government rests with the Government, they should be responsible for that; to that extent their responsibility must be maintained and in the maintenance of that responsibility no impediment should be thrown in their way. That, I consider to be the cardinal principle of the pronouncement.

Now, gentlemen, we accept both the principles, and so you find that we have provided sufficient safeguards. To the extent of the powers that are to be vested or reserved in the Government, they should be enabled to exercise their powers, unimpeded by any embarrassment that it is possible for the Legislature or popular voice to put them into. We also take care that to the extent that responsibility is to devolve on the people it must be entire, sincere and absolutely unshakeable. That is exactly what these proposals mean. Now, gentlemen, with reference to this, as has been already pointed out to you, it is possible that there could be differences of opinion. The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has spoken in words of eloquence and wisdom of the need for a compromise and the need for our expression of the united will of the people to those with whom that united expression will count. It has been the endeavour of those who are responsible for these proposals not merely to make clear our own position but to enable others whether in this assembly or elsewhere to give expression to sentiments and views which in the main shall be in unison with our own, so that though it may be that it is different voices that speak, the ideas that are given expression to shall be the

same in their cardinal and basic principles. (Applause). It is with that object that these proposals have been framed. The Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru has told you that these proposals have not gone as far as he would like. I am one of those, possibly a very negligible member, in this assembly, (Cries of 'No, no'), who unhappily think that these proposals have gone a little too far. (Cries of 'No, Never'). You have justly anticipated me. I told you already that I am a negligible quantity in the assembly. What I wish to mention to you is that this has been found to be the meeting place of those who might want to go even farther than this and those who if left to themselves, would not like to go as far as this. The merit of our proposals consists in this, that this is found to be a common meeting place and that is what enhances the value, the importance, and the weight to be attached to our proposals. With these words, gentlemen, I beg to commend this proposition to you.

The Hon'ble Mr. Fazlul Haq (Bengal) :—Brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I beg to support the resolution, but in doing so, I wish to guard against being misunderstood. I can assure you that if I were free to follow my own inclinations I would have proposed the condemnation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme (Hear, hear and prolonged applause) and would have urged upon you the acceptance, instead, of the Congress-League Scheme which has been thrice ratified by this great national assembly : but I feel, gentlemen, also that at this one of the supremest moments of crisis in the history of our country, our own individual will must be subordinated to the consideration of the common good. (Hear, hear and applause). I can tell you that very weighty reasons have weighed with me to induce me to accept the resolution before you. I will therefore take you into my confidence and indicate to you the reasons which weighed with me and I feel sure that you will agree with me that it is a matter of wisdom and prudence that we should accept the resolution in the form in which it has been put before you.

Remember, ladies and gentlemen, that the proposals that are now before you in the shape of criticisms will have to be judged by the bar of public opinion in England. We have to take into account the fact that the British people will be the final arbiters of our destinies and if I may say so, we have to remember the mental characteristics of the Englishman. I do not know if you have observed it, but my own experience of the Englishman teaches me that there are some very prominent characteristics in his character. One is that he is about one of the most conceited of human beings on the face of the earth. (Applause). I do not in this sweeping generalisation include men like Mr. Bradlaugh, Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. A. O. Hume, Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. B. G. Horniman. He is one of the most conceited of human beings ; he believes most sincerely that he has been created by God Almighty himself and that the rest of mankind has been created by some agency with whom

God has no concern. He thinks that he has got a right not only to govern himself but to force his government on others. That is the result of his conceit. I give him credit for sincerity of purpose. He cannot disobey the inclinations of his own mind. Secondly, if I may use the expression, he is also one of the dullest of God's creatures. You may remember that there is a common saying that an Englishman may spend his whole life-time in this country and yet cannot even pick up a smattering knowledge of any vernacular. I know that one Englishman lived for twenty years in this country and the sum total of his knowledge consisted of three words: "Thum, hum, jatha." (Laughter). He cannot appreciate points of view different from his own. We hear of the angle of vision, but with an Englishman it is either an obtuse angle or an acute angle; but never the right angle. (Applause). He feels most profoundly for the Belgians; he feels for the freedom of the smaller nations in Europe; but at the same time he forgets that for a period of one hundred and fifty years he has practically kept the people of India in bondage and put fetters around the feet of those who are descendants of sages, whose feet their ancestors would have been proud to touch. He forgets all that, and yet I give him credit, not because he is sincere, but because he is dull. It is a very difficult set of people whom we have to deal with.

Thirdly, we have also to remember that we have got implacable enemies to face, namely, the Anglo-Indian Press. Fourthly, I must say with great sorrow that to-day we miss from our midst some stalwarts of the Congress. Reference has been made to them, and I cannot but refer to them with great reverence, and I appreciate all the work that they have done for the country. But, ladies and gentlemen, there is such a crime as infanticide. Supposing parents try to kill their own children. it is a criminal act, and the fact that they have given birth to the children, is no justification for killing them. It is yet a crime; but thank God, that though the parents tried to kill the child, the child is not dead: it lives—the Congress lives and is bound to thrive. (cheers). The Divine spirit has permeated the Congress; the Congress which has been moulded into shape by such divine hands as those of Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, Mr. Badrudin Tyabji, Mr. Ananda Mohan Bose, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Sir William Wedderburn and Mr. A. O. Hume, will never die and those who try to kill the Congress will only try to kill themselves. At the same time, we must remember that we have not got them with us, and that makes our path difficult and our task onerous. These are the main considerations which have weighed with me in accepting the resolution in its present form. Ladies and gentlemen, I would appeal to you to accept the proposals, as the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru reminded you, as the considered and deliberate opinion of some of our chosen leaders. We have spent three days in settling the wording of the resolution and all that human labour, patience

and foresight can do has not been withheld from the consideration of the proposals now before you. Before we part, in making this appeal to you, I submit that I am not making an appeal which is new to you or to which you are unaccustomed. Whatever our differences may be, whatever may be our so-called cleavages, at which our enemies rejoice, loyalty to the cause and the ideals of the Congress is the creed of the citizens of India. Having said this, I do not think that I need take up the time of the Congress by going into the merits of the resolution as they have been gone into by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malvaiya and the Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Mr. B. Chakravarthi (Calcutta):—Ladies and gentlemen, on the last occasion when I had the honour and privilege of addressing you a few words, a criticism was directed against me that I appeared to be well-pleased with myself. Well, I plead guilty to that charge. I was well-pleased then. I have been well-pleased since then during my stay in Bombay and I am well-pleased to-day before you. The reason is, on the first day when I noticed this vast assembly of my countrymen and country-women, the beauty, the wealth, the manhood and the womanhood of my country, I was well-pleased. And I have been well-pleased since then to stand by you.

I support this resolution as a partial escape from imprisonment and we have consented, (Laughter) under able advice, to come out of the prison-house partially and under surveillance. That is why we have said that for some time Law, Police and Justice will remain with you, so that you may watch my conduct when I am out of the prison-house. You may think that I am exaggerating matters when I say that this is a partial escape from prison. I mean what I say. What is hated in the prison? You may have good food, good clothes, and every comfort that you may require, but the will is not your will. You are wanting in self-determination. Somebody else regulates your conduct, and for the last 150 years we have been in prison, somebody determining as to what we are to do, physically, intellectually, morally, spiritually, commercially, and from the industrial point of view. I resent it. Even a partial escape I welcome. You will see what is the position. The play of the soul and mind has been denied to us. We are producers of raw goods of every kind. We are to grow paddy and jute and wheat and other things and export them. We are to serve in offices as nazirs, as they are called, and peishkars, and somebody has to do the work of the mind and of the soul. In the army, we are the raw goods, that is to say, we are to bear arms and bear arms for the purpose of fighting the enemy and defending the country, not under our control and guidance; but somebody else has to control our mind. Take the navy. It has been destroyed and there is no Indian navy. At one time, especially in this city, you will bear in mind we had a mercantile navy as well as a navy

for the purposes of warfare. That being the position, what we say is, as my friend the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has pointed out, why should we not for example have the subject of education transferred to us? If the control of education is transferred to us, we will take care of our children's education. This is a part that I resent most, because not only am I kept in prison, but my children are being perversely educated because the brightest of them have been taught to think that the prison-house is the best place for them. They think that the older men who are dissatisfied with their lot have gone mad, that they are fools, because they want a change of conditions and want free life in the open sun and the open air.

Let me take another example. It is with regard to industries. My friend the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has pointed out what is the difficulty impeding progress. Why should not industries be made over to our hands? The moment they are made over to our hands, we will deal with the matter in our own way. Therefore, without taking up more of your time, I ask you to accept the proposal which has been put before you not as absolutely satisfactory, but as the best we have thought it wise to demand regard being had to the attitude of mind of the British people at the present moment. My friends have already pointed out to you that it does not satisfy any of us fully, but this is the most prudent course that we can take at present.

Mr. S. R. Romanji (Bombay):—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen, as the proceedings of this national assembly have been enormously drawn out, I will only content myself with saying that as a very humble member of the Parsi community, I support the resolution with the greatest pleasure.

Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao (Madras):—Mr. President, brother delegates and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I look upon it as a great privilege to be called upon to address you on this memorable occasion, because you know that we are at a crisis in the fortunes of the motherland. I will not go into details of the scheme or the resolution which has been so ably expounded and explained to you. I will confine myself to that part of the resolution which says that the report on constitutional reforms is disappointing and unsatisfactory. The proposals of the distinguished authors of the report are disappointing and unsatisfactory because they are based on part I of the Report. This Report, I may say at once, is one-sided and misleading—I refer to Part I of the report. We see the hand of an Indian Civilian in almost every paragraph of this report (Hear, hear). There seems to be a deliberate attempt to misrepresent the people of India and the stage of advance they have reached. It was not so in the days of the old East India Com-

pany when the foundations of the British Empire were being laid by such great men and administrators as Sir Thomas Munro, Elphinstone, Sir John Malcolm, and Metcalfe. If you saw the minute of Sir Thomas Munro,—this minute, I may tell you was drawn up more than a century ago when the British Government had just established itself in India,—you will see the contrast between its spirit and the spirit which this report breathes with the misleading and one-sided observations prepared by Civilian hands for the information of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu. In the old days Sir Thomas Munro did not hesitate to recommend that we should have Self-Government, that we should have the power of taxing ourselves, that we should be allowed to occupy the highest posts in the service of our country. Nowadays the Civilians have become a strong corporation with vested interests and they seem to think that they should oppose every scheme that is calculated to give us Self-Government or responsible government. Lest you should think that I am condemning it in a general way I may give you a few instances of misrepresentation contained in the report. There is in the report a quotation about the people being composed of different creeds, races, and religions from Lord Dufferin. In this extract from Lord Dufferin's statement the head-hunter appears very prominently, and this is quoted to convey the impression that we are still in a backward state of civilization and that we are unfit for Self-Government. I am sure that the Civilian who had charge of Mr. Montagu and the deputation from England, including Mr. Roberts, the author of the phrase "angle of vision"—I am sure that he took them over the different parts of India and showed the head-hunter to the party. Did he take the trouble—I ask the Civilian, simply to show that the report is one-sided—to take the party to the adjoining Native State of Baroda, where His Highness the Gaekwar has taken in hand the forest tribes, the "Donkas" and the "Doublas" and others and given them free boarding houses near their homes, and facilities for learning agriculture, and the handicrafts?

Again, the report speaks of the illiteracy of the peasant and his disqualification to take part in any electoral scheme. I have got a great deal to say about the report, and also about our ability to rightly use the new found power which the united Congress and Muslim League has given us, as an instrument for self-determination. I find that I have already exceeded the time allotted to me, and I shall reserve what I have to say for another occasion. I commend to this assembly the resolution as framed by the Subjects Committee.

Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas who, on rising was received with cheers said :—
Mr. President, sister and brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I have come here under the orders of the President to address you a few words in support of this resolution. Ladies and gentlemen, when I and a few friends of mine decided to accept the invitation of my honoured and revered friend, the Hon'ble

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, to attend the informal conference on Wednesday last, and when thereafter we decided to come here, we were told that either we would be rough-handled in the Subjects Committee or that we were falling into a trap laid for us by our Extremist friends. Possibly my friend has asked me to appear before you to-day to satisfy you that we were not rough-handled. At the same time I take this opportunity to thank all the representatives of what is rightly or wrongly called the Extremist party for the very courteous hearing that they have given to us and to our opinions (Applause) and for the spirit of compromise in which they have accepted some of our suggestions. We on our side have also thought it best in the interests of unity to which the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has referred, to accept all the modifications as they stand, although we may not approve of all of them. That is the only way of acting as practical politicians. I recommend this resolution for your favourable acceptance. (At this stage three cheers were called for the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and heartily responded to).

Mr. B. G. Tilak, who on rising was received with a tremendous ovation and continued cries of "Tilak Maharajki Jai," and "Bande Mataram," said :—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—My first duty on this platform is to thank the Government of Bombay (Laughter) for allowing me to open my lips at least here. I am sorry, very sorry, that the President has not been so kind to me as the Government of Bombay! (Laughter) He has allowed me only five minutes. (Cries of 'You may go on'). I have consented to abide by his ruling. It is now 10. 30 a.m., and we have got good deal more work to be done. I do not want to take up much of your time as there are a number of resolutions which must be gone through before 11 or 11.30 a.m. We are not going to have another session in the evening, and so you will excuse me if I confine myself to a few remarks on the resolution so ably moved by my friend the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. What we have tried to do in the Subjects Committee is to distil our different opinions—and our Subjects Committee was a big distillery—and it was very difficult to distil, in the language of my friend, Sir H. A. Wadia, 'the gourd and the cucumber' together. That was the difficulty of our task. Both had to be distilled ; and it was a very difficult task, and even our enemies considered it difficult—I shall not call them enemies if you like but I will call them only our opponents. They believed that we were engaged in a very impossible task and that by the beginning of September the Congress would be nowhere. And they would have been delighted at it. Unfortunately their predictions did not come true. (Cries of "Fortunately" and continued cheers)—Unfortunately for them—(Laughter)—their predictions have not proved true. I am sure so long as the spirit of forbearance and the spirit of give-and-take pervades the councils of the Congress, such a fatal contingency is never likely to arise. We have been awfully misrepresented. We were told on the strength of stray

expressions of thought, in moments of heat and passion, that the Congress was going to reject the whole scheme. I could never understand and have never understood what it meant. We are in the midst of our negotiations. If you reject the scheme, then you have done with it. What are you going to tell the British people? "That we reject the scheme?" And what will be the reply? "Why have you come down here? You could have sent that criticism through the post. You have rejected the scheme and you have nothing to propose instead. Go back to your country." That would have been their reply. I think that we have learnt enough of politics to know that it is absurd to take such a position. That should have been clear. After that there were other difficulties. Fortunately for all, we have been able to place before you a reasoned document; a resolution which has combined the wisdom of one party, I may say, the temperament of another party, and if you like to call it—I do not like to call it myself—the rashness of a third party. You will find that they all have in very good proportions happily blended together.

What was our difficulty? Many of you must have read the report on Indian Constitutional Reforms. That report is a beautiful, very skilful and statesmanlike document. What was the object of that report? There are two words in vogue, namely, Self-Government and Responsible Government. We asked for eight annas of Self-Government. This report gives us one anna of Responsible Government and says that it is better than eight annas of Self-Government. The whole literary skill of the report lies in making you believe that one anna of Responsible Government is more than sufficient and more than eight annas of Self-Government. If you read the report over and over again, you will find that it is—I do not know what to say—a very skilful document, a very statesmanlike document—I am not going further than that—designed to make us believe that one morsel of Responsible Government is more than sufficient to satisfy our hunger for Self-Government. We have discovered that fortunately. That is one of the merits of the recommendations contained in this resolution. We now plainly say: we thank you for the one anna of Responsible Government, but in the scheme we want to embody not all that is embodied in the Congress-League Scheme—the rails might be different, but the carriages that carry passengers might be transferred from one rail to another. That is what we have tried to do, and we have tried to satisfy all parties concerned, and a very difficult task has been accomplished, as difficult as the task that Mr. Lloyd George is performing in the British Parliament when he means to satisfy the Irish Pacifists and those who want to carry on the political war to the end. (Hear, hear). It is a very difficult task; but it has been done. The future way is clear, and I hope that what we have done will be of material help to us in carrying on this fight to the end. Sir Pherozeshah Mehta once said that the business of the Congress was to focus popular opinion.

We have tried to focus public opinion ; though some of the rays have unfortunately escaped us. Substantially the resolution represents the opinion of the country. There it is ; we can utilise it, and we can tell the British democracy that though the report may be very good and very artistically prepared, and written, yet the opinion of the country is that it is unsatisfactory and disappointing.

You will ask me, what is the good of saying all that. We ask that Self-Government should be completed in 15 years. Our critics say that it is too short a period. I want our critics to remember that unless India is raised to the status of the self-governing Colonies, to be an equal member of the Empire, the Empire will lose in strength and it will be in danger. We ask for Self-Government not only for the sake of ourselves—although there is that self-interest,—so much I admit—but also for the sake of the Empire. What is the good of developing India in 200 or 300 years ? India's status should be raised within the next ten or fifteen years. It is only then it can help the Empire. Those that say that the first step we ask for is too much are, I must say, the enemies of the Empire itself ; they do not consider the question from a broad point of view. It is not a question between the bureaucracy and our people. We want the right of control to be exercised over the bureaucracy within the next 15 years. It is only then that India will be ready to take part in the development of the Empire, will be a source of strength to the Empire, which it must possess and which at the time of the re-construction of the Empire it should be the duty of British statesmen to bring about by adopting the policy which has been enunciated by them ; and this resolution supports that policy. I ask you to accept the resolution unanimously. (Applause).

Mr. Abbas Tyabjee (Bombay) :—Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen,—it is a very difficult position for any speaker to come after our friend Mr. Tilak. I know that all that he has said is the last word and that the question is decided. But, gentlemen, some of us have to justify ourselves for being here, to justify or at least to make allowance for those friends with whom we are in absolute sympathy in our political life, and who are keeping away. * You know this report is read by millions of people. Everybody has been trying to understand it. But they have understood it in their own way. Now the time has come to understand it with others. If everybody understands this report in his own way, there arise a variety of views expressed by one side or the other—I won't call them parties. It is only differences of our views, differences of opinion. We do not form parties in the Congress. There are distinct cleavages of opinion. We have old men who are politicians, who have seen many differences of opinion and have sympathised with the young. Many of our leaders and others expressed views which

seemed incompatible; these very gentlemen, who expressed these opinions came to the conclusion that they would work together in the Congress even though they were in the smallest minority, and make themselves heard. These brothers have been on good terms with the young men who took us into confidence, always treated us nicely. I have the fullest hope that if any of us made suggestions which were reasonable, they would, notwithstanding all the speeches that have been made and the pamphlets that have been published, be carried. I am glad to say that I am one of the few who refused to break up with the Congress or to hold any separate movement in which I was satisfied that I was not going to have fair treatment. In a democracy you must expect differences of opinion. We have done with the days of aristocracy and autocracy. We are no longer Brahmins, Hindus, Mahammadans, Parsees and Christians, but we are all Indians. It is only differences of opinions; and not of castes. It is no longer those ideas of Lord Dufferin which were expressed twenty years ago. I only say this in justification for those who kept away; they mistrusted their powers to lead—those powers which they exercised over us till to-day; and if they trusted to those powers and sat round us there would have been no difference of opinion, and it would have been possible that some better proposals might have been made. The resolution is the crystallisation of our ideas on the question of self-government and responsible government, and as such, the resolution is a compromise certainly; but in the main it represents the solid opinion of the Congress. I hope you will accept it on that basis and pass it unanimously. We are not in disagreement with other gentlemen; they mistrusted their powers as leaders, and they will come to the same conclusion as we have come to and there will be very little difference of opinion between us both. Therefore, I hope that nothing we have done differs from what they are going to do. I hope they will not mistrust us; and if they will join us in the Congress, we will be happy to ask them to take their lead as before. With these words, I beg to support this resolution.

Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal (Bengal) who, on rising, was received with tremendous cheers, said:—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen of the National Congress and visitors,—I do not think that after the speeches to which we have listened, it is at all necessary for me to take up much of your time in commending this proposition that already stands commended to you upon its own merits. I will first of all say one word about one word and that word is “compromise.” The scheme of the resolution is a compromise; but I ask you between whom? Compromise implies there are two opposing views, and I refuse to admit it, Mr. President, that in truth and reality there are in this country two opposing views in regard to the scheme of reform that has been formulated by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. (Cries of ‘Rain, rain’). I am glad of the rain.

I take it to mean ladies and gentlemen, when I say that there are no opposing views among the people of this country, it is not you, but even the Heavens are cheering my words. (At this stage the rain stopped). Thus you see the rain is now over. Then comes the applicability of the word "compromise." The compromise is between the view of the people of India and the suspicion of the Government of India. Some of us are anxious to look inside the psychology of the official mind and are anxious to propitiate the official mind in a matter of this kind. That is statesmanship; I admit it. I am anxious to propitiate it, and I have propitiated it by giving my consent to the bill of rights. The first thing that the report demands is that the authority of the Government of India which means the authority of the Governor-General in Council shall be indisputable, (Cries of 'No, no'), in all matters adjudged by it to be essential to peace, order and good government. (Laughter). Now sir, this is an authority which is in every Government in the nature of the government itself. We give it to them. We say let it not be a bureaucratic government, but let it be a responsible government. You see that is a good compromise. (Laughter). Then they say 'we must have indisputable authority to put down disorder. You say you must now have it. We say we must have indisputable rights, our birthrights, the right of person, the right of property, the right of speech, the right of thought, the right of association. We want them; give us these rights and you take your authority. So, here is a compromise. They say that we should not run fast. We say we are not running very fast. All that we shall get for the running is only the aching of our legs. Are we running fast? Are we going so fast as the situation demands? My last word is look at the situation. I do not believe that this scheme is the product of any generosity; I do not believe in any generosity in politics, in spontaneous generosity in politics, any more than I believe in the spontaneous something else in biology. I do not believe in it. Lord Islington did not believe in it; Lord Hardinge did not believe in it; Lord Chelmsford himself did not believe in it, because this announcement was required in the words of Lord Islington, for the gravity in the Indian situation. That is the real reason, the Indian situation was so grave that it affected the permanent interests of the Empire. That is the whole situation. We want to save the Empire. Allow us to save it; that is all we want. We want to keep up the British connection for guidance's sake as you have stated in the resolution. For goodness's sake, make it easy for the older men to induce the younger men to keep up that connection. We see the far-ahead dangers of an isolated India, we recognise the dangers of conflict between you, if carried on beyond certain limits; but my young people, impatient idealists, the dreamers of divine dreams, but for whom there would be no politics and nothing to hope for, for the people of India,—what shall I give to them? They have no distant vision. They have no appreciation of the complexity of the world politics.

If I have to take them with me and infuse them with the ideals of the Empire, you must give them something to stand for, to strive for, to live for, to hope for, and to die for. This resolution gives us the first step in that direction. (Applause).

Mr. Jayakar (Bombay) :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I regard it as a great privilege to be asked to speak in this brilliant galaxy of veteran readers of this National Assembly. But having regard to the short time at my disposal and having regard to the very humble position which I occupy in the public life of the country, I think you will agree that my main function this morning ought to be not to explain the merits of the resolution, because that must be left to the veterans of the assembly, but to put before you in rather short, brief and animated language, one or two aspects of the proposition which has been commended for your acceptance.

Before I do so, I should like to point out to you in the words of the "Times of India" which in its issue of day before yesterday, resorted to a little analogy from that wonderful book "Alice in Wonderland." I am not aware whether you have read a little parody in that wonderful book. I am prepared to take episodes from that book and remind the "Times of India" that there are many episodes there which will fit in with the present condition, in summarising the aspirations of this assembly. You remember a little episode that Alice wanted jam and asked for it. Jam is a little confection of sweet of which little children are very fond. Alice, a little girl, wanted a little jam and therefore asked for a little jam from those people who were her elders, who were hard task-masters, and who had plentiful jam in their possession. They did not want to give Alice jam at all; but wanted to feed her on hopes. They applied one formula which I wish you to remember in connection with the recommendations contained in the report. They said, "Jam yesterday, jam to-morrow, no jam to-day." Similarly I say that the report in a very large measure says "Plenty of Self-Government in front of you, very little self-government now and you have had plentiful self-government in the past." What we want in the words of Alice's formula is "Plenty of self-government yesterday, great deal of jam to-day, and jam, bread and butter to-morrow." I therefore remind you of this little episode of "Alice in Wonderland" and proceed to another matter and in about five minutes I will finish my speech.

I will admit that this compromise in this resolution has been to rid the report of the appearance which establishes our relationship between the British people and this country, a relationship which I am inclined to put on the same footing as that of the school-master and his children. I am sure that if, through some psychic will, either Mrs. Besant or Mr. Jinarajadasa will look into the past life of the authors of this report, go back life after life, they will find out

how the taint of the school-master comes into the whole report ; I have no doubt that in some distant bygone migration and bygone reincarnation Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford must have been school-masters somewhere. What is the conception of the whole report ? It is that India is a big school and that England and the Government of India are masters and that India will be put into small classes and compartments, so that year after year it may be five or ten, fifteen or twenty years, periodical examinations will be conducted in these classes by the school-masters, and according to the deserts and the merits of India, of her fitness of which "the British people and the Indian Government will be the sole judges" to quote the wording of the announcement of the 20th August last year will be judged. My difficulty is that I do not object to the compromise, and I am not one of those dreamers who believe that self-government should come to us all of a sudden ready-made, because I do not believe that Self-Government is conferred upon a country by another unless it is deserved. My objection is not to the national evolution or the growth of the nation ; but my objection is to the great difficulty as to how England is going to meet the task of the school-master. When you take the ordinary school-master in a school or college, who is it that understands the boys ? It is one who is in daily association with them, who has read their history, culture and civilisation. Our experience so far has been that England in spite of 150 years of association of a close character politically with India is not yet able to understand our National aims and aspirations. Rabindranath Tagore, though a fiction-writer is said to lead a seditious life just as Voltaire was considered a seditious preacher. Until very recently *Bande Mataram* was a seditious song. Therefore I say whenever the question of national sentiment comes in, is England going to be prepared to understand properly the Indian sentiments, so that the role that England assumes of being India's school-master can be properly performed ? You know the great difficulty of one race to understand another. We spend 15 or 20 years in understanding the culture and the civilisation of the English people ; and yet when I tell the English people that their habits are vicious, and that the rowdyism and indiscipline of the college boys are overmastering, I am told "you are an Indian, you cannot understand the English sentiments ; you must be an Englishman to understand it." We are told that we cannot represent the masses, because, by education we have placed differences between the masses and ourselves. We are told that we, Hindus cannot understand Muhammadans, because our religions are different. I say, take all these arguments and apply them to the average Englishman in this country and collectively to the Government which they have established ; and I say the task of understanding the aspirations and the national sentiments of the Indian people must be absolutely colossal and well-nigh impossible. I have no objection to England playing the role of the school-master. It can play it long if it wants ; but it must take

steps to understand and enter into the spirit of the national sentiments as Mrs. Besant and Mr. Horniman have done. We are not opposed to the progressive stages laid down in the report ; but if we object to it, it is on the ground that the task of one nation being judged by the standard of another nation is absolutely impossible. The analogy of the school-life to the national life is a mis-placed analogy. Therefore, our condemnation of the reform proposals as contained in the resolution before you, where we say that the scheme is unsatisfactory and disappointing, is based upon this feeling—that we do not want these examinations. We do not want these examinations time after time. We say that you may have as many commissions as you like provided that in 15 years' time, full Self-Government is given to this country. I have nothing more useful to add to the speeches already made and I therefore commend the resolution to your acceptance.

The President :—Ladies and gentlemen, it is 11 o'clock and the work before us is much in volume. I propose, therefore, in winding up the discussion on this subject, to call upon Mrs. Besant, whom I dare say you are all waiting to hear.

Mrs. Besant, who on rising, was received with loud and continued cheering said :—Mr. President, fellow-delegates and friends,—I am called upon not to speak on the details of a scheme that you all can read, but to wind up the discussion which has placed before you the main points of that which we have striven to accomplish. I would like to remind you that—in the battle into which we are now entering, in placing the essentials of our Congress-League Scheme within the framework of the Montagu-Chelmsford report,—I would like to remind you that we are like an army with a strenuous campaign before it, advancing against well-disciplined and serried hosts. For the success of such an army, you have various branches, your artillery, your cavalry, your infantry. Their pace is different, but they must be co-ordinated if they are to succeed in the struggle. If your cavalry charges ahead brilliantly, galloping on the foe without the preparation of the artillery, without the support of the infantry, what will happen? The enemy will meet them in their charge, will find them unsupported, will mow them down, separated from the main body of the host and then, having annihilated the cavalry, he would advance across the grounds left empty to annihilate the infantry in its turn. If we are called impatient idealists, if we are cavalry, we cannot win the battle by ourselves, we must have the infantry with us, who cannot gallop on horses, but who have to walk,—for that is their particular work—and I say we must wait for the infantry, we must be ready to accommodate our pace to theirs, and when their main body has fought their battle then we must charge forward as rapidly as we can, and turn the victory into a complete rout of the enemy.

I submit that the divisions made so much of, the controversies that stir the country, are nothing more than a manifestation of political life and political thought. (Hear, hear). You had much more unity in the days gone by. Why? Because the masses were not thinking, because the young took no interest in politics, because a few voiced the aspirations of the nation, and there was no difference because of the absence of thought. Now that you have much thought, now that you form your own opinions, now that you are preparing yourselves for self-government, you must have differences, because you are alive. If you are asleep, if you are paralysed, then you have blank unity everywhere. But if you have diversity, you should not quarrel with the manifestation of life. What we say to those who do not go wholly with us is: "Form your own organizations. In England they have Radical leagues, Liberal leagues, Conservative leagues, Tory leagues, but they all, "meet in Parliament. Have your moderate associations, have your Home "Rule Leagues, have as many separate organisations as you choose; but "join the Parliament of the nation, the parliament of the people, (Applause) "and let its united wisdom guide the deliberations of us all." One great point that we have made and which I shall presently put before you is that we want to go ahead in England. They have just emancipated six millions of their women and we want to win them to our side. The great difference in the new advance lies in that.

Now, I have two or three words to say to you which, I know some may think perhaps go too far. I find it continually said that you must preserve the British character of your administration. I ask you why? You are not Britons, you are Indians. If you are Indians, your administration should be an Indian administration. (Hear, hear and applause). Why have so much care about the British character of it when in your difference with England lies your real value to the Commonwealth? The phrase "The blessings of British rule" hypnotises the people. There is a method of making people helpless while they are really free. I could take some of you and by a few passes of my hand I could make you think that you could not move your arm and your legs, and because you thought it, you would become incapable of movement. That is what is done to you by your education. You are hypnotised into the belief of your unfitness, into the belief that you must be guided by another nation instead of the nation which you are from your immemorial past. And therefore I say to you that what you want is not so much the British character of this, that or the other service, but "Claim your rights as men: and the freedom of your own country." What is it that you want to do for India? Surely you want to "make it fit for free men and women to live in." It is not so fit to-day. I agree with Shrimatī Sarojini Devī in that that it is not human to be in the condition that you are. If you would be men and women, then can

you prefer subjection to freedom and obedience to the will of another rather than the exercise of your own? That is the point I would put to you. I would have you realise, as Mr. Asquith said, that there is an intolerable humiliation in the yoke of strangers, that you should realise that you should meet Britons as equals and not as subordinates. You should demand to be treated as a nation and not as merely asking for your freedom. I ask you to remember your dignity, your self-respect, your determination to be free, and in this scheme you are opening the door to liberty through which you will walk in, in the few years that lie in front. It is not enough to have food,—though indeed you have little of it,—not enough to have clothing and shelter. Without freedom you are not men; without liberty you are unworthy of your country, and so I ask you to prepare this beginning of a new life, of a new era for India, to pitch your hopes high, pitch your aspirations high, for it was said. "If you aim at the star, then your arrow will travel far." I plead to you in uniting with your brethren of the Moslem-League—for, in the whole of this proposition, there is nothing of importance in which they disagree with us—I ask you, Hindus and Muslims of the Congress, Muslims of the League, to join in a common cry: One is the Motherland; one is the nation." Pray, can we not say lifting our united voices, "O, Bharata Matha, mighty, divine and glorious, we are making your country fit for you to dwell in and we pray you to listen to our aspirations and to descend and dwell practically in our midst." (Applause).

The President:—I put the resolution to the vote. I take it that it is passed. (Cries of 'passed, passed'). Is there any one against? (Cries of 'No. no').

I declare the resolution passed. (Continued cheers and Applause).

PROVINCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

I shall now move resolution X from the Chair. The resolution runs as follows:—

Resolution X.—That the question of Provincial Contributions to the Imperial Exchequer be referred to the Provincial Congress Committees for opinions to be placed before the next Congress at Delhi.

I take it that it is passed. (Cries of 'passed,' passed) I declare the resolution passed. (Applause).

MAHOMEDAN REPRESENTATION.

I now move from the Chair resolution No. 7 which is as follows:—

Resolution VII.—The proportion of Mahomedans in the Legislative Councils and the Legislative Assembly as laid down in the Congress League Scheme must be maintained.

I take it that it is passed. (Cries of 'Passed, passed'). Is there any one against? (Cries of 'No, no'). I declare the resolution passed.

WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu who was received with cheers moved the next resolution and in doing so said:—Men of India, I shall not address the women of India to-day, because I stand before the men of India,—to me has been entrusted a resolution which might seem somewhat controversial. Though it might seem a trifle, though it might seem premature, though it might seem incredible considering our progress, I still claim the demand made in the resolution to be the primal right of womanhood. The resolution reads thus:

Resolution VIII.—Women, possessing the same qualifications as are laid down for men in any part of the scheme shall not be disqualified on account of sex.

Gentlemen, this resolution can be treated from the standpoint of practical politics, or from the standpoint of national ideals, or from the standpoint of economic considerations which must be dealt with in a modern age. No matter in which way one deals with the question, I still claim that sex is not a disqualification to the primal right of franchise; it is a human right and not a monopoly of one sex only. I put it before you not from practical considerations, not from economic considerations, but rather from the standpoint of the National ideal of India. We Indians have always boasted that we are followers of the Goddesses of our land. Our teachings have always inculcated the worship of the mother even before the worship of the father. What is the psychology and interpretation of that inculcation, of that doctrine, of that practice? Woman makes the nation; on her worthiness or unworthiness, weakness or strength, ignorance or enlightenment, her cowardice or courage, lies folded the destiny of her sons. Shall it be said by any law of biology, physiology, psychology or any 'ology' that you may bring in, that woman shall go down into the valley of eternal shadow and be made irresponsible for the future of a country? Is it possible, is it rational, I ask you, that the duty of a woman ends with the physical agony that she endures for the sake of her sons? Are you not aware that in every Indian house, it is the woman that is the centre of life waiting for the dawn? She is the servant of the household, she daily sacrifices every day of her life at the altar of her labours, of her love and devotion to the family. Then being the servant of the family, being the high priestess of the home, being the true legislator of the destinies of India, though unacknowledged yet supreme, is it not illogical, I ask you, is it worthy of you to say that she shall face death with no courage to face life, that she shall sacrifice for the sustenance of the family within the four walls of her home and

yet be not afforded that primal right which is as much hers as it is yours, because she is co-responsible with you for the honour and prosperity of your country? It has been said that to give women franchise would be to rob them of feminine grace. Not long ago I found myself in the noble, notwithstanding narrow seclusion of an institution where a child is taken away from the mother at the age of seven and kept from the voice of the woman till the age of twenty-one; but mine was the privilege of being admitted to that monastery where the noble guide of this institution quarrelled with me and said: "Why do you take away from the glamour of womanhood by labelling it and defining it? On the other hand, our young men imbued with the latest ideals of modern wisdom and thought say that women must be given franchise because they are the comrades of men and co-workers. But the truth lies in both things. A monastic youth on the banks of the Ganges told me that woman, has been true, but if truth be abiding, if truth be fundamental, if truth is one of what a friend calls the eternal verities, shall it be less eternal by being acknowledged honestly, squarely and frankly? I do not think that any male need have apprehension that to extend the horizon of woman's labours is to break all her power in the home. I do not think that there need be any apprehension that in granting franchise to Indian womanhood, Indian womanhood will wrench the power belonging to manhood. Never, never, for we realise that men and women have their separate goals, separate destinies and that just as a man can never fulfil the responsibility or the destiny of a woman, a woman cannot fulfil the responsibility of man. Unless she fulfils the responsibility within her horizon and becomes worthy and strong and brave, there can be no fulness and completeness of National life. We ask for franchise, we ask for vote, not that we might interfere with you in your official functions, your civic duties, your public place and power, but rather that we might lay the foundation of national character in the souls of the children that we hold upon our laps and instil into them the ideals of national life. We want the franchise for them that we might glorify the dirt, the degradation of civic life, that we might be able by our own implacable ideals of moral purity to cleanse the filth of public life. We want the franchise to be able to wield the power to say that our sons shall not be denationalised. We want the franchise to be able to say that our education shall not be the imitation of unsuitable and alien things but rather that our Nationality shall be evolved in line with our National traditions and that our National characteristics shall be the outcome of our own needs and capacities. Gentlemen, will you, who turn every minute of your need and every moment of your sorrow to the woman in your home, will you not show your chivalry which is justice, your nobility which is gratitude, by saying to them 'You, who, within the shelter of our homes are Goddesses, high priestesses, the inspirers of our faith, sustainers of

our hopes, the flower of joy upon our breasts, O ; mothers, O ! sisters, O ! wives, we will set your feet upon the path of freedom, we have our own vision, the vision of a distant goal, light the torch in your form and then accompany us to that distant goal to be the inspiration of progress and the reward of all our hope." (Loud and continued applause).

Shrimati Ansuya Sarabai (Ahmedabad) in seconding the resolution made a speech in Gujarati, which was to the following effect :—

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,—In seconding the resolution moved by Mrs. Naidu, I have to say only a few words. For, as the demand of the women of India is for pure justice and no favour, special pleading is not needed. They ask for their rights as citizens of this land. If these are not granted now, the time will surely come when they will secure them by their own efforts. You cannot be unacquainted with the struggle of the English women for justice. Such a struggle is not wanted in this country. It is not desirable considering the traditions of this land. Besides we have to carry on our national fight and all our efforts must be devoted to it. You want to keep with you your Mahomedan brothers. You want to bring in the moderates. Can you then exclude the women of this country—your mothers, your sisters your companions in life ? You have sympathy for women. Will you keep them without rights, in subjection—ultimately to turn them into rebels ? You are all assembled here to preserve your self-respect, to free yourselves from the fetters of dependency. You have fully realized what it is to submit to injustice and tyranny. If the bureaucracy claims to be the judge of your needs and to legislate for you, you look upon it as an insult. I, therefore, ask you—my countrymen, whether you will deny to your sisters the rights you demand for yourselves ? India's heart is not England's. I fully believe that she will not commit the blunders England has committed.

We have to advance in all fields of national life. We have to carry out schemes of great importance. In that task the assistance of women will be needed. You want women in your councils and Municipalities. If they are there, if they take part in public life, the whole standpoint will be altered. Administration will be then differently affected and conditions of life will change. Women will help to legislate for the protection of helpless children and women for peasants and labourers—all those who toil and are defrauded of their dues.

You will not say that we are not fit for the rights we demand. There are enemies of this land who say that the men and women of India are unfit. But you are acquainted with the lives and work of the great, sagacious and heroic women of this land—like Chandbibi and Nurjahan, Luxmibai and Ahalyabai. But I do not base my arguments on these ancient examples. For in our own

times women have taken part in political movements and proved their fitness. In the South African struggle women endured the hardships of the gaol-life with Mr. Gandhi. Then in the agitation regarding the indentured labour in the Fiji islands they took an active part. And a little while ago they joined in the passive resistance struggle of the Kaira agriculturists under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi and here I can say by my personal experience, that their co-operation was intelligent and enthusiastic. Besides in this our great movement for Self-Government women have given every assistance. They have signed in thousands the monster petition presented to the Secretary of State for India. A deputation on their behalf also waited on him. And in this very Congress you see that they are present in large numbers and if the proceedings were to be conducted in the vernaculars I am sure, ten times as many would have been present. The rights you demand for yourselves, the liberty you are fighting to secure for the people of this land, in order to obtain these very rights, this same liberty, the women of this country ask for your assistance and I trust you will give it and by so doing you will prove the sense of justice of our people and thereby add to the glory of our motherland.

Mrs. Ramibai Morarji Kamdar in supporting the Resolution said that that day was a proud and glorious day in the history of the woman world of India. She said that it was so because the men of India as represented by their leaders in that assembly of the nation had by placing that resolution on the agenda, given expression to their respect for and confidence in the women of this country in a manner worthy of their ancestors (cheers.)

The speaker said that she ought not to miss this opportunity to pay a tribute to the men of India who were ready and willing to extend to women equal political rights even when the men of what were considered civilized continents, *vis.*, Europe and America grudged to do so in their own countries.

The speaker then expressed her gratitude for this respect and confidence and assured the assembly that so far as the women of India were concerned they would never stand in antagonism to men, as their sisters in the West had done, or rise in a sort of rebellion in a manner unbecoming to the dignity of their sex as judged by their natural standards. The speaker continuing, said that that attitude of Indian women was proved by history, which had preserved the record of Indian women who had discharged their duty by enthusiastically co-operating with men, in times of danger when their faith and the liberty of the motherland were at stake (cheers).

The speaker further said that the women of India had often defended their religion and their country in the past and aspired to work for the regeneration of their land in hearty co-operation with men, and following the splendid ideals of their religion and civilization. Proceeding, the speaker

said, that the statements made by missionaries and persons like Mrs. Fawcett and the members of the Sydenham party, that the women of India were unfit to take upon themselves their share of political work or that they were sought by men were unjustifiable and untrue.

The speaker then reminded her sisters that though they should rejoice at the acceptance of this resolution they should also realise that such acceptance would increase their duties and responsibilities in no small degree and that they should spare no efforts to prove themselves worthy of their duties and responsibilities. The speaker wound up by saying that by the discharge of their responsibilities alone would they maintain their great and ancient ideals of womanhood and prove themselves worthy daughters of the Motherland as well as equal and loyal companions of men in the arduous struggle which they were carrying on for the emancipation of the Motherland.

Mr. Vibhakar:—Mr. President and brother and sister delegates,—It is my proud privilege to associate myself with this proposition and I hope it is the proud privilege of the Congress to be associated with the proposition which stands for the equality of rights of the men and women of India. Sir, we have been asking the British Parliament and the British Democracy that if they want to go with clear hands and a clear conscience to the Peace Conference they must give equal rights of British Citizenship and the right of self-determination to the people of India as they have done to the Dominions. Are not, then, the women of India equally entitled to tell the men of India that if they want to go with clean hands and a clear conscience to the Democracy of England, they must be prepared to admit the womanhood of India to the full rights of British Citizenship? And remember, Sir, this is not a question of mere academic importance. The issue will become vital and living in a few years' time. Even now some of the liberty-loving women in this country are astir for the complete civic and political emancipation of Indian womanhood and for full and equal citizenship, for they strongly believe that out of this equality of citizenship there will emerge that equality of social rights and social justice which alone can remove the wrongs of the modern world. It is, therefore, but right and statesmanlike that before the battle develops we should capitulate with good grace. For, I can well imagine, Sir, how say about six years hence, you will be standing as a candidate for the office of Minister of Police, Law and Justice and carrying on an electioneering campaign, and how you will be then received by your electorate with a fusillade of "Votes for Women"! Would it not be, therefore, more dignified, more statesmanlike, more graceful, and less wasteful, for this Congress to wisely anticipate that situation and express our willingness to give our women their birth-right when we ourselves have got it, than to be compelled hereafter to admit our defeat and our narrow-mindedness when-

some of our brave suffragettes will have shaken the walls of our Council Chambers with consequences fateful and unimaginable at present? I commend, therefore, ladies and gentlemen, the proposition to your acceptance.

The President :—I was going to close the debate on this resolution, but the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya wants to say something on this resolution, and as he is always listened to with attention, I have no doubt that you will listen to what he says.

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, speaking in Hindi, opposed the resolution and observed that it was premature as the Muhammadan ladies in India observed gosha and it would be impracticable to give effect to the suggestion in the resolution.

The Hon'ble Pandit Motilal Nehru speaking in Hindi supported the resolution.

The President :—I had no intention of allowing any discussion upon this subject. I now put the proposition to you for vote. Do I take it that the resolution is passed? (There were cries of 'Yes, yes' and 'No, no' and some cries of 'all, all').

The President then stepped on to the rostrum and said :—The subject obviously is of such engrossing interest that when I asked for votes, I heard so many voices that I confess my incapacity to find out whether the cries of 'Yes' or whether the cries of 'No' were those of the majority. (Cries of 'No, no'). You have entrusted to me the duty of finding out your wishes and to declare on our behalf what your wishes are, and I trust you will enable me to faithfully make the declaration that will truly represent your views. Therefore, I would beg of you to tell me, that is, those that are in favour of the resolution will express your approval by saying 'Yes,' while those who are against the resolution will remain silent for the moment. (Loud cries of 'Yes, yes'). Now those who are against the resolution will say 'No'. (A few cries of 'No, no'). I am able to declare that a majority, a very large majority (cheers) is on the side of the resolution and therefore the resolution is carried. (Loud applause.)

AJMERE-MERWARA.

The President :—The next resolution that I put from the Chair is as follows :—

Resolution XI.—This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the status of Ajmere-Merwara and Delhi should be that of a regulated Province, and that popular government and effective control in the affairs of the Local Government shall be granted to the people.

I put it from the Chair for your consideration and acceptance. Are you in favour of it? (Cries of 'all, all'). Any one against it. (Cries of 'No, no'). I declare the resolution carried.

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

The next resolution I want to put to you from the Chair is as follows :—

Resolution XIII.—That this Congress is of opinion that the proportion of annual recruitment to the Indian Civil Service to be made in India should be 50 per cent. to start with, such recruitment to be by open competition in India and by selection from persons already appointed to the Provincial Civil Service.

The resolution was carried by acclamation.

ARMY COMMISSIONS.

Mr. Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhary (Lahore) then moved the following resolution :—

“This Congress places on record its deep disappointment at the altogether inadequate response made by the Government to the demand for the grant of commissions to Indians in the army, and is of opinion that steps should be taken immediately so as to enable the grant of at least 25 p.c. of the commissions to Indians to be gradually increased to 50 p.c. within a period of 15 years.”

In doing so he addressed the audience in Hindi and said that Indians had shown their valour and capacity and could fight as well as any other soldiers. It was an insult to them that commissions should be withheld from them. —(*Bombay Chronicle.*)

Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai (Madras) :—I will just say one word. I second the resolution. I do not think that many words are required to commend the proposition to your acceptance.

Pandit Neki Ram (Delhi) supported the resolution in a Hindi speech and said that Indians were fighting shoulder to shoulder with other soldiers, and by not giving them commissions they were casting a slur on them. —(*Bombay Chronicle.*)

The resolution was then put to the vote and carried.

THE ROWLATT COMMITTEE REPORT.

Mr. C. R. Das (Bengal) who, on rising was received with cheers said :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, it is now quarter past twelve and it is impossible to deal with the resolution which has been put into my hands in a satisfactory way. I shall read the resolution to you and content myself with making just two observations. The resolution runs in these terms :

FRANCHISE AND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE.

Mr. C. R. Das (Bengal) :—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I have to place before you a resolution which is more or less of a formal character. You know that under the reform proposals, one proposal is that committees will be appointed for the purpose of determining the question of franchise and other matters, connected with franchise and other necessary particulars. Now this resolution deals with that matter. I will read the resolution to you. It says :—

“That, so far as the question of determining the franchise and the constituencies and the composition of the Legislative Assemblies is concerned, this Congress is of opinion that, instead of being left to be dealt with by committees, it should be decided by the House of Commons and be incorporated in the statute to be framed for the constitution of the Indian Government.”

OR

“In the alternative, if a Committee is appointed for the purpose, the two non-official members of the Committee should be elected—one by the All-India Congress Committee and the other by the Council of the Moslem League while the co-opted non-official member for each province should be elected by the Provincial Congress Committee of that province.”

The first part of the resolution therefore declares that we do not want any committees. We know what commissions and committees are. We have heard of the Rowlatt Commission, we have heard of other commissions; and we know into whose hands those commissions are entrusted. Therefore we say that we do not want the committees, let the House of Commons decide these questions. If it is said “Where are they to get the materials from to decide the question” my answer is, “refer to the Blue Books.” They will give you information regarding the extent of education, the population and all other details which are necessary. If a Committee is appointed, what will they do? They will take evidence and unfortunately for us, people are not wanting in this country who, when called upon to give evidence, may give away our rights as they have done often and often before. (Cries of ‘Shame’). Having regard to all these circumstances, the first thing we say is that we do not want any committees; and let the House of Commons decide the question. We will go to England and instruct the Members of the House of Commons rather than entrust this work to people who probably may be against the extension of franchise.

Secondly, supposing the Government do not listen to us, and a committee is formed, the resolution goes on to say “In the alternative if a committee is appointed for the purpose, the two non-official members of the Committee should be elected, one by the All-India Congress Committee and the other by the Council of the Moslem League while the co-opted non-official member

"for each province should be elected by the Provincial Congress Committee of that Province." We claim that the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League are the representative bodies of India (Applause). We want to prove that claim by our practical action and this resolution shows that we not only put that forward as an argument, but that we believe in the validity of that claim. I say that if the question of the principle of election is introduced into the formation of these Committees, there is no body in India which is better fitted and better qualified to elect the Indian members than the Indian National Congress on the one hand and the Muslim League on the other. With these observations, I commend this resolution to your acceptance.

Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai (Madras):—I heartily second the proposition.

Mr. B. Chakravarty (Bengal):—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure in supporting this proposition, and I shall very briefly tell you the reason for it. The difficulty that I have always felt with regard to the appointment or selection by Government is this: the man who ceases to be an Indian is considered to be the best man amongst us to represent our interests. It has often been said that *A* is more English than an Englishman himself and therefore more qualified to represent Indian interests than an Indian who lives, moves and has his being as an Indian. The danger with regard to a Committee of that character is this: one man is to be selected from England, there are two civilians to be selected from India and the Government is to appoint one or two of those, who, instead of representing our views, represent the views of the bureaucracy. We want to have some men whom we can trust, who live as we live, who eat as we eat, who think as we think, and who work as we work.

The Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad):—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, so far as the alternative in the resolution is concerned, I am with Mr. Das. I agree that we should recommend that with regard to the two non-official Indians, who are to be appointed under the proposals of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford the Government may very well give the All-India Congress Committee and the Muslim League, the opportunity of recommending who those gentlemen should be. To that part of the proposition I agree. But so far as the first part of the resolution is concerned, namely, the proposal that the House of Commons should decide what the franchise should be, I am opposed to the suggestion. The House of Commons will have any amount of business to attend to at present. They do not find time to discuss the Indian Budget. To expect them to find out what the franchise in India should be, is to expect them to do the impossible. Secondly, it would require on the part of men deciding it a great deal of local investigation as to

the conditions of the people, income of the people, the conditions of education—the customs of the people, which determine the franchise and which have to be studied. I think the House of Commons will be hardly competent to do it nor will it have time to devote to this question. I therefore oppose the first part of the resolution and if Mr. Das will drop it, I will support the second part. I wish you to consider that in any committee that may be appointed, there should be our representatives elected by the Congress and the Muslim League.

Mr. C. R. Das :—If this is going to be put to the vote, I claim the right of reply.

The President :—Of course you can have the right of reply.

Mr. C. R. Das :—I warn you against the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's opposition, because if you do not put it in the alternative, you will get a Committee, but will not get the Committee that you want. It is best to leave it in the hands of the House of Commons. The House of Commons should be made to understand the real condition of affairs; and we will make them understand our position and we will devise means for it. But if it is left in the hands of a committee to be nominated by the Government, you will not get what you want and the right sort of men will not get into it. The local knowledge and other things which will be placed before them will be fictitious and therefore unreal knowledge. In these circumstances, I warn you against the Panditji's opposition.

The President :—The resolution is before you and you can see for yourself that it is in the alternative. The first portion of the resolution is objected to by the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He has informed you that he is prepared to accept the second part of the resolution. His objection therefore amounts practically to an amendment or something in the nature of an amendment. Therefore, I have to put that to you first.

There was a cry from the audience that the amendment was not seconded.

The President :—It is in the nature of an amendment and not exactly an amendment and requires no seconder; and it is desirable that I should ascertain your views on the objection of the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Is it your wish that the first portion should be dropped and the second portion only put? Those who are for the amendment of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will say "Yes." (Cries of 'Yes'). Those who are against will say "No." (Loud cries of 'No. no'). I declare that the Hon'ble Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's objection has been disposed of by the cries of 'No.'

As regards the whole resolution, those who are in favour of it will say 'Yes'. (Cries of 'Yes, yes'). Any one against it? (Cries of 'No, no').

I declare this resolution passed.

RESERVED AND UNRESERVED DEPARTMENTS.

The President :—Connected with the resolution just passed is the next resolution which I will ask Mr. Das to propose. (*After consultation*), Instead of asking Mr. Das to move the next resolution, I move it from the Chair as it is simply a logical sequence of the resolution which you have just passed. The resolution is in these terms :—

"That as regards the Committee to advise on the question of the separation of Indian from Provincial functions and also with regard to the Committee, if any, for the consideration of reserved and unreserved departments, this Congress is of opinion that the principle set forth in the above resolution should apply *mutatis mutandis* to the formation of the said committee."

Those who are in favour of it will say 'Yes'. (Cries of 'Yes, yes'). Any one against it? (Cries of 'No, no'). I declare that this resolution is passed.

DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND.

The President :—I will now place before you a resolution about arranging for a deputation to England. I put it from the Chair. The resolution is in these terms :—

"That the President of the Special Congress, the President of the Congress for the year and the Hon. Mr. G.M. Bhurgri, Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai and Mr. C. P. Ramsawami Aiyar, the General Secretaries of the Congress be constituted a Committee of Selection for the purpose of selecting the members of the Congress Deputation to proceed to England to press the Congress views on the British Democracy."

I take it that you pass it. (Cries of 'Yes, yes'). Any one against it? (Cries of 'No, no').

I declare that the resolution is passed.

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. Patel, the Chairman of the Reception Committee,—I call upon Mr. Apte (Poona) to move the vote of thanks to the President.

Mr. H. N. Apte (Poona) proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair in a Marathi speech and in doing so said that Mr. Hasan Imam had carried out the work which had been entrusted to him with satisfaction to all. It was an arduous work as they would all admit, and Mr. Hasan Imam had come through the

ordeal with added lustre. They were all thankful to him for coming to Bombay and presiding over the Congress in these critical times, and the confidence which they had placed in him was fully rewarded.—(*Bombay Chronicle*).

The Hon'ble Mr. B. S. Kamat (Poona)—Ladies and gentlemen, I have great pleasure on your behalf to second the vote of thanks which has been proposed by my friend Mr. Apte of Poona. You have seen during the last few days how our worthy and esteemed President has conducted himself in the Chair, and how he has also brought to a successful and satisfactory conclusion the deliberations and proceedings of this Special Congress. Gentlemen, those of us who could turn their attention back to what was appearing in the press during the last two months, wherein some fears were entertained in certain quarters, some prognostications and prophecies made and foretold, will see that, the resolution which has been finally shaped under the guidance of our President has not been one of a character which will give any cause of complaint whatsoever to any of our friends either here or outside to make them think that the National Congress has passed a resolution which will mar or wreck the scheme of reforms. We were told that there would be an impress on the resolution of the Special Congress of those particular words which have been quoted with much ostentation—"The Scheme is unworthy to be offered by England and unworthy to be accepted by India." I have scanned the resolution for the last two days and there is absolutely no impress of this feeling on the resolution. All the credit for this circumstance is due to the President. I am not going to take up much of your time. Those of us who were in the Subjects Committee will have noticed with what courtesy, affability and impartiality, the President has conducted the difficult task of guiding the proceedings in the Subjects Committee. I believe there was a peculiar sense of responsibility, a peculiar sense of difficulty and a peculiar sense of delicacy resting on the shoulders of the President of this Special Congress. He had to reconcile the views of this Congress with a particularly strong feeling outside the Congress; he had also to reconcile the views of this Congress with the views of the Muslim League; and he had also to reconcile the views of this Congress with a particular wing in the Subjects Committee, I mean that negligible quantity which has been referred to. He has combined within himself all the tact to reconcile all these divergent elements. He is therefore entitled to our gratitude.

The Hon'ble Mr. V. J. Patel :—The resolution has been duly proposed and seconded. Is it your pleasure that it should be carried? (Loud and continued cries of 'Yes, yes').

The proposition was then declared carried amidst acclamation.

At this stage, three cheers were proposed for the President, Mr. Syed Hasan Imam and responded to. The President was then garlanded.

VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE.

Mrs. Annie Besant :—Mr. Chairman and fellow-delegates : I am asked to propose a vote of thanks to the Reception Committee of the Congress and the Volunteers. The Reception Committee had at the very shortest notice to make the arrangements for this Special Congress. The Pandal in which you are met was put up in an unprecedentedly short time which seemed impossible when first it was proposed. But by the business-like habits of Bombay men and by the admirable sub-division of work, everything has been done as though the Reception Committee had months instead of only weeks. I ask you then to thank them for their hospitality, their good arrangements and the thoroughly efficacious carrying out of the Special Congress. I ask you also to thank the Volunteers who during the day and far into the night have looked after the work here and the comforts of the visitors and delegates scattered in various buildings all over the city. Your hearty thanks are also due to the Chairman of the Reception Committee (Applause) and the Secretaries and an equally hearty vote of thanks to the Volunteers for the admirable way in which they discharged their duties. (Applause).

The proposition was declared carried amidst great acclamation.

THE PRESIDENT'S CONCLUDING SPEECH.

The President in concluding the proceedings of the Congress said :—Brother and sister delegates to this Special Congress, I am overwhelmed with the sense of gratitude towards all who have been here in this Congress and those that are not here in body but are in spirit for the confidence that you have placed in me in inviting me to take the first seat in this national assembly, so that I may enjoy the honour and the privilege to be your servant. It has been to me the greatest gratification of my life that the ambition to serve the country has resulted in my finding in your affectionate hearts a place—an ambition natural to every Indian. (Applause). Gentlemen, an appointment under the sign manual of the King is a most coveted of possessions, but greater than the King are the people over whom the King rules. (Applause). Reference had been made, when my name was proposed to you to preside over the deliberations of this Congress, to a little episode in my life-history and that was when I enjoyed the honour of a seat on the Calcutta High Court, a memory which I hold extremely dear to me. But if I held there a place under His Majesty's sign manual, I have got the proud distinction to-day of enjoying a place here in your midst not under any sign manual but under a sign that has been indicated by the heart. (Cheers.)

Gentlemen, when I was asked to preside over this Special Congress, I suffered from nervousness which it will be impossible for you to realise, for I was conscious of my own deficiencies and I was doubtful if I could fulfil those res-

possibilities that naturally devolve upon one who is asked to conduct to a successful end the deliberations of a people suffering under a sense of wrong. Gentlemen, in obedience to the behests of my friends, I not only accepted the post but carried out their wishes. While I suffered from nervousness, I felt that I was asked to discharge some onerous duties in the midst of those who were my own, who would, by their labours, assist me to make up for my deficiencies ; and you have, I can assure you, done that to me which I had expected would be done to me ; but I had never expected it in that measure in which you have shown your indulgence and patience. I have been treated with indulgence and patience in the Subjects Committee and all this goes to emphasise one idea in my mind and that is this : if at any time the conduct of affairs is entrusted to us, we shall be able to carry on our affairs efficiently. (Applause).

Gentlemen, when I started from Patna to Bombay, I undoubtedly was prepared to receive the hospitality of Bombay, but I did not know that I would receive the hospitality in the liberal measure that I have received since I have come within the Presidency of Bombay. Gentlemen, to any outsider not acquainted with Bombay, the claim of Bombay that it is the first city in the east may appear to be somewhat vain and may give the impression to one that it is the city of bureaucrats that ascribe to themselves all the good qualities of the world. Come to Bombay, live in Bombay, mix with the people of Bombay, and Bombay is realized as a gem studded on the shore of a beautiful sea. Its buildings make it the first city in the east ; its mercantile activities make it the first city in the east ; its methods of administration make it the first city in the east ; its municipal arrangements achieved under the directing hand of our great and illustrious leader, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, make it the first city in the east. All the prosperity, all the affluence, all the collection of wealth, of honour, of dignity, go to prove that Bombay is the first city in the east. But while Bombay is the first city in the east, we who come to Bombay from distant corners of India have not come here to witness your beautiful arrangements only ; we have not come here to see your beautiful city in its architecture ; we have come here and we have seen the architecture of your hearts (Cheers) and have found that Bombay is the first city not merely in the architecture of masonry but is also the first city in the architecture of hearts. (Applause). Bombay, the first city in its buildings, in its arrangements, is also the first city in its hospitality.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am most beholden to you, and I assure you that I am weighed down by the kindness that has been shown to me by the hospitality with which I have been indulged, and by the kindness that has been shown to me in respect of the duties entrusted to me. I am beholden to the volunteers who have done a great deal to assist me in being punctual at the

meetings and who have also conduced to my comfort by constant attention to my personal wants. I am beholden to the Chairman of the Reception Committee, (Applause), the Secretaries and other members of the Reception Committee, who have one and all, without the least stint, been as kind as kind could be. I am going away from here with a feeling of love for my countrymen enhanced by the demonstration that I have received of the affection of the people towards those who are allowed the privilege to serve the people (Applause). Gentlemen, I am grateful to you and I say *Bande Mataram*.

I shall declare the Congress dissolved, not now, but after the BANDE MATARAM song is sung.

Three cheers for the King Emperor were called for by Mr. Jadunath Muzumdar and heartily responded to, not in the usual fashion of "Hurrah," but with cries of 'Bande Mataram,' repeated three times. Three cheers were then called for and were given to the President.

The BANDE MATRAM song was sung by a group of Indian ladies, after which the Congress was dissolved.

APPENDIX.

INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

SPECIAL SESSION.

FULL TEXT OF THE RESOLUTIONS.

INDIA AND THE WAR.

Resolution I.—That this Congress tenders its most loyal homage to His Gracious Majesty the King Emperor and has learned with great satisfaction of the recent successes of the Allies in the War now raging and sincerely prays for their early and decisive victory and the final vindication of the principles of Freedom, Justice and Self-determination.

CONGRESS AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Resolution II.—That this Congress re-affirms the principles of reform contained in the Resolutions relating to self-government adopted in the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League held at Lucknow in December 1916 and at Calcutta in December 1917 and declares that nothing less than self-government within the Empire can satisfy the Indian people and by enabling it to take its rightful place as a free and self-governing nation in the British Commonwealth strengthen the connection between Great Britain and India.

INDIA'S FITNESS FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

Resolution III.—(a) That this Congress declares that the people of India are fit for Responsible Government and repudiates the assumption to the contrary contained in the Report on Indian Constitutional reforms.

(b) That this Congress entirely disagrees with the formula contained in the said Report that the Provinces are the domain in which the earlier steps should be taken towards the progressive realisation of Responsible Government and that the authority of the Government of India in essential matters must remain indisputable pending experience of the effect of the changes proposed to be introduced in the Provinces and this Congress is of opinion that simultaneous advance is indispensable both in the Provinces and the Government of India.

DECLARATION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.

Resolution IV.—The Government of India shall have undivided administrative authority on matters directly concerning peace, tranquility and defence of the country subject to the following :—

That the Statute to be passed by Parliament should include the Declaration of the Rights of the People of India as British Citizens :—

(a) That all Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India are equal before the law, and there shall be no penal or administrative law in force in the Dominions, whether substantive or procedural of a discriminative nature ;

(b) That no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, property, or of association, free speech or in respect of writing, except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice, and as a result of lawful and open trial ;

(c) That every Indian subject shall be entitled to bear arms, subject to the purchase of a licence, as in Great Britain, and that the right shall not be taken away save by a sentence of an ordinary Court of Justice ;

(d) That the Press shall be free, and that no licence or security shall be demanded on the registration of a press or a newspaper ;

(e) That corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any Indian subject of His Majesty, save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects.

FISCAL AUTONOMY.

Resolution V.—This Congress is strongly of opinion that it is essential for the welfare of the Indian people that the Indian legislature should have the same measure of fiscal autonomy which the self-governing dominions of the Empire possess.

THE REFORM SCHEME.

Resolution VI.—That this Congress appreciates the earnest attempt on the part of the Right Hon. The Secretary of State and His Excellency the Viceroy to inaugurate a system of responsible government in India and while it recognises that some of the proposals constitute an advance on the present conditions in some directions it is of opinion that the proposals are disappointing and unsatisfactory and suggests the following modifications as absolutely necessary to constitute a substantial step towards responsible government :—

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

- (1) That a system of reserved and transferred subjects, similar to that proposed for the Provinces, shall be adopted for the Central Government.
- (2) That the reserved subjects shall be foreign affairs, (excepting relations with the colonies and the dominions) army, navy, and relations with Indian Ruling Princes; that all other subjects should be transferred subjects.
- (3) After the first term of the reformed assembly, the position of the Viceroy and the Legislative assembly in regard to transferred subjects should be the same as that obtaining in the self-governing dominions.
- (4) The allotments required for reserved subjects should be the first charge on the revenues.
- (5) The procedure for the adoption of the budget should be on the lines laid down for the Provinces.
- (6) All legislation shall be by Bills introduced into the Legislative Assembly provided that if, in the case of reserved subjects, the legislative council does not pass such measures as the Government may deem necessary, the Governor-General in Council may provide for the same by regulations, such regulations to be in force for one year, but not to be renewed unless 40 per cent. of the members of the Assembly present and voting are in favour of them.
- (7) There shall be no Council of State but, if the Council of State is to be constituted, at least half of its total strength shall consist of elected members, and that procedure by certification shall be confined to the reserved subjects.
- (8) At least half the number of Executive Councillors (if there be more than one) in charge of reserved subjects should be Indians.
- (9) The number of members of the Legislative Assembly should be raised to 150, and the proportion of the elected members should be four-fifths.
- (10) The President and the Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly should be elected by the assembly.
- (11) The Legislative Assembly should have power to make, or modify, its own rules of business and they shall not require the sanction of the Governor-General.

- (12) There should be an obligation to convene meetings of the Council and Assembly at stated intervals, or on the requisition of a certain proportion of members.
- (13) A statutory guarantee should be given that full responsible government should be established in the whole of British India within a period not exceeding 15 years.

THE PROVINCES.

Executive.—

1. There should be no additional members of the Executive Government without portfolios.
2. After the first term of the reformed councils, the relation of the Governor to the Ministers in regard to the transferred subjects should be the same as that obtaining in the self-governing dominions.
3. The status and salary of the Ministers shall be the same as that of the members of the Executive Council.
4. At least half the number of Executive Councillors in charge of reserved subjects (if there be more than one) should be Indians.
5. The Budget shall be under the control of the Legislature subject to the contribution to the Government of India, and during the life-time of the reformed councils, to the allocation of a fixed sum for the reserved subjects; and should fresh taxation be necessary it should be imposed by the Provincial Government as a whole for both transferred and reserved subjects.

Legislature.—

1. While holding that the people are ripe for the introduction of full Provincial Autonomy, the Congress is yet prepared with a view to facilitating the passage of the Reforms, to leave the departments of Law, Police and Justice (prisons excepted) in the hands of the Executive Government in all Provinces for a period of six years. Executive and Judicial Departments must be separated at once.
2. The President and the Vice-President should be elected by the Council.
3. That the proposal to institute a Grand Committee shall be dropped. The Provincial Legislative Council shall legislate in respect of all matters within the jurisdiction of the Provincial Government, including Law, Justice and Police but where the Government is not satisfied with the decision of the Legislative Council in respect of matters relating to Law, Justice and Police, it shall be open to the Government to refer the matter to the Government of

India. The Government of India may refer the matter to the Indian Legislature, and the ordinary procedure shall follow. But if Grand Committees are instituted, this Congress is of opinion that not less than one-half of the strength shall be elected by the Legislative Assembly.

4. The proportion of elected members in the Legislative Council shall be four-fifths.

Elections.—

5. Whenever the Legislative Assembly, the Council of State, or the Legislative Council, is dissolved it shall be obligatory on the Governor-General or the Governor as the case may be, to order the necessary elections, and to resummon the body dissolved within a period of three months from the date of dissolution.

6. The Legislative Council should have power to make, or modify its own rules of business and they shall not require the sanction of the Governor.

7. There should be an obligation to convene meetings of the Council at stated intervals, or on the requisition of a certain proportion of the members of the Council.

PARLIAMENT AND INDIA OFFICE.

(a) The control of Parliament and of the Secretary of State must only be modified as the responsibility of the Indian and Provincial Governments to the electorates is increased. No power over Provincial Governments now exercised by Parliament and by the Secretary of State must be transferred to the Government of India, save in matters of routine administration, until the latter is responsible to the electorates.

(b) The Council of India shall be abolished, and there shall be two permanent Under-Secretaries to assist the Secretary of State for India one of whom shall be an Indian.

(c) All charges in respect to the India Office establishment shall be placed on the British Estimates.

(d) No financial or administrative powers in regard to reserved subjects should be transferred to the Provincial Governments until such time as they are made responsible regarding them to electorates, and until then the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State should continue.

(e) The committee to be appointed to examine and report on the present constitution of the Council of India shall contain an adequate Indian element.

VI

(f) No dissolution of the legislature shall take place except by way of an appeal to the electorate and the reason shall be stated in writing countersigned by the Ministers.

MAHOMEDAN REPRESENTATION.

Resolution VII.—The proportion of Mahomedans in the Legislative Councils and the Legislative Assembly as laid down in the Congress League Scheme must be maintained.

WOMEN AND THE FRANCHISE.

Resolution VIII.—Women, possessing the same qualifications as are laid down for men in any part of the scheme shall not be disqualified on account of sex.

FISCAL FREEDOM.

Resolution IX.—This Congress urges that consistently with imperial interests the Government of this country should have complete freedom in all fiscal matters.

PROVINCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

Resolution X.—That the question of Provincial Contributions to the Imperial Exchequer be referred to the Provincial Congress Committees for opinions to be placed before the next Congress at Delhi.

Resolution XI.—This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the status of Ajmere-Merwara and Delhi should be that of a regulated Province, and that popular government and effective control in the affairs of the Local Government shall be granted to the people.

ARMY COMMISSIONS.

Resolution XII.—This Congress places on record its deep disappointment at the altogether inadequate response made by the Government to the demand for the grant of commissions to Indians in the army, and is of opinion that steps should be taken immediately so as to enable the grant of at least 25 p.c. of the commissions to Indians, to be gradually increased to 50 p.c. within a period of 15 years.

FRANCHISE AND SUBJECTS COMMITTEES.

Resolution XIII.—That, so far as the question of determining the franchise and the constituencies and the composition of the Legislative Councils and the Legislative Assembly is concerned, this Congress is of opinion that

instead of being left to be dealt with by committees, it should be decided by the House of Commons and be incorporated in the statute to be framed for the constitution of the Indian Government.

Or, in the alternative, if a Committee is appointed for the purpose, the two non-official members of the Committee should be elected—one by the All-India Congress Committee and the other by the Council of the Moslem League while the co-opted non-official for each province should be elected by the Provincial Congress Committee of that province.

SEPARATION OF INDIAN AND PROVINCIAL FUNCTIONS.

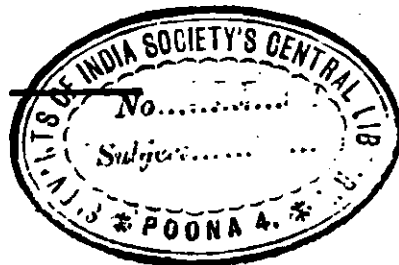
Resolution XIV.—That as regards the Committee to advise on the question of the separation of Indian from Provincial functions and also with regard to the Committee, if any, for the consideration of reserved and unreserved departments, this Congress is of opinion that the principle set forth in the above resolution should apply *mutatis mutandis* to the formation of the said committee.

THE ROWLATT COMMITTEE.

Resolution XV.—This Congress condemns the recommendation of the Rowlatt Committee which, if given effect to, will interfere with the fundamental rights of the Indian people and impede the healthy growth of public opinion.

CONGRESS DEPUTATION TO ENGLAND.

Resolution XVI.—That the President of the Special Congress, the President of the Congress for the year and the Hon. Mr. G.M. Bhurgri, Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai and Mr. C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the General Secretaries of the Congress be constituted a Committee of Selection for the purpose of selecting the members of the Congress Deputation to proceed to England to press the Congress views on the British Democracy.



ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE.

SPECIAL SESSION.

The Special Session of the All-India Muslim League was held in Bombay on the 31st August and 1st September 1918, the Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad presiding. The following is the full text of the resolutions that were adopted by the League. Except in regard to the Council of State, the resolution on Responsible Government adopted by the League is identical with that of the Congress and this unanimity was rendered possible by the fact that for the first time in the history of the two premier political institutions, the Subjects Committee of the Congress held a joint conference with the Council of the League. The resolution on the Reform Proposals was finally shaped in harmony with the views of the accredited representatives of both the bodies.—(*Young India*).

LOYALTY TO THE THRONE.

1. The All-India Muslim League tenders its most loyal homage to his Majesty the King-Emperor and assures the Government of the steadfast and continued loyalty of the Muslim Community of India throughout the present crisis.

THE LEAGUE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT.

2. The All-India Muslim League reaffirms the principles of reform contained in the resolutions relating to self-government adopted in their annual sessions at Lucknow and Calcutta and declares that the grant of self-government within the Empire is essential to strengthen the bond between England and India and also to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian people.

INDIA'S FITNESS FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

3. The All-India Muslim League enters an emphatic protest against the insinuation contained in the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms that the people of India are unfit for Responsible Government.

FISCAL AUTONOMY.

4. The All-India Muslim League is of opinion that it is essential for the welfare of the Indian people that the Indian Legislature should have the same freedom in fiscal matters as are enjoyed by the self-governing dominions of the Empire.

MUSLIM INTERNEES,

5. The All-India Muslim League deeply deploras the unavoidable absence of some of the trusted leaders of the community from this Special Sessions of the League and once again puts on record its respectful but firm protest against their continued incarceration inspite of the repeated prayers of the community for their release.

MUSSALMAN REPRESENTATION.

6. The All-India Muslim League once again emphasises the importance of making due provisions for an adequate and separate representation of the Mussalmans on all self-governing institutions which will be constituted on the inauguration of the proposed constitutional reforms.

DECLARATION OF INDIAN RIGHTS.

7. The All-India Muslim League is of opinion that the Government of India shall have undivided administrative authority on matters directly concerning peace, tranquillity and safety of the country, subject to the following:—

That the statute to be passed by Parliament should include the Declaration of the Rights of the People of India as British citizens :

(1) that all Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalized or resident in India are equal before the Law and there shall be no penal or administrative law in force in the Dominions, whether substantive or procedural of a discriminative nature ;

(2) that no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, property or in respect of free speech or writing or right of association except under sentence by an ordinary Court of Justice and as a result of lawful and open trial ;

(3) that every Indian subject of His Majesty shall be entitled to bear arms subject to the purchase of a licence, as in Great Britain, and that the right shall not be taken away save by a sentence of an ordinary Court of Justice;

(4) that the Press shall be free and that no licence or security shall be demanded on the registration of a Press or Newspaper ;

(5) that corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any Indian subject of His Majesty serving in the Army or Navy save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects.

SIMULTANEOUS ADVANCE IN GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

8. The All-India Muslim League affirms that the introduction of a system of Responsible Government should proceed simultaneously in the Central as well as the Provincial Governments.

THE REFORM SCHEME.

9. The All-India Muslim League, while welcoming the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms as an earnest attempt to liberalize political institutions, and recognising that some of the proposals constitute an advance on the present conditions in some directions is of opinion that the recommendations as a whole are unsatisfactory and regrets that the scheme fails to appreciate the peculiar position of the Mussalmans of India and evinces a want of sympathy with their interests. The League is further of opinion that the following modifications and changes in the proposals are necessary to render the scheme of reforms a substantial step towards Responsible Government :—

That the proportion of the Mussalmans in the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Councils as laid down in the Congress-League Scheme must be maintained.

The measure of control that the Parliament and the Secretary of State exercise over Indian affairs should be relaxed as subjects are transferred to popular control, from time to time, and in the case of reserved subjects, the general and financial control of the Parliament and the Secretary of State should not be substituted by the control of the Government of India as long as the Government of India is not made fully responsible to the people.

The Council of India should be abolished and the Secretary of State should be assisted by two Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian. The establishment charges of the India Office should be placed on the British Estimates.

The Committee to be appointed to examine and report on the present constitution of the Council of India should contain an adequate Indian element.

There should be no Privy Council for India.

The Indian element in the Executive Council of the Governor-General should not be less than half of the total number of members. In making such appointments the claims of the Mussalmans should be borne in mind.

Power may be taken for the appointment of Under-Secretaries but the majority of these should be appointed from amongst the elected members of the Legislative Assembly.

The total strength of the Legislative Assembly should be 150, of whom four-fifths should be elected. The President and Vice-President of the Legislative Assembly should be elected by the Assembly.

The Council of State may be retained, provided that a system of reserved and transferred subjects similar to that proposed for the Provinces is adopted for the Central Government and that in the legislature of India the certificate of the Governor-General in Council should not apply except to certain reserved subjects hereinafter mentioned. The Reserved Subjects should be confined to the Army, the Navy, Foreign and Political relations between the Government of India and other Powers, excepting relations with the Colonies and Dominions, including the declaration of war and entering into treaties and matters directly affecting the peace, tranquility and safety of the country.

In the Council of State, half the members shall be elected, one-third of the elected members being Mussalmans to be elected by Muslim constituencies."

The certificate of the Governor-General should not apply to matters other than reserved subjects and only in cases directly affecting the peace, tranquility and safety of the country.

If the Governor-General dissolves the Legislative Assembly he shall summon a fresh Assembly within three months of such dissolution.

The Governor-General in Council and not the Governor-General alone should have the power to pass ordinances.

The Budget in the Legislative Assembly should follow the same procedure as the Provincial Budget, *mutatis mutandis*.

Reserved Subjects should include only Law, Justice and Police (except prisons) and there should be a complete separation of Judicial and Executive functions at once.

The status and salary of the Ministers shall be the same as that of the members of the Executive Council.

Complete provincial autonomy should be assured by terms of the statute within six years.

No additional members shall be appointed without portfolios.

The League disagrees with the recommendation that additional member or members may be appointed to the Provincial Executive Councils by the Governor from among his senior officials for purposes of consultation and advice only.

The Governor shall not have the power to summon either part of his Council separately.

Power may be taken to appoint Under Secretaries provided that the Under Secretaries so appointed shall be from among the elected members of the Legislative Council.

The Legislative Council shall consist of four-fifths elected and one-fifth nominated members.

The Legislative Council shall elect its own President and Vice-President.

The re-transfer of transferred subjects to the list of reserved subjects in case of maladministration shall only take place with the sanction of the Parliament.

The Legislative Council shall have the right to vote the salary of Ministers five years after the first Council.

STATUS OF AJMERE-MERWARA.

10. The status of Ajmere-Merwara and Delhi should be that of a regulation province and that popular government and effective control in the affairs of the Local Government should be granted to their people.

Special Provincial Conference, Madras.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

OF

MR. C. VIJIARAGHAVACHARIAR

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Agreeably to the convention obtaining in our Congress and Conferences, it is my duty to tender to you my respectful thanks, for the honour you have done me in calling me to the Chair at this Conference. I rejoice, however, that there is no convention or understanding requiring me to congratulate you as well upon your choice of your President. We have reached a great crisis in our public life. Believe me when I say that I have accepted your invitation purely as a call to duty, but with feelings of considerable anxiety and diffidence, conscious, painfully conscious as I am, of the limitations under which I shall be able to perform the task you have asked me to undertake. My position is further peculiarly embarrassing owing to the fact that some very distinguished countrymen of ours, in whose company and under whose stimulating inspiration I have been so long acting in our efforts to promote and develop our public activities, have, however conscientiously, found their way to adopt a most unexpected attitude in reference to the vital question of the constitutional reform in the country. In saying this I allude more to the manner of the expression of the difference and less to the substance of it which one or two have found their way to adopt. To say that those who have, in discharge of their duty to our country no less than to our King-Emperor and to England, to freely criticise or even decline to accept the projected reform in its vital parts, make an attack upon the Right Hon. Mr. Montagu and upon H. E. Lord Chelmsford and that they ignore the high sense of duty and the lofty motives which inspired them in their labours in this connection— is, I venture to submit, an unjustifiable use of one's freedom of speech and, an inexcusable use of poetical license, if there be any such, in public criticism, as it would be to impute to some of them other than honourable motives in their conduct.

2. At the very outset, I desire to perform a very superfluous duty. I but give expression to the indisputable fact that those who find themselves unable in the main to welcome the proposed scheme of reform in its present form and nature, and who even may desire to substitute for it an entirely metamorphosed plan, are not the less loyal in their trust in the great integrity of character and high purpose of the illustrious authors of the Report in question, both personally and as representatives for the time being of the British Raj of India. Only such men appear, to a far greater degree than their critics among their countrymen, to emphasise their faith in the sacredness and vital potentialities of the fundamental and inalienable rights of the people of this country as part of mankind, and as inheritors of the fruits of an ancient civilization and as citizens of the great British Empire. In these circumstances, I shall honestly endeavour my level best to perform my task without looking this side or that, in view solely to a scrutiny of the merits of the question before us and while I do so, I shall need not only your kind patience but also your liberal indulgence to my short-comings in the performance. And I crave both at your hands.

3. There are two questions before us, the consideration of the Report on Indian Constitutional Reform proposed by the Rt. Hon. Mr. Montagu, the Secretary of State, and H. E. Lord Chelmsford for adoption by His Imperial Majesty's Government and of the Sedition Committee Report. Most unexpectedly, the two questions have become somewhat connected with each other at this juncture.

4. In the examination of the question of Reform we labour under certain disadvantages. We do not know what would be the opinion and final decision of the Cabinet on these proposed reforms. There is also the other disadvantage that these reform proposals are not complete in themselves, and are to be supplemented by the views and recommendations of two Committees to be appointed, one for the purpose of deciding the subjects pertaining to the two compartments into which the Provincial Governments will be divided in order to start the system of Responsible Government and the other for the purpose of examining constituencies and franchises and the composition and strength of Provincial Legislative Councils. This country is entitled to a double opportunity for examining the findings and the recommendations of both these Committees as well as the final views of the Cabinet on the entire proposals, before they are adopted by Parliament for formulation in a constitutional Statute. Our purpose at this Conference is primarily and in the main relates to the reform problem.

5. I need hardly call your attention to the fact that the proposals before us are the outcome of the announcement of the policy of His Majesty's Government on 20th August last. The first question we ought to put to ourselves

whether in our discussion and final decision as to these reforms, we should confine ourselves to this pronouncement or whether we also are entitled to subject them to our scrutiny on a broader outlook and more in consonance with our fundamental and inalienable rights, natural and as British citizens. I venture to submit that there is nothing to confine us in our scrutiny to the four corners of the pronouncement of the 20th August. On the other hand, it is desirable in every conceivable interest to subject the proposals to both the tests.

6. This pronouncement of the policy of His Majesty's Government to be adopted towards India consists of three parts as we all know, namely, a recognition of our right as part of the British Empire to Responsible Government, secondly, a statement as to the mode of attaining the same, and thirdly, a declaration as to the gradual, and increasing Indianization of the services of the country.

7. The last portion of the pronouncement relating to the gradual increase of the Indian element in the services of the country is an advance upon the recommendations of the Islington Commission, and may be left out of our consideration at the present moment with thanks, as it is no portion of the structural plan for the reform of the political machinery of the country in view to convert it into Responsible Government.

8. As regards the other two parts, this great pronouncement as to our right to Responsible Government as an integral part of the British Empire, is rightly taken by the country as heralding the dawn of our political freedom and England is entitled to our eternal gratitude for this recognition. The word 'goal' in the statement may be treated as a vague tautology and need not be allowed to attenuate our feelings of gratitude.

9. But we must enter our respectful caveat against the claim that the British Government and the Government here in India should be the sole judges of the time and measure of the necessary steps to be taken in view to reach the complete system of Responsible Government. The people of this country are not to have any voice in this process at any time—only these two judges might be pleased to require the co-operation of a few people who will be trained under the new opportunities of public service to be gradually introduced. I beg to submit that this new and startling doctrine is extremely perilous and is the root cause of the very unsatisfactory and extremely disquieting nature of the projected reform proposals. It is impossible for me to say whence this political doctrine has been derived. Neither at the time of the pronouncement nor in the Report before us is there any clue to enable us to find out the origin and validity of this very interesting doctrine. I shall have to allude to this point again.

10. The Report before us should be read and considered in its two parts. The first part may be designated the preamble of the second part, which enumerates categorically the proposals for the suggested reforms. It is an able and brilliant survey of the present political status of this country and is a blend of political maxims and historical doctrines, facts, inferences and pronouncements of a highly complex character. We can most thankfully collect out of them several political principles and pronouncements in relation to our rights and aspirations and make a *vade mecum* of them for the light and guidance of the practical politicians of this country. The remainder of this interesting explanatory memorandum consists of doubtful historic facts and very disquieting and even perilous political doctrines and these constitute in the main the framework of the plan and programme for the constitutional reform of our country. To these two aspects of the brilliant statement by way of preliminary survey, I would add a third. The survey is remarkable for the chapter of grave omissions in historic facts, precedents and parallels—quite germane to the question of Indian constitutional reform—which are easily drawn from the constitutional history of the civilized world in general and from the treatment by England of its expanding Empire, in particular in relation to her self-governing colonial dominions.

Our duty thus is to confine our scrutiny and final decision to the actual and formal proposals and to allude to the very able statement in the Report in so far as it is found necessary for this purpose. Otherwise we might run the risk of having our vision obscured by the bewitching statement of glittering political pronouncements, which, I fear, have captured the imagination of several of our trusted and venerable patriots and leaders and I beg leave to state, made them somewhat blind to the undoubted infirmities and even perilous tendencies of the scheme itself.

11. The reforms suggested naturally enough relate to the British Raj of India in two aspects, namely, the relations of England with India as maintained by Parliament through the Secretary of State with his Council, and the relations *inter se* between the Government of India and the Provincial Governments. The plan of the reform, therefore, naturally divides itself into three parts—the reform of the political machinery for India in England, of the Government of India, and lastly of the Provincial Governments. The pronouncement of the 20th of August, in so far as it relates to the grant of Responsible Government, is to be given effect to only by way of reconstruction of the machinery of the governments of the subordinate provinces and, God save the mark—only in a portion of that machinery, if that is possible or conceivable, and only as to a fraction of the functions of that machinery.

12. I shall rapidly pass over the first two phases of the proposed reform, and shall engage your attention at some length on the third. I must premise that it is not possible for me to traverse the whole field of the complex scheme of reform within the time that is available for me at the Conference. Besides, I am conscious that full justice will be done to the entire subject by the speakers in the course of the discussion and debate to follow and in a manner which I cannot pretend to rival. I would therefore content myself with doing some reconnoitering and skirmishing work in view, in so far as it is possible, to make my humble contribution to the discussion and final decision of the question before us.

13. The leading feature of the reform proposals in reference to the control of Parliament and the Secretary of State and his Council is that the salary of the Secretary of State would be transferred to the English Estimates and that in all probabilities, the salaries of the Members of his Council and of the staff will be also placed upon the same Estimates after the recommendations of the Committee which would be appointed to examine and report on the present position. We are told that the Secretary of State's Council and the staff, besides doing political and administrative work for India, are also charged with some agency work on her behalf in England. The Committee might be able to draw the line of demarcation between the two kinds of work and recommend what proportion of the expenditure shall be borne by the Indian taxpayer on account of the agency work. This proposal must be viewed by us from two points of view, as a measure of financial justice and also as a measure of constitutional reform. There can be no doubt that the former is some advance in the path of reform. But viewed as merely a constitutional measure, the proposed reform is not very important in my view. Parliament has already several opportunities, if it is desirous or anxious, of enforcing the responsibility of the Secretary of State for India strictly to itself—for instance, in the course of the debate for adopting an Address in reply to the gracious Message of the Sovereign; next, by way of amendment that the Speaker do leave the chair in view that the House of Commons might resolve itself into the Committee of Supply and again, by moving a specific resolution and so forth. On all such occasions the affairs of India can well be subjected to the scrutiny of Parliament and a vote of confidence or vote of censure passed upon the Secretary of State for India and on the Ministry generally; but there is no evidence since the East India Company was succeeded by the King in Parliament sixty years ago, that these opportunities have been freely availed of, and found inadequate. It would, therefore, depend upon circumstances whether this reform will be for our benefit. The Secretary of State for the Colonies whose salary is on the English estimates, is one kind of Minister as regards Ceylon and a totally different one as regards New Zealand. Imagine what would have been our fate if last year, when the Rt. Hon. Mr. Chamberlain

made that superb and historical stand in defence of the policy of India as regards the cotton duties, when almost the entire force and authority of Parliament under the direction of so great a man as the Rt. Hon. Mr. Asquith were marshalled against him, if his salary had to come from the English taxpayer by the annual vote. It seems to me that the consciousness that he and his Council and staff were eating their salt at the cost of Indian taxpayer, might perhaps be an asset for the advantage of India—India at least while the paternalism and the autocracy of the Government of India is maintained. However, the reform, exiguous as it is, may be welcomed agreeably to the general feeling of the country although I venture to submit, it furnishes no matter for over-jubilation as a constitutional measure.

14 As regards the Government of India, a number of changes are proposed. I need not call your attention to the principles and details of these changes at any great length, as it is frankly admitted by the illustrious authors of the reform proposals that the authority of the Government of India should be preserved as 'indisputable' as ever in 'all matters deemed by it to be essential for the peace, order, good government and sound financial administration of the country.' A new feature in these proposed changes is the introduction of the Sovereign Princes of India in view to their taking part in the administration of British India. A Privy Council is to be established in which these Sovereign Princes will be allowed seats. The object of this Council is that the Viceroy might consult it, whenever he saw fit, on matters of policy and administration. The principal ground for inviting the Sovereign Princes of Indian States to have a voice in the solution of the problems of administration and policy of British India is derived from the statement that the interests of Indian States and of British India are often common and overlap each other. On this principle, His Majesty's subjects of British India should also have a voice in the administration of the internal affairs of those Indian States. The relations between the Native States and the British Government of India are embodied in treaties, supplemented, it may be, by what is called "Case Law" as evolved by the bureaucracy from time to time. But I am unable to see why in discharge of mutual duties and obligations, no matter how derived, the Princes should have a voice in the Government of British India any more than the people of British India can claim to have a voice in the Government of Indian States. I do not know whether these august personages will be allowed physically special seats as replica of their thrones. Any how this is a very serious matter to be most carefully considered in the political progress of India. I fear that this attempt to introduce the Sovereign Princes to assist the Government of India will be viewed almost universally as tending gradually to reduce them to the level of nobles. We are next told that all the important Indian States would be placed directly in political relation with the Government of India and released from all influence and control by Provincial Government

I think this is a desirable change in itself. To begin with, these States will be saved from the very heavy quinquennial expense of receiving and entertaining both the Viceroy and the Provincial satraps. But the more serious ground is that it is generally believed that our Maharajahs and Nawabs in direct relation with the Government of India enjoy greater freedom and prestige. I know of an instance not very long ago when a very able and original provincial satrap peremptorily summoned to his presence a very enlightened prince, and roundly scolded him in the fashion of a pedagogue towards a schoolboy and even declined contemptuously to accept his offers of men, money and material towards this great war, and all this because he, the Prince, declined to take in the internal administration of his State, further instructions of the political agent than he was obliged to retain under the treaties between him and the British Government. Matters came to such a head that I believe he would have been deposed but for the influence and statesmanship of Lord Hardinge.

16. But the reason assigned for this welcome change is not the grant of greater freedom and prestige to the Princes. Is it on the ground that it is desirable to release them from the future provincial democratised Governments? Well, I would only say that if the people of this country had a voice in these Governments, the Mysore State Railway would have remained their property and under their management to the great benefit of the public. And the Aladdin's lamp of Kolar gold mines, would have remained a monopoly of Mysoreans and Indians. However this might be, we might welcome this part of the Reform while entering our protest against the reason assigned. May we ask what course is to be adopted in this matter when at some far off date the Government of India too is democratised? I suppose our Sovereign Princes will be placed directly in relation with His Imperial Majesty and their courts will be adorned with the presence of Imperial Ambassadors in the place of bureaucratic Political Agents and Residents.

17. The Indian Legislature is to consist of two Chambers, called the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly, respectively. The Council of State both in respect of its franchise and composition as well as in its functions, is but the existing Legislative Council in disguise and it is the Legislative Assembly that is new. But the Report says this is the old Assembly re-formed and the Council of State is the new body. Apart from the nomenclature, a most superfluous study of the functions of the two Chambers convinces one that such legislative power as is allowed to the Indian Legislature, rests with the Upper Chamber alone with its official majority and nominated and elected non-official members. In all matters deemed by the Governor-General in Council as being essential to the interests of peace, order and good government and financial administration, the Legislative Assembly would be powerless and helpless and also in all cases of emergency legislation whether it comes

within the formula or not ; but such emergency legislation is not of a temporary nature but permanent. No controversy arises as to whether our country stands in need of a bicameral Legislature. It is not, as a second chamber properly so called, to arrest hasty legislation and to act as the highest judicial tribunal, that the system is proposed. It is an adroit contrivance to keep the present power of the bureaucracy in law-making under a mask.

18. The most astounding feature of the new proposals that the Governor-General is given power to dissolve any one of the Chambers, or both, at one and the same time. This is a most extraordinary power, unknown to any system of real, responsible government. The illustrious authors of the proposals absolutely give no reason for this novel and startling proposal. But a similar power is given to the Governor of a Province and there the reason is given frankly, namely, that this power is a valuable means of controlling of the legislature by the Executive. We may take it therefore that a similar reason applies to the Governor-General of India as well. This is a very extraordinary departure from constitutional laws and conventions applicable to Responsible Government. In England, it is a settled constitutional convention that a Parliament can be dissolved only as an appeal to the people, where the King under advice from his Ministry believes that the House of Commons as regards any important vital issue affecting the Government of the country or generally in the main, has ceased to reflect the opinion of the country. Though the power of dissolution is a prerogative power, it is a settled convention that the King can only exercise it upon the advice of the Cabinet responsible to Parliament. There is some lingering controversy as to whether he is invariably bound to accept the advice, but speaking negatively he can exercise this prerogative power never except upon such advice. This startling departure therefore, reversing the policy of all free countries where a parliamentary system of Government prevails, is calculated to make the Government of India and the Provincial Governments more autocratic and bureaucratic than they are at present. As pointed out by the *Hindu*, a parallel can only be found in Germany. The following passage in Lowell bears it out : "In most constitutional Governments at the present day, the power of dissolution is the complement of the responsibility of the Ministers and is used at least in theory to ascertain whether the Cabinet possesses the confidence of the nation. But, in Germany, it exists without any such responsibility and hence is simply a means of breaking down resistance in the Reichstag. It has indeed been used for this purpose."

To keep the Government of India as absolute as ever and yet to arm the Governor-General with this extraordinary power to control the legislature, smacking as it does of Germanism, is a most disquieting feature of the new proposals.

19. The crux of the reform, in fact, the reform by way of redeeming the pledge of 20th of August for the grant of responsible government to India, is the plan proposed for provincial governments. This reform is to be introduced in all the provinces called the major provinces, except Burma. It is not to apply to the minor administrations or the backward parts of the eight provinces included under the designation of scheduled Districts under Section 71 of the Government of India Act 1915. Under this section, the Secretary of State in Council may add to these scheduled districts and this power it is now proposed to transfer to Provincial Governments. This is the geographical scope of the reform. On the other hand, these provincial governments are to be constructed with two departments, a major and a minor, so to say, the former of which will continue autocratic and bureaucratic as at present, while the latter is intended as the protoplasm of the responsible government looming in the horizon of our political eternity. The Legislative Council is to be enlarged and the elective element, on a broad direct electoral basis is to be increased. The Governor will choose out of these elected members one or two ministers to administer in conjunction with him the minor departments and he may also appoint two officials without portfolio in the Executive Government for consultation. The subjects to be committed to the charge of provincial governments will be divided into two parts, called the reserved subjects and the transferred subjects, and it is these transferred subjects that would be entrusted to the new ministers and the Governor, while there is a net work of provisions, more for training these ministers for administrative work than for starting and developing responsible government.

20. It is my duty to call your attention to the leading features of this scheme at some length. Here, as everywhere, attention is arrested by the great originality and startling nature of the several principles and provisions that make up the entire scheme. In order to see how far this scheme is a redemption of the pledge of the 20th of August as to a first step in the path towards complete responsible government, you must permit me to remind you of some of the leading political maxims and constitutional conventions of a truly responsible government. The expression 'responsible government' is the same as the expressions 'Cabinet Government' and 'Parliamentary Government,' and these expressions imply a vast assemblage of ideas which cannot be understood and appreciated without a reference to the constitutional history of England in its present form. We must remember that responsible government in its modern sense is a creation of the people of England and has been copied from her by the several countries of the world where it prevails. For our purpose, the history of the origin and development of responsible government in England is easily told in a few sentences. It is the living trophy of the final victory in the struggle between the doctrine of

the divine right of kings and that of the right of the sovereignty of the people. When the doctrine of divine right of Kings was exploded finally in the reign of Charles II, it was succeeded by a fiction that 'the King can do no wrong.' The genius of the makers of modern England charged this fiction with the principles of national freedom. The King can do no wrong, but his ministers can. He is not responsible, but his ministers are. From that time forward, it is the ministers that acted and not the King. The great constitutional principle of England that the King reigns but does not govern, takes its origin during this period. It is the ministers that govern. We all know of the famous repartee of Charles II to the cruel epigram by way of epitaph on his tomb.

"Here lies Charles our mutton-eating King.

Who never said a foolish thing

And never did a wise one"

"Quite so," replied His Majesty.

"My words are my own, but my acts are my ministers'"

The King's ministers though nominally taken from the Privy Council, are really a Committee of the Parliament, and consequently responsible to the Parliament, and responsibility to Parliament was easily responsibility solely to the House of Commons—not only because they are representatives and the legal Sovereign of the people of England, who had then finally achieved the recognition of their natural rights as their own political sovereign, in the words of Professor Dicey—but chiefly because it is they that had the means of enforcing the responsibility by sanctions. It is they that had the most effective sanction, as they were the only trustees of the ways and means of government. From this time forward, several other successive conventions having the force of law were developed in connection with the powers and duties of Cabinet Government. For instance, it was not enough that the Commons should have the power of turning out the Ministers when they ceased to command their confidence. They should also acquire the positive power of replacing them by men of their own choice. It was in the reign of William III the idea struck him that choosing of ministers from the members of Parliament who commanded the majority of the House of Commons would enable him the better to carry on the war on the Continent. I shall presently allude to the several other conventions and understandings developed as essential to the working of Cabinet Government. You will thus see that the King's Ministers are responsible to the Commons and *not to the people or the electorate*. Without this kind of responsibility, it is impossible to conceive that the political supremacy of the people of England from whom all authority to govern them is derived and with the sole end of serving whose welfare all such authority is to be exercised, can be maintained for a day. "In the proposals before us, the Indian Ministers are to be responsible not to our elected members of the Legislative Council nor even to the entire Legislative Council itself, but to the electorate."

This is a very extraordinary proposal. It is impossible to find the reason for this primary and vital departure from the constitutional principles and conventions pertaining to Responsible Government. The illustrious authors do not give any reason for this departure, but they say that they have *defined* the responsibility of Ministers (para. 245) as amenability to constituents primarily and in the second place to the Legislature. May I respectfully ask what is their authority to propose such a definition? You will in vain search for any such authority in the constitutions of the countries where such a system prevails, or from distinguished writers of constitutional history. This unique proposal for the creation of responsibility for the fractional performance of Government functions, is most delusive. It is interesting too from another standpoint. The illustrious authors say that there is practically no electorate in India and the people capable of becoming electors have to be found and drilled to exercise the franchise, that the people at large are a non-political people and they lack all political experience in connection with the system of Responsible Government. Yet, most strangely enough, our Ministry is to be responsible to this vague nebulous political factor. Why not be content with the responsibility of our ministers to God!

21. The proposals do not even say that the Governor in choosing his Ministers will find out as far as possible whether or not they would command the confidence of the elected members or the majority of them.

22. Curiously enough, while these ministers are to administer the transferred subjects, their own salaries do not come from the fund provided for the service of the transferred subjects, but are to be a charge on the allotment provided for the reserved subjects. This is most extraordinary too and no reason has been given for this strange provision. It is thus seen that the Ministers are part of the bureaucracy. The authors of the reforms frankly say that "the ministers do not hold their office at the will of the legislature."

23. And yet another doctrine more strange still. The ministers are under the control of the Governor, and not only so, but to a far greater extent than he can control the official members of the Executive Council. These members of Executive Council are two and therefore they have full power to outvote the Governor if they think it necessary. In that case, the only way in which he can override their decision is by the exercise of an extraordinary power by law vested in him, in the great interests of State. This special power we all know was secured by Lord Cornwallis,—thanks to Sir Phillip Francis and his two colleagues who as majority of his Council, kept Warren Hastings at bay. This being so, it is matter for our surprise, and a very depressing surprise too, that the Governor is given invariable power not only to advise, but also to control the ministers. It is thus immaterial whether the Ministers be one or two in number.

24. Besides this control of the ministers, there is another possible and even probable danger. A committee will soon be appointed for the purpose of determining what subjects should be transferred and what subjects should be reserved in each of the 8 provinces. It is open to them to recommend that limitations should be placed upon the complete control of the transferred subjects (para. 238). Thus we manage to get on for five years. During this period, it is clear from the proposals, by express statements and necessary implications, that the legislature has no power to pass a vote of want of confidence in the ministers either directly or indirectly by refusing the grant of supplies, for any service, however small, or by even the reduction of a single rupee, powers similar to those enjoyed by the House of Commons.

25. As to their financial power, it is also delusive and even more—it is annoying and calculated to bring them into conflict with the people of the country. The bureaucracy from the Secretary of State downwards to the Provincial Government of Major Departments including our Ministers, are the first Mortgagees of the entire revenue of India. The balance is to be allotted for carrying on the administration of the province in reference to transferred subjects and if this balance is found insufficient, as it well may be if we have regard to the expanding nature of the services, and at a time when the utmost of the tax paying capacity of the country except among in extremely small sections of people in the present almost inelastic economic state of the country, has been reached the ministers are to roam abroad and find new fields of taxation for the deficiency. It is extraordinary that this power is viewed as a right and liberty. On the other hand, it would make the administration of the transferred subjects galling and odious. This introduces a kind of political primogeniture for the bureaucracy. Those that hail this power as a right and liberty would do well to apply a very crucial test. Will the bureaucracy consent to change places with the Ministry in this particular? Would they consent to make the fund necessary for carrying the administration of the transferred subjects, with the new further progressive expansion, the first charge upon the revenue? And in case of deficiency for the administration of the reserved subjects, would they take to further taxation of the country and that without the assistance and co-operation of the ministry?

26. Well, at the end of the five years, the Government of India can be removed by the Provincial Government—not by the Ministry also, be it remarked, or by the Provincial Council for a modification of the lists of transferred and reserved subjects. The latter might also ask that the ministers' salaries might no longer be treated as belonging to the reserved group and might be voted annually by the Legislative Council. Then three events will follow upon this application. The then existing state of things might be left alone, or one or more subjects from the reserved lists might be removed and placed

on the transferred lists, or some of the subjects of the transferred list might be re-transferred to the Major Departments by way of punishment. All this depends upon "the evidence" placed before the Government of India and upon the sanction accorded by the Secretary of State. The illustrious authors do not give us any indication as to the sort of evidence that should or might be produced for the purpose. In fact, this is what might be called the class examination of ministry by the bureaucracy, but the subjects in which they are to be examined are unknown. We can easily divine what would be the plight of the poor honourable ministers! Their position before the Government of India in this examination of the political college will be most miserable. If they are on the side of progress for and by the people, it is in the highest degree unlikely that they would pass the examination. But if, on the other hand, they and the bureaucracy agree, the progress already made and the further augmentation of the transferred subjects would not, I submit, be worth having for and by the people of the country.

27. Then, let us suppose that they pass this examination and their salaries are to be finally voted for annually. This is the only power or influence that is to be allowed to the Legislative Council over the Ministry. Here again, I would engage your attention for a few minutes. Why is this the only power? Suppose the ministers say "we would serve as honorary officers without salaries, what then? What becomes of the vote, and what is the alternative next step in the progress of responsible government?" The English Parliament has enormous powers to turn out the Ministry when it has ceased to command the confidence of the majority. For instance, it can refuse the whole of the supplies needed for carrying on the Government and then it is impossible for the ministry to remain in office even though they might waive their own salaries! I need not dwell upon the other conventions in this connection. The Commons can attack the administration of the Cabinet when it has ceased to command the confidence of the majority in more ways than one; by a resolution of want of confidence expressly moved and carried, by attacking the Government in the course of the debate for an address in reply to the gracious message of His Majesty in opening the Parliament, by an amendment to the motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair in order that the House of Commons might resolve itself into Committee of Supply, as well as by refusing the grant of Supplies in the Committee. Cutting down supplies is not only penal in view to compel the ministry to go out, but it may extend to the refusal of very small items of expenditure. This is viewed only as an indirect vote of want of confidence. Lord Rosebery's ministry fell in 1895, because Government was defeated on an extremely small item in the army estimates. Where such a thing takes place, the Government can escape the consequences of defeat and need not resign if it can secure a vote of confidence in the House itself. These are the methods by which the Cabinet is absolutely controlled.

by the people's representatives in the Commons. I am absolutely unable to see why the one very delicate and embarrassing method of cutting down the ministers' salaries is the only weapon to be placed in the hands of provincial legislative Councils and even that only if they behave like good boys in the quinquennial class examination.

28. There is another interesting aspect of the whole situation. The proposals say, and say rightly, that the whole Executive Government including the minister or ministers, should present a "united front" to the outside world. This is in accordance with constitutional usages in England. We know that the Cabinet in England is jointly responsible for the act of every one of the members. They consult secretly; the proceedings are not even recorded and the decision arrived at might or might not be unanimous, but it need not even be that of the majority. It might be the opinion of one member only, say the Prime Minister, and if any member thinks that the difference is so serious that he is unable to give his consent to it conscientiously, his only course is to resign his membership of the Cabinet. Instances of such resignations have been somewhat more than usual recently. One can easily see therefore that the final decision of the Cabinet is always well understood and well defended in Parliament. But here, our Ministers are only a part of the whole machinery. It is not clear from the proposals how, in case they disagree with the Governor and when he overrides their decision as he has power to do under the proposals, the ministers are to defend themselves in the course of the debate in the legislative council for refusing to vote their salaries. Are they entitled to say that the particular act or acts condemned were not theirs, but those of the Governor? If they are theirs, what is their responsibility then? Would it be fair to cut down their salary? If they are not entitled to reveal the exact facts, what is the course which the legislature can adopt in the discharge of their duty to the country when they disapprove of the act of the Government in regard to any of the retransferred subjects? Such difficulties and dead-locks cannot happen in the case of the Cabinet in England as the responsibilities are joint, no matter who is responsible for the decision. But here, the responsibility cannot be joint between the bureaucratic Government of the reserved subjects and the responsible Ministerial Government of the transferred subjects. If it is possible to introduce the principle of joint responsibility between both the compartments then the whole attempt at the first stage of Responsible Government collapses. View it how we may, on the assumed ground of innate unfitness, it is impossible to claim that by this process this vast country could be schooled and rendered fit for realising Responsible Government in any conceivable measure of time, if, indeed, the object would ever be reached at all. It is clear that we are instinctively, if not logically,

drawn to the irresistible conclusion that this strange first morsel of reform is wholly an unnatural political dose and that we are strongly entitled to suspect its potentialities and possibilities.

29. We pass on. At the end of another five years, comes a Royal Commission appointed by Parliament for the purpose of surveying the whole political situation in India and it can make several recommendations, very much of the nature of the recommendations which the Government of India might have made five years previously, and this process is to be repeated at cycles of twelve years. There is no indication here when the authors expect the completion of the training of this country in order that they may deserve the full Responsible Government for the Provinces. There is no indication whether during these successive cycles, any and what improvements may be made in the constitutional functions of provincial legislative councils and whether they would ever become completely elective and possess the full powers of people's representatives. Not a word is said as to when the process of liberalising the Government of India so as to convert it into a responsible government will begin, and if so, whether wholesale or in compartments or instalments; and this is the whole programme.

30. It is impossible to make any attempt whether our ministers numbering from 8 to 16 for each period of three years or the survivors of them with other substitutes will, at the end of the five years stand all these examinations—first by the bureaucratic pedagogues somehow to be transformed into political pedagogues, and then by the political examining universities to begin with the matriculation examination at the end of ten years and if they pass it to allow them to appear for further examinations and pass them if they can at successive periods of twelve years. It is difficult to imagine a more ingenious political contrivance for the introduction of constitutional government into this country pregnant with so much hopelessness and charged with tendencies perilous to our national aims and aspirations. Can the authors or their supporters quote a parallel instance or an approximately parallel instance in the history of the world? And what has India done to deserve so specially dangerous a treatment?

31. We may well stop at this point. The system will not stand the most superficial scrutiny. It won't do at all. It won't work. If at all it would, it would injure our interests and postpone the realisation of our national aims to the Greek Calends.

32. But the whole question is capable of being considered and it ought to be considered from other standpoints as well. The illustrious authors of the scheme both expressly and by necessary implication reveal some of their reasons for the adoption of this clumsy, nebulous and extraordinary method.

of redeeming the solemn pledge, a method much more calculated to defeat their end than in the least degree to promote it. I have no time to examine all these reasons but I would confine myself to two or three of them. Much is made of the old fashioned view that the vast masses of the people of this country are illiterate, ignorant, and helpless and that the educated Indians not only do not represent them, but also that the masses are to be protected against them by the strong hand of the bureaucracy. This is a jumble of truths, half truths and untruths. It is a fact that the vast masses are illiterate, thanks to the policy of the East India Company and their successors in office; but it is not true that they are ignorant. It cannot be pretended, indeed, that a knowledge of the three R's, while it would alter the statistics of the Census Reports, would appreciably alter the character of individuals or the people collectively. There are several Europeans who believe that the peasantry and the workmen of India are as good as those of any other country and better than those of several of the advanced countries. A distinguished French merchant at Pondicherry and President of the Chamber of Commerce there told me several years ago, that the Indian peasantry are more intelligent and more prudent than the French peasantry. The Indian peasantry, as they are, manage their own affairs with unerring judgment. They know whom to trust and whom not to trust. They know which officials are incorruptibly honest, whom to be afraid of and whom they could bribe. They make no mistakes in all this or in the choice of pleaders when they have occasion to employ them and the judicial statistics show the amount of increasing litigation in the country. I believe they would well compare in capacity and fitness at least with the electorate of England in 1832 on the eve of the great electoral reform. I read of an instance, as, I daresay many of you have, that during one Gladstonian election campaign one elector came with a stout cord in his hand and asked the election agent where was the cow promised to him for his vote in favour of Gladstone. To this day it is not an uncommon occurrence for unsuccessful Parliamentary candidates to attribute their defeat to a lack of sufficient supply of motor cars by them. I maintain that the presumed incapacity of the peasantry and workmen of India is greatly exaggerated.

33. Nor can it be seriously maintained that the educated Indians do not well reflect and represent the feelings and interests of the peasantry and the poor of the country. They are their best natural friends. The educated Indians are all more or less from the peasantry and the poor. Not one of them would have the courage to say (not even those who may be said to have been borne with silver spoons in their mouths) that he has not, among his relations near and remote, some who are not illiterate and who are unable to find food for themselves and their children throughout the year and who

do not sustain a breakdown in their economic capacity during a period of the most trifling distress. It seems to me that it is absolutely unnecessary to labour this point. Only the other day the "Pioneer" in view to prevent the lower orders of this country from getting nervous in consequence of the threatened political danger through Central Asia made an appeal to the leaders and thinkers of India to see that they (lower orders) are calm and confident. It says as follows :—" We ask the leaders of public opinion in India to keep before their minds the responsibilities of their position : to remember that their thoughts, speeches and writings, not always clearly understood, *lie at the root of the opinion of the unlettered.* Should the educated community in any Province, suddenly awakening to the reality of war, lose its nerve and give way to baseless apprehension, the *agricultural community* is soon oppressed with fears even more groundless, because due to apprehension even less intelligent. Let the leaders of opinion in India, like the leaders of opinion in Great Britain, take their stand with calm courage upon the unshakable ground of the righteousness of our cause, of the might of our Empire, of the steadfast determination of our Allies to conquer in the name of humanity. *The example of leaders is followed eventually by the people at large.*" The italics are mine. I need not pause to emphasise the several admissions and principles contained in this statement. It is a reflection, therefore, altogether groundless and unmerited, to say that the masses need protection from the bureaucracy against the educated Indians. It is an insult to our understanding and that it is an insult to the understanding is proved by the instinct of the "Pioneer," the premier and representative Anglo-Indian newspaper and by no means an apostle of our national aspirations.

34. One other important reason assigned and inferred is contained in paras 158 and 328 of the Report. In the former para, they say " so long as India depends for her internal and external security upon the army and navy of the United Kingdom, the measure of self-determination which she enjoys must be inevitably limited. We cannot think that Parliament would consent to the employment of British arms in support of their policy over which it had no control and of which it might disapprove. The Defence of India is an imperial question and for this reason the Government of India must retain both the power and the means of discharging its responsibilities for the defence of the country and to the Empire as a whole ;" and in the latter para, they say speaking of the shortsightedness of the Government which has constantly refused to afford military training to the Indian people as follows :—" We need not pause to emphasise the very paractical limitations which the actual conditions of India impose on a policy of military expansion. They cannot, we think, be unknown to some speakers who have ignored them." Here again I would beg of you to bear with me for some little while. These two passages

may be rapidly examined in the light of actual indisputable facts. We need not go to the ancient testimony of the Greeks and the Chinese or the past history of India to determine whether or not India is capable, under proper conditions, not only to defend herself but also to be a tower of strength in the Empire and on behalf of humanity if only against the next German war and it is strongly believed everywhere that there is sure to be another huge German war. The position I invite you to take is that the people of this country are capable of taking care of themselves against any army in the world.

35. General Sir Ian Hamilton says, in his Staff Officer's Scrap Book, that the people of India and Nepal are sufficient and fit under good leadership to shake to their foundations the artificial societies of the West and he further admits that it was from his knowledge of the military capacities of the Indians that he prophesied that Japan would beat Russia because the Japanese greatly resemble the Gurkhas but that the Gurkhas themselves are more hardy and powerful than the Japs. It is admitted that our army were fully equal to any army in their behaviour and achievements in France and Flanders against the most scientifically drilled army of the world. The distinguished authors of the "Indian Corps in France," the Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick Smith and Lt. Col. J. W. B. Merewether, C. I. E., are in raptures over the exploits of our countrymen. They distinguished themselves in every kind of military work, however novel it was to them. These authors say that several of them proved themselves greater heroes in fact than Homeric heroes in fiction. In several instances the Indian Sepoys rose equal to the occasion when all their officers had been killed or wounded, and saved the troops and the situation by taking the command at once. General Sir O'Moore Creagh in a letter gives me an instance of a Garwahli soldier achieving such a thing. He took command when all the British Officers of his regiment had been knocked down and he did exceedingly well and he was awarded the military service medal for having saved the regiment when all the Europeans had been struck down. The authors of the Indian Corps in France record an instance of Gangna, a Dogra Havildar, killing five Germans in a hand to hand fight in the battle of Ypres and when his bayonet broke, he continued the unequal combat with a sword which he picked up until he received six wounds and then he collapsed. Happily he was found alive when the trench was retaken and he was awarded the Indian Order of Merit by His Majesty the King Emperor. It is worthy of your attention that all this glory was achieved by our troops not only under altogether new and most bewildering environment but also in spite of the fact that they had been ill drilled and even ill nourished. In support of this statement of mine I rely upon the letter of Sir O'Moore Creagh wherein he says that in spite of his own personal endeavours our troops were kept ignorant of modern methods of warfare that they had no knowledge, until they

went to France, of big shells and high explosives ; they had not even knowledge of intrenching tools. The findings of the Mesopotamia Commission entirely bear me out. They find that the Indian troops were comparatively neglected in their training and equipment and that they were only inadequately fit even for internal frontier warfare. Among the recommendations to be given effect to immediately in Mesopotamia there is one for increase of rations for Indian troops. "The field service ration should receive very careful consideration in the light of experience in Mesopotamia. This especially applies to the rations for Indian troops. The War Office Sanitary Committee found that even "the improved ration" sanctioned as late as October last was deficient in many respects." To my mind no further argument is needed to enable us to make up our mind clearly and definitely on this point, namely that the achievement of responsible government by India would enable her to create one of the most efficient and splendid armies in the world which would be sufficient not only for the defence of India against any power or probable combination of powers but would also be the most valuable co-partner with England in the defence of the whole Empire for all time to come.

36. I need not pause to consider the galling reflection implied on our loyalty in the other passage quoted above. This implication is disloyal to all past experience whether Mahomedan or Christian. In making this statement the illustrious authors forget that the Mahomedan Rulers of India as soon as they established themselves on the throne at Delhi employed Hindus in all the grades of military service and trusted them in every battle whether against Mahomedans or infidels and that without the least disappointment. The great Moghal warrior and statesmen, Emperor Akbar, says that "the Hindus know not what it is to fly from the field of battle and that they are of unbounded fidelity." Our authors forget that the British Raj of India has been established on the invitation and with the substantial assistance of the Indians themselves. And the spirit of the whole of this country in its loyalty and devotion to its King-Emperor and to the great cause which England and her Allies are fighting for has been the wonder and admiration of the world and the greatest disappointment of the Kaiser in this war as admitted by the present great Prime Minister. In discharge of every duty of ours to ourselves, to England and to humanity, we must raise our emphatic protest against this view, so easily calculated to retard if not permanently to prevent our national realisation of perfect self-government within the British Empire.

37. While we are thus conscious of our present and possible capacity to provide for our defence and to meet the imperial requirements in this behalf we do not desire that India should be denuded of its English troops and English officers. But on the other hand we desire their co-operation and camaraderie of spirit in more interests than one. But this can only be achieved by creating

one army and one navy for the whole country whether on and under the water or in the air without any distinction of race or colour. At least half the officers should be Indians under equal rules and regulations so that the English officers would now be the official superiors, now be the Official equals and now be official subordinates of the Indian Officers. Among other elements tending further to strengthen the relations between England and India, this new policy would be the most predominant factor." I would again quote from Sir Ian Hamilton. Says he "it is on the loyalty and camaraderie bred of regimental life that we shall have to depend one day for our hold upon India."

38. I do not think it is necessary for me to detain you any longer in view to emphasise the point that in the pursuit and furtherance of our national aims and aspirations we are entitled by all the available evidence to call upon English statesmanship, uninspired and uninfluenced by the Sydenham School of politics, to repose absolute trust in us. Otherwise they may play any legerdemain they like with political patch-work in response to the national aspirations and demands, but no such contrivances would ever do.

39. I might suitably allude here to the Report of The Sedition Committee, 1918. It would be difficult adequately and accurately to criticise the opinion expressed and findings arrived at in this Report without a thorough study of the material on which the Committee bases them. But the whole of the material is not published. No indication even is given as to how and whence the Committee find their way to make the startling statements in the short introduction of less than a page. It says that Republican or Parliamentary forms of Government were unknown in India till the establishment of British rule. It is, in my humble view, extremely doubtful if the Committee had power within the terms or even the spirit of the reference made to them, namely to investigate and report on criminal conspiracies in view to revolutionary movement and to make recommendations in view to lessen the difficulties that Government feel they have in effectually dealing with them, to travel into the ancient history of India to make such a remark. A most superficial knowledge of the literature on the subject of ancient Indian polity would conclusively refute the bold assertions of the Committee. There were republics and parliamentary forms of Government in India and responsible government without the name as it is claimed for France before its formal installation some fifty years ago. Max Muller says that among the lessons which ancient India can teach us is one about Parliamentary representation of Government. From the view that the King is for the people and not the people for the King told by so many sages, that the world does not belong to the King of the world but to all born in it, that the country does not belong to the King of the country and that taxes are not the King's property but the people's return and provision for their protection, we can draw the neces-

sary conclusion that the conception of the sovereignty of the people was a well-established political maxim of ancient India. But no deep study of the material of the Report is necessary to record our emphatic opinion that the recommendations made in view the more effectively to deal with sedition and conspiracy are drastic and more calculated to add to the difficulties of the Government than to lessen them. The safeguards for an impartial trial of the accused are to be thrust aside. An astounding paradox is enunciated in the Report. Because, it is grevly said, the conspirators know that confessions to the police cannot be made use of as evidence against them, therefore they easily make them and facts are thereby obtained! A most original discovery. It is said that the conspirators are generally young men. Thus they are lawyers enough to know the legal effect of their confessions but not shrewd enough to know that confessions of crimes and the circumstances would enable the Police to exploit all the available means for evidence ending in their conviction which they could not have done without such concessions. The committee whose members are four distinguished Judges and an eminent pleader do not say why at all the conspirators make the confessions at all. Yet the special tribunal to be set up without jury or assessors are to send for the literature of the C.I.D. and read them without the knowledge of the accused or their pleaders and they may or may not give copies of the literature or even portions of them to the accused. Such a trial is bound to be futile and even a farce. It is impossible for human beings whatever the judicial training or integrity of character, not to be influenced by the facts disclosed by the Police literature. But why is the committee nervous about the jury or even assessors. The recommendations, if adopted, would add not only to the body of the repressive laws of the country but what is more dangerous and galling to our national pride to discriminatory laws and discriminatory administration.

40. Here let us pause and ask ourselves the question how far the proposed reform would enable the country to get rid of laws now in existence which are both repressive and discriminatory expressly or in their application and how far the country would be able to prevent the enactment of any such laws in future. I have no hesitation in affirming that absolutely it gives us no power, no not even an increase of mere influence which alone is now possible for us by means of our elected members of the legislatures. The expression "Majesty of the Law" and the "Rule of the Law" have no application in this country. Excluding the common law of India now confined to civil status and inheritance—not without modification by the British Government—and the few laws of Parliament hardly in use in actual application, such as the Habeas Corpus Act, all our laws are decrees of the bureaucracy under the triple name of Acts, Regulations and Ordinances. None of these is law

as known in civilised countries. None of these is enacted by the people through their representatives; hardly any of them is a reflection of Indian public opinion. Nor is any of them even the product of bureaucratic legislature, distinguished from and independent of the executive and administrative bureaucracy. The very names of our legislative councils and of the members thereof other than the ex-officio members shew that they are merely expansions and phases of the Executive Government. The illustrious authors of the Report admit this. The dispatches between the Government of India and the Secretary of State some of which are quoted in the Report would conclusively prove that the whole structure of the Indian legislatures was intended to give the appearance of legal expression to the executive will forged in England or India. Let us not be misled by names. We have no public law in this country. The triple bundle of Acts, Regulations and Ordinances are the kaleidoscopic product of one and the same bureaucracy. The whole of British India is one Scheduled District, one backward tract without the name. Is it not time that we made an honest and strenuous endeavour to get rid of this unnatural and abnormal state of our country as part of the British Empire. The reform perpetuates this abnormal and dangerous state of things. Under the name of the two formulas, one for the Government of India and the other for Local Governments, "peace, order and good government or public tranquillity, the Executive Government have ousted all jurisdiction from the Legislative Councils, Provincial and Indian. Now pause and think whether we shall be true to ourselves and to the dumb millions, if we tamper with our rights and accept a compromise in this vital connection? And what is the natural and eternal principle on which the satrap or bureaucracy should claim the divine right to provide for the order and peace of the country without the co-operation and representation of the people? Those that would accept modifications of this unnatural shibboleth by the bureaucracy, whatever their position, learning and service to the country hitherto, thereby consent to our remaining only semi-free and that by toleration and sufferance of the bureaucracy. Yes, sacred words those, "Majesty of the Law," rule of the Law. We have need of them more than our rulers. But let us have the genuine articles and then let our rulers see the effects of trusting the people in the exercise of their natural rights. All sorts of methods have been tried these twenty years, taking the internment of the two Deccan Sirdars, the Natu Brothers as our starting point, by the Government to extirpate anarchy; and more arbitrary and more drastic powers were secured and applied from time to time. Failure writ large is admitted; well, hand over the department dealing with anarchists to us and let us have the making of the law and the control of the bureaucracy in executing that law and anarchism would be removed in less than a decade. The enthusiasm following the advent of our self-government would alone be sufficient to alter this state of things. The editor of Japan Times

accounts for the diminution of serious crimes in Japan since her glorious achievement so as to take her place among the great nations of the world, on the ground that their intense enthusiasm and devouring patriotism leaves them neither times nor inclination to commit crimes. When the services are under the control of the people we know how to get rid of our anarchically inclined youths, present and potential. I venture to submit therefore that I am entitled to ask you to hesitate to being a party to any modification of the proposals which would not give the people of this country power to provide for their freedom for their personal freedom at least to the same extent to which the personal freedom of the meanest European British Subject of His Majesty is by law and administration guaranteed and safeguard.

41. Do not allow your clear judgment to be obscured by teliapseera like, "half a loaf is better than no bread," "We shall be practical politicians" and so forth. Nor attend to the threat that we might, if do not accept this unnatural bit of reform, get nothing. Remember we ask for no gift. We seek our natural rights and we ask our rulers to assist us in removing the obstacles in our path to our political destiny. Some more submit that the proposed remedy is beyond all political experience.

42. The next point I would invite your attention to is the question how far the adoption of the reforms as they are or without substantial modification would raise the country out of its economically depressed condition. The Hon. Sir Alexander Cardew said in Coimbatore that acre for acre this country now produces much less, so low as a fourth, than several countries in Europe and that this disastrous state of things is remediable. But he asked where is the money to come from without which progress in this vital direction is impossible? My answer is, give us the keys of the national chest, allow us to control by law the whole fiscal policy of the country, permit us to recognize the services of the country subject of course to the rights of the personal of existing ones and leave us to play the necessary financial pranks annually with our budgets, then we shall find the requisite funds for starting the agricultural improvement of the country and for giving the peasant, and his wife two meals where they now have one and two clothes to wear alternately where they now have not more than one. This power which we most naturally seek more on behalf of our poor dumb millions and less on behalf of the microscopic intelligentsia has been persistently refused to us by the bureaucracy posing as the God-appointed guardians of the voiceless masses of India. All bold experiments at liberalisation of infinitesimal bits of the huge and complicated machinery of the Government of India, if conceivable and workable, which I have endeavoured to show to be impossible, are bound to produce national helplessness and national hopelessness in this vital direction as in every other, necessary for our national uplifting

43. You would then ask me what exactly should be our attitude at this juncture. To my mind it is easy to make up our minds. We need part of the scheme and we shall not reject the whole of it. It will stand in three important matters. The reform of the Government for India in England the Indianization of the services and the further advance of local self-government. But on three essential points we should absolutely refuse to accept the proposals adumbrated in the scheme before us. Compartmental administration by way of preparation in view to start Responsible Government at the end of unknown and far off cycles, modification in view to entire responsible Government or some thing like it in the Provinces without at the same time liberalising the Indian machinery as responsible Government, and finally the prohibition of our legislature to have an effective voice in the making of laws within the highly elastic formulas of peace, order, good government and sound financial administration. The illustrious authors admit that political reform of Provincial Government implies and involves reform of the Central Government. But they somehow find their way to postulate that the two changes need not be simultaneous. They state no reasons for this straight position.

44. On the other hand constructively we are able, I venture to submit to meet the demands of the bureaucracy under the present situations by allowing Parliament or the coming Imperial Federation, if it becomes an accomplished fact, to actively interfere by law in matters of Imperial concern whenever the Indian Legislature and Government are found different towards such. The fact of such power is enough to act as a highly educative force sobering us if need be, in the enjoyment of our new powers even if no higher considerations should influence us, which is in the highest degree unlikely. It is true that the Imperial Parliament can now, in theory, legislate for the whole Empire but it is only a dormant power and not at all exercised in the case of the self-governing dominions, nor, thanks to the contrivance of the bureaucracy, in the case of India. For this purpose we can well rely on the Congress Moslem Scheme somewhat modified in the light of the criticism of the Report before us. One important part of the criticism is quite undeserved. The Congress-Moslem Scheme, you will remember, ask for power to elect the non-official members of the Executive Councils. The illustrious authors say that this demand is without parallel in the history of any important country. I submit that this is a mistake. In Switzerland the National Executive Council of seven members is entirely elected by the Congress. The four members each of the Executive Councils of the four provinces of the Union of South Africa are all elected and the two non-official members of the Executive Council of the Crown Colony of Mauritius are elected. All these Executive

Councils are irremovable at the pleasure of the legislature unlike the Cabinet of England. I see no reason therefore why this aspect of the Congress-Moslem scheme should not be adopted for our reform. But even this demand might be given up.

45. In this connection I have another suggestion to make which I think is most important. The recognition and guarantee of our natural and fundamental rights should find a place in the instrument of the coming constitution whatever its nature and scope might be. In making this suggestion I simply ask you to follow the examples of the great free countries of the world including England from the days of the Magna Charta. The protection of such rights, I venture to think, should not be left to our coming legislatures, but should be embodied in what President Poincare happily calls the Law of Laws, viz., Law of the Constitution of the Country. Besides, there is one great advantage in the adoption of this suggestion. No question would arise in enacting this part of the constitution as to any supposed inconveniences arising from the presumed hostile or even conflicting interest in this country due to race or colour or creed. All would like to secure personal freedom, to have freedom of speech and the liberty of the press. I would therefore place in this list for adoption in our constitutional law, at least the following :—

1. All Indian subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India are equal before the law. There shall be no penal or administrative law in force in the Dominion whether substantive or procedural of a discriminatory nature.

2. No Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, prosperity or as respects his freedom of speech except under sentence by a court of justice and as a result of a lawful and open trial.

3. Every Indian subject of His Majesty accused of a criminal offence shall be furnished as soon as he is arrested with information disclosing the nature of the accusation and all evidence in support of that accusation shall be taken before him in open court subject to cross examination by him or his Counsel and he shall be entitled to have evidence produced to rebut the evidence against him.

4. No such person shall be arrested for an offence except when taken in the act otherwise than by the authority of a warrant by a Magistrate or Justice of the peace stating on the face of it the nature and particulars of the offence. Every such person accused of an offence not punishable with death shall be entitled to bail and a superior Court of Justice may allow him bail in cases punishable with death.

5. Every Indian subject accused of an offence punishable otherwise than with simple imprisonment for three months or with fine only is entitled to demand his trial by a jury.

6. An appeal both in law and on the facts shall be allowed from every conviction and no appeal shall be allowed from a sentence of acquittal provided a retrial may be ordered by a High Court in cases of grave mis-carriage of justice.

7. In criminal trials no confession shall be evidence against any accused person unless made in the course of the trial freely and voluntarily in the immediate presence of the trying judge and no conviction shall be based on any such confession if withdrawn before the close of the trial.

8. Confessions of co-accused are not evidence against an accused person and the evidence of accomplices whatever the number is insufficient for a conviction unless such evidence is substantially corroborated by the evidence of persons of unimpeachable character relating both to material particulars and to the identity of the accused.

9. No torture or corporal punishment of any kind shall be legal whether as punishment for a penal offence or by way of discipline, whether in the army navy, or among convicts.

10. No person shall be searched without his previous consent except under a lawful warrant by a Magistrate in executing the provisions of a penal law.

11. The private domicile of every Indian subject of His Majesty is sacred and inviolable and no search of the same or its premises shall take place without the previous written consent of the occupiers thereof except under a lawful warrant describing the particular part to be searched and the purpose of the search issued by a Magistrate or a Court of Justice.

12. Every Indian subject of His Majesty shall be entitled to bear arms without any previous permission or licence and the right shall not cease temporarily or permanently except under a sentence of a Court of Justice for his abuse of such rights.

13. The Press shall be free and its liberty is guaranteed. No license or security shall be needed or demanded in respect of any printing press.

14. Next to the defence of the dominion and to the maintenance the supremacy of the law the most prominent function of the Government is the education of all classes of people, general, scientific and technical freely and cheaply.

15. The male inhabitants of the dominion shall be compulsorily trained and drilled for purposes of the defence of the country under suitable laws but shall not be subject to compulsory military service except in a grave national crisis.

16. All religions and sub-divisions of religions are equal and free in the dominion and there shall be no State or established Church of any kind whatever.

17. There shall be but one cadre of superior service throughout the country relating to every branch of the administration without any reference to race or any other basis of a discriminatory kind.

46. You would see from the above that I but indicate the lines on which His Majesty's Government might be invoked to modify and improve the present scheme of proposals. Provincial Conference as we are, we cannot adopt definite and final proposals by way of modifying and improving the scheme before us. That should be left to the coming Special Congress in co-operation with the Moslem League. We must look forward in the light of all the circumstances to their doing their best in this direction. I doubt not that it would be found in the highest degree desirable and necessary for the Congress and the Moslem-League to appoint a suitable and well informed joint deputation to England with power to present the Scheme to Government that they will have adopted with power too, if necessary, to enter into necessary compromises as to details and provisions without surrendering our national rights and fundamental principles of Self-Government. Whatever may be the modification of the Congress Moslem Scheme one part of it must be kept sacred, viz., the entente between the Hindus and the Moslems.

47. I spoke to you to-day of the chapter of serious omissions in the Report. One of its phenomenal features is an utter absence of any statement or allusion as to the origin of the strange conception leading up to this extraordinary scheme. He would be a bold man who would venture to predict the projection of any such scheme from the pronouncement of the 20th August last. The statesmen responsible for the enunciation of the policy could not, I venture to submit, have had the remotest idea of such a plan. If they had, they might well have said so. They might and would have said that their idea of the first instalment of responsible government to this country was to begin with provincial political machinery, with a small portion of that machinery, morphologically and physiologically and that the reform would not bear at the first the complexion of the system of the responsible government, if indeed it was not the reverse of it, and there would have been no necessity for the Secretary of State in brilliant company to have come all the way to India and in concert with His Excellency the Viceroy to have exploited the country for opinion

and recommendations, having previously secured calmness in the political atmosphere of the country. It is clear thus that this product is neither of English origin nor of Indian origin. It bears the lineaments of the founding of the Round Table politicians. This is an additional factor in the Reform proposals galling to the national mind of India. It is not merely a founding but a very monstrous founding. The illustrious authors do not say how many metamorphoses of this strange monster would be necessary before we reach the really first stage of responsible government in this country. Evidently they propose to start for us the same evolution which science says the species homo has gone through. We are told from a study of human embryology that our ancestors during the pre-monkey period were a succession of monsters, one evolved from the other. The illustrious authors do not say how many such monsters they are going to provide for our evolution before we or rather our remote posterity will reach the next stage, from monsters to grinning and chattering monkey, and when finally we can enter our political paradise in the "image and transcript" of Noble England, the home of Liberty and the mother of the system of responsible government in view best to preserve and ever develop the liberty of man. The attempt to secure support for such a contrivance is simply ludicrous if not disingenuous.

48. One would have supposed that the authors of the very able survey of the political situation in the Report would have alluded to the Mesopotamia Commission. The findings and recommendations of this Commission are pregnant with lesson for our light and guidance and for the light and guidance of English statesmanship at this crisis. The evidence taken by that Commission from several distinguished witnesses including Lord Crew, General Sir Edmand Barrow, General Sir O'More Creagh and Mr. Carter of Calcutta disclosed the extraordinary fact that in connection with this war, the mentality of our bureaucracy is India first and England next. We all have heard of the 'Perish-India-School.' We might designate all those Englishmen in India and in England of this kind of mentality as the "Perish-England-School," in which Lord Sydenham and people of his kidney take a foremost place. The next lesson derived from this is that the whole system of administration in India has reached the breaking point and the opinion of Commander Wedgwood and the majority of the Commissioners say the different between them and is more in emphasis than in substance—that the Indian should be given the full privileges of citizenship. During the debate on the Commons in connection with the Mesopotamia Report Mr. Ramsay Macdonald said of the Indian bureaucracy as follows:—"They are worthy able people but they are working a machine and the man who works a machine, is bound to accommodate his whole mentality to the machine. If you are out in India

for twenty or thirty years and have got to work the machine of the Indian Civil Service, then it does blind you even if it sharpens you in its own direction..... But now that we have discovered that the whole system is not nearly elastic enough and cannot protect the country, do not allow us to reconstruct a new machine by the mentality of the old which has broken down."

And the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu said in the same debate. "The share of the Indian people in this war from the beginning to the end has always been greater than the share of the Indian Government in this War and always more willing than the share of the Indian Government." "The Government of India is too wooden too inelastic, too antediluvian to be of use to the modern purposes we have in view. I do not believe that anybody could ever support the Government of India from the point of view of modern requirements." "The Indian Government is an indefensible system of Government." Can this document before us be said to be in the remotest degree a reflect of this opinion of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State or Mr. Ramsay Macdonald or of the findings and recommendations of the Commission? No, decidedly no. Then it is clear that he succumbed to influences, which he, perhaps, did not foresee when he started for India and which, we are sure, he was not able any wise to control. In doing our duty now unflinchingly we would merely strengthen the hands of the Secretary of State, the Right Hon'ble Mr. Montagu, and others who, I am sure, are prepared to take a much more sympathetic and liberal view of our rights and demands in the way of the political enfranchisement of our Country.

49. I think it is now time that I bring my rambling observations to close, extremely thankful as I am to you for the kindness with which you have listened to me. I would not detain you any further by endeavouring to summarise my suggestion with the reasons therefor. I believe, I have made, in so far as in me lies, the present position clear to you. I have said that this is a supreme moment in our national life and it rests wholly with us whether we shall wisely seize it and manage it to the lasting benefit of our country and the Empire. In this duty we should not falter. If we do, it would be a national crime. We must be grateful, exceedingly grateful, that the illustrious authors of the scheme of political Reform before us have acquitted us of the charge rashly brought against us by the people whom I have designated as the "Perish-England-School" that we are taking criminal advantage of the necessities of England at this moment and trying to extort from her political concessions for our benefit. No charge can be more coarse and more false. Our duty just now is twofold. There is little or no organic connection between these two duties. On the one hand, it is our duty to continue to do our very best towards England and Her Allies in view to their winning this

great War on behalf of mankind. But on the other hand this duty need not interfere with our duty simultaneously to pursue our national aims and aspirations and to secure the needs, the essential needs, of our country without which we cannot get into the path of progress towards our unknown destiny with any chance of meeting and taking our place among those nations which we have, thanks to the rash contentment of our ancestors, overtaken us by centuries. Far from this duty being inconsistent with our other duty, the feelings inspiring the performance of these duties co-exist and are necessary for each other's existence. Nothing can be a greater mistake than to believe that modernisation and a capacity to be easily pleased in the discharge of our duties to our country are the characteristics of loyalty. True loyalty is only possible not by reason of the so-called moderation and an easy spirit of compromise and such other tell-tale words, but by a culture of true love towards England in addition to our feeling of legal and ordered loyalty and if ever this culture is possible it is eminently so now. There is the tide of flow of love towards England now throughout the country. Kipling says "that France is now beloved of every soul that loves its fellow kind" and it is impossible to love France now, as we all do, without equally, if not to a greater extent, loving England. It rests with England not to relapse into its pre-war mentality of lack of imagination especially in regard to this country. We all know that she is now fighting and sacrificing her most precious blood in the Thermopylae of the freedom of the World and if her statesmanship is not equal to enabling her to see India as she is and to recognise the rising tide of not mere loyalty but also of love, then it would be our sacred duty persistently to educate her into an adequate performance of her duty to us, regardless of consequences.

50. England must recognise that what President Poincare says is true of India no less than of France. He says that the intense feeling of French patriotism and French spirit of self-sacrifice is vitally connected with her intense love of mankind and that neither feeling can exist without the other. If England desires that the present opportunity should be seized by her to make India enter on a course of culture of love to her to supplement and strengthen the roots of loyalty, she must, regardless of the school of Sydenham, permit us courageously to pursue our culture of love of our own country and this culture would be impossible without our honestly and frankly telling her what our national requirements are and what our demands are and that we are the best if not the only judges of those requirements. England and her great Allies allow the survivors of slaughtered savages the right of self-determination in the choice of their Government. It would be a strange and fatal inconsistency that she should deny us this natural and inalienable right, as the latter part of the pronouncement of the 20th August last evidently does deny and as the principles and programme of this Report seem to maintain

the strange doctrine. It is impossible to take shelter behind our presumed and assumed incapacity for self-government for denying to us the measure of responsible government to the same extent, to begin with, as the extent with which the five self-governing Colonial Dominions of England were started. Canada is the birth-place of British Colonial Responsible Government and it was given to her in spite of disloyalty of Lower Canada and following a serious revolution. So was the case of South Africa. It would be futile and short-sighted statesmanship on the part of England to allow a distrust of us to lurk behind the too frequently proclaimed incapacity on our part for self-determination and self-government,—a distrust which is a lingering echo of the distrust of that great accident, the Indian Mutiny, the result of the misgovernment in consequence of the breakdown of the system of Government of this country by the East India Company. The Indians have been tried in the performance of various governmental functions and nowhere found wanting. It is conceded that they have distinguished themselves not only at the Bar but also on the Bench and experience teaches us that they have not been found inferior to their English comrades. Our Army, drawn from the peasantry and the poor and ill-taught and ill-drilled and ill-nourished, rose, as I have shewn above, equal to the performance of the most glorious deeds in this War. They also proved conclusively that the often urged fiction that they need European officers and that they won't easily submit to the commands of their own countrymen is proved to the hilt to be untrue as well as their born capacity to lead. If then the Indians in the performance of this great and glorious function have been found to rise fully equal to the task demanded of them, where is the incongruity in the justice and validity of our demand that we should be tried, notwithstanding the previous ill-preparation, in the art of true government of our country? If there is a difference of view on this subject between our rulers and ourselves which should prevail? That of ourselves that we should be tried and judged or that of the school of Sydenham which is greatly responsible for this Report that we should not be given the chance at all? It must be remembered that this is the only way in which we could make up for lost time. I ask you, therefore, to be frank and firm in our duty at this moment. No spirit of timidity under the misleading name of moderation, spirit of compromise, practical statesmanship, half a loaf than no bread and so forth should anywise retard the accelerated pace we so much need for our progress in our path to our destiny. It is for you to determine at this critical and vital moment which, if lost, is lost for generations together, whether you will make history or whether you will rashly consent to be arraigned at the bar of history. If you would make history, the way to us is clear, boldly to march on like all the free peoples of the world. It will be idle to pretend that we shall be as well able as England is to run responsible government at the outset, but to all those who apply this

argument against us we must reply in the same way in which the Right Hon'ble Mr. Asquith silenced the critics of his policy in this War as a bundle of mistakes and muddles. He claimed that in consequence of England's years of unpreparedness the only way to destroy Prussianism was to rush forward regardless of the risks he might thereby run and aptly quoted a political maxim of one of the greatest of political philosophers of the world, Burke. So shall we act and gird ourselves up for our work and run after the nations that have over taken us till we reach them and overtake them too, replying to all the timid and hostile critics in the immortal words of Burke, "it is not to be imagined how much of service is lost from spirits full of activity and full of energy who are pressing, who are rushing forward to great and capital objects when you oblige them to be continually looking back. . . . Applaud us when we run ; console us when we fall ; cheer us when we recover, but let us pass on, for God's sake let us pass on."

Central Provinces & Berar
SPECIAL CONFERENCE.

Speech of the President,
MR. B. G. HORNIMAN.

FROM "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE."

The Special Conference of the Central Provinces and Berar met on August 11th, 1919, at Akola. There was a full attendance of delegates and visitors, including about a hundred ladies. The following is the text of the Presidential address of Mr. B. G. Horniman:—

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I thank you sincerely for the honour you have done me by electing me as the President of this important joint Provincial Conference of the Central Provinces and Berar. I assure you that I use the word honour in no formal sense, for a heavy responsibility is laid upon the shoulders of one who is called upon to preside at such a gathering at this grave juncture in the history of India, and I feel that it is a signal mark of distinction and perhaps, I may be allowed to say, of trust, that you have conferred upon me. (Hear, hear.) The responsibility of a public pronouncement on such an occasion and at such a time is indeed a heavy one, but I trust that I may be able to fulfil it to your satisfaction and justify your confidence.

But whatever the shortcomings of which I may be guilty in your view, ask you to believe that the views I shall express have been formed on a most earnest consideration in my judgment of what is best for India and her people, (Hear, hear) and after consultation and discussion with many of your leaders, those with whom I agree and some of those who do not agree with me on all points. Right or wrong, I have no motive to serve but the cause of the land of my adoption and the land of my birth and the great confederation of States of which they are a part. And I believe, as we must all believe, that the truest service to India, as it is the truest service also to England and the whole Empire, is to strive to attain for India and her people those rights which are the birth-rights of all peoples and to place her in a position of equality and full dignity with the free peoples of the world, as a trusted and trusting partner in the great Empire (cheers), the political greatness and economic wealth of which has been and must remain so largely dependent on her willingness and contentment to remain within it.

SPECIAL SESSION OF CONGRESS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, there is only one subject at this Conference which is uppermost in our minds and with which I think you will expect me to deal to the exclusion of almost everything else, and it will meet with your wishes, I have no doubt, if I plunge at once *in medias res*. An event extraordinary and unprecedented in the history of our National Congress is to take place in a few days from now. A special Session of the Congress has been called to meet at the end of this month to consider and express an opinion upon the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford

which has been recently published. And the event is the most momentous, I think I may say, in the political history of India since the rule of the country was taken over by the British Crown. While, therefore, there may be other subsidiary pressing matters on which we may desire to express an opinion, and will be right in doing so, you will agree with me in thinking that our almost-undivided attention must be given to this greatest question of the Constitutional Reforms, which will decide the course of political progress in this country, its contentment or otherwise for many years to come, and that our main purpose at this Conference is to put forward our views on this great problem for the help and guidance of the special Session of the Congress in coming to a decision.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have no desire to detain you by entering into any elaborate historical retrospect, but I think it is essential that we should find first of all the basic principles on which we are to build and to that end I must refer, at the outset, first, to the constitutional aims and principles contained in the creed of the Congress and for which the Congress has been working for so many years past; and second, to the recent events which have led to the production of these proposals for reform on the part of his Majesty's Secretary of State and his Excellency the Viceroy. As regards the first, the Indian National Congress has always fought as its first aim to obtain for the people of India a voice in the management of its own affairs. We need not, however, go back further than, first, 1891, when as the Hon. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya has recently reminded us, the Congress passed a Resolution demanding for the people of the country a "potential voice" in the management of their own affairs, and, second, 1907, when the Congress in order definitely to formulate its position incorporated in its constitution Self-Government on the lines of that obtaining in the Self-Governing Dominions, as the aim which it sought to achieve by all constitutional means. The attempt that was made in 1909, known as the Morley-Minto Reforms, to take a step in advance towards the satisfaction of our aspirations was but the merest tinkering with reform; it did not even pretend to do more than admit the elected representatives of public bodies and a few Indians selected by the government themselves to consultative and critical functions in the Government and administration of the country and, since the success of such a tentative and timid experiments depended entirely on the extent to which a bureaucratic administration extended its consideration and co-operation to the non-official element in the Councils and acted upon its advice, it has not been a success at all. ("Hear, Hear" and Laughter.) But had the Morley-Minto Reforms fulfilled all the expectations that even their authors hoped for them, they could not for very much longer have continued as a stop-gap to the ever-increasing demands of the Indian people to take a really substantial step on the road to self-government and to secure such a measure of control in the Councils of the Government as

would give them the most effective voice in the management of their own affairs. "The spirit of Liberty" as the authors of the recent Report have said in discussing the pre-war situation "was abroad and active" and criticisms was "combined with demands that became steadily more insistent for a form of Government which would leave Indians free to rule India in a manner consistent with Indian ideas."

PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION.

Such was the atmosphere and the situation before the great cataclysm of 1914. We need not discuss what course events might have taken had it not been for that catastrophic event. I only want to note the situation. But in 1914 came the great adventure of Prussian Militarism and dominationism. It was quickly realised that Liberty would be nowhere safe in the world if this repulsive adventure of aggression were to succeed. It was not merely the liberty of France, Belgium or Servia that was involved. The liberty of the world was threatened with destruction. What was the effect following upon this brutal impact on the moral sense of the great democratic and liberty-loving peoples? The whole lesson it taught was realised and expressed in the immortal phrase of President Wilson that "the world must be made safe for democracy," that every people must be free to decide for themselves the form of Government under which they should live; and that if the world was to remain at peace and humanity, to be saved from the lust of domination, the evils of race subjection, and the horrors of autocracy, there must be government everywhere only with the consent of the governed. (Applause.) Thus, the angle of vision was changed and political preconceptions revised. British statesmen were the foremost in asserting and preaching the doctrine of self-determination. India might have been content to await the end of the War before she called for a revision of her case and the application of these incontestable maxims to herself. But she was forestalled by the other members of the Empire who began to demand, and obtained a hearing for the demand for a greater, it not an equal voice, in its chief Councils. Faced with the alternative of remaining a dependent—subject to the domination of the great Colonies as well as the Mother-country—it was time for India to bestir herself and thus since 1915, the National Congress and its associated organisations have been energetically agitating for the immediate translation of these great and noble maxims regarding "self-determination" and "Government with the consent of the governed" into practice by the grant, without further delay, of a substantial measure of responsible Government to India. (Cheers).

CONGRESS-LEAGUE DEMANDS.

Ladies and Gentlemen, when we consider the uncompromising fashion in which the doctrine of "self-determination" has been preached from the house-

tops by British statesmen, I think, we may say that the Congress has been comparatively modest in its demands. (Hear, hear.) But in its modesty, it has been equally clear and uncompromising and the principles which it has asked to be laid down as the least that can be given as a first step towards the attainment of the full measure of responsibility are plain and I hope unchangeable. (Hear, hear.) In 1915 we passed a resolution calling for such an immediate measure of reform as would subject the executive government to effective popular control—that was when Sir S. P. Sinha presided—and instructed the All-India Congress Committee to draw up a scheme of reforms on those lines in conjunction with the Council of the All-India Moslem League. In 1916, at Lucknow, we passed a resolution embodying that scheme, the leading principles of which I think it is useful and in fact necessary to recall. I will give them briefly as defined, by the Hon. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri :—

1. That the voice of the duly elected representatives of the people should prevail both in the Indian and the Provincial Legislative Councils.
2. The Legislative Councils should enjoy complete freedom of legislation subject to certain exclusions (Imperial defence, peace and war and foreign and political relations with other States).
3. The Legislative Councils should have full control of the finances of the country, including powers of taxation and regulation of expenditure and full fiscal autonomy.
4. The Councils to have the power of controlling the Executive though not of turning it out of office.
5. The public representatives to be elected by ballot on a direct and broad franchise.
6. The Judiciary to be independent of the Executive.

Ladies and Gentlemen, if there is anything in this doctrine of self-determination, it is found in the teaching that the only proper sort of government is that where the government is responsible to the people. These are indeed very modest demands, which were put forward, let us remember, not as an extravagant and excessive request in the hope of getting something less, but as an irreducible minimum (cheers), at any rate as regards principles, devised in order to satisfy the demand for a transitional stage. Ladies and Gentlemen, we have now to decide whether we are going to run away from or stand by our principles. (Cheers).

DECLARATION OF AUGUST 20, 1917.

Let us now turn to the Montagu-Chelmsford Report and recall briefly the circumstances which immediately produced it. At first the Government in

this country met the agitation for an immediate declaration of policy and an early instalment of reform by a series of measures of repression, instigated by those at the centre of affairs in Delhi and Simla and which were an amazing negation of everything that was being shouted at the world by British statesmen and of the very ideals and principles for which Great Britain, with the freely given aid of Indian blood and treasure, was waging war. That policy did not succeed. I do not suppose there has ever been an example so striking and instructive—though there have been many in the world's history—of repression defeating its own object. Those measures of repression only served to fan the flame of agitation into a veritable conflagration and the Government saw fit to change their attitude. The change came on August 20th, 1917, when the Secretary of State made his famous declaration in the House of Commons and announced his intention of visiting this Country in the following terms :—

“The Policy of his Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at Home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of the local Governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others.

“I would add that progress in this Policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of Indian peoples, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.”

NOT A FINAL VERDICT.

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, in 1917 the Indian National Congress reaffirmed the position taken up in 1915 and 1916. We expressed “grateful satisfaction” I use the exact word, over the pronouncement made by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India on behalf of the Imperial Government that its object is the

establishment of responsible Government in India and we, the Congress, urged "the necessity for the immediate enactment of a Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of responsible Government for India at an early date, the full measure to be attained, within a time limit to be fixed in the Statute itself," and we expressed our "emphatic opinion that the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms ought to be immediately introduced by the Statute as the first step in the process." I want it to be noted that when the Congress came to deal with the pronouncement of August 20, 1917, it confined itself to expressing its satisfaction with the declaration by His Majesty's Government that the establishment of responsible government was the goal of British Policy in India, and it ignored the cautious and unsatisfactory terms of the rest of the pronouncement, and proceeded to demand :—

- (1) A Parliamentary Statute providing for the establishment of responsible Government at an early date,
- (2) The inclusion in the Statute of the date on which full responsible Government should be attained, and
- (3) The immediate adoption of the Congress-League Scheme as the first step.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am laying stress on this because it has been attempted in certain quarters to have it laid down that we are confined within the four corners of the announcement of August 20, 1917, and that we are thus bound by its limitations. (Hear, hear). It has even been stated that every subject of the King-Emperor, British or Indian, is absolutely bound by its terms. That is an extraordinary proposition to which, I do not think, anyone but its authors will assent. (Hear, hear). There is nothing sacrosanct about the announcement. It has even no constitutional sanctity. It was merely an announcement of policy on the part of the Government in power which may go out of power any moment and it is open to anyone to accept it or not as he chooses and thinks fit. What is clear, Ladies and Gentlemen, is that the Congress did not accept it. The Congress welcomes the declaration of policy, but as to the method of carrying out the policy it passed over the terms laid down in the announcement and it reiterated its own demand. (Applause.) Ladies and Gentlemen, it would be impossible that we could accept a pronouncement that is the very negation of the principle of self-determination and tells the people of this country: "We cannot deny your right to self-government but then you shall have it when we choose to give it and the extent of the instalments to be doled out must be decided by us and not by you." (Hear, hear). That is clearly not self-determination but a denial of your right to have it, and no Indian or body or association of Indians, who

believes in self-determination, or who believes that the country is fit for responsible government or who voted for the Congress resolutions of 1915, 1916 and 1917 could accept it without stultifying himself and abandoning the whole position taken up by the Congress (loud cheers) in those resolutions. No, ladies and gentlemen, the announcement of August 20, 1917, was not accepted as the final verdict on our demand. (Hear, hear). It was accepted as a basis of discussion and its forbidding phraseology was ignored in the hope that when Mr. Montagu, a man who had expressed himself in terms of severe criticism of the present system of Government in India and was known to be sympathetic to our cause—that when he came here as Secretary of State to discuss with representative bodies the problems to be tackled, he would deal with us in the generous and statesmanlike spirit of the utterances of himself and other British statesman rather than regard himself as bound by the rigid and cramping terms of an announcement, which was phrased to accommodate the limited vision of Lord Curzon and Lord Milner and Mr. Bonar Law.

REPORT PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTING.

Well, Mr. Montagu has come and gone and we now have the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms drawn up by himself and Lord Chelmsford with the assistance, I believe, of Mr. Marris. Ladies and Gentlemen, I am here to speak to you frankly what is in my mind and I do not believe you would wish me to do otherwise. And I say, at once, that in my view the Report is profoundly disappointing. (Loud cheers). And I believe there is no doubt that it has profoundly disappointed the country. Self-determination was formally denied in the announcement of August 20; it has been practically ejected by the Report of April 1918 and that full measure of Responsible Government for which you asked for a definite date to be fixed has receded into an indefinite and distant future, to be attained only after the lapse of an unknown number of decades taken up by a process of training, at the termination of each of which everything will be determined by somebody else and not by Self. (Hear, hear). You are not fit for self-government, say Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, and to make even a small beginning will be a doubtful experiment, but we cannot ignore the inconsistency of refusing to India what British statesmen declare is necessary for the world and we are bound by the terms of the announcement of August 20th, which says a beginning must be made, so we propose to risk the experiment and make a very small beginning and at the end of every ten years your conduct shall be reviewed by a commission which will decide whether you are allowed to advance, to stand still, or to go back. The "conditions of the problem" are exhaustively reviewed and it is found that, while the educated classes have made striking progress in their political development during the last few years, the masses are still igno-

rant and "need the protection of the bureaucracy", (Cheers), "the basis of a system of responsibility is a lively and effective sense of sanctity of other people's rights" and that sense is not yet developed in India—I suppose it is the exclusive monopoly of the bureaucrats! (laughter)—cleavages of religion, race and caste; abysmal ignorance; unequal distribution of wealth; the small proportion of people who interest themselves in or know anything about politics; the inarticulate state of the ryot and his contentment and appreciation of the present beneficent system of administration, and so on and so on. All these old shibboleths are once more marshalled to the front and arrayed before us in imposing and attractive phraseology to exhibit the complexities of the problem and provide the justification for making the first step as tentative and timid as possible and overloading the concessions that are made with an elaborate series of safeguards and checks, the only admirable thing about which, is the ingenuity that has devised them and which would have been better employed in elaborating checks and safeguards on our bureaucratic rulers. For if these proposals are to be passed into law as they stand the latter will remain as much as ever, and perhaps more, our masters.

HOLLOW PLEA OF UNFITNESS.

What is the relevancy of the plea of unfitness? I will not trouble to examine the accuracy of the list of conditions which are said to make up the unfitness in the view of the authors of the report. But the bulk of all these conditions have not prevented other countries from achieving or receiving the gift of responsible government. (Hear, hear.) Ignorance, want of education, cleavages of caste and religion and even race, unequal distribution of wealth, these and other detrimental things did not stand in the way of the British and the American peoples when they achieved responsible government, they did not stand in the way of Canada or of South Africa when they received the free gift of responsible government from the Mother-country. (Applause.) I cannot in the time at my disposal enter more elaborately into these illuminating historical parallels. I would ask every one to read the able and convincing memorandum of the Hon. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya which contains the most effective exposure of the hollowness of this plea of unfitness I have ever read. Why is India alone to be judged by these standards? Let India be unfit, but let India be ruled by Indians according to Indian ideals (cheers) and it is her right to claim it. She has the right like all other nations to find her way through the path of experience. If, as Mr. Chamberlain told us only a few days ago, "progress in India must be through mistakes," for God's sake let Indians have the power to make the mistakes themselves (Loud cheers), for they are sick and tired of the mistakes of the bureaucracy and believe that they would thrive better on those of an indigenous character. (Laughter and cheers.)

DRASTIC ALTERATIONS NECESSARY.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I do not wish to use the language of exaggeration, but I have examined these proposals for Reforms over and over again, I have discussed them and I have studied with due attention the opinions that have been passed upon them by people of all shades of opinion, and I cannot find that they offer us any immediate and effective control over the administration, while they certainly do not promise us anything in the future but leave us at the mercy of the chances of a game of beggary-neighbour with the bureaucracy, in which the dice—if I may be allowed to mix my metaphors—are heavily loaded in favour of the latter. (Hear, hear). And I have not been able to find that they satisfy anybody except in a small degree. Even the nine gentlemen who signed the manifesto known as the Manifesto of the Bombay Moderates, are not completely satisfied with the scheme for the provinces, though they regard it as a substantial instalment, and they declare unequivocally that the scheme as regards the Government of India is "excessively cautious and unnecessarily illiberal" (Hear, hear), incompatible even, they say, with the terms of the announcement of August 20, to which they attach so much sanctity, and based on an unsound formula. Ladies and Gentlemen, I agree with every word of that and I do not know that anything more condemnatory could be said (Hear, hear). Then, I find that there is a considerable number of people, both in and outside the Congress, and even nominated members of the Council, who are in a state of nervous tension lest the scheme should be summarily rejected, who tell us we shall be lost if we do not accept it, but display grave dissatisfaction when they come to analyse the details in regard to some of the most essential features. Well, we need not quarrel with them. There are many ways of receiving a stone instead of the bread for which you ask. You may say: "I don't want your stone" or you may say: "I gratefully accept this stone you have given me, but may I respectfully point out that I asked for bread", (Laughter). And if by the latter process we get some bread to go on with, I would be the last to say that we should refuse to take the sustenance that it affords, even if it is only half-a-loaf. But if we are going to proceed on those lines, let us see that we get at least one-half loaf. Now if these proposals gave us half-a-loaf, we might perhaps, accept it and begin to ask for more as soon as we had swallowed it. But the proposals as they stand, will have to be materially modified, and in fact, drastically altered and supplemented before they can be accepted even as half-a-loaf. (Hear, hear).

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, as they frankly state in the Report, have felt themselves bound by the terms of the announcement of August 20th and they have drafted their proposals in accordance with

the limitations thus imposed. They have been over-careful, perhaps—so careful to keep themselves within the four corners of the announcement as to occupy only a very small space in the room that it provided. We on our part must examine their proposals in the light of the principles laid down in the Congress-League Scheme (Applause) and generally of the resolutions passed by the Congress in 1915, 1916 and 1917 and the modifications, alterations and supplementations that we propose must be drawn so as to bring the proposals, as far as they allow, into conformity with those principles (Hear, hear.) I may say here, perhaps, that I think we need not bother ourselves at present with any discussion on the basis of the terms "rejection" and "acceptance." It is clear that the question of rejection or acceptance has not yet arisen. We are not called upon to accept or reject anything. Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford have laid before us certain proposals and they have invited criticism and suggestions. To that invitation Mr. Montagu has within the last few days, added an emphatic assurance by way of corollary that the report is not to be regarded as "a finished document" to be translated "unaltered into an Act of Parliament." It is there to be criticised, to be sifted and to be tested. Well, let us criticise, let us sift and let us test. Having done that we shall wait and see how far our criticisms and our suggestions are acted upon in the draft of the Bill that is now being prepared. But I would urge Mr. Montagu in the meanwhile not to leave the drafting too much in the hands of Mr. Marris and not to continue his assistance on our keeping within the four corners of the announcement of August 20, 1917, for there cannot be satisfaction of our demands unless there is to be some relaxation in that respect. Well, having offered our suggestions and criticism, having put forward anew our demands on such basis as this report provides, we will wait for the Bill. When that is published, when the final word of the Imperial Government is before us in that draft, then will come the time when we shall be called upon to say whether we reject or accept what is offered to us. (Hear, hear.) And that we may be able to do, since the Bill cannot come before Parliament until next Spring, at the Delhi Congress next Christmas.

SOME FUNDAMENTAL DEFECTS.

In the meanwhile, as I have said, we must examine these proposals, which are unacceptable as they stand, in the light of the principle of the Congress-League resolutions and see what we can do to bring them into line with those principles. You will not ask me, Ladies and Gentlemen, to explain to you the details of the proposals for, I am sure you are by now well-versed in all their qualities and defects. I propose only, as briefly as possible, to see where they depart from or are in opposition to our demands. If we take just once again the main principles of the Congress-League Scheme, as I have enumerated them above, they are briefly :

1. Popularly elected Legislative Councils on a broad franchise (that is, an elective majority.)
2. Control of the Executive by the Councils.
3. Power of the purse in the hands of the Councils with the reservations already stated, and
4. *Provincial autonomy based on the above.*

In regard to the first, the Report proposes a substantial elected majority in the Councils and proposes a direct and broad franchise. That is what we have asked for and fortunately it provides a basis on which we are able to deal, as a common ground, for discussion of the scheme. But when we come to the principles of control of the Executive and the power of the purse, the proposals concede neither one nor the other in the Government of India and concede only a very modified control in the Provincial Governments. Indeed, in regard to the former we are at an absolute deadlock, for while our fundamental proposition is that the popular representatives must be given an effective control over the Executive in all but matters of Imperial Defence and foreign relations, Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford frankly begin with "the fundamental proposition that the capacity of the Government of India to obtain its will in all essential matters must be unimpaired," and they go on to say "we seek deliberately, when the purpose justifies us, to depart from popular methods of legislation ; and it is obvious that no device which conforms to those methods can possibly serve our purpose." These are very uncompromising declarations and we can only hope that the unanimous opposition, which has been expressed from every quarter, in this matter to this frank departure from the terms of the announcement of August 20th constituting a glaring rejection of the principle of self-determination at the outset, will induce Mr. Montagu to recognise the imperative necessity of abandoning this position if the scheme for the Government of India is to command assent in any quarter. You are aware how it is proposed in the report to secure for the Governor-General in Council the drastic powers necessary to enable him to over-ride the popular will. A government Bill amended by the Assembly in opposition to the wishes of the Government will be re-amended in the Council of State in accordance with the Government views. If the Popular Assembly then refuses to accept it as amended by the Council of State it will go to a joint session of both the Houses, unless the Governor-General chooses to certify it as essential to the interests of peace, order or good government (including sound financial administration) in which case the Assembly will not have the power to modify or reject the amendments. Similarly, if the Bill is refused or thrown out by the Assembly the Governor-General will certify it and send it to the Council of State for disposal finally and the Governor-General in Council is to have power, in

addition, in cases of emergency to pass a Bill through the Council of State and merely report it to the Assembly as having been passed. Again in case of a private Bill, the Governor-General in Council may certify it as being prejudicial to good administration and send it to the Council of State to be passed into Law in the form there given to it. Thus the authors of the Report have devised an effective machinery to satisfy their aim that the will of the Government of India shall remain unimpaired. In any conflict of opinion the Popular Assembly will be wholly at the mercy of the Executive. That is a proposal that must be drastically modified and we must demand that, first, the Council of State, if there is going to be a Council of State, shall be elected, so far as it is elective, not from a fancy electorate, but from an electorate that directly or indirectly represents the people, (Hear hear) and second that all this machinery of the Governor-General's certificate shall be removed and the decision of the joint session of the two houses in case of dispute shall be final. The Governor-General and the Governor-General-in-Council will retain their powers of assent, reservation or disallowance, the Governor-General will retain his power of making ordinances and the Governor-General-in-Council his power of making regulations. Surely that should suffice to carry any Government in the world through all such crisis as may arise when emergency measures or powers are essentially called for. And unless this is done, we shall still be at the mercy of an Executive with powers for the permanent enactment of repressive measures like the Press Act and the Defence of India Act and as well as powers to reject measures that are insistently demanded by the needs of the people. Then we must ask that at the least the powers of the Assembly in the Government of India to control or modify the Budget shall be equal to those accorded to the Provincial Councils whatever it may be when the Scheme is modified. And we must hold to our demand that at least half the members of the Governor-General's Executive Council shall be members of and responsible to the Assembly in the same way as it has been proposed that the Ministers in the Provinces shall be responsible to the Councils. These are the main changes in the Scheme of the Government of India that, I suggest, are indeed absolutely essential if we are to have only the beginning of responsible Government, which must be begun in the Provinces as well as in the central authority.

FARCE OF PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY.

I now turn to the proposals for the Provinces. Here again there is no concession of the Congress demand. The Congress-League Scheme has, in fact, been wholly rejected. The Joint Scheme or Curtis Scheme as we call it, has also been elaborately rejected but not without having extracted from it its kernel in the shape of a divided executive with "reserved" and "transferred" subjects. Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, this principle of dualism in the Government appears to me to be thoroughly unsound and without entering into details, it seems to me, that the elaborate paraphernalia of a divided executive,

with executive members in charge of "reserved" subjects, non-controllable by the Legislative Council and Ministers in charge of "transferred" subjects controllable by the Legislative Councils, the Governor being at liberty to deliberate with his whole Government or part of it as he thinks fit, and empowered to call additional official members to give further weight to the official side of the case: and on top of all this paraphernalia power to certify legislation as essential or undesirable, as the case may be, in the interests of peace, order or good Government or sound financial administration and Advisory Committees and Grand Committees—all this will lead to such a production of incessant deadlocks and constant thwarting of the popular will as will in all likelihood reduce the whole business of administration and legislation to a farce (Hear hear). We know where the shoe pinches and we shall have Mr. Peace, Order or Good Government—Mr. Pogg, we might call him (laughter)—walking in at every turn. And when he is not available in will come Mr. Sound Financial Administration, or if it is a popular Bill dealing with a transferred subject Mr. Reserved Subject will step in and say: "You are poaching on my reserve!" (Laughter). But even that does not exhaust the possibilities, for the authors of the report lay it down that the Governor should not accept without hesitation proposals which are the result of inexperience. Ladies and Gentlemen, can we hope that with all these years of experience of our bureaucratic infallibles and Governors in official leading strings, that peace, order and good government, the charge of poaching on reserved subjects and inexperience will not be constantly on the tapis to save the inarticulate masses from the rash and oppressive measures of their life-long enemies the educated classes or to secure for them the excellent measures proposed by their official friends and protectors! The Hon. Mr. Patel pointed out the other day that the non-official member is almost better off in some respects in regard to the passing of legislation under the present system than he could be if he is to be subjected to all these checks and safe-guards involved in the Governor's certificate, his control of the so-called popular Ministers and the making up of the Grand Committees which would have to be separately constituted for each Bill in question. What is the necessity for all this elaborate machinery to provide checks on the consummation of the popular will? We see in it only the renewal of a lease of power to the bureaucratic administration and it is that we have set out to prevent if we can, in order that the people may decide for themselves through their duly elected representatives, what they consider best for themselves. And at the end of five years let it be remembered, when the behaviour of the legislatures and the ministers comes to be reviewed, it is open to the Government to take away from a province some of its transferred subjects as well as to give it one or more of the "revised" subjects. (Hear, hear).

DISTRUST OF THE PEOPLE.

Distrust, as it seems to me, is written over all these. And there must be some trust if any sort or any instalment of responsibility is to be successful. (Applause). And there must be a term set to the transitional period whatever it may be. I agree with the Hon. Pundit Madan Mohan Malaviya in his condemnation of the proposal for reserved and transferred subjects. Dualism in the Government is, I think, unsound in theory and I do not believe it will work in practice. One could provide many examples of the deadlocks and difficulties likely to arise. But let us only take one or two. Suppose a Minister in control of a transferred subject comes to a difference with the Government over the Budget or any other matter. Is he to give way or is he to resign? If it is a vital matter and if he is a man of self-respect he will resign. And suppose, as in all possibility will be the case, the Legislative Council supports him. What will the Government do? They will have to find a new Minister who will agree with them, and who will be out of sympathy with the Legislative Council, who will oppose his measures, and what is then to happen! A deadlock that can only be solved by the ruthless use of the Governor's certificate. (Hear, hear). Or take the case of a Bill introduced in the Legislative Council by a private member which contains for the purpose of making it effective a penal clause and how many Bills do not have to contain a penal clause? Up jumps an executive member of Council and says: Oh, you are proposing to punish people. This is encroaching on Police, Law and Justice, which is a reserved subject: another deadlock. There is hardly a branch of social legislation in fact, in which the possibility, even the probability, does not arise of a measure being objected to as trenching on a reserved subject. I am, for these reasons, entirely opposed to this principle of dualism. It seems to me it should be sufficient for all purposes of safety, if the popularly elected members of the Government were on the same status as the other members and the portfolios which the Government thought it unsafe to trust to them ought to be safe in the hands of their official colleagues. However, the suggestion has been made, and supported, among others by Mrs. Besant, Mr. Tilak, Mr. Jinnah (cheers) that we should ask that only Law, Justice and Police should be reserved and that these should be automatically transferred at the end of five years to the Ministers. I can do no more than commend this suggestion to your notice and approval.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have detained you long and I dare not presume further on your patience by entering in detail on other points. I can only enumerate as briefly as possible those on which I think we should state our position and our demands clearly and uncompromisingly. I have already dealt with the chief features of difficulty in the Scheme, as regards the Govern-

ment of India and the question of the removal of the proposed unnecessary and oppressive checks and safeguards standing in the way of the due control of the Executive by the Legislative Councils in legislation and administration. There is still the question of the power of the purse. We must reiterate our demand for full power in the Legislative Councils to control the whole Budget without the limitations proposed in the Report. (Hear, hear.) That is to my mind indispensable. The Legislative Councils themselves must be the bodies to decide such disputes as arise regarding whether a subject is to be treated as reserved or transferred in its character and the power of the Governor to stifle legislation as impinging on a reserved subject as it stands in the Scheme must be removed. (Hear, hear.) I do not propose to deal with the question of the relaxation of the control of the Secretary of State over the Government of India or that by the latter over the Provincial Governments, because whether that is to be regarded as a good or a bad thing depends wholly on the extent to which we are able to secure control of the Executive by the popular assemblies. It is certain that if we lose the power without gaining the latter, we shall not be better but worse off. There are other minor details which I need not deal with here. But I would say in conclusion that it is essential that we continue to press two other matters of the first importance, first that it should be laid down in the Statute that full responsible government be given at the end of a certain period, I should say not more than 20 years, and second the separation of the Judicial from the Executive control.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is essential that we should strengthen the hands of the Congress in putting forward the united views of all of us in regard to the changes which we consider it essential should be made in the proposals before us. And all our efforts should be bent upon that. If we stick to our principles we can afford to give way on matters of detail. But we must make it clear that our principles are unalterable and that if they are not conformed to in the main by any scheme of reform, we cannot be satisfied. It is for the Government then to see whether they think it right or expedient to ignore our voice and to complete the draft of their Bill without incorporating in it the criticisms and suggestions which we put forward. (Hear, hear).

APPEAL TO "MODERATES."

Continuing, Mr. Horniman said that our so-called moderate friends had threatened to hold a separate Conference. He deprecated the line which these few gentlemen intended to take to the great detriment of the country's interests.

Proceeding he said: And in that respect I cannot but think that in spite of all the appearances of diversity of views which faces us at this critical juncture, that if we all settle down to meet one another in an amicable spirit of discussion we may arrive at

a reasonable basis of discussion. If we cannot do so let the majority prevail as it has always done in the Congress and must always do in any well organized and properly constituted representative body. I refer of course, now to the attitude of those of our so-called Moderate friends who threaten to hold aloof from the coming special session of the Congress. I would appeal to them, at least for the sake of trying to arrive at an agreement with them in the interests of the cause which is common to us all, not to take the suicidal course that has been threatened. Ladies and Gentlemen, the people who stayed outside the Congress in 1908 were ignored. Those who stay out now are liable to be ignored, but if they are not ignored by the British Government and people, they will have struck a deadly blow at the unity of India. If they feel that they will not be able to come into line with the majority that should not be a reason for running away. Let them come into the Congress and fight their battle. They will receive a respectful hearing and if they cannot agree with us they will at least get a more effective hearing for their views than by holding a separate Conference of their own. (Loud cheers.)

