

**REPORT
OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS**

38656

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**FORTY-FIRST
SESSION
GAUHATI**

(ASSAM)

1926

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INTRODUCTION.

Assam had been anxious to invite the Indian National Congress since the year 1922. A short history of the national awakening in Assam will, I hope, not be out of place in this preface. It was after the sitting of the Indian National Congress at Nagpur, in the historic year 1921, that the idea of non-co-operation actually filtered into Assam. Some students from Assam attended the All India Students' Conference and the Indian National Congress held at Nagpur. On return to Assam, they set the pace by first agitating for the boycott of the Gauhati Cotton College. The Assam leaders were at first against a general strike of students; but the impetuosity of the young men and the time-force of that period coupled with the soul-stirring writings of Mahatma Gandhi carried the day. All leaders imbued with nationalistic ideas became thorough non-co-operators and the rest is a well-known episode in the history of the Province. The sufferings of Jallianwala Bagh and the Khilafat wrongs appealed to the imagination of the classes as well as the masses. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with great hopes of unity and ultimate liberation through sacrifice and suffering. It was then that the hearts of the Assamese people began to feel sympathy for their brethren in other provinces of India and from that day forward the Assamese people, proverbially hospitable, tried to have a chance of inviting their brethren from other parts of India, to meet them, to treat them and to exchange ideas with them in the full spirit of brotherly love and affection. What a pity that this great hope could not fructify during those glorious days!

People suffered untold harassments and their hearts sank. But the zeal of the selfless sufferers for the country's sake headed by our great leader Mr. Phookun did not flag. After several efforts their attempts at Cawnpore became successful. Mr. Rohini Kanta Hatibaru, the young and energetic Secretary of the Provincial Congress Committee, took courage in both hands and succeeded in getting the Congress to accept our invitation to Assam.

Shortly after, a provisional Reception Committee was formed in Assam, the main object being to discuss whether the smallest of provinces whose population was only 40 lakhs could dare to invite the Congress. The patriotism of the younger generation with their unbounded love of country got better of their prudence and it was decided to stick to the game. In that meeting it was also decided that the Congress shall hold its sittings at Gauhati. Gauhati is the ancient capital of Kamrupa, called Pragjyotishpur. It is a town

containing only 16,000 souls. But even then the plucky band of workers stuck on to their resolve. Mr. Phookun set the ball rolling by beginning the collection of subscriptions. And the Reception Committee acquired a plot of land near the Pandu station at the foot of the Kamakshya Hill. This plot belongs to the priests of the Kamakshya Temple and they allowed the use of it free. The A. B. Railway authorities also very kindly granted a plot of land on the banks of the Brahmaputra river to the west of the Pandu Railway station. Both the plots measured about 300 acres of land. The provisional Reception Committee had to make great efforts not only in raising subscriptions and donations and in enlisting members of the Reception Committee, but also in clearing the site of dense forest. The beautiful Congress camp which gladdened the hearts of many in the Congress week was a howling jungle wherefrom tigers and bears fled during the clearing. The reclamation of the site alone cost about Rs. 10,000.

The main burden of expense fell upon the Kamrup District. Some of the patriotic Indian planters of Upper Assam paid handsome donations, which ran in some cases to four figures, the largest single donation being two thousand rupees. Out of the total subscription to the Reception Committee amounting to Rs. 40,975 three-fourths was subscribed by cultivators of the soil at the rate of Rs. 25 per head. This response evoked by the 41st session of the Congress forms a valuable asset for future work in Assam. The Volunteers numbered 750 and they were all local people. These volunteers, mostly young farmers, with students among them, did yeoman service. They actually worked as coolies night and day to bring all arrangements to completion. They served as porters and *mooties* at the Railway station and kept guard in the camps night and day. There was also a batch of lady volunteers. I must thankfully mention the name of Dr. Hardiker, the chief organiser of the Hindustani Seva Dal, who attended the Congress with some of his followers and helped the local volunteers in various ways.

The members of the Reception Committee numbered 1639 and poor Assam counted on the number of members for its funds. The estimate was for 4000 members, but this number could not be got, partly because some of the districts did not respond to the call as expected, and partly because the number of selfless and earnest workers was very small. Their attention was divided between the collection of funds and the erection of the new town at Pandu. Various sub-committees were formed to work conjointly with each other, under the control of the executive body. It is really gratifying to state that the members of each sub-committee worked day and night at a stretch for weeks together, unmindful of their homes and personal interests. In the beginning of the year, suggestions were received from Bengal and from other provinces that a tent should be made of khaddar and that

as Assam does not produce sufficient marketable quantity, other provinces should supply the same. That great patriot from Behar, Babu Rajendra Prasad, in whose heart there is always a soft corner for Assam had already started khadi works on *adhi* terms at Nowgong. As a humble friend of Babu Rajendra Prasad, I approached him for funds to enable me to manufacture khadi for Assam and through his intercession the All India Spinners' Association helped the Assam spinners through me with a loan of Rs. 6000. Through the patriotism of some of the Assamese village women, the Assam branch supplied the Congress Reception Committee with about 10,000 yards of beautiful home-spun khaddar which covered the spacious Congress tent. In spite of great difficulties, the necessary quantity of khaddar was got ready in time and the Assamese people were gratified by the unbounded praise bestowed upon them in this matter by their great leader Mahatma Gandhi.

The All India Congress Committee also helped Assam very liberally in that the major portion of the money due on account of the Tent was arranged to be paid through their intercession by future Reception Committees.

Two camps were made for the accommodation of delegates, visitors, R. C. members and people able to pay high rents. The camp situated on the banks of the Brahmaputra river with grand natural scenery in front and the village Pandu behind was named Chittaranjanpur after the great departed leader Deshbandhu Das. The President's cottage in the midst of a group of humbler cottages added to the beauty of the picture. Here a cottage was specially erected for Mahatmaji just overhanging the Brahmaputra, made of straw and reeds lined with white khaddar. Thousands of villagers came to attend the Congress, every one calling it the great *Rajasuya Yajna* and every one extremely anxious to have a *darshan* of the great *maharshi*. The camps near the pandal site were all made of hessian khaddar. Unexpectedly rain set in on the second and third days of the Congress. Guests, visitors and the delegates were consequently put to much inconvenience. Indian Nationalism, however, rose to the occasion and with rain falling through the roof of the tent, the deliberations of the Congress were carried on without a break to a successful end. Every one including ladies bore the inclemencies of the weather with a smile on their faces. The fair womanhood of Assam clad in purest khaddar, mostly woven and embroidered by their own hands, stood exposed to the rain from morning till Mahatma's departure patiently and quietly to have his *darshan* and when Mahatmaji left not an eye remained unmoistened.

. The arrangements for boarding, light, water, accommodation sanitation, transport and medical aid were declared by all to be satisfactory

The distance from other parts of India and possibly the idea that Assam is a place of minor importance kept back hundreds of those visitors and frequenters of Congresses, who seldom missed a Congress held in other parts of India. The inclemencies of the weather kept back the local visitors and the result was a huge deficit amounting to over Rs. 35,000. Compared with the expenses incurred by other provinces in holding the Congress, Assam acquitted herself fairly well. In spite of the arrangements having been made on a lavish scale the total cost did not exceed a lakh and forty thousand and if Assam had the same number of delegates and visitors as other Congresses got, possibly the Reception Committee could have shown a surplus. But unfortunately in spite of the delegation fees being raised to Rs. 5 at Gauhati, and the whole amount being handed over to the Reception Committee and in spite of a generous donation of Rs. 10,000 from the All India Congress Committee the deficit still stands at about Rs. 26,000.

I must say a word about the Swadeshi Exhibition before concluding this note. All thanks are due to the energetic Secretary of the Exhibition committee and the band of selfless workers who co-operated with him. I must mention the name of Sjt. Krishna Nath Sarma, Secretary of the All India Spinners' Association, Assam Branch, who worked incessantly in supplying khaddar for the tent, and whose efforts brought the Assam khadi stall in a line with the khadi stalls of other provinces. The Exhibition was opened by Mahatma Gandhi amidst great enthusiasm and Mr. Shankarlal G. Banker helped in the artistic arrangement of the exhibits in the central pandal. Pure swadeshi products of all kinds from different parts of India made the Exhibition a really beautiful sight to see.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Reception Committee I beg to thank all the workers, office-bearers, helpers and well-wishers, who gave of their best to make the occasion a success. I should also record with gratitude the fact that the Municipal and Local Boards of different districts in Assam helped the Exhibition with contributions. It is regrettable to note, however, that certain amounts granted by some Municipal and Local Boards were withheld, because the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Districts refused permission for the grants.

N. C. BARDALOI,

General Secretary to the Reception Committee.

MISPRINTS

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President Srinivasa Iyengar

41st Indian National Congress

Gauhati Session, December 26, 1926.

FIRST DAY.

For the first time in the history of Assam, the 41st annual session of the Indian National Congress was held at Pandu Nagar, Gauhati, in the Congress pandal, on Sunday the 26th December, 1926.

Punctually at 2 p.m. a gun fire announced the arrival of the President-elect. A procession was then formed which entered the pandal amidst cheers and cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-Jai" and "Srinivasa Iyengar-ki-jai", preceded by a band of Volunteers singing the 'Bande-Mataram'. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, the President-elect, was led to his seat in a procession composed of Mahatma Gandhi, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Maulanas Mohamad Ali, Abul Kalam Azad and Shaukat Ali, Pandits Madan Mohan Malaviya and Motilal Nehru, Messrs. J. M. Sen-Gupta, V. J. Patel, Vallabhbhai J. Patel, T. Prakasam, and B. G. Horniman, Dr. Satyapal, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj, Mr. T. R. Phookan and Mr. Bardoloi.

Among those present were Mrs. Gandhi, Mr. Pethwick Lawrence M. P. and Mrs. Lawrence, Dr. Nartin Hurlimann, Swiss Journalist, Mr. and Mrs. Leister, Mrs. Captain (grand-daughter of Dadabhoy Naoroji) Mr. A. Rangaswami Iyengar, General Secretary of the Congress, Dr. Pattabhi, Mr. B. Sambamurti, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Sm. Urmila Devi, Mr. O. Kandaswami Chetty, Mr. Aney, Dr. Moonje M. Faiznur Ali, Babu Shiva Prasad Gupta, Mr. N. C. Chander, Syed Murtuza Saheb and Dr. B. C. Roy.

The proceedings commenced with the "Bande Mataram" sung by Pandit Vishnu Digambar, all standing. An exquisite choir of Assamese girls followed with a welcome song:—"In what verse shall I sing your welcome, you image of God in man, you image of the Infinite in this assembled host."

Mr. T. R. Phookun, Chairman, Reception Committee, then got up the rostrum amidst cheers and delivered the following address of welcome:—

यं ब्रह्मा धरुणोन्द्र रुद्रमरुतः स्तुवन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवैः।

वेदैः साङ्गैः पदक्रमोपनिषदैर्गायन्ति यं साम्गाः ।

ध्यानावस्थित तदगतेन मनसा पश्यन्ति यं योगिनो

यस्यान्तं न विदुः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः ॥

BROTHER AND SISTER DELEGATES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

As I stand before you to offer our welcome a sense of overwhelming loss overtakes me and I can scarcely give expression to what is uppermost in the minds of all and everyone of us. Deshabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das is not with us to-day. He laid down his life for the Country. He needed rest and God in His eternal mercy granted him that, although the Country had need of him, I doubt not that he will be gratefully remembered now and for ever by a nation whose honour and dignity he tried to maintain at the cost of his life.

It is with much pleasure that I, on behalf of the members of the Reception Committee and of the people of Assam generally, welcome you to the labours of the 41st Indian National Congress at Gauhati. I am not worthy of the great privilege of receiving you, so kindly conferred upon me, but my excuse in accepting it is that I have taken it as a command from my people which I am bound to obey.

While inviting you to our poor province, situated at the easternmost corner of India, we were fully alive to the fact that we will be putting you to a series of serious inconveniences. We did really foresee the difficulty of a small provincial town like Gauhati consisting of a population of 16,000 souls only, having to accord proper reception to you. We also fully realised that all our best endeavours could not go far enough to give you the least in the name of comforts. But I hope you will forgive our failings when you take into our account our peoples' earnest desire to be in actual touch with this Mighty Institution. Have we not therefore fair reason to believe that your kindness and sympathy for a sister province will soon make you forget all the troubles taken out of love, and forgive us for those given in our earnest desire to serve you?

Fairly rich in her natural resources, she is undoubtedly magnificently rich in her natural grandeur. Maybe it is due to my natural pride as an Assamese, but I feel that Assam with the lofty mountains standing along the North, with the wide plains encircled by the high ranges—such as, of Bhutan, Khasia—Jaintia, Naga and the Garo hills, watered by the crystal currents of thousands of hill streams, and with the mighty Brahmaputra majestically flowing through her heart, Assam will stand comparison with the most beautiful country in the World.

आमनि मणिपर्यन्तं आचित्र गन्धमादनान् ।

देवाः मरणमिच्छन्ति किं तत्र मानवादयः ॥

It was not without reason that reference was made in the "Joginitantra" of Kamrup as the place where gods even desired to die, not to speak of human beings.

The place where we have assembled to-day is sacred with thousand memories of India's past glories, memories of culture, of heroic deeds, of scientific achievements, of great happenings cherished in tradition and chronicled in history. The yonder hillock on the Brahmaputra enshrines a temple of Siva, known as Pandu Nath which was founded by the Pandavas during their exile. There is the Nilachala (the blue mountain) wherein stands the famous temple of Kamakshy Devi. For centuries Kamakshya in Kamrup has been the meeting place of devout pilgrims from all parts of India.

Ladies and gentlemen, it was in this Holy land of Kamrup that Narakasur of Pauranic fame reigned supreme. It was Raja Bhagadutta of Kamrup who went with 10,000 elephants to the holy battlefield of Kurukshetra and gallantly fought for the Kauravas with soldiers from Assam which came up to 1/18th of the entire *Kuru-sena*. It was in this holy land of Kamrup that Rishis and Munies, such as Basishta, Galava, Sukracharya, Kasyapa and others found suitable places for their meditations. Ancient Kamrup which lay extended up to "Karatoya-Samakirna Yabat Dikkar Basini" including Cooch Behar and Rangpur was at one time the seat of Indian culture. Kumar Bhaskar Varma of Kamrup escorted by Hiuen Tsang led the historic deputation to the Court of Emperor Siladitta II known as Harsha Vardhana.

It was here in 1668 A. D. that the great Assamese general Licit Bar Phookun defeated the most powerful army of Emperor Aurangzeb and stemmed for ever the tide of Mogul conquest. It was here that Assamese people fought their Thermopylae and drove back the Moguls from their homeland. In the conquering career of the mighty Emperor it was only at Saraighat—not far away from this pandal, that his formidable army had a crushing defeat. And again it was here that the great Assamese King Rudra Singha collected his vast army numbering over six lacs to conquer back from Gour the territories up to the river Karatoya which form the traditional boundary between the ancient kingdom of Kamrup and the world west of it. And yet again it was about 6 miles from here that Bakhtiar Khiliji the Conqueror of Bengal was defeated and turned back in 1204 A. D. by the most powerful King Kamata. Three miles to our east along the Brahmaputra lies the lovely town of Gauhati—the ancient *Prag-Jyotishpura*, the capital of Narkasur, Bhagadutta and hundreds of other Kings before and after them.

It was in Assam that Princess Joymoti of sacred memories practised passive resistance and was slowly tortured to death under the order of the King. She cheerfully died the most cruel death spurning the highest position offered to her, yet firmly refusing to disclose the whereabouts of her beloved husband which she alone knew.

However poor our condition under the British Raj may be to-day, we are inheritors of a very ancient Hindu culture, and I am proud to say that if there is any place where catholic and progressive Hindu Religion is a living force, that place is Assam. In days of yore, the fact that the non-Aryan culture had to yield to Hindu culture is evidenced by the acceptance of overlordship by Asur Kings of the Aryan Monarchs of Delhi. During mediaeval days, Hindu orthodoxy of a rather sordid character seemed to dominate the religious beliefs of the Assamese. But the preachings of two of the greatest religious reformers of that age—Sankara and Madhaba, and their Brahminical contemporary Damodar ushered into Assam an era of religious renaissance, the like of which can be compared only with the contemporary Vaishnava Movement of India or the Protestant movement of Europe. These great teachers suffered privation at the hands of the powers that were and practised Satyagraha against the Brahminical *hierarchy* of Assam backed as they were by the powerful support of the Assamese Monarch. But truth came out triumphant in the end and these two mighty spirits have left for Assam such a catholic faith of love, amity and brotherhood that without the process of conversion by missions, hundreds of our animistic brothers are being Hinduised and are being brought within the fold of Hindu society. It is for the preachings of these great spirits also that the evils of untouchability do not appear to be so acute as they do in other places of India. Mighty as they appear as religious teachers, no less great were they in the realm of letters. Assamese literature which is one of the most ancient of languages having Sanskritic origin, was greatly enriched by them in their songs, lyrics and poetry, and it is by their appeal to the higher human sentiment and to the soul at the same time that they attained such great successes as reformers. Before and after these great poets many noble writers in both prose and poetry flourished and I make bold to assert, that their writings would adorn any of the best literatures of the world. In the domain of architecture also, one has merely to look round any place, from Dhubri to Sadiya and from the North to the South, and he is sure to find temples and images, beautiful stone pillars, and engravings all proclaiming the existence of an ancient civilization and culture.

Kamrup, the sacred land of progressive Hinduism is also a place of great pilgrimage for the Muslims, for, there is the Holy Powa Mecca at Hajo within 15 miles from where we are sitting. I am proud to be able to say in this connection that it is in Assam where Hindus and Muhammadans have at all times lived in friendliest of friendly terms and are still doing so.

Friends, I am afraid, I am trying your patience by making references to some of the characteristics of Assam and the Assamese people; but I hope you will bear with me for a while when I make a

brief reference to our family institution of Khaddar and Weaving. Khaddar movement, which is a problem of all problems in India to-day, was so very much simplified by the old Assamese, that could we bring back into our midst the activities of those days, the boycott of foreign cloth would become unnecessary. It is, I suppose, an accepted fact to-day, that production of Khaddar cannot be based on specialised labour however best our institution or organization may be. In order that spinning and weaving may prevail in all places and at all times, production of Khaddar should be the aim of all families and spinning made into a living institution. This was exactly the position of the Assamese families of old. In Assam the best of ladies spun and wove; and although during the last 30 years some of them seem to have forgotten spinning, weaving has nowhere been given up. There are yet several places in Assam where spinning in cotton, silk, endi and muga are done on an extensive scale, and cloths worth several lacs of rupees produced every year. One centre in Nowgong alone where the All India Spinners' Association is working, has produced no less than 1,00,000 yards of Khaddar within three months only and in a season when the people do not generally spin. In weaving we can surely claim to be some of the best weavers of India. Mahatmajee's expression that "Ladies of Assam weave fairy tales in cloth" although highly flattering to our ladies, is not surely an exaggeration. What I therefore feel regarding Khaddar movement is that in Assam we do not require so much Khaddar propaganda as an organization for supply of cheap cotton and other materials and implements and inducement to spin. I am also disposed to believe that because we have not given up spinning and weaving, we are, in spite of all our poverty, not destitute. It is a significant fact that out of 12 lacs of indentured labour in Assam, not one is an Assamese. Khaddar in my opinion may not be commercially a business proposition but economically it is perfectly sound.

Brothers and Sisters, it was only in 1838 that the whole of Assam came under the British control although one portion was taken in 1826 by the treaty of Yan-daboo. We have undoubtedly had some improvements brought about by the British Raj; and we are very grateful to His Majesty's Government for them, but while Cholera and Kala-Azar, Malaria and Small-pox are causing havoc to the people of Assam it is cruel, if not criminal, for the Assam Government to be thinking of increasing land revenue. But the severest indictment that the Government of Assam stand charged with, is the wilful slow poisoning of the people of Assam by carrying on their immoral traffic in opium. And what is more, when a number of selfless workers raised their voice of protest by

preaching temperance during the Non-co-operation, they were mercilessly flung into prison-house.

While the shadow of Jallianwala Bagh is still getting longer, while the blood stains of innocent babes on the brick walls of that Bagh are still proclaiming the brutality of Dyer; while the brave and patriotic sons of India are being slowly killed behind the prison bars without trial, while the Ordinances and repressive laws stand unrepealed, the Noble Lord commands that India must co-operate unconditionally or she will be meted out the worst treatment. Let Gauhati Congress give a suitable reply to the Noble Lord but I personally feel that India will not allow herself to be coerced into co-operation by such threat and she will not barter birthright for a mess of pottage however tempting it might be. "Good, bad, indifferent you must work the present constitution" dictates the Noble Lord "or you will be given no further reforms." This to my mind means India's power of resistance must be crushed, she must be humiliated. Let Gauhati Congress, let the representatives of the people of India answer the challenge of the Noble Lord fairly and squarely, but I personally believe that the Councils should either be mended in a manner suitable for the attainment of Swaraj or should be ended completely. Let Gauhati Congress decide whether India should get back to her old mentality of begging for favours on bended knees with folded hands or that she should stand on her own rights and make a demand for her birthright. Let Gauhati Congress decide whether India should be humiliated into co-operation in the hope of getting some favours or she should stoutly refuse co-operation till her legitimate rights are conceded.

If we sincerely believe that Swaraj is India's birthright and if we honestly and earnestly mean to work for its speedy attainment; we must make Hindu-Moslem unity a living reality and I firmly believe it to be possible if we really wish it. We must forthwith drive away the wicked and the selfish spirit of communalism, we must take back the untouchables at once and above all inspire confidence into the minds of the Indians of all communities, of the rich and poor alike, that Congress is a living organism, with a unity of purpose and unity of action working for the salvation of India.

I deeply regret to have to note the difference that is subsisting in the Congress camp to-day. How can I help deploring the secession of personalities like Messrs. Jayakar and Kelkar, Dr. Moonje and Mr. Aney, of Lalajee and Malaviyajee from the majority party of the Congress?

That great fighter for Political freedom Deshabandhu Chitta Ranjan Das declared that 1926 would be a critical year in the history of our Country. I verily believe it to be so. We are to-day confronted with the gravest of problems India had to face within the last 6 years of

choosing between Co-operation and Non-co-operation, between slavery and freedom, between subservience and self-reliance. On your wise decision on this subject alone rests the future of India. While the masses of India are looking up to you for a united verdict, while the situation calls for our best energies and united action, should it be proper for you to be carrying on a fratricidal warfare? Honest differences of opinion are undoubtedly inevitable in politics, but should we not close up our ranks, specially when the deceptive manœuvre of the enemies is threatening a complete rout? Should we not be able to sink all our differences, when united and concerted action is the only sure weapon left in our hands in defeating our common enemy?

In such a critical state of the country I may be pardoned if I take the liberty of striking a personal note and appeal to Mahatma Gandhi once again to give us the lead.

The magic land of Kamrup has an old tradition that people staying here over three nights are converted into sheep, and we all know that the sheep have the peculiarity of following the leader faithfully. Let us hope, therefore, that the magic influence of this land will enable the fighting groups to settle their differences and make the Hindus and Muhammadans unite in love and brotherhood and follow the leadership of the Congress like innocent lambs tended by the gentle shepherded of Sabarmati.

That tiny little Charkha,—that wheel of Indian life, moved with unfailling regularity by that mighty little man Mahatma Gandhi is, in my opinion not only spinning yarns for the dumb millions of India, it is not merely laying a straight path for the economic salvation of India, but is slowly evolving that irresistible world force of Non-violent *Non-co-operation* which alone will be able to check effectively the deadly spirit of Imperialism, which is out to crush the soul of Independence of the weak and the helpless nations.

Ladies and gentlemen, you as the worthy representatives of the Indian nation are called upon to-day bravely to stand by Indian Nationalism and show us the right way to Swaraj. So lead us out of internal dissensions and guide us in our earnest endeavours for the speedy attainment of Swaraj. By your wise counsel and sincere tolerance make us forget our communal differences which are eating into the vitals of our national life. By your liberal policies and generous dealings, break down the petty party manœuvres and show us the right path to a united action. By your noble example of self-sacrifice get us out of our wicked ways and inspire us into living an unselfish national life. Give us a bold lead towards the goal of Swaraj, instil courage into the hearts of the weakest of the weak and bring hope

unto the millions of despairing minds by your loving message of confidence and success; declare with a united voice and determined spirit that we will fight with a grim determination, all evil forces that might thwart us in our earnest attempt to win Swaraj, proclaim that you will fight to a finish at all cost the fair fight for freedom of our beloved motherland. I personally possess a great deal of robust optimism and I have a firm faith and a clear vision that freedom of India will come sooner than many people expect—if only we work honestly, earnestly and unitedly. Let not our success be judged in the measure of our achievements. Non-violent Non-co-operation had worked wonders within the very short time it was practised. It has animated Indian life with a sense of manhood, it has infused that love for freedom for the motherland, which cannot be killed even by the most inhuman methods of Bureaucracy. It has taught us that the weakest nation has a right to rebel against the most powerful nation that tries to impose by strength of arms its will against the wish of the people.

In the course of our honest endeavour to secure freedom should difficulties arise and despair come, let us not forget to say.

Iyyaka naabudu wa iyyaka nastayeen.

Let us prayerfully say unto God :—

“Thou power supreme
Whose mighty scheme
These joys and woes of mine fulfil
Here firm I rest
They must be best
Because they are Thy Will.”

Our right to invite you to such a distant and a poor country is based upon our modest achievement during the Non-co-operation Movement, on the terrible sufferings undergone at that time by the people of Assam at the most cruel hands of the Bureaucracy and above all in our sincere willingness to follow your lead through the Congress and do our nonest best in the fight for Swaraj.

But I offer my humble apologies for detaining you so long by telling our Provincial tales of joys and woes, for you have more important questions to answer and much more difficult problems to solve. Deliverance of a Mighty nation enslaved by the merciless decree of Providence rests with you. I ask you with all the humility that I can command to forgive us for our many shortcomings and request you to begin your deliberations.

Presidential Speech.

Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar who was garlanded by an Assamese girl, then ascended the rostrum and was received with continued cheering.

He said: "Friends, I regret extremely my inability to speak to you either in Assamese or Bengali or Hindi. My regret is all the keener that I am obliged to speak in an alien language. I crave your forgiveness also in that I may not be able to deliver my address completely owing to a bad throat and ill-health.

"Friends, before I begin to speak to you about the things upon which I have prepared a written speech, I must refer to the great calamity that has overtaken us all, the death of Swami Shraddhanandaji. As I was coming along with friends in the train, Mahatmaji received a telegram from Lala Lajpat Rai saying that Swami Shraddhananda had been shot down. It was not possible for me to realise, and it is not possible for me yet to realise fully the great national loss, the great loss which every one of us has sustained. I should also like to mention to you that I had the privilege of knowing Swami Shraddhananda rather intimately. The loss was all the keener in that I had sent a letter to him and had received a message from him just when he was on his death bed. The way, the cowardly, treacherous way in which he was assassinated has sent a thrill of horror throughout the country. It is not necessary for me to refer to this sad occurrence at length just now, for there will be an appropriate motion made by the Congress in regard to that matter. But I should like to say one or two brief words of his great services. His services to his country and his faith were not less than those of any others. To many of us he looked an ancient Rishi reborn in these days for the redemption of Hinduism, for the reform of Hinduism, for the removal of untouchability and for imparting to us the missionary fervour which was lacking before he came to the field. As a social reformer, and as an educationist connected with the Gurukul movement his memory will be immortal. Equally has he rendered to the country political, patriotic and other services in connection with the Congress organisation, and latterly he devoted his life to the cause of religion. In many ways therefore, his loss will be remembered for very many years to come; and we may not be able to see his like again. But let us remember that he died perhaps as he would have loved best to die. He died a happy warrior, fighting for his country and for his faith.

"To the memory also of the late Umar Sobani a word is due from me. I had not the privilege of his acquaintance, but in the early days of the Non-co-operation movement he gave of his best, he gave his time and his wealth liberally and freely for furthering the movement

in India, which particularly in the Western Presidency was accelerated and supported by that stalwart patriot whose untimely death we deplore."

He then read the following printed address.

Presidential Address

FRIENDS,

I am profoundly grateful for the signal honour that unredeemed India has conferred on me. I have accepted the responsibilities of this great office made more formidable to me by the lustre of great names, at a time, as Mahatma Gandhi put it, "of unexampled difficulty" only in the belief that it was a compliment to South India and that, in the discharge of my task, I shall have your full support and co-operation.

THE NATIONAL DEMAND AND ITS SEQUEL

The foremost of our duties for the coming year is to mobilise all our forces on the issue of the National Demand. It was formulated in February, 1924, in the Legislative Assembly by Pandit Motilal Nehru on behalf of the Nationalist Party consisting of the Swarajists and the Independents. It asked the Government to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full Responsible Government in India and for that purpose to summon at an early date a representative Round Table Conference to recommend the scheme of a constitution for India with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities; and to place the scheme for approval before a newly elected Indian Legislature after dissolving the Central Legislature and finally submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a statute. That resolution was passed by a majority of 76 to 48 against the Government; and though the Swarajya Party began their work in the Assembly with a gesture of honourable co-operation the Government arrogantly brushed it aside. But in order to side-track the principal issue, they appointed the Reforms Inquiry Committee to investigate the feasibility and desirability of securing remedies for the difficulties and defects connected with the working of the Government of India Act but consistently with the policy, structure and purpose of the Act. The evidence that was given before the Committee by those who worked the reforms devotedly as well as the report of the minority established clearly that the system of Dyarchy, both as a step towards responsible government and otherwise, was an egregious failure. The attempt of the Government of India to induce the Assembly to accept the recommendations contained in the Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee was met by a reiteration of the national demand in the Assembly in September, 1925, in an amplified form. This time also the Assembly by a majority of 72 to 45 passed the resolution, Swarajists and Independents acting together. It was a second time rejected by the Government.

In December, 1925, the Congress held at Cawnpore ratified on behalf of the country the terms of the settlement offered by the Independent and Swarajya Parties by the resolution on the national demand. To enforce that demand in case it was rejected and to carry on the fight for Swaraj, the Congress adopted a programme of work both in the country and in the Councils and provided for the education of the electorates in its policy and the capture by Congressmen, under specific pledges, of the elected seats in the several legislatures.

In March, 1926, on the refusal of the Government to accede to the demand, the Swarajya Party walked out of the Assembly and the Provincial Councils in accordance with the Congress mandate. The leader of the Party in the Assembly said on that occasion: "We hope and trust that the nation will give a suitable reply to the truculent rejection of our demands and send us again in larger numbers with a stronger mandate and, God willing, with the sanction for fulfilling its aspirations and enforcing its commands."

THE GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The results of the campaign thus opened and of the general elections that followed and are just now over, have justified the policy of the Swarajya Party in the Assembly and the Provincial Legislative Councils and have abundantly proved the wisdom of the great experiment inaugurated by the Congress at its Cawnpore Session. Throughout the country, thanks to the Congress electoral campaign, there has been a tremendous amount of political education and the vehemence, the extent and the concentrated fire of the opposition, communal or other, have only served to demonstrate the utter soundness of the programme and policy of the Congress, and the strong hold it has over the people.

The provinces of Madras, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, in a striking degree, and the other provinces including the Punjab, to a lesser extent, have responded to the Congress mandates and come under the Congress discipline. If in some provinces our success has not been as great as in others, it is due solely to the fact that Congressmen there were divided amongst themselves and was not due to the superiority in the programme or policy of any definite political party. Having regard to the fact that it is the first time that the Congress has run the elections on an all-India scale and that there were serious differences amongst Congress leaders and workers, the successes achieved under the Cawnpore mandate all over India are, both in quantity and in quality, most remarkable. Though they have not been a surprise to most of us, they have come as a shock to the bureaucracy and its allies in every province. Nor can we forget that most of those who succeeded against the Congress candidates, though they had not subscribed to the Congress pledges, succeeded still as Congressmen. On the whole he who runs may read the lesson of the elections that

the centre of political gravity has decisively and definitely shifted from the bureaucracy and its Indian supporters to the National Congress.

The real meaning of our success at the general elections, the success of those that obeyed the Cawnpore mandate, cannot be easily missed. It constitutes an unmistakable endorsement of the national demand and of the policy of walk-out that marked its rejection by the Government. It also signalises the enthronement of a sound and robust nationalism in place of communalism as a dominant political factor. In Madras, Brahmin-non-Brahmin differences have ceased to be the great prop of the foreign bureaucracy that they have been till now. And it is a matter for gratification that in Tamil Nadu and in Behar, Muslims have joined the Congress Party and been successful in the elections. Above all, the country has given its unequivocal verdict against the system of Dyarchy and the rest of the political apparatus established by the Reform Act. For, we must remember that Congress members form the largest single party in almost every legislative council, though in some provinces they are much more numerous than in others. And they went to the polls on a clear pledge of non-acceptance of the office of Minister till a satisfactory response was made by the Government to the national demand. Nor can we overlook that the elections with all the difficulties that we had to face have been a severe test of our capacity for Swaraj, and have given us patience, skill, a quiet confidence, a nation-wide organization, party loyalty and a thoroughly democratic outlook.

WE ARE ASKED TO WORK DYARCHY

We have by now largely cleared the decks for action and must therefore concentrate our attention next on enforcing compliance with the national demand. We shall for the present keep the door open for a just and honourable settlement. But we must not deceive ourselves into the belief that the Governments in England and in India are now willing to concede our demand or even to open negotiations with us for the purpose. They will be, as they have always been, prodigal of words that mean nothing and will deploy against us all the arts of a trained and evasive diplomacy. The only answer, we have so far had from Government, in every variety of accent and phrase, is, that we should "lay aside for the time being our demand for Swaraj and should soberly and whole-heartedly work the present constitution." It is conveniently ignored that the new constitution was worked by various groups of moderate or progressive politicians "soberly and whole-heartedly" during the period of the first Councils. The boycott of the Councils by the Congress, far from obstructing the path of the Reform Act enabled men who had confidence in the Government and in whom the Government had confidence to co-operate unreservedly and to work the Act. Then again, in the period of the

second councils after the Act, in many provinces and notably in Madras and Bombay, groups of politicians worked the constitution exactly in the way in which they were required to do. How can it be said that the constitution has not been given a fair chance or has not been worked for 6 years by Indians pledged to co-operate "soberly and whole-heartedly" with the Government? Even the opposition by the Swarajists, during the term of the second councils was in strictness only a parliamentary opposition, except in Bengal and the Central Provinces. Whether the constitution was worked by Congressmen or by moderate groups, should make no difference to the Government. What the Government therefore requires really of us is that the Congress should give up its demand for Swaraj and merge itself in the bureaucracy.

Shall we still think it wisdom to harbour the wish that is father to the thought or to discover proofs of a changed heart in ingenious hints dropped by press correspondents or in the impressions of those that are in touch with high officials or with past or present members of Parliament who are more able to advise us than to bring round British opinion and parties to our view? The least therefore that we must insist upon is a businesslike statement in public, precise and concrete, and satisfactory in content and tone, by the Government in India or in England. Meanwhile, we must follow up the victories we have gained by consolidating all our forces and by steadily increasing the pressure of the councils and of the country upon the Government. We must pool all our resources together and make a firm stand against a non-co-operating bureaucracy, and wrest Swaraj from their unwilling hands. I trust the lapse of 6 years has not made us either forget the wholly illusory character of the Reforms or develop a new tenderness towards them. Our experience has, if anything, abundantly shown that the reforms have not given the people's representatives any real power and can lead neither to self-government nor to good government. A brief and dispassionate examination of the salient features of the Reform Act should convince us that we would be stultifying ourselves if we developed a new faith in it.

IS DYARCHY WORKABLE?

That Dyarchy is neither a helpful stage in the progressive realisation of Responsible Government nor serves as apt machinery for grinding down good Government, has been the unanimous verdict of experience and is now practically admitted on all hands. Lord Birkenhead himself has referred to it more than once in apologetic terms though he insists upon our working it. Its true purpose is not merely to provide for the administration of certain subjects by the Governor and his Executive Council, but to attenuate the power of the

Ministers and the control of the Legislature over the transferred subjects. Under this grotesque system, the Ministers are always under official tutelage and domination so that they cannot breathe the oxygen of freedom. The joint deliberation between Ministers and Members of Council for which Lord Willingdon took credit proved to be in the interests of the reserved half. Even without it, most matters relating to transferred subjects require to be considered by those in charge of the reserved departments and to that extent are shaped by the opinion of that half of the Government. This was fully established by the evidence before the Reforms Inquiry Committee. The fact that members of the Civil Service are themselves Members of Government makes the Ministers helpless in their relation to the members of the Civil Service. Again, the rules relating to financial restrictions and the control exercised by the Finance Member as one in charge of a reserved subject over important aspects of transferred subjects, make the power of the Ministers as unreal as that of puppets. Lastly, the division of subjects between the reserved and the transferred halves is such that the pith and marrow of a government are with the former. As regards the conflicts between the two halves of the Government, the Governor is made in effect a constitutional dictator in the province and Dyarchy can be tempered only by the frequent exercise of his powers. Further the power of the Governor on his sole authority to make laws relating to a reserved subject contrary to the decision of the Legislative Council furnishes a capital instance where the reformed Legislative Councils possess much less power than their predecessors. That one man can make laws quite as valid as the laws made by a Legislature and in the teeth of the latter, proves our charge that the Reform Act has in reserved departments set up an irresponsible autocracy.

The position as regards transferred subjects is no whit better, though we frequently make Dyarchy the gravamen of our charge against the Reform Act as if its removal alone will end all our troubles. For, we must remember that in respect of transferred subjects there is no responsible government and the mere transfer of reserved subjects to additional Ministers on the same statutory conditions as at present govern transferred subjects will not improve matters. At the outset, each Legislative Council has a solid block of nominated and official members to support the views or policy of the bureaucracy on questions relating to transferred subjects though a majority of elected members may decide otherwise. Thanks to the nominated members and to the number of special constituencies, supple, reactionary or obscurantist, the composition of a Legislative Council is such that the Ministers have to depend upon the support of the Governor and his Executive Council. Nor is it very difficult for a Governor to form, against a majority group of elected members, a Ministry with the aid of a minority group of elected members and of his own nominated and protected block. This

has been done again and again in every province. This inherent vice in the structure of a Legislative Council deprives it of any real representative character and its elected members of any adequate power. Secondly, under existing conditions, the power of appointing Ministers exercised by a Governor is not a mere technical mode of naming the established leaders of the majority in the Council but is a substantial power of patronage by which a nobody or anybody can be made a *benami* leader to carry out the Governor's policy. Thirdly, we all know that a Legislative Council has no control over the items of expenditure known as non-votable under each transferred head including the salaries and allowances and all other payments of officials belonging to superior services in that department. These non-votable items amount to a high percentage of the expenditure relating to each transferred subject. Fourthly, the Ministers have little or no control over the members of the Civil or other public services serving in departments dealing with transferred subjects, and the Governor has and exercises the power of making all appointments to posts in the transferred departments. The statutory independence of the Indian Civil Service is the most outstanding feature of the Reform Act. All the parliamentary apparatus of a responsible government will prove to be a costly and pompous futility unless the completest control over the Indian Civil and other services is unreservedly secured to Ministers fully responsible to a wholly elected legislature. Fifthly, the Governor is empowered to over-ride the Ministers' decisions on questions relating to a transferred subject and direct him to act otherwise. Sixthly, the Governor has an emergency power—the emergency to be determined by himself—to authorise expenditure notwithstanding a vote of the Legislative Council in respect of transferred subjects. Seventhly, the Governor has power to stop legislation in respect of transferred subjects notwithstanding the opinion of the Legislative Council. Eighthly, he can return a Bill relating to a transferred subject to the Council for reconsideration with his recommendations which are in effect obligatory. What this power means was forcibly illustrated by Lord Willingdon in Madras in connection with the Hindu Religious Endowments Bill. Ninthly, when a Governor cannot through his Ministry manage a Council to his satisfaction, he can himself administer the transferred subjects as happened in the Central Provinces. Tenthly, a Minister can hold office during the Governor's pleasure which does not mean the formal expression of the Council's pleasure but his own independent pleasure against the opinion of the Council, as was vividly demonstrated by Lord Lytton in Bengal. Eleventhly, the Governor is entitled to disallow any motion for the adjournment of the business of the Council to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance even when it relates to a transferred subject. Lastly, the allocation of the revenues for the

administration of transferred subjects depends primarily on the will of the reserved half and of the Governor and not on the decision of the Legislative Council.

I have restated the position under the Act only to make it clear that even if Dyarchy goes, a Legislative Council will have control over the transferred subjects only if and when the Governor allows and not otherwise.

The Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee concedes that the Dyarchy which was introduced is "clearly a complex confused system having no logical basis, rooted in compromise and defensible only as a transitional expedient." It is not possible to imagine to what it is a transition or how it is defensible except as an expedient for putting off the grant of Swaraj or of substantial reforms leading to Swaraj. The majority of the Committee add: "While the period during which the present constitution has been in force has been too short to enable a well-founded opinion as to its success to be formed, the evidence before us is far from convincing that it has failed." This oracular judgment is much too ingenuous to deceive any one and is a sufficient condemnation of the system of hybrid executives, councils partly elected and partly nominated and all the other devices of the sham scheme of reforms which was admitted by its authors themselves to be charged with potentialities of friction. The Minority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee concludes that "the present system has failed and is incapable of yielding better results in future."

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Nor can it be pretended that the Central Government is at all responsible to the Indian Legislature. In the first place, that Legislature has no power of the purse. Nearly three-fourths of the expenditure of the Government of India excluding that on Railways, is withdrawn from the vote of the Legislative Assembly and as to the remaining fourth, the Government is empowered to restore any demand which has been refused or reduced by it. The Governor-General has also an emergency power to authorise at his discretion any expenditure, he being the sole judge of the emergency. In the next place, the Governor-General may direct the stay of any bill, clause or amendment. In the third place, in addition to the power to make temporary ordinances, the Governor-General is given, what he had not before the Reforms Act, the autocratic power of certifying any bill and signing it as a permanent law on his sole and absolute authority notwithstanding the refusal of the Legislature. Fourthly, the Assembly is neither wholly nor in reality a representative and democratic chamber. Between a third and a fourth of its strength consists of nominated members and a three-fourths majority of elected

members is required to defeat the Government and to enforce the popular will. For, the Government's 40 votes are bound to neutralise at least an equal number of elected votes. Further, from amongst the elected strength must be deducted the seats provided for special constituencies which, in the Assembly as in Provincial Councils, are amongst the fortifications of the bureaucracy. Lastly, there is for the Government the additional safeguard provided by the second chamber. And the Council of State is so planned and constructed as to checkmate the Assembly and to form an impregnable citadel for the Government. It has, time and again, proved itself to be reactionary and has turned down the decisions of the Assembly on most vital questions. For instance, it agreed to the enhancement of the Salt Tax and to the Finance Bill and supported the certificate of the Viceroy against the decision of the Assembly. It rejected the Bill passed by the latter for the repeal of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. It passed the Bill relating to the Bengal internees, that was rejected by the other chamber and the resolution relating to the Lee Commission recommendations against its decision and it approved of the recommendations of the Majority Report of the Reforms Inquiry Committee against the opinion of the Assembly.

It is then abundantly clear that the centre of gravity both in the Central Government and in the Provinces, alike in transferred and in reserved departments, when analysed closely, is, both in fact and in constitutional theory, in the Executive Government, in other words, in the bureaucracy. It would therefore be a tragedy if we still sought to discover, in all this statutory hypocrisy, the germs of self-government.

DESABANDHU'S OFFER

While our national demand remains rejected, there has been no response to the gesture of peace that was made by the heroic figure of Desabandhu Das. No fairer offer could have been made than was made by him at Faridpur in his great and moving appeal for reconciliation. As he said: "The Government should guarantee to us the fullest recognition of our right to the establishment of Swaraj within the Commonwealth in the near future and in the meantime till Swaraj comes, a sure and sufficient foundation of such Swaraj should be laid at once. Further, the Government should divest itself of its wide discretionary powers of constraint and follow it up by a general amnesty for all political prisoners". The long history of repression, that has darkened our struggle for freedom, proves that the curve of repression and the curve of reforms go inter-twined; of repression gilded with reforms, of reforms withered by repression. The case of the Bengal internees as well as of the Sikh patriots is about the most flagrant violation of elementary justice we have had; and the harrowing story of the Bengal Ordinance and other internees as well as the earlier story of the Punjab agony and abasement shows that we are asked

always to move in a vicious circle with shame and humiliation as our badge, and not Swaraj as our birth-right. No settlement with the Government can be held to be just or honourable that does not involve a complete reversal of all repressive measures and a clear guarantee against their future repetition.

Further, while the plea was set up that the Government of India Act could not be revised before the appointed term in the direction of more substantial concessions, no difficulty was found by the Government in amending the Act so as to give effect to the Lee Commission recommendations involving an annual increase of 1½ crores of rupees in the emoluments of the superior services.

INDIA'S STATUS

Again, while India is being denied Swaraj, the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee of the Empire Prime Ministers has restated the position of the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire equal in status and in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs though united by common allegiance to the Crown and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations". That Committee adds, and rightly, that every Dominion now and always must remain the sole judge of the nature and extent of its co-operation. India is, of course, excluded from this privileged communion. She is not to be a free country, equal in status to the Dominions, but is to bear the galling burden of an Empire; and the nature and extent of her co-operation are to be determined for her by others. The time has, I think, come when we must make it clear to others and to ourselves that if England wants India to remain within the British Empire it can be only on the terms just stated; and that otherwise none can or should set any limits to her freedom.

If we confine ourselves to the abolition of Dyarchy are we certain that the residuary powers of the Governor will be surrendered? What again is the use of responsible Provincial Government without a responsible Central Government? The comedy will be enacted differently but its spirit and purpose will be there if the Central Government is not a fully responsible government. Supposing again, both the Central and the Provincial Governments are made responsible governments and we are still not to touch the Civil Service, the position will be no better. The Indian agents of the foreign bureaucracy will be more numerous and there will be more competition for Ministerships but the masters will be the same. We cannot therefore compromise on the question of appointment and control of the services or provide for them a dual control. Any scheme of self-Government will be nothing but an empty form if the control over the army and navy and the control over the political relations with Indian States, as distinguished

from foreign relations with other countries, are not given to our Swaraj Government. Any such reservation will deprive the Indian Swaraj Government of financial, administrative and political control over the Indian people including Indian Princes. Otherwise, self-governing India will be menaced by an army under foreign control and the Indian States will be perpetual thorns in its side, if nothing worse. These departments are now included in the definition of Dominion Status and form items 1 to 4 in the schedule of central subjects administered by the Government of India and are indispensable for the maintenance of a real Swaraj Government.

ARMY AND NAVY

The naive concession made by some of our friends as to our incapacity to administer the army and the navy contradicts our demand for Swaraj and supports the argument of the advocates of the alien rule that tell us, "You cannot have an army and navy to defend you : how then can you have Swaraj?" It is but an illustration of our diffident mentality to assume that we cannot maintain or control an army or navy. There is absolutely no truth in it. There is a splendid Indian army which has distinguished itself in a hundred fields in all parts of the world. That the Muhammadans and the Mahrattas formed and led armies in other days according to the then standards of equipment and efficiency proves that there is no inherent deficiency in the Indian people in that respect. If one thing more than another is illustrated by any true history of India, it is that our people had plenty of martial spirit. As to the navy, the ancient Indian people were an adventurous and sea-faring race and had far-flung colonies. But, it is not the historical or racial argument that calls for enlargement, for Free India can buy and man a fleet and maintain an army on the most modern lines. It is in ultimate analysis nothing but a question of finance and the training of men. Japan and China and all the lesser states of the world that enjoy self-government have found these things and there is no reason why we cannot find them. I would, therefore, urge upon you that we should clearly think out what Swaraj means and should not abate an iota in our demand for full self-government.

In the meantime, our paramount duty is, as I have already urged, without waiting any longer for a response that does not come, to organise more completely than we have hitherto attempted, the will of the nation on our demand for Swaraj.

OUR COUNCIL PROGRAMME

To that end, the twin principles of self-reliance in all nation-building work and of resistance to every anti-national activity must inspire all our efforts, as they certainly inspired the non-co-operation phase of the struggle. In that view and in view of our present limita-

tions, and for the immediate present, the programme of work both in the councils and in the country, as laid down by the Congress at Cawnpore cannot, I think, in its general outline, be easily bettered.

And first as to work in the Councils, the general policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and the various Councils should be one of resistance to every activity, governmental or other, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj; and in particular, Congressmen in the legislatures should :—

- (a) refuse to accept offices in the gift of the Government until in the opinion of the Congress a satisfactory response is made by the Government to the national demand
- (b) refuse supplies and throw out budgets (unless otherwise directed by the All-India Working Committee) until such response is made by the Government
- (c) throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers
- (d) move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of the country
- (e) take steps to improve the condition of agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with due regard to the rights of the Zamindars and
- (f) generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

This was framed in the light of experience so as to be acceptable to as large a number as possible of workers in the political field and it represents the minimum amount of resistance that is required for the success of our movement.

THE QUESTION OF OFFICE

Controversy has raged round the question of non-acceptance of office; but it should be easy to come to a decision upon it, if we kept in view the spirit and objective of our fight against the bureaucracy. In no province is the Congress party in the Council in an absolute majority so as to be able to take office and dictate terms to the head of the Government and the reserved half. To form a ministry, it will have to coalesce with other groups and to lower its flag and to lose its distinctive character. And any such Ministry if formed can hold office only on sufferance and with the support of the Government and its nominated and official group of votes. On the one hand, it will be indistinguishable in achievement or rather the lack of it, from a

Ministry formed by any non-Congress group of members. If, on the other hand, it attempts to maintain its spirit and carry out its purpose it must either resign instantly or acquiesce ignominiously in its failure. Again, a strong Minister can only attempt to improve some of the details of administration but can neither help to change the system of Government nor can effect even material improvements in administration. By improving a detail here and a detail there of administration, he would rather help to perpetuate the existing system of Government by casting his reflected benevolence on the bureaucracy. In reality, no one who has closely followed the achievements of Ministers in the several provinces can seriously believe that any Ministry can, without a proper system of self-government, get good government for the country.

We should also clearly realise that the power of an opposition, though indirect, is very real and much more effective than the power of Ministers and that if we are disciplined and energetic and in sufficient numbers in any Council we can carry out our policy and programme more easily than the Ministers.

The refusal to accept office till a satisfactory response is made, constitutes an amount of political pressure that is necessary and sufficient to induce the Government to come to a settlement. By accepting office, the Congress is bound to become an unconscious ally of the bureaucracy. And, if the most advanced party in the country takes office, where will be the determined and disciplined opposition in each council to fight against Dyarchy or for Swaraj? Neither the Ministers nor their party can openly speak and vote against the administration of reserved subjects. Again, neither the refusal of the Government to release political prisoners and internees nor the rejection of our reasonable demand nor that of our offer of honourable co-operation can be forgotten when we are asked to take office, not as part of a settlement, but as a token of our unconditional surrender. Our self-respect prohibits us from retracing our steps when, instead of defeat, victory beckons us to march ahead.

It is said that if we cannot organise forthwith civil disobedience there is no other honest alternative than to own ourselves beaten and accept office. Neither horn of the dilemma exists save in one's imagination. The policy we are pursuing is thoroughly logical and practical and, if persisted in for a while longer, will be crowned with success. After the severest denunciations of the Reform Act on a thousand platforms and the most cogent demonstration of the futility of taking office, it were an anti-climax to think of Ministries now. I am certain that the Government wants Congressmen to become Ministers only on the terms of "sober and whole-hearted co-operation" with the reserved half and the bureaucracy. I am sure, we are all convin-

ced that without a fair measure of self-denial we shall never be able to achieve anything, and that a policy of continuous opposition and resistance to the bureaucracy is required to give tone to our organization and life and vigour to our movement. Lastly, let us not forget that the policy of non-acceptance of office is neither unconditional nor for all time. On the other hand, its relaxation or modification depends upon the attitude of the Government and its willingness to agree to conditions more or less similar to those that were adumbrated by Desabandhu Das at Faridpur.

Objection is raised to the continuance of our present policy in the Councils on the ground that it has been tried for the past three years and that we are not yet in sight of the realisation of our hopes. The charge of barrenness is falsified by the party's splendid record of achievement in the last Assembly and in the Councils, and by the results of the general elections as a whole. Shall we forget that it was to create an atmosphere of resistance both in the Councils and in the country that we entered the former and that we succeeded in making their atmosphere invigorating and markedly different from what it was before? We have not yet fully acquired the habit of resistance. And the power of resistance must be indefinitely increased till it fulfils itself. Again, this time, the work in the country must be our first care; it will then easily gather such volume and intensity as to sweep everything before it.

The Cawnpore session of the Congress marked a turning point in the history of the Congress and of the country. By making the programme and policy of the Swarajya Party its own and by absorbing that party, the Congress gave a new orientation to our political activities. It resolved upon the nationalisation of the legislatures established by Government by bringing them under its own control. This change of attitude on the part of the Congress towards legislatures has been fiercely attacked from more than one quarter. It has been denounced as a constitutional heresy to claim for the Congress a control over the Legislatures. The justification of the claim is, however, obvious. Experience during the period of the non-co-operation movement had shown that the Councils functioned as anti-national institutions and thwarted the attempts of the Congress to obtain Swaraj. It was, therefore, necessary to ensure that the political institutions established by the nation and the political institutions established by the government should function as a single organ and speak with one voice.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Our foremost duty is to keep constantly before our eyes the vision of Swaraj, what it is, what it requires of us and what it will not permit

us. It means nothing less than that the Congress should have the fullest control over the people and should have a steadily increasing number of workers knit together in bonds of unshakeable loyalty and perfect understanding. It is only in proportion as the control of the Congress over the people increases in area and in intensity we can obtain or establish Swaraj. We must make the Congress the centre of all our activities and build up Swaraj in and through it. It is, therefore, right and wise for the Congress to organise thoroughly all the electorates whether for the Legislatures or local bodies and to bring them under its discipline and control. The millions that have the franchise and the millions that have not, have to be habituated to accept voluntarily and cheerfully, the mandates of the Congress as the mandates of a national government. While the aim of the non-co-operation movement was to form the national administration leaving the political and administrative bodies under the influence, discipline and control of Government, what we should now do is to bring under Congress control not only the people who are more or less indifferent to the political and administrative institutions of Government but also those who seek to utilise them directly or indirectly. At the recent elections, have been demonstrated the love of the people for the Congress and their willingness to come under the Congress banner. It is of the very greatest importance that the electorates for the legislatures and local bodies should be so thoroughly educated and nationalized that they and the Congress may become identical in spirit, purpose and action, if not in numbers. The Congress, and not the Government, must issue mandates to the Legislative Councils, to the local bodies and to the village administrations. Under this scheme, both the work in the country and in the Councils can be so closely interrelated as to develop the maximum amount of political pressure against the government. When the electorates, the legislatures and the Congress learn to act as a single organisation, sanctions for the enforcement of national rights and demands will, of themselves, spring into existence.

Again, we have to organise the country in respect of the many serious grievances of the people. They are not yet fully alive either to their rights or to their wrongs. The study and investigation of grievances must form an essential part of Congress work. The Congress members of all the legislatures should meet as a separate national legislature and frame model laws for adoption by the people. The remedying of grievances must be upon the basis of self-reliance and resistance and not on the basis of co-operation with the Government. The people must be taught to assert their rights and to develop their powers of self-reliance and resistance. The issues of prohibition, of taxation of land and above all of unemployment will give us sufficient momentum and take us a long way forward.

If incessant propaganda is carried on in town and in village, if the Congressmen inside and outside the Councils interest themselves, each group in the work of the other, and if people are organised in respect of grievances upon which they feel most strongly, the end will soon be in sight.

We must establish village *sabhas* that shall, under Congress mandate, administer village affairs and be the units of a permanent Swaraj. The great practical difficulties that are in the way must not depress us but should only serve as a powerful stimulus to exertion. Mastery, as has rightly been said, is acquired by resolved limitation; and the acid test of Indian leadership, of resolute patriotism and of constructive ability consists in the determination and contentment of men to organise and lead villages for the cause of Swaraj. The secret of success in the work of village reconstruction mainly lies in the discovery of apt rural leadership.

In this way, the Congress will ere long become the national government.

CAPTURE OF LOCAL BODIES

The work that I think must next be undertaken is the capture of local bodies in every province. Both in connection with the constructive programme and on its own merits I would urge upon you the need for such action. If Congressmen pledged to carry out the constructive programme and to follow the advice of local Congress committees make it a point to capture as many seats as possible in the municipalities and local boards, the national movement will gain tremendously in strength. You can, in the first place, powerfully help the anti-drink campaign and place it on a practical basis; you can also nationalise education in municipal and board schools and spread the cult of Khaddar amongst teachers and boys and amongst municipal voters and employees. You will be able to devise ways and means to relieve unemployment to an appreciable extent. And those in service of local bodies will become nationalised if their administration is undertaken by Congressmen. You will benefit the people in other practical ways, besides giving them the advantages which a municipality or board is intended to give but so seldom gives. In the second place, Congressmen will acquire local leadership and establish control for the Congress over the people of the locality. At present, the control is either exclusively with persons who are hostile or indifferent to the national movement or is divided between them and us. The present influence of the bureaucracy and its ministerial or other allies over local bodies must be replaced by ours and the hold of the Congress over the people greatly strengthened. In the third place, you will be able to communicate to others that burning love of country that is in you. Fourthly, it will enable all sections of Congressmen to come together and will give us additional organisations from which and by which the fight for Swaraj

can be carried on. Lastly, village reconstruction and village government can with the resources of the local bodies be more easily achieved than if we have to set about that work without such aid. We have already succeeded to some extent in the direction of nationalizing local bodies and have demonstrated its feasibility. Neither the occasional failure of the experiment nor academical arguments founded on obsolete theories, nor all the undoubted difficulties incidental to elections and the formation and maintenance of parties should deter us from persevering in it. The local bodies must be reformed by the abolition of nominated seats and must become parts of our great national organisation.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

No less important than the programme of work in the Councils and in the local bodies is the constructive programme of the Congress. Neither our political preoccupations, nor any comparative table of values which one may frame for one's self should make us forget that khaddar, prohibition and removal of untouchability as well as the other items of work are vital aspects of our national movement.

KHADDAR

Thanks to Mahatma Gandhi's inspiration and iron will, the restoration of the Spinning Wheel to its ancient primacy has made the boycott of foreign cloth real to an appreciable extent and has powerfully stimulated swadeshi spirit and enterprise in all forms and directions. It has by its persuasiveness affected to a visible extent the national psychology, and has lent a new dignity to our manhood and womanhood. For, it has given us a feeling of self-respect and has raised the Indian name in the estimation of the Western and Eastern world. From bitter hostility and contempt it has journeyed through all the stages of misunderstanding and has at last found a home in our hearts. It has demonstrated our constructive ability and is increasingly providing relief for unemployment while the State is doing nothing to mitigate it. Above all, work in this direction means love and love means influence. And the political pressure exerted by a boycott of foreign cloth is there all the time. The transfer of jurisdiction over khadi production from the Congress to an expert organization has, I think, ensured for it a permanent and conspicuous place in our national life unaffected by the controversies and fluctuations of politics. I trust the All India Spinners' Association will become a nation-wide labour organization which, if it cannot be identical with Swaraj, will go some way towards it. For, its potentialities are considerable; it can greatly help in the work of village reconstruction and in the establishment of village government. During 1925-26, Khadi production was 19 lakhs and this year it is expected that there will be an

increase of 25 per cent. The increase in output has been accompanied by a steady improvement in quality and in patterns and Khadi has become distinctly cheaper. Nevertheless, the demand for Khadi is not as rapid and universal as one would wish. It is, therefore, our paramount duty to see that continuous political and patriotic backing is given to Khadi and to the boycott of foreign cloth and that the new spheres of influence which our national organization has won through the message of Khaddar are not lost to us by our indifference to it. And let us remember that of the two greatest achievements of Mahatma Gandhi, non-co-operation and Khaddar, though it is difficult to decide which is the greater, Khaddar is at once the radiant symbol of our self-reliance and of our power of resistance.

PROHIBITION

We have not, I am afraid, latterly paid much attention to the question of total prohibition. Our movement will gain in moral grandeur if we successfully organise the will of the nation in that behalf. The measures that were adopted during the active period of non-co-operation were no doubt marked by temporary exaltation and magnificently illustrated our spirit of sacrifice. They have, however, led to no permanent changes in the landscape. No Minister has during the past six years been found, and I doubt whether a Minister will now be found, to be courageous enough to bring in a bill for total prohibition and to resign his office on its rejection or disallowance. Anyhow, while the fight for Swaraj is carried on in the legislatures and outside, we must devise effective ways of removing the drink evil which is among the greatest causes of poverty in many provinces. In my province, where the Congress Party in the Council is pledged to 'make total prohibition a major issue, next only to Swaraj, the drink revenue amounts to nearly 6 crores of rupees out of a total provincial revenue of 16 crores. At least twice the amount of revenue derived by the Government in each province under Excise will represent the minimum loss to the people. The loss of revenue to the State due to a policy of total prohibition is more apparent than real; for there is bound to be more than corresponding increase in national wealth. It can, however, if necessary be made good in other ways and should not make us hesitate to take decisive measures. I do feel that on this point the national conscience is not yet sufficiently roused. And yet both Islam and Hinduism can easily supply tremendous driving power if we will but put our hands to it.

UNTOUCHABILITY

The removal of untouchability was long confined to the platform of social or religious reform and did not then make rapid progress. By making it one of the items of the constructive programme of the Congress, we have, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, almost in the

twinkling of an eye materially changed the attitude towards it alike of the educated classes and of the masses. The final solution of the question, however, depends in great part upon the improvement of the economic conditions of the vast bulk of the untouchables. And the time has, I think, come when in order to ensure its speedy accomplishment, increasing concentration on it is required. As in the case of Khadi, an *ad hoc* organisation consisting of enthusiasts and religious and social reformers will, if properly led, be able to complete the work so splendidly begun by the Congress. Neither foreign nor domestic critics are, however, right when they assert that untouchability is a formidable obstacle to Swaraj, or that its removal will automatically bring about Swaraj. We cannot wait for Swaraj till it is removed any more than we can wait till caste is abolished. There is the capital instance of the United States of America achieving freedom long before the abolition of a very real and wide-spread slavery. But we must all agree that we must make an end of untouchability, apart from any question of Swaraj and whether we ever win Swaraj or not. While I would deprecate the iterated rhetorical stress on untouchability as a serious impediment to Swaraj and the consequent admission in favour of foreign domination, the higher philosophy of Hinduism as well as the history of religious dissidence in our country emboldens me to claim that the rule against untouchability has neither part nor lot with the indestructible soul of Hinduism. Judged by any test, humanitarian, rational or spiritual, patriotic or democratic, we cannot with decency uphold in Hinduism the dogma of an immutable untouchability. It clouds our vision, limits our experience, hardens our heart, narrows our sphere of responsibility and prevents our ideals of justice, love and sincerity from being perfect. The feeling that a particular caste or tribe or sect as such is by divine ordinance invested either with a mystic superiority or spiritual guardianship over others or has been condemned by God to bear the visible symbols of a hopeless degradation is destructive of the divinity in man, which is the central doctrine of Hinduism. It is not good for any one, neither for the guardian nor for the ward. As an *Ahaval* of Kapilar, current in my province, puts it "Who can see any unlikeness of form between men such as there is between bull and buffalo? Vasishtha born of lowly mistress to Brahma like red water-lily springing up in mire; Sakti born of a Chandala woman to Vasishtha: Parasara born to Sakti of Pulaiya woman; Vyasa born of a fisher-girl to Parasara; all these by study of the Vedas rose to high estate and are famous as holy men". And if we are still in doubt, it is dissipated when we listen to Vemana's disconcerting query: "Why should we constantly revile the Pariah? Are not his flesh and blood the same as our own? And of what caste is He who pervades the Pariah?"

We must, therefore, realise that untouchability is but the offspring of man-made custom and has no divine sanction behind it. On the other hand, from the point of view of Hinduism, it prevents it from spreading far and wide and sending its roots deeper and robs it of the transforming influence of missionary fervour.

The Congress Party in the Legislative Councils will, I have no doubt, attend to these and to the other items of constructive work to the extent to which they can be furthered in and through the legislatures. I trust it will, in particular, tone up the educational institutions belonging to or aided by the Government and secure the passage of enactments, including, in courses of compulsory studies, such subjects as will inculcate in boys and girls a consuming patriotism, courage and a wide national outlook.

LABOUR AND UNEMPLOYMENT

The organisation of labour has been included by the Congress at Cawnpore in its constructive programme. We must give it a front place in our work for the coming year. The welfare of labour, its housing, its provident funds and industrial insurance and all the other things required for improvement in the treatment and conditions of labour are of great national importance. They constitute a reserved subject though they concern us more than the bureaucracy. Labour legislation in India whether it concerns registration or trade unions or other matters is by no means satisfactory. Labour is not represented by its own men in the existing legislative bodies as the present electorates are too unmanageable and expensive. And nomination is a wholly inadmissible method of securing representation either of labour or of the depressed classes or of any class of the population. The Congress must therefore increasingly promote the welfare of labour and the Congress party in each legislature should represent its interests and pay special attention to its requirements. Fortunately labour in India is becoming more and more insistent on its rights and is slowly organizing itself. There is perfect identity of feeling and interest between the national movement and labour. None need fear that in India the legitimate interests of labour will be sacrificed to capitalist interests; or that the Congress can neither reconcile them nor be just to both.

Next to Swaraj, the greatest of India's needs is the relief of poverty and unemployment. Owing to a variety of causes it has assumed colossal dimensions. The average income of an Indian is hardly Rs. 68 per annum. We are face to face with un speakable squalor and misery and starvation. The first duty of a Government is to take adequate measures for their removal; but under the present system of Government the problem is wholly ignored. Otherwise, will the

present Government, for instance, establish the great industry of ship-building on a large scale or start a line of state-owned steam-ships that will earn freight for India and give employment, as Indian Railways do, to tens of thousands of Indians? Assuredly not. We want Swaraj for the purpose of discharging what according to our tradition and culture is our paramount duty. For, Swaraj has to be won before we can establish industries on a large scale and adequately deal with the problem of poverty and unemployment. In the meantime the Congress party in the several legislatures should make every attempt to get laws passed compelling the Government to relieve unemployment by the establishment of State industries, by opening up of new tracts for cultivation and in other ways. It should also educate the country and link unemployment to the Swaraj movement in such a way as to produce an increasing amount of pressure on the Government.

GOVERNMENT'S CURRENCY POLICY

A grievance of considerable magnitude has recently arisen in connection with the currency and exchange policy of the Government. The recommendations of the Currency Commission adopted by the Government do not establish the effective gold standard with gold currency which India needs for her prosperity but are injurious to Indian interests. These and the resolve of the Government to fix the exchange at 18d, its continued deflation of the currency and its sales of Reverse Council Bills contrary to the clear assurance given by the Finance Member that the Assembly would first be consulted, have exasperated Indian public opinion. They are bound to result in gross injustice to our industries, to our agricultural population and to our exporters. A little reflection will make us agree that the lower price of imports is no compensation especially when we remember the expenditure on imported goods by the vast bulk of the consumers is but a small percentage of their total expenditure. The loss inflicted upon India is very substantial, whether we have regard to the drop of 12½% in the real value of agricultural produce or of exports or have regard to the competition between products of Indian and foreign industries or to consequential increase in agricultural indebtedness. Nor will additional taxation be, as contended, necessary if the exchange is at 16d. The question should not be regarded as a recondite question for economic Pandits or as if its eventual adjustment does not mean serious loss at present. The currency policy of the Government has a far-reaching importance: it not only affects certain key interests but the general welfare of the country. To say that sections of Indian capitalists want to exploit us is but an attempt to prejudice us which must be resisted. In our fear lest our own capitalists use us, let us not allow ourselves to be exploited by

foreign capitalists in the interests of England and to the general detriment of India. I am confident that we shall be able to hold the scales even not only as between rival communities but as between rival interests in India. I cordially welcome the formation of the Indian Currency League and trust that it will adequately educate public opinion on the question of the ratio of the gold standard, gold currency and other cognate questions. But I am certain the League will be able to achieve nothing, either by debate and vote in the Assembly or by protest outside, unless it comes into line with the Congress and unless its members harness themselves to the dynamic politics of the Congress.

INDIAN STATES

Indian States, in the opinion of some friends, present a difficult and delicate question in connection with our demand for Swaraj. The difficulty only exists so long as we do not go into it and the delicacy arises because we have one view for British India and another for Indian States. I share, to the full, the sympathy of all those who think that Indian States are a kind of very imperfect Swaraj. They remind us of the high estate from which we have fallen and our national instinct, sound in the main, prompts us to preserve these relics of an ancient dignity. But the reconciliation between sentiment and the imperious necessity for Swaraj is by no means difficult. The rulers of Indian States ought, in their own interests and in the interests of their subjects, to content themselves with the position of hereditary governors or administrators of their territories under a system of representative institutions and responsible government. It is better, much better, for an Indian ruler to be the head of a democratic government and to rely on the support of his people than to occupy the very dubious and anxious position he does at present. He will then, if he is a just and wise ruler, be in a safer, freer and more dignified and influential position than he is in now; if he be unjust or vicious, he will not deserve any protection either from the present government or from Free India. The population of the Indian States is about 72 millions, somewhat less than a third of the population of British India. The identity of sentiment and civilization, of interest and aspiration, between the two is unaffected by political barriers; and echoes of our Swaraj movement are heard in the States. The people of British India, when they are fighting for Swaraj, are entitled to have the Indian States brought into line with British India. Matters affecting the relations of the Government with Indian States or relating to the affairs of such States, ought not to be excluded, as they are at present, from the consideration of the central legislature. We in British India are, by ties of blood, religion, culture and business so intimately connected with those in the Indian States that it

is impossible to deny them our help in their aspirations and in their grievances. The people of each State should have such representation in the Assembly as may be necessary to safe-guard their interests till each Indian State obtains a system of responsible Government.

GREATER INDIA

The lineaments of our great ancestry reveal themselves in us to-day however thin in the transmission, the ancient blood has become. And the adventurous spirit of early India which built up long ago a greater Bharata Varsha to the East and to the West, to the North and to the South is not extinct. It is now seen in the greater India which our brethren, in humble and laborious fashion, are building for us in far off lands against unparalalled odds. The status of Indians abroad, whether in South Africa or Kenya, in Fiji or Guiana, in Ceylon or Malaya, in America or Australia, depends inevitably upon the status of Indians in their own land; and Swaraj for India depends in its turn upon the brave and unfaltering spirit of our kith and kin across the seas.

The patient industry and skill of the Indian labourer wins rich fields of cereals and sugarcane, plantations of rubber, tea and coffee and smiling gardens of fruit, flower and vegetable from virgin forests and unpromising lands amidst the hardships of unfamiliar countries and climates. He is therefore induced, with the permission of the Indian Government, to emigrate to distant countries where he lives a life of incessant toil and misery often unsweetened by the happiness of a real home. But when the need for his labour ceases, he is asked either to submit himself to humiliating conditions or given notice to quit. The position of Indians in South Africa and Kenya stands on a much worse footing while their claims to equality are distinctly greater. Indians abroad are of all classes and positions and should be entitled to full rights of citizenship there just as much as others. In any case, the term "cooly" connotes the dignity of labour and the Indian cooly settler, lowly as he is, is far superior in status to the original convict settler in Australia. No white man, I believe, refuses to employ an Indian on a lower wage, but his passion for improving the lot of Indians insists on their adoption of higher standards of living.

With patience and perseverance, our brethren are solving the question of racial equality all over the world. We can help them only by winning Swaraj for India. In the meantime, the Cawnpore resolution to open a foreign department to look after the interests of overseas Indians and to carry on propoganda concerning their status has to be sufficiently implemented. The deputation of our South African friends to India last year was an education in itself. I would suggest the holding, once in a way, of a session of the Congress in

South Africa. Further, a small committee should be appointed to go to the principal foreign countries where Indians, whether traders, students, labourers or others, reside, so as to get into direct personal touch with them.

ASIATIC FEDERATION

The time has perhaps come for us seriously to think of a Federation of the Asiatic peoples for their common welfare. So long as our neighbours were ruled by irresponsible autocrats, such an idea was clearly out of the question. Now that Angora, Persia, China and Siberia are governed by democracies, a federation of Asiatic democracies will make for peace, prosperity and freedom of Asia and therefore comes within the range of practical politics. Signs are not wanting to indicate that our neighbours take keen interest in us and we must reciprocate it. In order to promote better understanding and closer relations between India and other Asiatic countries, frequent interchange of visits by appropriate delegations should be arranged, as well as other steps taken. We have too long neglected the possibilities of a cultural and business union with all Asiatic countries.

COMMUNALISM AND NATIONALISM.

I have reserved, to the last, my remarks on the struggle between communalism and nationalism. The critical phase of the struggle is over and the issue is no longer in doubt. The riots and disturbances that have recently disfigured our social life have drawn forth nearly all that is bad in communalism. The forces of nationalism are steadily and visibly triumphing over the forces of communalism. The results of the elections in the Punjab and the United Provinces are as much due to serious divisions amongst Congressmen as to the confusion caused by communal cries. Those two provinces have not, as it appears to me, given their verdict in favour of communalism. For the number of Congress candidates that succeeded there on the Cawnpore mandate is larger than the number that succeeded on the Hindu communal ticket. In Bengal, Behar, Madras and in the rest of India, the answer of the electorates against communalism has been decisive. In Madras the electorates, with the masses of the general population at their back, have cashiered a communal party that for 6 years, thanks to Lord Willingdon, has been responsible for the acute tension of feeling between Brahmin and non-Brahmin. They have loyally supported the Congress ideals of nationalism, unity and justice and have effected a remarkable change in the atmosphere of the province. Electorates predominantly non-Brahmin in composition have returned, either unopposed or after contest, Brahmin and non-Brahmin Nationalists to the local council and to the Assembly and the brunt of the fighting was borne by patriotic non-Brahmins, not less hungry than others for Swaraj. In Bihar, the loyalty to the Congress both amongst

Hindus and Muslims has been very striking and the national harvest for Council and Assembly is abundant. In Bengal, the Congress party in the Council will be much stronger than before and communalism has been held in check. I feel sure Bengal will maintain, as ever, her political primacy.

That communalism is a negation of nationalism and is an obstacle to Swaraj, is being rapidly and very generally realised. I am confident that wherever intensive propaganda, sincere and persuasive, clearly analyses the fallacies underlying it, communalism will go to the wall. Happily, prejudice and suspicion are not deep-seated amongst Indians and communalism is but their off-spring. Again, who will not agree, after some political education, that communal conflicts necessarily involve that there should be an arbiter and that if the whole of India were divided into two warring communities, the arbiter would always be a foreigner? We must not only reach, but hold fast to, the conviction that we are Indians first and last and right through. National representation and national leadership must be our aim and not communal leadership and communal representation. A patriotic Hindu or Mussalman should, at all times and at all costs, desire to represent and lead not only his own community but the other community as well.

In Great Britain, differences of race, language and habits between Englishmen, Scotchmen and Welshmen did not prevent them from establishing self-government. Nor did the bitter and prolonged struggles between Protestants and Roman Catholics prevent the advent of self-government in England, France and Canada. Nor did the divisions between the white races in South Africa make the grant of self-government impossible. The differences between Hindus and Mussalmans or between Brahmins and non-Brahmins are by no means such as to prevent them from being one nation. There is no conflict of interests between them in respect of all those matters which tend to their common welfare or make for a national advance or relate to the establishment and development of self-governing institutions.

FUNDAMENTAL SAFEGUARDS

Religious doctrines and institutions and such social usages and personal laws as have historically been due to a distinctive culture are alone peculiar to any religious community. There should therefore be a fundamental law of Swaraj to guard against the making of laws by any legislature in India that may affect liberty of conscience, freedom of religious observance or association, the right to religious education and, at the option of the community concerned, the right to personal laws. Another safeguard has been devised by the Working Committee of the Congress to prevent communal hatred and strife and to protect the legitimate interests of minorities. The rule is to the following effect:—

No bill, motion or amendment relating to any inter-communal matter should be moved or discussed if a majority of three-fourths of the members of any community affected thereby in the legislature, are opposed to the introduction or discussion of such a bill, motion, or amendment. And the Congress party in the legislature concerned, should take such steps as may be possible to give effect to this resolution in each case. But if their efforts are not successful, and a three-fourths majority of the members of any community of the Congress party affected by such an inter-communal question consider that it should not be made a party question, then the Congress party in the legislature shall refrain from making it a party question.

PLEA FOR TOLERANCE

In the early days of a world faith, again, conversion was of its essence. Though each community should be free to make conversions, no resort to conversion is really any longer useful or necessary. For, the lives of the best and most pious men in each community are a fitter and more effective propaganda in that behalf than definite missionary effort. But wherever the latter is made, it should be open and general and neither secret nor directed to the converting of particular men or women. Let us realize that no great and long-established religion gains in truth, beauty or spirituality with any increase in its census figures.

It is not by hatred of another's religion or of those that profess it that the interests of one's own religion are advanced. Asoka in his Edict on tolerance proceeded on abundant experience and a clear perception of the "essence of the matter", as he calls it, and of real and lasting values. Says he: "He who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect."

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

Moreover, no community can, in these days, really progress in secular affairs unless the nation as a whole advances, unless, in other words, the other communities either acquiesce in the rise of one community or make equal progress. The best way of advancing politically one's own community is, therefore, to raise the status of all the communities as a whole. For, if you seek to advance your own community, all the other communities band themselves together against yours. Communalism is not so much a positive idea of benefiting one's own community as a destructive desire to obtain advantages at the expense of the other communities. And how, one may well ask, is a community benefited by one of its members securing a

post in government service or succeeding in an election? If he conducts himself justly and honestly as a member of the public service, members of his community can share only in the general good and can gain no undue advantage. If, on the other hand, he favours them at the expense of others, he will become unjust and corrupt. Again, what is every-day distrust between two individuals of the same community is dignified into communal distrust or tension when it arises between two individuals belonging to different communities, though, in both cases, the motive or cause, whether it be ambition or envy, bad temper or enmity, necessity or greed, difference in opinion or temperament may be the same.

That much abused expression communal representation is a misnomer; for all the communities are equally interested in all public questions and in the country's problems and in particular solutions of them. Such differences as exist are temperamental and individual and not at all communal. Taxation and other burdens imposed by the State bear on all and grievances are common to all and methods of redress or agitation are not peculiar to a community. Nor is it by mathematical or mechanical formulae that justice between communities in the matter of the services or in other matters can be rendered. The Congress stands for equal rights and opportunities for all classes, castes and communities. And Indian nationalists are developing a high sense of justice; they are even sensitively just. Let us realize clearly that to uphold justice between man and man is to uphold justice between community and community. As a safeguard, a negative rule against members of any community or caste monopolising offices is all that is required. There are so many communities and there is so much of competition in these days in India that it is impossible for any community to create such a monopoly. Again, neither a Hindu nor a Muslim member can at all represent his religion in a Legislative Council on any question except where his religion is sought to be affected.

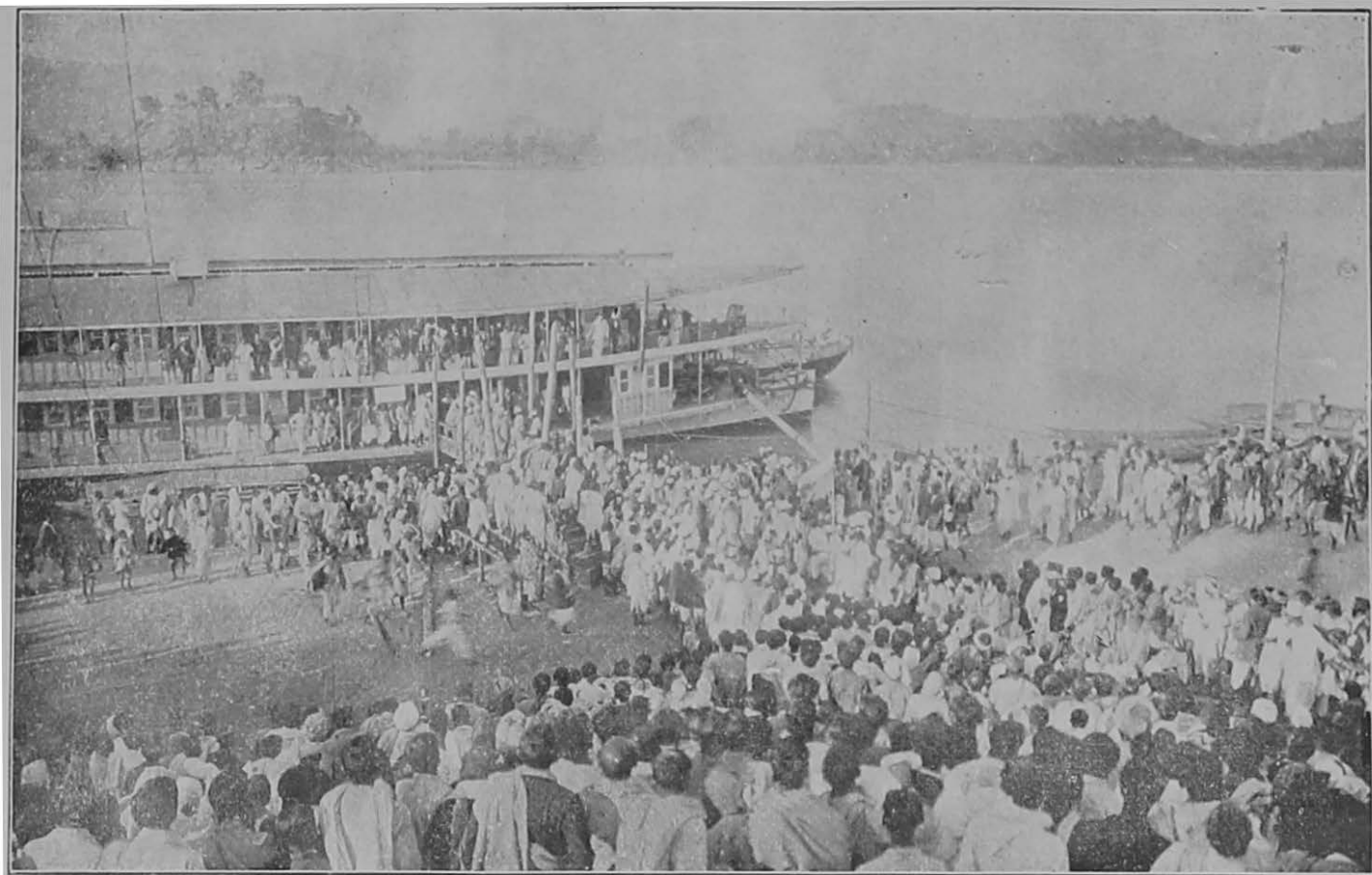
POLITICS AND RELIGION

The intrusion into politics of religion, and very often of dogmatic religion, must be resisted as a primitive or mediaeval idea, born of theocracies, and disastrous alike to religion and to politics. Hinduism and Islam will gain immeasurably in strength and purity if they are not mixed up with secular politics. I do not speak of morality or of that spiritual quality which is common to all great religions; for thereby politics and organizations are cleansed and made sweet and wholesome. In the evolution of States, theocracies have not survived as they were responsible for fanaticism, persecution and internal strife and neglected the material welfare of the people and the proper arts of government.

HINDUISM AND ISLAM

Lastly, let us clearly grasp the truth that neither Hinduism nor Islam stands in danger of being destroyed by the other. Both are great religions, ages old; and both have an abiding hold on vast populations. They have again and again come into severe conflict with each other and have survived it, as they have survived the shocks of foreign invasions and foreign civilizations and all other catastrophic changes. In mediaeval conditions, Hinduism and Islam both continued to flourish in full vigour, independent of the religion of powerful despots who were backed up by their own communities, numerous and armed. In modern times, when there is far greater religious tolerance, and when autocracies have been replaced by democracies and democracies are notoriously secular in their outlook and priestly influence has largely declined, it is wholly chimerical to imagine that if either the Hindus or the Muhammadans in a province constitute a majority in a democratic form of Government, the religion of the minority will suffer. No proselytizing can equal the hearty crusading fervour of early and mediaeval times: and the two great religions of India have in spite of innumerable conversions and re-conversions adjusted and consolidated themselves and have acquired an adamant stability. A Hindu State that attempts with all its authority to destroy Islam will be subverted in a minute and a similar fate will befall a Muslim State that attempts to destroy Hinduism.

Let us not forget, in the fever of political controversy, that the strength of each religion is derived from God and is rooted in the souls of Prahladas. Not all the tortures of a Torquemada nor all the burning at the stakes nor all other forms of persecution have been able to destroy the mystic quality of the human soul. Neither Hinduism nor Islam derives or requires strength either from the present or from any future Government. Both stand far, far above Swaraj which is not comparable to them. Neither foreign Governments nor self-Governments, neither democracies nor autocracies, can destroy that seed of faith which is in every one of us, that inspired interpretation of the universe to which one elings for guidance and solace in this world and for salvation in the next. Hindus and Mussalmans have lived in the past and will live in the future as patriotic fellow citizens and firm and loyal friends. In the transaction of public affairs, in all matters of secular advancement, in all aspects of the administration and on all public, political and national questions, they easily can and should think and feel and act as Indians. I fervently appeal to Hindu and Mussalman leaders with all the strength of my feeble voice to consider the need for concerted action in a calm and dispassionate spirit and to unite indissolubly for their common deliverance.



President's Arrival

APPEAL FOR UNITY

It appears to me that the vision of Swaraj has become somewhat dim in the dust of internal strife and our hunger for it less keen in our greater desire for the philosophy of individualism. The need of the hour is not philosophy but action, not freedom for the individual but freedom for the nation, not alone unity in ideal and object, but also unity in method and action, direction and pace, and above all, not polemics and projects but organization and discipline, first and last and right through. The question naturally suggests itself: Should we have distinct parties in the country or in the Congress? I know the weight of names is against me, but I would beg a calm and earnest examination of the question with Swaraj brain and Swaraj heart. The answer comes again and again from the depths of our being, from the holy of holies, from our tortured soul, that the righteous should link hands against unrighteousness. There can be only two parties in India, the party of the Government and its adherents that obstruct Swaraj, and the party that fights visibly and unceasingly for Swaraj. An army has several arms, but it would be a singular army indeed if its cavalry fought its infantry and its artillery opened fire on both. The duties of all groups or parties in the country and in the Congress is vigorously to co-operate with one another in their fight for Swaraj just as the arms of a sensible army will do in a real war.

I deprecate the philosophy of individualism in a supreme struggle for freedom against a powerful people with their trained bureaucracy and with unlimited material resources. On a question whether a particular course is wise or unwise, will succeed or fail, will accelerate Swaraj or retard it, to make one's opinion or judgment or feeling a matter of conscience is false philosophy. On a point of religion, of morality, of honour, one's own conscience must be the arbiter, but in transacting the affairs of a country, when a decision is not irreligious, immoral or dishonourable, I fail to see how we may rely on our right to differ from one another and yet uphold the discipline necessary for an organization fighting for Swaraj. If the soldiers in any army claim similar right when engaged in a battle they will have short shrift at the enemy's hands. We want freedom for our country and must, therefore, pay the price for it.

Again, shall we cease to be constantly on the alert and prefer the easier to the harder way, retreat to advance? Shall we avoid taking prompt decisions, refrain from action when a decision has been come to or indulge the critical mood? Shall we not concentrate on the imparting of a new momentum, the attracting of fresh recruits and the consolidation and stiffening of our ranks? Or, shall we

relax our wills and substitute patience for impatience, little things for big things, discretion for valour, policy for truth, dogma for faith, and sweet reasonableness for stern determination.

Do we feel that we are unfit to undertake the Government of the country? Is it not actually run by Indian officials and are not the English overseers merely concerned in laying down policies which their Indian subordinates and colleagues who are in no better position than subordinates, are obliged to carry out? The machinery of the Government is already there, only the directing brain and voice are needed and that surely can be supplied by us.

What is needed to break our bonds is only that we should get rid of this creeping paralysis of brain and will, of this hypnotism which the foreigner exercises over the Indian official and un-official, whether his opponent or his friend. The conditions in India are so favourable to the immediate attainment of Swaraj that it were an easy achievement if we could but set our hands to it. One or two men in every village or town have but to shoulder the responsibilities of a real and lasting leadership. Character and transparent patriotism, steady courage and average ability are all that is needed for the purpose. We have been trying to build leadership from above which is an impossible process and from abroad which is a destructive process. We must build leadership from the base and on the spot itself. Efficient local leadership alone and not propaganda or programmes of sorts will solve the problem. For, Swaraj means the ability to set up a local Panchayat or leader that will command continuously the loyal and energetic support of the people in the locality.

With the greatest fervour and in all humility, I would appeal to all leaders, all groups of workers and all schools of thought, in and outside the Congress, to put aside all differences for one brief year and stand together as comrades in arms determined to win freedom. We all, whether Swarajists, Responsivists, Independents or others, long for unity; and none among us is anxious to emphasise or perpetuate differences. But we all long equally ardently for Swaraj. May I, therefore, request all friends, whether they agree or not with all that I have said, to see if it is not possible to reconcile the longing for unity with the longing for Swaraj, without affecting either and in such a way and by such methods as shall amaze and baffle and discomfit the Governments in India and in England at this critical hour.

We can restore our faith in ourselves only by restoring our faith in each other, for without an atmosphere of energetic goodwill and of freedom from suspicion and prejudice, it is impossible to perfect the work of organization that we have begun or to reimpose the splendid discipline that staggered the world till the 10th of March, 1922.

CONCLUSION

Swaraj is not an intellectual but an emotional proposition. We must cherish it in our hearts with unquenchable faith. Neither genial humour nor mordant sarcasm, neither the persuasion of friends nor the wrath of foes, neither appreciation nor calumny should make our patriotism tepid or qualify the singleness of our purpose. We must, therefore, become possessed by a passion for Swaraj that is not warped by fallacies and impulses, that will stand for a uniform and rapid corporate advance in serried masses, that will know no obstacles, that will not wax and wane with the seasons, that will not be daunted by imprisonments or depressed by failures.

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥

कर्मण्येव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणां कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥

Messages of Sympathy.

After the Presidential Address was delivered, Mr. Girdharilal read out the following messages :

"Today the most important and far-reaching issue is Hindu-Muslim unity and Council divisions. If the Congress fails to concentrate whole-heartedly on the Hindu-Moslem question as the one great object, then allow me to say that all other programmes, however interesting and practical are bound to prove fruitless. In my enforced retirement my heart goes out to you (President) in your great difficulties in handling the national problem."—*Hakim Ajmal Khan.*

"Nothing would have given me greater pleasure than to respond to your invitation which reached me in my banishment at Mussoorie, but regret previous engagements prevent me from attending the momentous session. I pray God may so guide you that you may be able to direct the nation's activities in a way which may lead to India's quickest and earliest emancipation."—*Ex-Maharaja of Nabha.*

Mr. Bhopatkar, President, Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee, wished the Congress should adopt a formula acceptable to all the wings—and this was afforded by the Sabarmathi Pact.

Sardar Mangal Singh said the Sikhs steadfastly stood by the Congress in the fight for freedom and hoped the Congress would unitedly maintain uncompromising opposition to the bureaucracy and refuse to bend before British Imperialism.

Hon. Seth Govind Das of Jubbalpore prayed for communal and political unity.

Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas wiring from Benares urged the Congress to adopt the programme acceptable to all progressive parties and render India's demand for Swaraj effective.

Mr. Hussainbhoj Laljee from Bombay expressed sympathy in the President's efforts to bring about unity.

Prof. Indra in a letter dated the 18th December said: "Swami Shradhdhanand wished to reply to you personally but as he is still lying in bed directs me to thank you for the invitation. You know his ideas about national unity. He hopes you will be able to unite the different wings of the national army at Gauhati. Without unity our efforts will be of no avail. 'Indians, unite' is his message from the sick bed."

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas said he felt he might not be of any use as he had not yet made up his mind to sign the Congress creed. He fully agreed that need for concerted political action on the part of all parties was supreme. He hoped to be able to work with Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar in the Assembly to this end.

Sir Hari Singh Gour said well-informed and influential friends in England had written to say that the Conservative Government were anxious to hasten the appointment of the Royal Commission as they wished to settle the future of India before they went out of office as they were afraid that if they did not do so it might be left to the Labour Government to settle this outstanding question, and to the prejudice of the English interests in India.

Sir Abdur Rahim who had accepted the Presidentship of the All India Mahomedan Educational Conference said it had been his effort to devise a programme of concerted action acceptable to both communities and in spite of all misunderstandings and bad feeling that existed he was hopeful that such an agreed policy was possible. He continued, "I shall continue to work for it, whatever obstacles may be thrown in my way from various quarters. When we shall be able to meet on a common platform with a clear and definite realisation of the needs, aspirations and difficulties of different Indian communities, we should be inaugurating a truly national life which will be able to overcome all resistance."

Mr. K. Natarajan trusted that nothing would be done at Gauhati which would hamper the good work he (Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar) had so far done.

The Resolutions

I. CONDOLENCE

The President called upon Mahatma Gandhi to move the Resolution on Swami Shraddhananda's murder. Mahatmaji received an ovation on his first reappearance in public after the lapse of an year's retirement.

Mahatma Gandhi moved the following resolution :—

“This Congress expresses its horror and indignation at the cowardly and treacherous murder of Swami Shraddhananda and places on record its sense of the irreparable loss the nation has sustained by the tragic death of a brave and noble patriot who dedicated his life and his great gifts to the service of his country and of his faith and espoused with fearless devotion the cause of the lowly, the fallen and the weak.”

He spoke in Hindi and the following is a summary of his speech :
Brothers and Sisters,

You must have noticed that the resolution I have moved originally stood in Maulana Mohamad Ali's name. But I am here to move it in obedience to the President's summons. We see from the newspapers that the assassination of Swamiji has evoked grief and horror throughout the land. I said speaking on the same subject at the All India Congress Committee that we should not mourn over Swamiji's death. He had died the death of a hero, and every one of us might wish for such a death. But I want to make a slight correction in that last statement. Every brave man welcomes such a death whenever it comes to him. He greets it as a friend. But let no one therefore invite or hanker after such a death, let no one desire that someone else should be in the wrong and err against God and man, so that he might become a martyr. It is wrong to wish anyone to go astray. Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr, but let no one lust for martyrdom.

Swamiji was a hero among heroes, the bravest of the brave. He had astonished the nation with an unbroken record of bravery. I am witness of the pledge he had taken to sacrifice himself at the altar of the country.

But need anyone speak at length on Swamiji's services to the nation? Swamiji, as every one knew, was the help of the helpless, the friend of the weak and the oppressed and the work he had done for the untouchables was unsurpassed. I well remember his having told me once that unless every Hindu member of the All India Congress Committee had an 'untouchable' servant in his home, the work

of the Congress for the uplift of the untouchables would not be complete. This may sound as an impracticable proposal, but it shows his unbounded love for the untouchables.

I shall not refer here to his many other services. Whilst the assassination of such a great hero and patriot, such a servant and devotee of God as Swamiji can be made to serve the country's cause, imperfect men as we are, it is natural for us to mourn over his sad death. And when one thinks of the circumstances under which he met his death one is naturally filled with horror and indignation. The assassin sought an interview with Swamiji to have a discussion on Islam. His faithful servant refused to admit him as he had Dr. Ansari's orders to allow no interviews so long as Swamiji was seriously ailing. But God had evidently ordered otherwise. Swamiji when he overheard the request asked Dharmasingh to let the man in. Brother Abdul Rashid was shown in. I purposely call him brother, and if we are true Hindus you will understand why I call him so. Swamiji asked his servant to admit Abdul Rashid, because God had willed to show therethrough the greatness of Swamiji and the glory of Hinduism. Swamiji was of course too ill to discuss religious topics and he asked the stranger to seek another occasion. But he would not go. He said he was thirsty and asked for water. Swamiji asked Dharmasingh to fetch water for him and taking the advantage of his absence, the man deposited bullet shots in Swamiji's breast.

This is a thing which should not have happened in India—India, where both Hindus and Mussalmans are proud of their faiths. I have studied the Koran with the same reverent attention as I give the Gita, and I say that the Koran nowhere sanctions or enjoins such murders. The murder has been possible because the two communities look upon each other with feelings of hatred and enmity. Many Mussalmans believe that Lalaji and Malaviyaji are the sworn enemies of Islam as was Swamiji in their opinion. On the other hand, many Hindus regard Sir Abdur Rahim and other Mussalmans as the enemies of Hinduism. To my mind both are wholly wrong. Swamiji was no enemy of Islam nor are Lalaji and Malaviyaji. Lalaji and Malaviyaji have a right to express their opinion freely and even if we disagree with them no one may excite feelings of hatred against them. And yet what do we see today? There are few Mussalman papers today which do not use foul language against these patriots. Now I ask in all humility what is the wrong they have done. We may not see eye to eye with them in their methods of work. But I am sure that it is his great service that has earned for Malaviyaji the name, Bharat Bhushan. Lalaji too has a great record of service. Then take the Mussalman leaders. Sir Abdur Rahim may think that Hindus are in advance of the Mussalmans in every respect, that they are rich, they are educated, and the Mussal-

mans are poor and uneducated. Sir Abdur Rahim thinks that his community should have a preference in the services. It is open to us to feel and say that he is mistaken in his views, but why should we abuse him for his opinions? If Maulana Mohamad Ali says that although he has respect for Gandhi he holds that the faith of a Muslim who believes in the Koran is greater than the faith of Gandhi, why should we be angry? Do not some Christian clergymen say that a Christian regularly going to church and serving Jesus is better than a Hindu however pious he may be? What does that matter to us? I therefore appeal to you that if you hold dear the memory of Swami Shraddhanandaji you would help in purging the atmosphere of mutual hatred and calumny, you would help in boycotting papers which foment hatred and spread misrepresentation. I am sure that India would lose nothing if 90 *per cent.* of the papers were to cease today. Many Mussalman papers today subsist on hatred of the Hindu and many Hindu papers subsist on hatred of the Mussalman. Swamiji has left for us a rich lesson written in his blood. 'Do you know the liberality of the Arya Samaj?' he once asked me. 'Do you know how Maharshi Dayanand forgave the man who poisoned him?' I knew it. How could I be ignorant of it, knowing as I did that the Maharshi had before him the example of Yudhishtira and the teaching of the Gita and the Upanishads? But Shraddhanandaji in his overflowing reverence for the Maharshi dilated upon his forgiveness. I tell you the disciple had no less of that noble quality than his great master. Speaking once about the implications of "Shuddhi" he told me that his "Shuddhi" excluded any feeling of ill will for the Mussalman, that it meant purification of self and of the great community to which he belonged, and that his ideal was the ideal of the Gita—"See thyself in every one of the created beings." But he emphasised that the Hindu also was no less a friend of his than the Mussalman and that it was his duty to serve him. Even if the whole Muslim world were to turn against me, I would declare that Malaviyaji is my friend and elder brother. I declare also in the same breath that none of the Mussalman leaders is an enemy of Hinduism. Sir Abdur Rahim is not an enemy of the Hindus, nor is Mian Fazli Hussain. When I met him he assured me that he was an old Congressmen, that he loved the Hindus no less than the Mussalmans, but that as a Mussalman he wanted to serve the latter. We may disagree with him in his views, we may not like his demands for the Mussalmans, but why should we therefore swear at him and say that he is an enemy of the Hindus? Why should we not express our dissent from his views and fight them, if necessary, even as I do with Malaviyaji, in many respects, in a Satyagrahi way? I repeat therefore with all the emphasis I can command that Sir Abdur Rahim or Mr. Jinnah or the Ali Brothers are no enemies of the Hindus. Let not the lesson of

Swami Shraddhanandaji's death be lost on us. You will all be accepting this resolution standing, while at this moment perhaps there are Hindu-Muslim disturbances going on in Delhi. But I tell you that if every one of you understands and lays to his heart the lesson that Swami Shraddhanandaji has left for us, it is again possible to win Swaraj in no time. I am a mad man, you will say, accustomed to giving rash promises. Well, I tell you I am not mad, I am still as much in earnest about my programme as I was in 1920, but those who made pledges in 1920 broke them and made Swaraj impossible then. We are all children of the same Father—whom the Hindu and the Mussalman and the Christian know by different names. What if Shankara declared his faith in one God in his formula *Ekanevadvitiam* or Ramanuja in his dual doctrine or Mahomed in his *La Ilaha Illillaha*? All meant one and the same thing. If we cleanse our hearts we shall be able to see that Swamiji has served us in his death as much as he served us when living. Let us purify our hearts with his blood, and fight, if need be, for our rights in a peaceful and Satyagrahi way. Let every Musalman also understand that Swami Shraddhanandaji was no enemy of Islam, that his was a pure and unsullied life, and that he has left for us all the lesson of peace written in his blood.

Now you will perhaps understand why I have called Abdul Rashid a brother, and I repeat it. I do not even regard him as guilty of Swami's murder. Guilty indeed are all those who excited feelings of hatred against one another. For us Hindus, the Gita enjoins on us the lesson of equality, we are to cherish the same feelings towards a learned Brahman as towards a *Chandala*, a dog, a cow and an elephant.

This is no occasion for mourning or tears, it is an occasion that should burn on our hearts the lesson of bravery. Bravery is not the exclusive quality of the Kshatriyas. It may be their special privilege. But in our battle for Swaraj bravery is essential as much for the Brahman and the Vaishya and the Shudra as for the Kshatriya. Let us not therefore shed tears of sorrow, but chasten our hearts and steel them with some of the fire and faith that were Shraddhanandaji's.

Maulana Mohamad Ali in seconding the resolution said:—Friends, it was a little over five years ago that I was travelling through this province in the company of Mahatma Gandhi. That was in 1921, and it was on my way from Assam to Madras that I was arrested at Waltair, taken to Karachi and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. When we returned from the smaller prison to the larger prison of India, as we call it, I was released from the prison at Jhansi—I found that a considerable change for the worse had taken place in the atmosphere of India. I found that our great work for the freedom of India had been retarded, and I can assure you that nobody was sadder than I was when I found this change. Just after my internment for five years as

a detenu under the Defence of India Act and as a State prisoner under Regulation III of 1818, on my return from the Betul Jail, I found at the Amritsar Congress after this interval of five years that the entire atmosphere of India had changed. That was a change for the better but this was a change for the worse. I cannot lay claim to having changed India for the better from 1915 to 1920, nor can I hold myself responsible for the change for the worse in India in those two years that had taken place. But if I can take some responsibility for this I am willing to do it. I think I can also claim some credit for the change for the better that had taken place when I was in prison. But this is not a question of taking credit or responsibility for things evil or good. The real condition of affairs has to be faced. It was very unlikely that I would come to this Congress, but I felt that I must come to Gauhati, because it was this Province, after touring through which I was arrested and I wanted to revive the old associations, and, if possible, try to revive the old atmosphere. More than that, I wanted to come to Gauhati because we, the no-changers, had allowed a wing of the Congress, our Swarajist brothers, to remain in the Congress and yet go into the Councils and there work on behalf of the Congress. I wanted to know whether the Congress should give a decisive mandate to our brothers in the Councils as to what work they were to do in the Councils and also to chalk out a programme for their work in the country. These two things I considered to be so important that in spite of many disabilities I decided to start for Assam.

Delhi, though it is a small Province, is yet in many ways the heart of India. I ought to have been living in Delhi for many years except for the long intervals that I have been in prison. I am grieved to say that Delhi, the scene of unity, in one hour was turned into a scene of disunion and dissension. There was nothing at the present moment in the atmosphere of Delhi which foreboded the great tragedy that has recently taken place. It is really a bolt from the blue. And many men who read the telegram thought that that was a mistake made by the signaller, who signalled perhaps in place of "sad death" the words "shot dead". We thought it should be "sad death" and not "shot dead". But the words were too plain and I did not delude myself in this belief long. My first duty was to send a message on behalf of my brother and myself to Prof. Indra, Swamiji's son, assuring him that our hearts went out to him in his great sorrow. But Swamiji's death is not the kind of death for which it is sufficient for one individual to express his sorrow to another individual who has lost his father. Here you have a resolution that "the Congress expresses its horror and indignation at the cowardly and treacherous murder of Swami Shradhananda and places on record its sense of the irreparable loss the nation has sustained by the tragic death of a brave and noble patriot who dedicated his life and his great gifts

to the service of his country and of his faith and espoused with fearless devotion the cause of the lowly, the fallen and the weak." In the A. I. C. C., the last one at which Mrs. Sarojini Naidu presided, she referred to this great tragedy under the shadow of which we met, and then in her inimitably eloquent speech she called upon Mahatmaji to express his own feelings, and when these two great patriots had finished I desired to speak and I was called upon by the President to speak, and I expressed my own views, which I think have been communicated by the Press to the people of India. I have not yet received any message from Delhi. I had also asked Dr. Ansari and my own newspaper people for information but I have not received any message from them as yet. Perhaps Dr. Ansari is away or something has happened to the telegram, and therefore I cannot account for it. All that we have heard is that the assailant was a Mohammadan, Abdul Rashid. Nothing is said about any motive that the assailant assigns for this act of his, but the report received by us shows two things for which I feel extremely sick. Firstly it was an old gentleman who had been so ill as Swamiji was, and was still on his bed of sickness recovering, and yet recovering slowly; and secondly a man came in the sacred name of religion to invite discussion with Swamiji. The story told is that the servant said that Swamiji was lying ill and could not see him at the time. Surely every one in Delhi knew in what condition he was. Therefore the request was an outrage to my mind. But the man insisted, and I say that it shows with what great missionary zeal the Swamiji was carrying on his work that he said that the man could come in and speak to him. This man made a request which, to my mind, was nothing but a pretext. He is said to have asked the gentleman to whose house he had gone, for a glass of water. He claimed the hospitality of the Swami and then found an opportunity to commit this dastardly outrage. I say that this combination of circumstances is most sickening to me. This man went there in the name of religion and asked for a religious discussion, and then he claimed the hospitality of the very person he was going to attack, a person who was ill, and for all we know, was lying on his death bed. To attack a man in that position was the height of treachery, the height of cowardliness and the height of dastardliness.

I associate myself most heartily with this resolution which after it had been placed before the Subjects Committee was entrusted to me to move. Subsequently the President told that I was not to move it but he asked me to second it. I am now seconding it, and in doing so I associate myself most whole-heartedly with all that has been said in the resolution and by the mover. I also associate myself with the sense of loss which has been sustained by the country. I also associate myself whole-heartedly with the condemnation of the atrocious and

cowardly deed. I would not be true to my faith, and therefore to the nation, if I did not say that the same value would not be put by the Mussalmans as by the Hindus upon every part of Swami Shradhdhanda-ji's life work. He certainly felt most keenly his position as one living in an unfree country. He was most anxious to secure its liberation even though he did not always see eye to eye with us. But this is not the time to refer to differences of opinion as to the nature of methods which Swamiji sometimes adopted. His main work latterly was for his faith to which he had dedicated his great gifts, and though here too differences of opinion no doubt existed, with regard to some of the methods adopted by him, there can be no doubt that he worked with unmistakable intensity and missionary zeal in the cause of his faith as he understood it. However, I imagine there can be no difference of opinion in the matter of his courage. In that respect all communities can alike appreciate his greatness for there is a community of the courageous and the brave to which men of all creeds and countries belong,—a community to which only the coward is an alien. I always like to picture Swamiji as the stalwart patriot who fearlessly bared his bosom to the bayonets of a dozen of Gurkhas when they were used by the Government to intimidate Delhi in the Satyagraha days. I feel that I should have liked to share the risks which he went through in those days. Swamiji did not die then; he was not destined to die then. As I told you Swamiji was a brave man and he would never fear death. He was a noble and true Satyagrahi. It would have been a matter of great sorrow to every one if he was killed at the hands of Indians although employed by Government.

I think to a composite nation such as ours, it must be a great pity to all of us that Swamiji's assailant was a fellow-countryman. To me individually, as an Indian, and also as a Mussalman it is a matter of great sorrow that a Mussalman should have done this dastardly deed. No theologian can say that Islam legalises such deeds which are certainly an outrage, and I cannot imagine in what circumstances they can justify a murder, an outrage—a dastardly deed such as this.

I share with all my fellow countrymen, both Hindus and Mussalmans the sense of our irreparable loss. With these words I commend this resolution to your acceptance.

The Maulana then addressed the Congress briefly in Hindustani.

Pandit Motilal Nehru in supporting the resolution spoke in Hindustani.

Speaking next in English he said:—What I have just said in Hindustani, the purport of that, I will now with your permission repeat before you in English. I think that the only justification for appearing before you to support the resolution was that I had the honour and

pleasure of being perhaps one of the oldest friends of Swami Shraddhanand, and that at a time when he was not a Swami, but a plain Munshiram. He was in those days a student in the same College as I was. He was my senior in the College, as he was in age, and up to his dying day our relations were of the most cordial character and therefore I would not be doing my duty unless I came forward and associated myself with this resolution of condolence. What I next said was that the resolution had been most carefully worded, and every word in that resolution had the fullest and amplest justification behind it. Few people can claim and can be given credit for greater courage of conviction than Swamiji had. He was a man who was not afraid of anything. Through good report and bad report he did service to the motherland to the best of his ability and ran considerable risks in doing so. He was once roughly handled by Gurkhas when there was a sort of martial law in Delhi, and instead of showing any fear he turned round upon the Gurkhas, laid bare his breast to the Gurkhas' bayonets and defied them. His towering personality, his height and the kind of dignity which he always bore simply cowed down the martial spirit of the Gurkhas who humbly made way for him. That was an example of his physical courage. His moral courage was even superior. I have instances of his disagreement not only on political but also on religious questions, and I have shown you that he was never afraid of boldly expressing his opinions and acting upon them in spite of the fact that the great majority of the Hindus did not agree with him. He was a great advocate, for instance, of widow marriage, which, as you know, many people are opposed to, but that never prevented him from proclaiming from many platforms that the Hindu community suffered the greatest wrong to continue by not having widow marriage. Then he had his differences with Mahatma Gandhi. He had his differences with the Mahatma on political matters, but he never hesitated to ventilate the differences and always pointed out what he thought was wrong and what he thought was right. At the same time he was not unreasonable; he was always open to conviction. I have the greatest satisfaction in knowing that there were very few points upon which we disagreed. These were the traits of his character. Then I said that we have to draw a proper lesson from the brutal murder of which he was the victim. Our sympathies, of course, go out to his bereaved son, Prof. Indra whom I have known since his boyhood. Swamiji's death has come to every one of us as a great shock. There is no doubt about it. But there is a lesson to be learnt and not only is there a lesson to be learnt, but it ought to goad us to action. That lesson is that the unfortunate communal dissension which is now raging in the country between the two great communi-

ties, has now reached a stage beyond which it cannot be allowed to go any further except to the utter ruin of both communities. I say it is up to us now to cry halt to this communal movement, and these communal differences and that we should do our best, both Hindus and Mussalmans, to put a stop to this disgraceful state of things. If we draw that lesson and if we succeed, I say that the Swamiji's death will be fully avenged. Revenge is out of the question in the shape of punishing the person guilty of the murder. Of course, he can be sentenced and it will serve him right but that will be no satisfaction to the country at large. The only satisfaction that the country can derive is that by the fact of his death it would open the eyes of even those who were determined not to see things, and if the result is that the militant sections of both the communities will now see reason and come together,—I say that his death will be fully avenged. That is all I have said; I have nothing more to say. I commend this resolution and ask you to pass it in solemn silence, all standing.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya supported the resolution, in Hindi. The following is a summary of his Hindi speech.

Friends: It is a matter of deep grief and sorrow for the whole country that the great national worker, the great social reformer, has been murdered by one of our own countrymen. I cannot give expression to the feeling of deepest sorrow and agony with which my heart is filled. I think the whole nation should make atonement for the death of the great Swami. Swami Shraddhanand was a great patriot and he sacrificed his all for the service of the country, for the service of his community. He loved the young men of his land very dearly and felt for them and he established the Gurukula to train young men for national service. He was a bold man and never hesitated to give expression to his conviction in spite of strongest opposition. Those who think and do wrong may be afraid of giving expression to their conviction, but Swami Shraddhanand never faltered to act up to his belief, because he was never for anything wrong.

Along with our expression of sorrow for Swamiji's death two thoughts come uppermost in the mind about the dastardly murder. Swamiji was lying in his sick bed and a man came up to him and murdered him in cold blood. How could the desire for Swamiji's blood come into the mind of the man? From a common humanitarian point of view any human being will naturally shudder to think of killing an old man when he is laid up in bed with illness. How could then the thirst for Swamiji's blood come in the mind of the murderer? I believe the thirst for Swamiji's blood was infused into the mind of the man by those who write in newspapers, declaring time and often that Swamiji

is an enemy of Islam, as well as those who give expression to such feelings publicly. Some newspapers had been writing that any Moslem killing Swamiji would serve his religion. So long as such writings and speeches are not stopped there is no hope for bringing reconciliation between the two communities. Let Shuddhi, Sangathan and "Tabligh" go side by side and the work be done in the right way. Let there be no aggressive or retaliative attitude in the workers of the Sangathan and "Tabligh".

I would ask all sitting in the House to condole for Swamiji's death and then open their hearts and take the vow with God overhead as witness that they will never promote communal tension either by their writings or by their speeches or in their private conversations and conferences. I hear some Mohamedan newspaper has supported Swamiji's murder. I think this spirit is strongly reprehensible and I hope nobody will support such a thing. All Congressmen should make it a point to send newspapers indulging in such communal fanaticism to Congress offices, to the leaders and ask all not to read these papers.

Once again I say that I cannot express the deep sorrow and grief which have overtaken me. The bolt has come from the blue upon my breast and following the unperturbed devotion and patience of Swamiji I must try to bear with the sorrow. I hope you will all do the same and thereby really honour the great departed leader.

The Resolution was carried in solemn silence, all standing.

II. THE LATE MR. OMAR SOBANI

The following Resolution was moved from the Chair :—

"That this Congress places on record its deep regret at the untimely death of Mr. Omar Sobani who had rendered signal services to the Congress and the country during the days of the Non-co-operation movement."

The Resolution was carried with due solemnity, all standing

III. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Mahatma Gandhi moved the following resolution :—

"This Congress welcomes the Round Table Conference now sitting in South Africa to deliberate upon the best method of dealing with the question of the status of Indian settlers in that sub-continent and prays for divine blessing and guidance upon its deliberations.

This Congress once more tenders its thanks to that good Englishman, Mr. C. F. Andrews who has been chiefly instrumental in preparing in South Africa a calm atmosphere suitable for the holding of the Conference,

This Congress authorises the President to cable the text of the Resolution to General Hertzog, Sir M. Habibulla and Mr. C. F. Andrews."

Mahatmaji addressed the assembly in Hindi and the following is a summary of his speech :—

He said that Mr. C. F. Andrews had kept him in touch with the position in South Africa through correspondence. Mr. Andrews had emphasised in his letters that prayers should be held all over for divine guidance of the Round Table Conference. Need for such prayer was paramount. They knew that the Indian Government had no power to force its will on South Africa. The recent Imperial Conference had conceded to the dominions even greater freedom and independence in the field of imperial relations. They could, therefore, only pray to God to shower His blessings on those, engaged in the discussions of the Round Table Conference so that enlightened by the divine blessings, the Conference might concede justice to the Indian settlers in South Africa.

He then drew attention of the audience to the fact that the untouchability of South Africa, from which their countrymen were suffering was nothing but a repercussion of Indian untouchability. It therefore behoved them to put their own house in order.

He reminded the South African statesmen that history showed, those who having power abused it prepared for their own ruin, and implored them to grant the Indian settlers elementary justice which they desired. They did not ask for favours; in fact they had foregone, for the sake of peace, things they need not have in strict justice.

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad seconded the resolution in Urdu. He heartily associated himself with all that fell from Mahatma Gandhi.

The resolution was then put to vote and passed unanimously.

The Congress adjourned till noon next day.

SECOND DAY.

December 27, 1926.

The Congress reassembled on Monday, the 27th December, 1926 at 1 p. m.

The proceedings commenced with the singing of National songs.

The President called upon Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to move the Resolution on Kenya.

IV KENYA

On rising to move the resolution Mrs. Naidu was received with cheers.

She said:

Friends, I have been asked to move the following resolution on Kenya, the wording of which is Mahatma Gandhi's and not mine.

"In the opinion of the Congress, the progressively restrictive legislation against the Indian settlers of Kenya as evidenced by the latest action of the Kenya Government in increasing the original poll tax of 20 shillings, which by currency manipulation was raised to 30 shillings, and which has now been raised to 50 shillings by legislation, is calculated to demonstrate afresh that British Imperialism means the conservation of European interests at the cost of Indian interests, liberty and aspirations."

Friends, to-day in Kenya, a place about which most Indians know nothing and care less, the suffering Indians are holding a conference to decide how they shall meet and fight this new iniquitous tax that has been levied upon them. This new poll tax is just one more excuse, just one more token, just one more insult. It is not the mere additional tax, however unfair, that we are called upon to combat, but we have to go deeper, to look deeper to find the real cause against which the Indians of Kenya are fighting. I think it is not so much against British Imperialism as against the slave condition of Indians in India itself that we must fight. We and we alone are responsible for the plight of our brothers overseas. Our indifference, our own ignorance, our internecine warfare are the weapons used against our Indian brothers by the forces of reactionary Imperialism. It is not of much use to stand on the platform of the Indian National Congress and offer lip sympathy to those suffering countrymen of ours. It would be more to the purpose if we could liberate ourselves in India and thereafter speak with a voice which must be listened to with respect. What is the mere

tax that is imposed when the whole policy of the Kenya Legislatures is to drive away from East Africa those very men who have built up the prosperity of East Africa. We are so unaware of our own history, of the history of our colonisations, that we do not remember that East Africa has for centuries been the historic colony for the overflow of the Indian population. The enterprise, the really adventurous spirit of thousands of men from the West of India have made this part of East Africa the natural outlet for that adventurous spirit. History says that Vasco De Gama was looking for that "El Dorado" that was dreamed of by Europe, it was at Zanzibar, a point of East Africa, that Vasco De Gama sought for a guide to India, the dream of the world, when a man from Cambay showed him the shores of this dreamland. As long ago as that, East Africa has been colonised by Indians. In Kenya itself, where there are forests and mountains, where every thing means the action of the pioneer and sacrifice by some adventurous spirit for the sake of civilisation, it is always the Indian that has gone first and the civilisation of the whiteman has followed him.

Three years ago I went to Kenya. I went there to fight with my people against imposing on them that sinful thing called the White Paper policy. I went through the forests and went across the mountains and passing through the little townships were Indians trade, I went to the outposts of civilisation where there is British rule and where the flag of Britain is kept flying only because some depressed Indian 'Bunias' have had the courage to go first, start a town or settlement there which provides for the Imperial exploitation that is going on in South Africa. Everywhere the Indian is a sacrifice to civilisation, even the African having imbibed something of the contempt for the Indian settler that their Imperial masters teach them, calls the depressed Indians 'Bunias'. Without the depressed Indians in South Africa there would have been no Uganda Railway. Three hundred of them have died there. At Mombassa the lions came down and took away 60 of them, chiefly Punjabees. Everywhere where beasts of prey prowl around even at the door, it is not the Englishman who goes there, but the Indian, while the Englishmen reap the profits made possible by the sacrifice of Indians. Everywhere I went, I found that the forests were thundering with the roars of lions, the howling of panthers and the hyenas laughing in the darkness. A real shame it is that we allow our countrymen who have built up the continent of Africa to suffer because we have not had leisure from our own interne-cine warfare to protect their rights and the rights of those who are pioneers and link us up with the greater world outside. Three years ago because of that White Paper Policy the Indians decided that they would refuse to pay the poll tax which had been levied upon them for years. Alas! we in India had neither the desire nor the capacity, nor the

knowledge, and I repeat, nor the leisure from our fratricidal warfare, to give them the moral support they needed to sustain the brave battle that they had inaugurated. Today, the one leader that they then had, a Gujrati, Monilal Desai, is dead. On the shores of Mombassa, Kenya, Uganda and Tanganikya, the four provinces that make geographically East Africa, his efforts have led to a great change in the national consciousness. Not only had every Indian heart been aroused to a sense of national honour, but even those savage tribes inhabiting those parts had also been kindled to consciousness by that torch he held up. Those tribes said "Are you the Askari of Gandhi, are you the soldiers of Gandhi, has Gandhi nothing to do for these down-trodden children of Africa?". This was what Monilal Desai had done. The African people there were ready to collaborate with the Indians, but Mother India had no power to help her children abroad. What was it that the White Paper Policy said? It said that those beautiful highlands which are fruitful and lovely beyond the dream of man shall be only the preserve of the white settler. The Massai, the only inheritors were driven down in their thousands, their cattle put into preserves where drought decimated the cattle and broke the wealth and power of these few inheritors of the land. The South African Government said to the Indian "You shall not have property here." They said "the sons of India are a foul blot on the land". They said "the fairest portions of the towns are for the whiteman. You shall go into segregation." (cries of "shame"): They said to the Indians who were the natural colonisers for centuries in East Africa: "You shall have the Immigration Restriction Act". They said to the Indians, knowing that we were fighting for equality in India,—they said "you are not equal to us in education, you are not equal to us in social status, you are not equal to us in any of the human gifts of civilisation. Therefore you shall have a separate location". And we said "No". We claimed in the colonies equal responsibility for the building up of the civilisation in those ancient provinces.

Friends, now they say to the Indians: 'We will replace you by unskilled African labour.' They said that to supersede the Indians and give the children of the soil their rightful heritage. Now they bring out raw, untrained, youngmen from England at ten times the salary and they say to the old service men of Indian birth: "Go away, we dispense with you." Now they further want to crush the Indians by the same policy which they extend from Mombassa to Durban. They say "we will impose upon you every kind of restriction, so that at last you will exile yourselves from this land that your forefathers have helped to build up." What can we do? We can do nothing but pass pious resolutions. Believe me, the only remedy for the ills on which we wax eloquent in

our deliberations, the only remedy for East and South Africa and other colonies where the Indians' name is despised and where they are known as the children of a slave country, the only remedy, I say, is having Swaraj and that Swaraj will only come when you and I have settled our internecine disputes, when we have annihilated communalism, hatred, murder and other terrible things, which arise out of these inter-communal feuds, when we, the children of India, will stand up and say: "This land is our birthright and we must have our freedom." Then and only then shall we be able to offer freedom to our children in Kenya and South Africa. Taxation after taxation is imposed upon them as a further proof of the hatred and contempt in which the name of India is held abroad, because her children have not yet been shamed enough by their slavery to acquire freedom even at the price of their lives. Therefore, I move this resolution. This mere taxation, additional taxation of 20 more shillings is not a crime. The crime is that we are a subject people, and they who have to bear and suffer for the burden of our slavery are those who have built up the prosperity of the colonies abroad. (Cheers and applause).

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in response to persistent calls then addressed the assembly in Hindi also.

Mr. M. S. Aney (Berar) on being called upon by the President seconded the resolution.

He said :

Friends, this resolution, the seconding of which has been entrusted to me has already been very ably and eloquently moved by Mrs. Naidu. She has given you something of the old history and old connection of India with East Africa and she has also given you a faithful picture of her personal experiences of the deplorable condition under which Indian settlers have to live in that distant land. This resolution deals with two points. Firstly, the charge this resolution makes against the Kenya Government is not with reference to one particular measure, but there is a general charge made against that Government that its legislation affecting Indian interests is of a progressively restrictive character. The word "progressive" is more or less familiar to us since the days of the Reforms when the Government of Great Britain, His Imperial Majesty's Government, gave us the assurance that they were taking the Indians more and more into progressive association with themselves and giving them progressive self-government in this country. That pledge was given to the Indians in 1916 but after that both in this country as well as in regard to their conduct with Indians abroad, what is our experience? That is noted down here. There is nothing of progressive association here, nothing of progressive self-government

here, but there is the progressive restriction laid upon the natural rights of our brothers. That is the verdict which the Congress passes upon the legislations made and also the attempted legislations that are being made in East Africa in matters affecting Indian settlers. It is impossible for me to give you the whole history. In fact, I am not myself conversant with the whole history, but there is one man, one gentleman who is thoroughly conversant with it, who is a friend of India, and I am glad to say, who is a European also. He has, in a letter addressed to Mahatma Gandhi, said that no one used to sit at his table. To give a full description of it would mean volumes after volumes if it was necessary to indicate the trend of legislation and the successive attempts made by the White settlers in East Africa restricting the rights of Indians and making it impossible for them to live as true citizens of that Colony. The one ambition of the White settlers in East Africa has been to restrict Indian immigration into that land. A reference was made by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu to the White Book issued by the Colonial Office in 1923, and although that White Book is an iniquitous document there is something in that White Book that gave some satisfaction to us as well as to Indian settlers in East Africa. One policy is that it recognised the rights of the White settlers with regard to the highlands, but that the Local Government or the Colonial Office shall not undertake any legislation that shall have the principle of racial discrimination in any form. That was the pledge given in that White Book in 1923. Yet what do we find? Here is a measure which must have been enacted into law at this time under which there is nothing but racial discrimination. The sole foundation of that legislation and that measure is that it is done in the name of giving facilities for educating the boys of Indian settlers. That is the beauty of the whole thing. They want to make money for the sake of educating the European boys and the Indian boys, and now in the name of greater facilities for them the White settlers there, or the Government, want to raise a revenue of 53 thousand pounds. They want to raise so much money in East Africa, and for the purpose of raising this £ 53,000 a year they have devised a system of taxation, and that taxation is by imposing a tax on liquors, wines and spirits imported into East Africa. By this means they will be able to raise something like £ 31,000, but this is not sufficient to give greater facilities to the education of their boys. They have to impose a poll tax with a view to raise something like £ 20,000 more. That is the system of taxation by means of which they want to give education to 960 European boys, for which an allotment of £ 30,000 is made and evidently the allotment of £ 21,000, is for the education of Indian boys. That is to say £ 30,000 are to be spent for the education of 960 European boys, and £ 20,000 for the

education of some 2100 Indian boys. This is the invidious distinction made by the Government of East Africa for providing educational facilities to European and Indian boys. This is one iniquity.

The second point is, in raising this £ 31,000 for the scheme which they have prepared and considered in the Select Committee, it is understood, according to the calculations made by the Majority Report, that something like £ 24,000 out of the £ 31,000 will be realised from the Europeans and about £ 8,000 from the Indian settlers. The two Indian members on the Committee were Messrs. Pandey and Shamsuddin. These two Indian members have called upon the Government to supply them with statistics to show what is the ratio of the consumption of wines, liquors etc. amongst the White settlers and amongst the Indian settlers. Government have refused to supply them with these statistics because they think that the real ratio is not such as would justify them in imposing a burden of taxation to the extent of something like £ 24,000 on the White settlers and £ 8,000 on Indians. The Government do not wish to supply these statistics because they will not bear out their own recommendations. Virtually they want to impose a larger tax than they ought to upon the Indian settlers with a view to providing facilities for the education of European boys. That is what it comes to, and that is what the position is. There are two iniquities perpetrated. In the first place a larger amount of money is required for the European boys. If the same education is given to the boys of both communities, I do not see why more money is to be given for the European boys and why less money is required for the boys of the Indian settlers. Evidently there is some distinction between the education to be given to European boys and the education to be given to Indian boys. The former are probably to have a more thorough, and a somewhat higher education. This sort of distinction is not right and is not justifiable in the matter of education of these two classes of boys. They cannot hold the scales even in solving the question of education and are unable to do justice. That is the sort of attitude of the Kenya Government, and on the basis of that attitude is it not justifiable for the Congress to say that this is one more instance of the conservation of the European interests at the expense and cost of the Indian interests in East Africa ?

The East African people have determined to carry on a no-tax campaign there if that Government will not consider their proposals and stop this iniquitous bill becoming law. When they are going to wage a war like that, what are we going to do? They will look up to us as their mother country. If there is one man going from England to China and creating trouble in China, the whole of Europe is convulsed ; but here there are thousands of our countrymen in East Africa being harassed and oppressed, and is it not justifiable for them to look up to you

for help? And therefore you have to send them a message of courage to support and sustain them in the righteous struggle in which they might have to engage. But there is another duty, and another service which you can do for them here. The Colonial Office is no doubt the paramount power and we may make representations to it. But at the same time there is the Government of India who pose as the protectors of the rights of the people of India, and times out of number, have said that they stand for the interests of the Indian people and that they rule India for the sake of India and her people and they are not here to exploit India for the Europeans. This is the pose of the European. We know what it is worth but what I want to urge upon this House is that you should gird up your loins and carry on an agitation throughout your country and bring such amount of pressure upon the Government of India as would compel even the Government of India to intervene in the interest of Indian settlers in South Africa and bring themselves round to take some reasonable action by insisting upon the East African Government to grant a Round Table Conference. Try your best to do that in this country, try to move heaven and earth and insist upon the Government of India not remaining indifferent to the interest of Indians abroad. If you can do that and if you give them your unstinted support by standing up for them in the struggle they are carrying on you will have done your duty. Sincerely hoping that you may do this, I commend this resolution to your acceptance, and trust that you will pass it unanimously. (Applause).

The resolution was put to the House and carried unanimously.

The President: Won't you have a telegram of sympathy sent to Kenya?

Cries of 'Yes'.

V. WORK IN THE COUNCILS

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta then moved the following resolution:—

"This Congress reiterates its resolve that the general policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and the various Councils shall be one of self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation, and of determined resistance to every activity, Governmental or other, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj; and in particular Congressmen in the Legislatures shall:

- (a) Refuse to accept Ministerships or other offices in the gift of the Government and oppose the formation of a ministry by other parties until in the opinion of the Congress or the All India Congress Committee, a satisfactory response is made by the Government to the National Demand;

- (b) Subject to clause (d), refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government or unless otherwise directed by the All India Working Committee;
- (c) Throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers;
- (d) move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of the country and the protection of the freedom of person, speech, association and the press;
- (e) take steps to improve the condition of agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with a view to ensure a speedy amelioration of the condition of the tenants; and
- (f) generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust, on an equitable basis, the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen."

He said :

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: It seems to me that after so many years of the programme of the Swaraj Party being in actual work, it would not be necessary for any fresh arguments to be advanced in support of the continuance of the same policy with regard to our work inside the Councils. But we have to face two sets of criticisms. One set of critics attacks us on the ground that the programme inside the Councils is not strong enough. There is, again, another set who would tell us that even if the programme is too strong, yet it is a programme which will lead you to nothing, which will lead you certainly not towards Swaraj, but that the proper way of doing work in the Councils is to change the old policy of the Swaraj Party and immediately begin by the acceptance of Ministry and actually help in the running of the Constitution. Between these two sets of criticisms and critics, the Swaraj Party, and today the Congress, which has taken up that programme, are faced with some difficulty, and not only do these two sets of critics view this programme from two different points of view, but in the Congress and in the country they combine their forces against the majority party of the Congress and thereby try to impede us in our work inside the Councils.

Let us first of all dispose of that argument, viz. that as a matter of fact this programme needs a change, that is to say, that it is too strong a programme, it is a programme inside the Councils which does not lead us anywhere. I mean the Independent Congress Party and the Responsivists who constantly

din it into our ears that the time has come when the Swaraj Party's programme inside the Councils must be changed, that time has proved the futility of the programme of obstruction, as they call it, of the Swarajists of the present day and the Congressmen after the Cawnpore Congress programme. We all know that the Congress in 1920 decided that there was nothing in the Reforms. We all know that we declared to the world that these Reforms gave us no power whatsoever, and we all know that certain Ministers who worked these Reforms originally declared to the world, when they gave evidence before the Muddiman Committee, that these Reforms gave them no powers and that they were merely puppets in the hands of the bureaucracy. We all know that notwithstanding the fact that the Congress people stood out of the first Councils in 1920, yet those Councils were worked for all they were worth by the Moderates and the Liberals who thought that there was something in the Reforms. But they all declared, after the Swaraj Party was formed, after the Muddiman Committee was appointed and evidence given by those who were Ministers, that as a matter of fact, they were merely puppets, they had no powers, they were over-ridden by the Secretaries and members of the Executive Council and over-ridden by the Governors, that their powers and orders were interfered with even by the clerks of the Finance Department. Therefore, so far as the question is concerned as to whether there is any substance in these Reforms, there is no doubt that not only has the Congress declared it from the housetops that there was no substance in the Reforms, that there was no transference of power to the people, but even the Moderates and the Liberals admitted nearly three years ago that as a matter of fact these Ministers had no power whatsoever and that there was not a vestige of self-government in these Reforms. Need I point out to you that only yesterday in the masterly exposition of the Presidential speech you had all the proofs that showed that there was actually no power, no basis of any kind of responsible government in these Reforms? But it is said no doubt there are no powers; we will admit that as a matter of fact these Reforms do not give you, in any shape or form, any vestige of responsible government! what are you going to do while refusing to act as Ministers and at the same time going there as members of the Council? That is the cry not only of the Responsivists but also of certain No-Changers, as they like to call themselves, and a gentleman for whom I have great respect, Mr. Syam Sundar Chakravarty, has given notice that he will oppose the resolution, as he did at the last session at Cawnpore. I shall try my best to show that he is mistaken when he says that there is no strength in the programme and that this programme cannot in the slightest way help us to realise our goal. You must realise the

position of our country and our countrymen. Whenever you begin to draw up a programme of political work, you must consider the position in which the whole of the country is. The strength or weakness of your countrymen, of your political education and the strength and weakness of your opponents, all these things must be fully considered before you put forward a political programme for the whole country. Today can any one deny, in the history of British India,—can any one point out the fact having ever happened before the adoption of the programme of Council entry by the Swaraj Party,—an incident of this description, that a Viceroy who had been sent out to India for five years is invited by the Secretary of State for India to come over to England for a few months whilst he is in the midst of his work? Can any one point out an instance of this kind where a Viceroy while in the midst of his work had been asked by the Secretary of State to go and consult with him? They said: "We do not understand this policy of obstruction carried on by Deshbandhu C. R. Das and the Swaraj Party. We want to consult you. It is a serious situation we are faced with." What is the inference that you derive from such an invitation from the Secretary of State to the Viceroy? Never in the history of British rule in India has there been an incident of this description. Does not that show that the Government of England having been frightened, thought it desirable to consult the Viceroy with regard to the programme that was carried on by Deshbandhu during his lifetime? Is it very difficult to realise the difficulties under which the Government was placed when this policy of obstruction was being carried on in the Legislative Councils?

Gentlemen, may I remind you again of the speech of Earl Winterton in the House of Commons not very long ago when he was telling his hearers, members of the House of Commons, that the Swaraj Party was progressively disintegrating? Was it or was it not a compliment to the Swaraj Party? Did it show that the British public looked upon the activities of the Congress Party inside the Councils with happiness, or was it not a compliment to the Swaraj Party? Was it not a compliment to that programme and did it not show that they were afraid of that programme and were hoping that the party would gradually disintegrate? And gentlemen, that is not all. In the history of British rule in India can you give me another instance where an Indian speaking in Bengali in Calcutta was immediately answered in the House of Lords within 24 hours? I am reminding you of that instance when Deshbandhu Das spoke out in clear and unmistakable terms as to his policy in the country. It was Lord Birkenhead who did not allow many hours to elapse before he rose up in his place in the House of Lords to give a reply. It was not a fighting

reply, not a grudging reply, but a reply in a very peaceful manner. Did it not show that the Government was really very respectful towards the policy of the Swaraj Party in the Councils? Who does not know that for two years from day to day, from month to month, H. E. Lord Lytton tried his best to come to a compromise with Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and offered him terms to give up this policy which was being followed not only in the Bengal Council but all over India? I beg you to consider that, and not to run away with the impression that there is no strength behind the movement. There was great strength behind the movement of 1921-22. No one doubts the strength of that movement but there is also strength in this movement. You must shape your programme according to the strength or weakness of the country. Today it is not possible to carry out all the items of the programme of Non-co-operation which were placed before the country in 1921, but today it is possible to carry out the programme of work inside the Councils.

Gentlemen, it has been often said during the course of the last six or eight months, and particularly after Deshbandhu's death, that Deshbandhu had said at Faridpore a month or two before his death that he was for "honourable co-operation". There is no doubt that he used the expression "honourable co-operation". But the people who said this did not in the slightest way consider the context in which these two words were used by Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. They did not in the slightest degree pay any attention to the conditions upon which he was prepared for honourable co-operation. Our opponents, the Responsivists, the Independent Congress party men as well as the Liberals, want to say that a few months before his death Deshbandhu Das had undergone a great change so far as his political opinions were concerned. I deny this. Let any one read the speech over again, and he will find there the conditions under which Deshbandhu was prepared to give honourable co-operation. They were,

- (1) "you, the Government, shall change your heart ;
- (2) "you must release the political prisoners or put them on their trial in the ordinary courts of Law ;
- (3) "there must be such a change of Constitution from which we will be able to get Swaraj automatically without any further reference to the British Parliament."

That if these conditions are not satisfied, he said in clear terms, he would advise the country to follow the same policy in the Legislative Councils and in the Assembly as they had been following for the last two and a half years.

These were his conditions. "I am for honourable co-operation on these conditions." In another sentence he said: "If there is the slightest sign of self-government or responsible government or Swaraj in these Reforms, in this system of Government, I would to-morrow co-operate with the Government, but I am convinced there is no such thing in this system."

Gentlemen, it was not more than a year and a half ago that Mahatma Gandhi speaking to the European Association in Calcutta said "I am dying for co-operation". What did Mahatma Gandhi mean when he said that he was "dying for co-operation"? Did he not mean the same thing as Deshbandhu Das meant when he said "I am for honourable co-operation". Both of them meant the same thing. No one will accuse Mahatma Gandhi of having changed his opinion on the question of co-operation or non-co-operation with the Government while the present state of things continues in India. What he meant when he said that he was dying for co-operation was that he was compelled to non-co-operate because of things as they stood and that he was anxious to co-operate in future on honourable terms. Therefore when a passage from one of our leaders is quoted, when you quote a passage from here or from there, from this leader or from some other leader, without any reference to the context or the circumstances of the country at that time, I warn you not to listen to that kind of argument. Therefore it is perfectly clear you must take that expression "I am for honourable co-operation," along with what he said. Quote him, but with the conditions which he laid down, but do not omit the conditions and do not misquote him. Do not take a passage out of the speech without reference to the context and build an argument upon it.

Gentlemen, there is a further talk with regard to unity. If it is possible, certainly let us have unity by all means. Of course, we can have unity very easily. We can have unity to-morrow by submitting to the Bureaucracy. The strongest unity between you and every one else in the country would be by submitting to the blandishments of the Bureaucracy who demand the laying down of your programme and the working of the Reforms for what they are worth and the Government will then decide what is to be done in future with regard to the Constitution. Are we going to surrender the position to the Government for the purpose of getting unity, or are we going to strengthen the position of the country? If it is possible to unite for the purpose of strengthening the position of the country and the Congress, by all means let us unite. I would ask the Responsivists and other parties who say that they are within the Congress, I would ask them, supposing they were in a majority and their opinions were accepted by the Congress,—I would ask them what they would say to us,—would they say to us "let the

Swarajist programme be carried on notwithstanding the fact that the Responsivist and Independent Party programme was accepted by the Congress and the country"? Therefore I say this plea for unity is a futile plea. It means surrendering the position of the country to the Government. It does not mean real unity. You can have unity today if you go to sleep. Let us all go to sleep. Let there be no programme, no fighting and let us work the Reforms for all they are worth and there will be splendid unity. There will be no friction in the country, it will be all smooth-sailing,—we will have splendid unity.

There is one other point I would like to refer to before I resume my seat, and that is with regard to certain amendments notice of which has been given, I am sorry to say, by some of the delegates from Bengal. I would only remind my very old friend Mr. Basantha Kumar Mazumdar that there was no other disciple more true, more honest and more respectful than Mr. Mazumdar to Deshbandhu. It is not many months ago that Deshbandu passed away to the other world. I would appeal to Mr. Mazumdar to consider what his amendment means. The resolution that I am moving, I shall show you, is practically the same resolution, the same programme that Deshbandhu Das himself drafted with his own hand. Let us look at the programme that Deshbandhu Das had drafted. (Reads)

These words are now there in the resolution because the Congress has taken the matter up. It was not within the programme of the Congress. It was merely the programme of the Swaraj Party when Deshbandhu Das was alive. Today the Congress has taken up that programme. In resolution I clause (a) of Deshbandhu's programme adopted by the Swaraj Party on 17th August 1924, we find this :

"Refuse supplies and throw out budgets unless and until this system of Government is altered in recognition of our rights or as a matter of settlement between the Parliament and the people of India."

We say the same thing in clause (b) which says :

"Subject to clause (d) refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government or unless otherwise directed by the All India Working Committee."

Some objection has been taken to this proviso "Unless otherwise directed by the All India Working Committee". This has been put in not for the purpose of taking any important decision against the wishes of the people or the Congress, but it is for the purpose of meeting any emergent situation that may arise, when there is no time to take a decision either from the Congress or the All India Congress Committee. A case may arise when somebody must give a decision within twenty four hours. The decision cannot be delayed. Then who is to make that decision? It is for that purpose that this

power is reserved, for making a quick decision on an emergent matter. It is not to be taken that this power is to be exercised by the Working Committee if there is time for the matter to be considered either by a special session of the Congress or in a meeting of the All India Congress Committee. It is only kept there to meet an emergent situation when there is no time either to come to the All India Congress Committee or to call a special session of the Congress.

Then let us look at clause (b). It is said that in Deshbandhu's programme the words "subject to clause (d)" do not appear. You will remember that in resolution I, clause (c) of the Swaraj Party programme adopted on 17th August 1924. Deshbandhu used exactly the same language as we have in clause (d) in the resolution. We have in this resolution the same thing clause (d) of this resolution was also drafted in main by Deshbandhu in his old manifesto and programme for the Swaraj Party. Merely saying subject to clause (d)" does not mean anything contrary to or different from Deshbandhu's manifesto. No one can argue that clause (b) and clause (d) go against each other. This is only a draftsman's addition. It is not an alteration from the original programme that Deshbandhu drafted for the Swaraj Party.

Then, Mr. B. K. Mazumdar has given notice of an amendment that clauses (d), (e) and (f) should be deleted. All these clauses were in the original Swaraj Party's programme drafted by Deshbandhu. As I have been told by a Beharee friend today, you are in a strong position in Behar, Madras and Bengal. There is therefore a strong likelihood of throwing out Ministerships and having a much stronger force than was three years ago. I am surprised therefore that today we should be told to cut down the programme which Deshbandhu laid down. I do submit to you, particularly those who were near and dear to Deshbandhu, not to interfere with the programme in the fear and suspicion that, perhaps, something new is being introduced for the purpose of making it more easy and watery. I deny that suspicion, and I ask you not to entertain it for a moment. It is exactly the same programme.

I know and I have been told that this resolution will be opposed by my friend Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. If it is necessary, I will answer any new points that he may raise in opposition. It is not necessary to tell you any further now that the programme you are attempting to carry out inside the Councils is exactly the same programme that Deshbandhu chalked out for us when he was alive and leading the Swaraj Party in India. (Applause).

Maulvi Mahomad Shafi Daudi M.L.A. (Behar) seconded the resolution in Hindustani. The following is a summary of his speech.

President, sisters and brothers,

Many have already spoken in English and I wish to address you in Hindustani so that those amongst you who come from villages and

cannot understand English would realise the full import of this resolution. There is no use in passing this resolution unless all of you understand its importance. My friend Mr. Sen-Gupta has ably presented the resolution to you and I rise to satisfy, as best as I can, the doubts raised by our responsiveness and no-change friends. It is necessary that we should chalk out a programme for the Councils. Already the difficulties in our path in the matter of councils are too many. On account of the separate electorates for Hindus and Mussalmans, these difficulties are being further accentuated. There is a section of our countrymen that has given us much trouble in the last elections and is preparing for doing as much harm as possible to the Congress. The first part of the resolution, with which I hope you would agree, was already passed at the special session at Delhi. That very resolution is placed before you only in a slightly altered form. This is substantially the same as the Swaraj party programme adopted three years ago. Our no-change friends express dissatisfaction even at this and I would explain to you what it is. Let my friends not forget that there is a section of our countrymen which is ranged against us and however much we should like to ignore it, it has some strength behind it. Those people have been falsely accusing us, who have joined the Congress as being pro-Hindu and to that extent anti-Moslem. They tried to create an atmosphere in which, either a Moslem or a Hindu, to call oneself a Congressman was considered a sin. This section is born out of self-interest. It cannot march abreast with the virile programme of the Swaraj party. Therefore the leaders of that section are making frantic efforts to take the country back to the moderate days of 1918. We have to meet this new force along with the forces of the bureaucracy. So long as we are divided and weak we can not face this. We have to lay down a programme that carries the country forward. The no-change friends do not want to give rest to this Government and I would ask them to see the difference between the present state of affairs and what it was four years back. Government never cared for the weak-kneed policy of the liberals but now the Swarajists are making their presence felt and by their moral force are extracting response from Government in certain matters. The Swaraj party has declared to the world the country's minimum demands and also exposed the true nature of the bureaucracy. The Government can not for long deceive the world. I trust you will all agree with me in this. The no-change friends, I believe, do not realise the efficacy of our programme. There is no room for despair. I am quite hopeful of our future. We have to develop political parties on proper lines. I know many of the youngmen gathered here want to go forward. They are the hope of our country. The Cawnpore programme too did not satisfy many.

The second part of the resolution deals with the work to be done in the Councils. We are there to carry out your wishes. This part deals with the attitude we have to adopt in the Councils. So long as the Government do not respond to our demands, we will not vote grants for their expenditure. We have acquired a sense of self-confidence as a result of the Non-co-operation movement and I am sure we will rise equal to the occasion when time comes. You have to watch our Council activities with interest and help us in bending the Government to our will.

The Swaraj party has its constructive side also and it is in the third part of the resolution wherein the problems of labour, agriculture and other matters are dealt with. Thus a comprehensive plan of work is given to the Council members. We have to fight this Government which wants our co-operation only to disarm our opposition. This programme for the present holds the field and if a more forward and practicable programme is laid down, I would be the first man to follow. So I urge upon the house to accept the resolution.

Mr. Balakrishna Sharma (U. P.) moved an amendmet,

"that the words 'and oppose the formation of a Ministry by other parties' in Clause (a) of the resolution be deleted."

He said:

Friends, I would like to address those who come from such Provinces where Hindi is not spoken and I would say a few words in English for them. The reasons for which I move this amendment were given by me in my Hindi speech, and they are something like this. First of all we of the Swaraj Party of the late Deshbandhu C. R. Das adopted continuous, indiscriminate and uniform obstruction in the Councils. But no sooner we entered the Councils than we came to the conclusion that this uniform, continuous and indiscriminate obstruction was not the sort of thing which could very easily and comfortably be carried on inside the Councils, and therefore we had to change our programme. For that we had to seek the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, and Pandit Motilal Nehru and Deshbandhu Das went to Juhu and sat in conference there. They saw the futility of that policy which would not have been advantageous if followed to its logical conclusion. I am glad that our leaders rose to the occasion and found it convenient to change their policy for the time being. Then we made four or five changes in our policy. We accepted elective seats and gave permission to the members of the Swaraj Party to move resolutions inside the Councils, to introduce Bills and also to take part in all those measures of legislation and debates that were conducive to the welfare of the nation. This was one amendment to the original resolution laid down by Deshbandhu C. R. Das.

Today we are in more or less the same position and we are laying it down that we shall not allow even any other party to form a Ministry or that we shall not give help to any party to form a ministry. I am a man who would like that our nation should rise and offer battle to the Government, but it is very likely that, constituted as our Councils are, we may not find it quite convenient to oppose other parties and prevent them from forming a Ministry. Therefore I would like you to give your assent to my amendment and thereby make the way clear for further progress in our Council-entry policy.

Mr. Bhargava Sahai (U. P.) seconded the amendment in Hindi.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Friends,

I am one of those who believe that either we should altogether boycott the Councils or once we go in, we should get as much good out of them as possible. In no province do we find the Congress party in the legislatures strong enough to attack the Government effectively. I do not see any good in your obstruction. You do not use the Councils yourselves for the good of the people nor do you allow other parties to do so. How can you work the clauses (d), (e) and (f) without your ministers in office? If you want to solve the problems of the ryots and labourers, you should accept office, or allow others to do it.

Mr. Pratap Chandra Guha Roy (Bengal) moved the following amendment in clause (d) of the Resolution.

“that after the words ‘association and of the press’ the words ‘and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy’ be added.”

Mr. Sen-Gupta accepted the amendment.

Mr. Basanta Kumar Mazumdar (Bengal) moved the following amendments

(i) “that in Clause (b) the words ‘*Subject to Clause (d)*’ be deleted;”

(ii) “that in Clause (b) ‘The All India Congress Committee’ be substituted for words ‘The All India Working Committee’,”

(iii) and “that Clauses (d), (e) and (f) be deleted.”

In doing so he said :

Friends, I must ask my leader, the gentleman who is our leader in Bengal, Mr. Jatindra Mohan Sen-Gupta, to excuse me if I insist upon moving this amendment because I am not prepared to act upon the personal appeal he has made to me. My leader said that he could not understand how, being a true disciple of Deshbandhu I intended to oppose Deshbandhu’s programme. I am moving this

amendment only because I claim to be a true disciple of Deshbandhu, and I am proud to claim that I am, and it is that alone which makes me insist upon my amendment. I remember the teachings, the principle, and the true sacrifice of Deshbandhu, and I move the amendment only to be true to him and the work and the trust that he has left behind to his disciples to accomplish. It is not only the name of Deshbandhu, but also his work and his teachings and examples, and just now his very living picture which is before me inspires me to say, in spite of the request that has been made to me, and in spite of all difficulties, I shall be true to the teachings and the trust of Deshbandhu Das. What is Deshbandhu Das's programme? It is my misfortune that the leader who is moving this resolution is a Bengalee leader and that being his follower, I am going to oppose it. This is unfortunate, but my conscience compels me to do it. I hope you will excuse me and take what I am doing in that light. What was the programme of Deshbandhu Das? My learned leader told you that he did not take a programme of his own but that he has taken the programme of Deshbandhu Das,—the programme of the Swaraj Party which was adopted on the 16th & 17th of August, 1924. May I point out to you that it was drafted in 1924, and at the same time Deshbandhu Das worked the programme in the Councils for more than three years, but did he take up (d), (e) and (f)? Now, however, the entire programme is given, its two sides, one the wrecking programme and the other the working programme. What he meant is clear in his words, and I will tell you what it is. It is first entered in the preamble which includes in it the creating of an atmosphere of resistance in the country and that the Government by the bureaucracy, must in the future, be forced to yield to our national demand. It is in the preamble that we should create an atmosphere of resistance. What next? The national demand must include self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation. He has taken that programme of resistance to compel the bureaucracy to go hand in hand with us so that Swaraj will come automatically. The programme of wrecking the Councils is only to compel the bureaucracy to do this. This is what he said about his work in the Councils. Can you tell me what was the meaning of those words "whenever possible", and why they were put in? His programme was possible at the time on account of the condition of the country, the circumstances in the country, and the ideal of the country. The ideal of the people was leading to non-co-operation to bring down the Government and compel them to give us Swaraj. When Mahatma Gandhi's programme was in full swing, thousands of people came from north, east, west and south

and said "do not enter into the Councils". But when the wrecking from outside was not answering the purpose, Deshbandhu said "Go in by the front door and compel the bureaucracy to come to a compromise with us." That was the programme of Deshbandhu. My learned leader told you another thing—he wanted "honourable co-operation". Yes, we also want honourable co-operation if we cannot drive them out. But if I am in a position to drive them out, do you think that you or I or any one else will want honourable co-operation? Deshbandhu wanted to wreck the Councils and destroy the power of the government and by these means compel the government to come to a compromise. What were the signs? The signs were that the Government shall change their mind change their heart, change their constitution and will make the conditions such that Swaraj would come automatically. Did any of these things come about that would lead us to honourable co-operation?

At this stage the ringing of the President's bell warned the speaker that his time was up.

Mr. Mazumdar: This has come like a thunder-bolt. I appeal to the President not to ring his bell. I am more afraid of it than of a cannon ball. Gentlemen, it is for you to decide whether clauses (d), (e) and (f) are consistent with the working programme or a resistance programme.

The bell was again rung, but the President ultimately allowed the speaker to go on for another five minutes.

Mr. Mazumdar continuing said: I have every confidence that the delegates from the provinces do not require any argument from me. They can compare for themselves and see what is the working programme and what is the wrecking programme. I must go by Deshbandhu's wrecking programme. If I give up that, I give up the life of the Congress, I give up the respect of the Swarajists. If you want to take away the life from the body support this resolution. If you want to keep life in the body then support my amendment and delete these clauses. The working programme is the loyalist programme. Our programme is Swaraj programme, the wrecking programme. I shall now appeal to my friends in my mother tongue which is more convenient to me.

Mr. Mazumdar then concluded his speech in Bengali.

The President: I shall limit the time of the speakers, allowing the mover of a resolution 15 minutes, the mover of an amendment 10 minutes, and seconder and supporters five minutes except at my discretion.

Mr. Achintraṃ (Punjab) seconded Mr. Mazumdar's amendment in Hindustani.

The following is a summary of his speech :

President, brothers and sisters,

I rise to support this amendment because I feel the resolution as it stands does not clarify our position and policy. You want to oppose the ministries and at the same time wish to get matters done under clauses (d), (e), and (f), matters that directly come under the control of the ministers in the provinces. The question is whether we should reap any advantage by our entering the Councils. If there is any chance of working out any item of our national programme through the councils, I do not see why we should leave it. You cannot work clauses (d), (e) and (f) in case you begin obstruction indiscriminately. Do you believe you can get anything out of the ministers installed against our will? But it is easy to get your work done through your own ministers. We want the words Working Committee to be changed into All India Congress Committee. The 'Working Committee' of a ten or a dozen people will be generally of one mind and the working of this resolution could not be entrusted to their hands. A larger body like the A. I. C. C. should deal with it and if time comes a special session of the congress might be necessary to deal with the matter mentioned in the resolution. Therefore I am confident you will accept this amendment.

Babu Syam Sundar Chakravarti (Bengal) in opposing the main resolution said :

Mr. President, fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, in the very first place I crave your indulgence for speaking in a language which is not mine, and as a justification I would only urge this much that when last time at Cawnpore I attempted Hindi some gentlemen on the dais advised me not to do it. Be that as it may, you may consider me as absolutely lacking in the sense of humour when I appear before you year after year to oppose a resolution which seems to have become the very flesh of the flesh, bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the Congress programme,—I mean this Council resolution. But my reply to that, as you are charging me with being wanting in the sense of humour is this. I beg to submit that the boot is on the other foot. Who is lacking in the sense of humour? Who likes this resolution?

First, let me discuss it from the popular and the common sense point of view. Let those who are lovers of this resolution put their fingers on their breast and frankly tell us if they themselves love this resolution. I have asked the rank and file of the Swarajists and they have all unanimously told me that this resolution is not at all after their heart. I do not mean either its grammar or its logic, but its substance. The attitude not only of the Swarajists but of all the delegates assembled before me towards this resolution can be summed

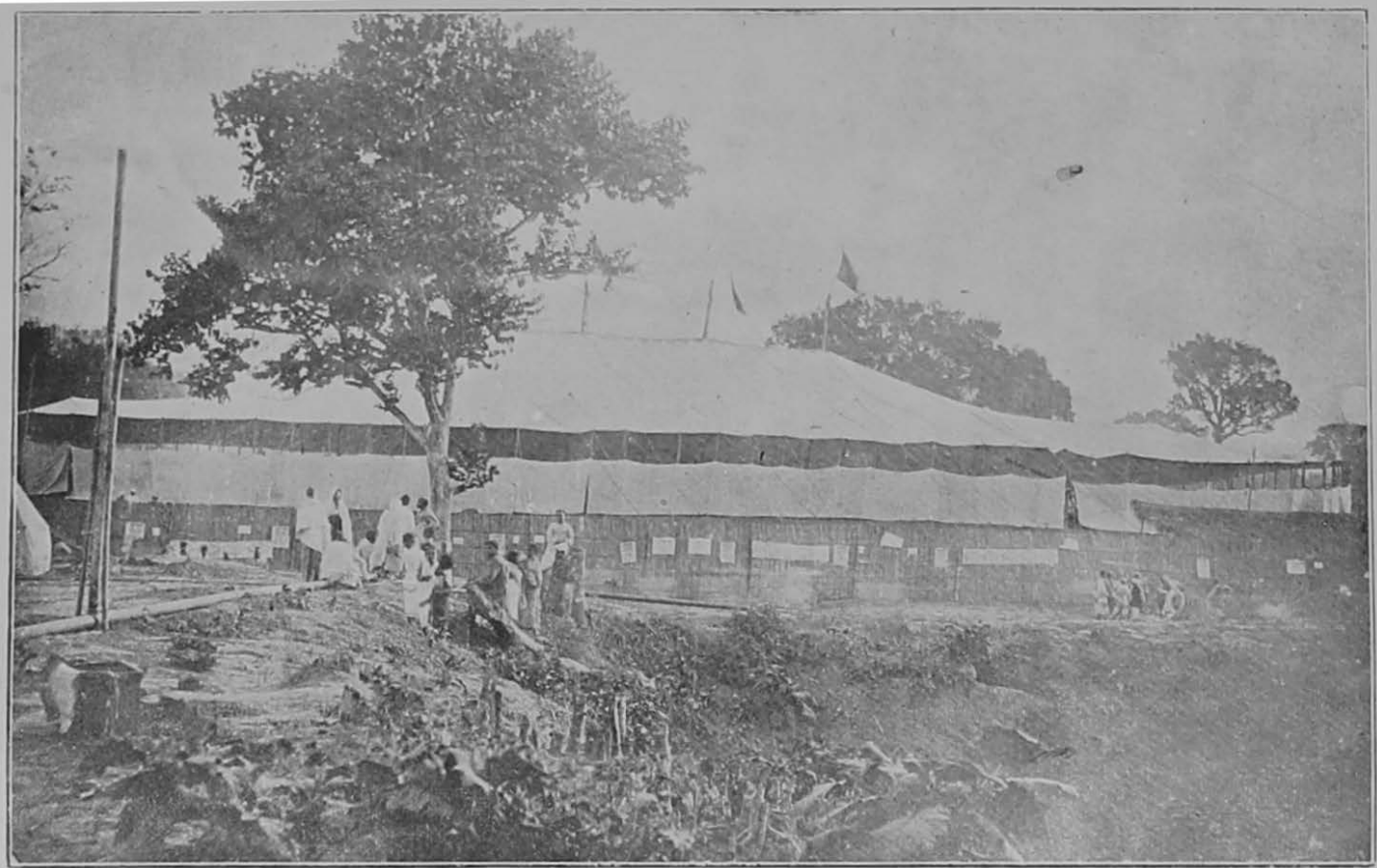
up in the story of a simpleton. This simpleton was found weeping very bitterly. A friend who happened to come near him asked him, "Brother, what is the matter, why are you shedding almost tears of blood?" He said, "Yesterday a relation of mine came to me and told me that my wife had become a widow." (Laughter). He said, "Halo, what sort of a man are you? You are present in flesh and blood before me and yet you say 'my wife has become a widow'." He said "Yes, *Main to jantahu, lekin koi bhale admi bola.*" (Laughter). That is, my dear sir, if you are frank, if you have the courage to lay bare your hearts before your fellow delegates, that is your internal feeling with regard to this resolution. For the last few years, from the special session of the Delhi Congress I have been used to this apologetic explanation of the intention and motive of this resolution. Nobody can defend it, indeed it is indefensible. You acquiesce in it simply because the man or men who wanted to do this are *Va'e admis*, not that they strike a responsive chord in your heart, not that they appear before you as the framers of a programme in answer to the various needs of the country, but, as the Chairman of the Reception Committee told you long before we adjourned yesterday, that in Kamrup men become sheep. Gentlemen, why do I object to this resolution? In the first place it is self-contradictory. I had no intention of entering in detail into the merits of this resolution, and I am not used to that sort of criticism. My only sorrow, my only grievance is that after coming all the way from Calcutta by begging, borrowing and stealing money and rubbing shoulders with the angels who, the Reception Committee Chairman told us, dwell in this blessed land, we shall be carrying the inspiration breathed by this resolution home. Why should I oppose this resolution? Why should this resolution be at all brought before you? Can you answer me honestly, can you look me at the face fairly and squarely and tell me "this is why we have brought this resolution"?

My answer to this resolution is, have you not tried it once, twice and even three times? Has it not been found wanting? What further sweets are there in it? This '*Dillika Laddu*' has been tried by you and swallowed by you *ad nauseum*, but still you will stick to it as a bear sticks to the hills. That is the one point that I brought before you. I do not know how they can answer that question, viz, that this resolution, whatever may be its merits or demerits, has been tried not once, but twice and thrice. Last time at Cawnpore the very same resolution was brought before us, and an assurance was given us by Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta that if we gave them one more chance they would mix with the non-co-operators and create a hell of a row in the country. Very good, you have been to the Council, you presented your demand, you say, to your

own cost or to your delectation—I do not know which, that no response was forthcoming. Is there any chance of any response being forthcoming now? Mr. Sen-Gupta was just quoting the utterance of a big man in England. I am not in the habit of doing so, neither am I in the know of the British Cabinet to be able to vouch for what he said—that Lord Reading was recalled all the way to England for consultation as to how to meet the Swarajist policy. But this I know that when Mr. Sen-Gupta was in jail, when Desh bandhu Chittaranjan was in jail, Lord Reading had to come all the way from Delhi or Simla to Calcutta and requisitioned the services of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who along with my help wanted to see that the tide of the progress of non-co-operation was sufficiently checked to present a decent appearance of the country.

I have heard that there is much strength in this programme. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Had there been strength in the programme, would the Bengal detenees have been rotting in jails in spite of the constant cries for their release coming from every hearth and home in Bengal? That is the test of your real strength. Mr. Sen-Gupta feels as much as I do about what the Bengal detenees have made of Bengal. The condition of the political prisoners is one great thorn in the side of Bengal and if the Swaraj programme had been really a virile programme, if this programme had in it something which would have struck terror into the heart of the bureaucracy, the medical examination of our Subhas Chandra Bose would have been quite different from what it is now. The Rangoon doctor tells us that he is all right, only occasionally suffering from fever and losing heavily in weight. That is a sort of insult to suffering humanity. I ask you, Mr. Sen-Gupta, is that the virility of your programme?

Next, you refer to certain complimentary expressions in the speech of Lord Birkenhead. I am not in the habit of constantly remembering these things, but still I say that this reference of yours puts me in mind of another story. A darwan was dismissed by a very big European. Since his dismissal he was constantly writing applications for reinstatement. Of course, he was looking forward to receiving replies, but no reply came. After six or seven months a reply did come and he took it to many persons to get it read by them. Every one said "You will not get anything." They had no time to look into these things. Last of all he got annoyed and said "My dear sir, I want you to tell me the exact words written in that reply." The man said "His Excellency regrets to say that he cannot do anything." The darwan enquired what did that mean. The man translating said "*Lat Sahab bara upos kartahai jo tomoro waste kuch nai karne sakta.*" The darwan was very pleased and said "*Dekho, Lat Sahab upos harta.*" (Laughter). This is your mentality. I am to blame, the whole country is to blame



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because we are pleased with such small mercies in the shape of complimentary phrases. The situation in the country is sufficiently serious. I am not here only to oppose this resolution for opposition's sake. I am too old and experienced for that. Mr. Shafi was asking me "Can you give me another programme?" Another Bengali proverb says that when you have no work, 'kill your uncle and carry him to the Ganges.' (Laughter). I do not tell you whether I have any programme up my sleeves or not. A programme was given you long before you came here and drafted this resolution at Cawnpore and Gauhati. I will tell you what it is in a few simple words. Concentrate on one thing. What is the most acute problem of our country? Mr. Sen-Gupta knows it as well as you all know it. The communal question is the most acute problem. I, for myself, was not at all willing to come to this Congress, except to put before you this communal question. We want, all of us want, Hindu—Moslem unity. I have during my recent intimate acquaintance with these riots come to learn that unless both communities become strong they can never unite. Kipling is responsible for this couplet :

" East is East and West is West,
Never the twain shall meet."

But he did not know or had forgotten that some one else had said,

" There is neither East nor West
Neither border, nor bridge, nor birth,
When two brave men meet face to face
From different corners of the earth."

Let the Hindus be brave, let the Mahomedans be brave, expel from both communities all the cowardice which has been the undoing of the national life. The Sangathan and Shuddhi in its larger and higher sense means 'purify yourself'. 'Self-purification,' says Mahatma Gandhi. Without that no nation has become great, and ignoble people have never acquired a noble government. Only concentrate on one single item of the national programme, viz. national education.

So I appeal to my brother delegates, if the recent incidents have brought to your minds the true lesson, if you have not come here only for sight-seeing at Gauhati or for any other sort of programme, if you want to do here, as the flower of the Indian nation, something for the good of India, reject altogether this resolution which is the badge of your slavery and concentrate upon one single item of Mahatma Gandhi's programme as that is bound to bring about Swaraj. (Applause).

The President called upon Sjt. A. Rangaswami Iyengar to speak.

Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar said :

Friends, I have been asked to support the resolution in its original form embodying the amendment of my friend Dr. Prataf Chandra Guha

Roy which has been accepted. I do not want to detain you with a long speech setting out the points in detail which the resolution covers. I desire merely to draw attention to the points which have been raised in the amendment, which you will find are absolutely inconsistent and untenable. My friend from U. P. wanted that the resolution should be amended by the omission of the words "Oppose the formation of ministry by other parties". I need not say that this would be negating the substance of the whole resolution. If we are right in our decisions which were made at Cawnpore accepting the Swaraj party's programme which has been in force for the past four years, that we should insist upon non-acceptance of offices, I say that it logically follows that we must oppose the formation of a ministry by others. The omission of these words merely signifies that you need not form a ministry of your own but you may form a *Benami* ministry. I say that this is a deception which we cannot practise, and we, the Swarajists and Congressmen ought not to practise it.

Then, my friend Mr. Basanta Kumar Mazumdar, whom I have known for a long time, wants that clauses (d), (e) and (f) should be omitted. I may tell you that the clauses (d), (e) and (f) were deliberately put in for the purpose of circumscribing such activities as we have to pursue in the programme of the Councils. In the Councils, as we all know, the Swarajist programme was the basis of the policy of obstruction, and so far as their policy is concerned, I will explain to you in a moment that that policy of obstruction was based on the principle which was laid down at the very inception of the Swaraj Party. The omission of the clause will throw the door open for moving all sorts of things instead of compelling us to move only those resolutions which are consistent with the policy of the Congress and the Swaraj Party. The omission of these clauses will make the programme mean nonsense, *viz.*, that you can go and move resolutions and do things against our policy and at the same time say that it is the Swarajist programme. I therefore say that the acceptance of these clauses would not be at all inconsistent with the existence of clauses (a), (b) and (c).

I leave my friend Mr. Syamsundar Chakravarti's observations to be answered by Mr. Satyamurti. But what I desire to say to you is that the policy which has been embodied in the resolution is the policy which the Swaraj Party adopted from the inception of its activities, from the time when Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru after consulting Mahatma Gandhi in the famous conference at Juhu prescribed what the policy ought to be. I desire to state that in this resolution which we are asking you to pass today, there has not been a single variation from the policy which was adumbrated at the time.

Friends, much has been said about the policy of obstruction, why we gave up this policy and observed the policy of discriminate obstruction. I do not want to quarrel with words. I desire only to say that the words used in this resolution were words which were deliberately adopted by Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, Mr. Jinnah and Dewan Bahadur Rangachariar, in February 1924 when the National Party consisting of Swarajists, Independents and Nationalists was formed. What was the creed upon which the Party agreed to work in the Assembly to reject the Finance Bill and throw out the Budget? It was put down with the consent of Mr. Jinnah and Dewan Bahadur Ranga Chariar in the following terms :

"If the Government do not make a satisfactory response to the resolution demanding Reforms within a reasonable time, the Party will then be bound to follow the policy of obstruction and will put the policy in operation at the earliest period when a demand for grant is made by the Government by refusing supplies."

These are the very words used by Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya and Mr. Jinnah and you will find them in the resolution.

Another thing has been said so far as the policy of rejecting the Finance Bill is concerned, that there is no meaning in it, that really we are not refusing supplies, and various other things. I do not want to detain you by going into details. I would only quote to you what Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya said in March 1924 in the Legislative Assembly. He said :

"So long as the Government of India Act is not revised, I find with my sense of self-respect and with the conscience God has given me, I cannot support taxation either now or in future."

Then, again, we have been told that our policy was not consistent with the principles of non-co-operation, with the principles of consistent, uniform and continuous obstruction. I do not want to bandy words. I will again refer you to the historic statement issued by Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru in consultation with and in answer to Mahatma Gandhi in Juhu, in which they pointed out exactly what relation the Swaraj Party's programme bears to the principle and practice of non-co-operation.

Mahatma Gandhi said "Nor is this difference a mere matter of interpretation of the word 'Non-co-operation', but relates to the essential *mental attitude* resulting in different treatment of vital points."

With reference to this I quote what Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru have said in their statement :

"But if non-co-operation is more a matter of *mental attitude* than the application of a living principle to the existing facts of our national life with special reference to the varying attitude of the bureaucratic

Government which rules that life, we conceive it to be our duty to sacrifice even non-co-operation to serve the real interests of the country."

This was done in May, 1924. It includes self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation. These are the very words which you find in the resolution before you. We are told that we have not followed obstruction, that it is futile and all that. There, again, I want you not to be misled by mere words, and I would again quote before you from the statement made at Juhu.

"We desire further to make it clear that we have not used in our programme the word 'Obstruction' in the technical sense of English Parliamentary History. Obstruction in that sense is impossible in subordinate and limited Legislative bodies, such as the Legislative Assembly and Provincial Legislatures under the Reforms Act undoubtedly are. Possibly another word should have been found to convey our meaning. We may state however that our position is really not so much of obstruction in the Parliamentary sense as that of resistance to the obstruction placed in our path to Swaraj by the bureaucratic Government. It is this resistance which we meant to imply when we used the word obstruction. This was clearly indicated in the way we defined and described non-co-operation in the preamble to the constitution of the Swaraj party. It is the removal of such bureaucratic obstruction which we feel we must emphasise. This is the policy which we have hitherto followed in the Legislative bodies and it is this policy which must in future be more and more effectively directed to the varying needs and problems of our national life."

"Here again we are anxious to end all verbal discussion as to whether this can be aptly described as a policy of 'uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction'. We are content to detail our policy and then leave it to our friends to give it a more appropriate name, should they so desire."

Friends, I again point out to you especially in regard to clauses (d), (e) and (f) which are now sought to be removed by our very ardent friends who have been throughout supporting the Independent Congress Party in the policy of Responsive Co-operation, I desire to point out that the wording of clauses (d), (e) and (f) are also contained in the Juhu statement.

Within the Legislative bodies we must continue:—

- (1) To throw out budgets unless and until the system of Government is altered in recognition of our rights or as a matter of settlement between the Parliament and the people of this country.
- (2) To throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its power,

- (3) To introduce all resolutions, measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of our national life and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy.
- (4) To follow a definite economic policy based on the same principle, to prevent the drain of public wealth from India by checking all activities leading to exploitation.

All these terms you will find from the very outset in the programme of the Party, and this is the very programme which we are now putting before the House and asking you to accept.

We were told by the speaker who preceded me that we have already tried it and we have not succeeded. I say our record is before you and the extent to which we obtained success; and we know this that friends like Sjt. Syamsundar Chakravarti did their best to obstruct us, and it is not for him to come here and say "You have not succeeded." What did you do to make us succeed? Therefore that argument comes with an ill grace from him. We say that we shall continue to follow that programme and continue our faith in the policy which Deshbandhu laid down for us with such remarkable faith.

I would ask you to accept this resolution and not merely say "You have not succeeded in releasing the detenues, in doing this or that." If we have not succeeded, the fault is that of our opponents and others. That is no reason why this programme should not be followed. I show that this is the one and only programme before you. It has been stiffened and made workable for every true Congressman, and it has been placed before you with the consent of Mahatma Gandhi, and I would ask you to follow the lead which Mahatma Gandhi gave us in 1921. (loud applause).

Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, who was received with cheers, speaking next said:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, the resolution which is now before the Congress is up to this time the most important one for all practical purposes. All that I desire to say about it is that I am very glad that much of what we recommended in the earlier years has been adopted in this resolution. The programme that is now laid before the Congress for your acceptance is the programme which some of us had pledged ourselves to for some years past to be adopted by the Congress. To that extent I am sincerely glad at the change that has come over the ideas of my fellow delegates at this Congress. Only, two clauses to which I still find it necessary to take objection are clauses (a) and (b). My own idea is that if you eliminate these two clauses you will eliminate clauses which make your position less consistent. The clauses do not mean anything seriously in practice. The acceptance

or non-acceptance of ministerships is not now a practical question. In several provinces Ministers have been appointed. I understand that in no province do those who come to the Council under the Congress ticket constitute a majority and there is not much chance of ministerships being offered to Congressmen. Therefore it is not wise to talk about ministerships not being accepted until the Government had made a satisfactory response to the National Demand.

A voice: In Madras it was offered and rejected.

Panditji: My friend reminds me that ministership was offered in Madras and rejected. That strengthens my point, that you have no reason now to formulate this policy. You have come to this position that you have in several provinces ministers appointed.

A voice: What about the U. P. ?

Panditji: In the U. P. I understand ministers have been appointed. I have no wish to waste my breath over this part of the resolution. I only wish to point out to you that as you have given up the programme of consistent, persistent obstruction, and as you have adopted the programme contained in clauses (d), (e) and (f) it would be more consistent, after the adoption of those clauses, if you drop these clauses about the non-acceptance of ministerships.

So far as the second clause (b) is concerned, I wish you had not introduced this clause that the refusal of supplies and the throwing out of budgets shall be resorted to until a satisfactory response is made by the Government. You add to it "subject to clause (d)". In my opinion the two are not consistent with each other. If you move measures and propose bills and support amendments then you cannot refuse supplies or have the idea of throwing out budgets. To my mind it would be more consistent with the dignity of the Congress if you adopt a programme of work in the Council which you can put into practice today. At present these two clauses which you have retained are clauses which, it appears, you will not be able to work up to. To that extent you will be still exposed to criticism. I wish the Congress not to be exposed either to ridicule or criticism, and I wish the Congress to take up a programme which can be carried out to the good of the country. I regret that you have these two clauses such as they are but, as regards the rest I entirely like this resolution. (Applause)

President:—Mr. Satyamurti will now speak on the resolution.

Mr. Satyamurti in supporting the resolution said :

Friends, This is a resolution which in many respects is one of the most important resolutions which have come before this session. The Congress has been attacked from two points of view, one represented by some delegates from Bengal that it is a weakening of the Congress Council

programme, and therefore it ought to be stiffened by deleting clauses (d), (e) and (f). The other is represented by Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya who thinks that clauses (a) and (b) should be deleted. If both these points are accepted there will be nothing left in the resolution. Here are two extremists,—one a Liberal Extremist and the other a No-changer Extremist, who do not like it. Therefore I suggest that the resolution represents the maximum amount of practical non-co-operation which is possible today in the Councils, and at the same time represents the anxiety of the Congress Party not to lay down a programme which they cannot carry out. I was very surprised to hear Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya saying 'I do not like to argue about the acceptance of office. I do not like the rejection of the budgets because you may have to support grants for those motions or bills which you yourselves promote or support.' If his position has come to that so as to make the remarkably commendable speech and practically say that excepting for one or two variations he likes the resolution, I would invite him respectfully to take his rightful place among the leaders of Congressmen today and help us to present a united front to the bureaucracy in India. Pandit Malaviya says "I have been saying this for two years and I am glad you have come down to my point of view." The mentality that always says "I told you so" is not a particularly commendable one. But in these matters we can convince those except the few who have ears and do not hear that the programme of uniform, consistent and continued obstruction of which, the distinguished President of the Assembly was the author had been given up, not yesterday after listening to the advice of Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, but in May, 1924 after Deshbandhu Das and Pandit Motilal Mehru, practical politicians as they are, had realised that because of the presence of leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the Assembly and the Councils that policy was unworkable. That was stated in their published manifesto of May 1924 where they said that the programme of obstruction will be applied in such form and manner as the party may determine from time to time with or without the co-operation of other parties in the Assembly or in the Councils. It seems to me therefore that Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya's modest claim that we have changed over to his view is historically inaccurate.

Pandit Malaviya: I do not claim that I have changed you but I am glad that you have come to my view. (Laughter)

Mr. Satyamurti: If that is so I invite him to join us. Why do you not walk into my parlour? Why do you keep out? Is it prestige? I should like to know what it is. (Laughter) The crux of the whole position is this; we go to the Councils to hurl defiance at the bureaucracy, and we say we will not allow them to work this monstrous experiment or expedient called diarchy. We tell them that we shall reject the

Finance Bill whenever we can do so consistently with our programme. We have faith in ourselves and in our country. I attribute no motives. But they have no faith in themselves or their country. They believe that Swaraj will dawn one bright morning in the east of India from Downing Street, and therefore we must work the Reforms for all they are worth and convince Lord Birkenhead and his friends that we are going to move resolutions, make speeches in the Assembly and in the Councils and we are going to call ourselves Parliamentarians. That is the fundamental difference between us. We may not be able to carry out our whole programme today, but we believe in ourselves, and we know from history and from the knowledge of British political psychology that Great Britain knows when to yield and when not to yield. Therefore this programme of so-called Responsive Co-operation is a programme of surrender and of waning faith in the country, and they believe that if they want Swaraj they must wait in the ante-chambers of the foreign bureaucracy to get what they want.

Several amendments have been moved to this resolution. The first is that the words "oppose the formation of a ministry by other parties" should be deleted. It seems to me that this amendment will take away the object and purpose of the whole scheme of the Congress with regard to the non-acceptance of offices. This non-acceptance of offices has got two meanings. It is not only intended to keep the Congressmen free from the shackles of office and free to work for Swaraj both inside the Assembly and Councils and outside, but there is another more important aspect of the doctrine *viz.*, not only must we refuse to accept office ourselves but we must make all the exertions of which we are capable to make diarchy impossible. That is what Deshbandhu did in Bengal. Deshbandhu Das refused the ministerial crown that was offered to him three times to form a ministry with the help of the other parties, but he was waiting for a gesture. So we have decided that we must not only refuse to accept office ourselves but shall also make the working of diarchy impossible by opposing the formation of a ministry by other parties. I am therefore anxious that these words must remain in the clause, otherwise what does it mean? It means that we refuse to accept office ourselves but permit Congressmen to support a ministry formed by other parties. Can anything be more grotesque, inconsistent or humiliating. If I believed that diarchy could be worked to any purpose whatever I would prefer Congressmen to accept office rather than sit behind and support others to accept ministerships. Because we believe that there is no office to accept and that the Ministers are just slavish *daffadars* to the Executive Council and that they have no power, initiative or responsibility, that I feel that Congressmen should not accept office. In these circumstances why should we allow other people to come there

and help the bureaucracy, help that system of diarchy which has proved to be unworkable.

A voice: What about Madras ?

Mr. Satyamurti : We have given no undertaking and no pledge, express or implied. The President has said more than once from the platform and in the press that there is no express or implied understanding between the Congress Party and the Ministry in Madras. When we shall break it and how we shall break it is a matter for us to determine. We want a majority for that. At present we are only 44. Are we going to knock our heads against the stone-wall? We will break them when we shall be able to get a majority. We shall do it and let no one have any misgivings or misunderstanding about the matter. Let the Madras example not be misquoted or misapplied.

The second amendment which was moved has been accepted. The very important words, "and consequent displacement of the bureaucracy" have been inserted in the resolution.

The amendment of Mr. B. K. Mazumdar which was moved before these words were inserted is now unnecessary. For, it means that these activities which we now seek to promote are governed only by this that by promoting those activities we consequently displace the bureaucracy. We are not going to try for trivial reforms here and there. There is in our own manifesto a sentence which I would ask your leave to read to you. "The party will not concern itself with trivial reforms in the various departments of the administration to be obtained by the Congress from the Government but would insist upon the transference of the necessary power." I recognise that there is a formal inconsistency, and that is why we have said there "subject to clause (d)". It is because we recognise that we must occasionally support measures of the Government or ask for something to be done for the people, that we feel that we may have to do this occasionally. My friend Pandit Malaviyaji when he went to the constituencies did not hesitate to flout us by saying that even if measures beneficial to the people were introduced by the Government, such as the water supply or measures to deal with the plague or other things like that, the Swarajists would not support them, but would oppose them. In order to meet that objection we have laid down openly that beneficial measures would be supported.

Pandit Malaviya :—Mr. Satyamurti is wrong in saying that I ever said that the Swaraj Party would not support a measure for water supply if that were to be moved, but what I did say was that in the Central Provinces the Government offered to introduce a Bill for making the Revenue Settlement for 40 years when the present term is 20 years, the Swaraj Party refused permission in the Council. They opposed it and refused to accept it.

Mr. Satyamurti: I accept the correction. Panditji is far too bad a debator to understand that in a debate one has got to state a position as emphatically as one can. (Laughter). I admit that in the Central Provinces the Swarajists were taunted by saying that they would not have the Revenue Settlement offered them for forty years. Am I altogether unjustified in remarking that he wanted to suggest that the Swaraj Party will not support measures of paramount interest to the people? I therefore suggest that we have made that concession to the needs of the situation.

A voice: After your return to Madras, are you going to move a resolution that you have no confidence in the Ministry?

Mr. Satyamurti: I have answered that question. I will now go on with my arguments. The position is this. The Responsivists flout us by saying that we will not support a reform for the permanent benefit of the country, and we meet them by saying that wherever these reforms are not inconsistent with the Swarajist policy and make for the healthy growth of the nation we will support them. They then turn round and tell us that we have come round to support the Government. If that is so, why should not Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Responsivists join with us?

My friends from Bengal tell us that the resolution as it stands amounts to responsive co-operation, and therefore we ought not to accept clauses (d), (e) and (f). I appeal to the delegates, specially the Bengal delegates, and I beg of them to remember that clauses (d), (e) and (f) are practically reproduced from the manifesto of Deshbandhu himself word for word. I have got the manifesto here, and you will see that they are the same. These clauses (d), (e) and (f) are intended to synthesise the programme of work of the Congress Party, outside in the country with the work of the Congress party inside the Councils, so that we may both inside the Councils and in the country promote as much or as little as we can our constructive programme. We want to keep up the spirit of resistance by refusing to accept ministerial offices until diarchy goes and until the Government responds, by throwing out budgets and Finance proposals in the Assembly and in the Councils, save in so far as we mean to support measures for the welfare of the people which, in the opinion of the Party, are consistent with the gradual displacement of the bureaucracy by the people. We want to establish a parallel Government, a Sinn Fein Government under which the people in the Councils and outside the Councils will work together.

One word more and I have done. I am anxious that this programme before us should be viewed and decided as a practical proposition. I can understand if it was possible to say that we should boycott the Councils. We have tried it but the result was sixty crores of

increased taxation and thirty thousand of the flower of India's patriots were flung into prison. On the other hand we have tried the Council programme and we say that we have created a situation where the British Government for the first time realise that we are the only fighting party in the country. I therefore ask you to support this Congress programme and give us authority to go to the Councils and fight the Government, on the promise that within three years we shall bring Swaraj very much nearer than any other Party can do. (Cheers).

Pandit Motilal Nehru on being called upon by the President rose amidst cheers and said :

Mr. President, brother and sister delegates, I had no intention of taking part in this debate, as you will see from the agenda paper before you my name is not on it. If I rise to close the debate, so to speak, it is more from a desire to congratulate my friend Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya for the very late discovery that he has made that we have really changed the programme now. It was long before we took our seats in the Legislatures for the first time in 1924 that we had made the changes for which he expresses his satisfaction today. What happened was that immediately after the elections of 1923 when we found that we were not elected with a clear majority in any of the Councils, we put our heads together, and at Cooanada in December 1923 before any Legislature was opened, the General Council of the Swaraj Party resolved that the members should be given permission to move resolutions and bills on the very subjects upon which it gave them liberty to move resolutions in this programme. We have been constantly assailed by our opponents by the charge that we went into the Councils on a programme of uniform, consistent and continuous obstruction and that we did not adhere to it. I repel that charge. In the first place I deny that we did go into the Councils on that programme of obstruction in all circumstances. That programme clearly says, if you will look at the first manifesto issued by the Swaraj Party, that if we are in the majority we shall follow a policy of uniform and consistent obstruction. It is obvious that if you are not in the majority you cannot possibly follow such policy. When we saw what the result of the elections was, we again in accordance with the first manifesto of the Party said that if by any chance we are not returned in the majority we shall go into the Councils and we shall try to speak to the other parties or groups or individuals who are elected and form a coalition between them and ourselves, and then try to carry out as much of the programme as was possible. This is exactly what we did. The moment we found that we were in a minority we introduced a change, we obtained permission from the General Council at Cooanada, and at the first or second meeting of the Party in the Assembly we passed rules embodying these things. It was later at Juhu, as was pointed out, these proposals were

given concrete shape after conference with Mahatma Gandhi, and the very words which you see in clauses (d), (e) and (f) were adopted in the general statement issued by Deshbandhu and myself. As has been pointed out by my friend Mr. Satyamurti, the real difference between us and those who represent the view of my friend Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, is about the acceptance of office or non-acceptance of office. I do not propose to comment on the speeches of the last speakers as enough has been said by Mr. Satyamurti and Mr. Ranga-swami Iyengar to controvert the arguments advanced by them. But I wish to say a word or two on this question of all questions, the acceptance or non-acceptance of office. It is a mistake to say that we do not accept office because the Bengal detenues have not yet been released or tried according to law. That is not one of the conditions of acceptance of office. It will be more accurate to say that we are not disposed, we are not inclined to even entertain a proposal to go into office unless the Bengal detenues are released. It is not that anything contained in the Reforms hinges upon the detention of these people. As you are aware, the Bengal Ordinance was passed long after the Reforms Act, and these Reforms were not acceptable to us from the very beginning. Now, we see that, while the flower of Bengal are in durance vile, while in their confinement they do not even know what the offence is with which they are charged, while they are not tried before an ordinary Court of Law we cannot, as self-respecting people, even think of examining the conditions upon which we shall be prepared to take office. So, it is not a condition of taking office, but it is a condition of looking at things evenly. If that condition is not satisfied, I say, that we, as self-respecting people, cannot even examine the merits of that question. But when the detenues are released or tried, then the question will arise whether time has come whether we should accept office or not. Now, gentlemen, I want you to consider for a moment what would have happened if we had actually accepted office. If there was nothing in the Reforms which prevents us from taking office, I ask you to suppose for a moment that we had really taken office and were merrily carrying on the administration on the lines of the Reforms Act. If subsequently the Bengal Ordinance was passed one December night and in the small hours of the next morning we found that all these enormities had been committed, what would then happen? I am supposing that we had actually accepted offices. I feel there would have been one course and only one course open to us, self-respecting men of India, and that was for all the Ministers to submit their resignations, and for all the Provinces to refuse to form a ministry until the great offence had been purged by the government and until the Bengal Ordinance which disfigured the Statute Book had been removed, and the

detenues were either released or tried according to law. That was the point which had often been discussed between me and the late Deshbandhu, and that was the view we took of it. We said that it was not possible for us to go into the question even.

Now, my friend Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya asked you to delete clause (a) which is the only clause which forbids Congressmen to accept offices under any circumstances unless a response is made by the Government. That response, however satisfactory it may be, if it is not accompanied by the condition precedent, that is to say, the release of the Bengal detenues or their trial according to law, will not be worth considering by us. Pandit Malaviya says that but for that clause about throwing out budgets and refusing supplies, the programme would be more or less acceptable to him.

Pandit Malaviya: It says nothing about the release of the detenues.

Pandit Motilal Nehru: I do not say that it made reference to the release of the detenues, but what I say is that the response which the resolution contemplates is subject to the condition precedent of the creation of a proper atmosphere in which that response can be considered by us, and that response includes the creation of that atmosphere. Well, we know that the Government has proceeded in the most high-handed manner, which would beat the record even of Czarist Russia at any time. When the Government shows what has often been suggested, that it has a clean heart, when it shows a change of heart it is then and only then that the other party to the contract or settlement can approach the Government with as clean a change of spirit as the Government itself can show.

I ask you, I ask Bengal, if Bengal can as a self-respecting Province as self-respecting men, even dream of accepting office while that shame, that degradation, that national humiliation hangs over their heads? I ask every Province, what is their position? Do they or do they not share the humiliation of Bengal? If they do not, do not talk to me of national honour again. I am, however, perfectly certain that there is no son or daughter of India who would for a moment agree to the condition of Bengal remaining as it is, accepting the Reforms and working them, as it is said, for what they are worth. I have absolutely no doubt in my mind what the verdict of this House and what the verdict of the country will be because Bengal's honour is my honour, because Bengal's honour is the honour of all the races of India. Unless Bengal is given the redress that it deserves, no Province in India has any business to accept the existing conditions and thus perpetuate our slavery. These are the only remarks I want to make.

I only want to add one thing as to what Sjt. Syam sundar Chakraverty said. He said, "You have worked your

programme for three years and "what have you got?" I would ask you in all fairness to consider whether we have been allowed to work our programme at all. I am responsible for the day to day work in the Assembly. Every minute of my time was spent in begging and beseeching of this member and that member, this group or that group and asking them "for heaven's sake, come and vote with us." In the first year of our Assembly work we were able to coalesce and we were able to inflict defeat upon defeat on the Government. The next year came round and things changed, we got less and less support and obtained far and fewer victories. When the third year came round the support was withdrawn. What could we do with only 42 members in a House of 142? It was then that the Congress in its wisdom, which has been fully justified by the result, asked us in fairness and in justice to ourselves and to our sense of self-respect and the self-respect of the country, to come out and go into the country and ask for the necessary weapon with which we could stand upon our own legs and defeat the bureaucracy. We have done our best, we have been into the country, and you know the result. I do not want to go more deeply into the matter. But I assure you that although we have not attained the success we hoped for, we are in a much better and in a much stronger position in the Assembly and in the various Councils than we were after the elections of 1923. We hope also, as I was encouraged by the speech of Pandit Malaviyaji—I have a very strong confidence in him and his friends regarding the amalgamation of groups, that so far as the Assembly is concerned, we shall be able to come to some understanding and present a united front to the bureaucracy. But so far as the Provincial Councils are concerned we are agreeable, if any programme is suggested which does not involve loss of self-respect to work with others. It may be merely sentiment but we cannot live without sentiment; we cannot throw it to the winds and carry on the work of the Reforms. I do hope that every delegate in this hall will realise that in voting upon this resolution he is really giving his verdict between those whose national honour has been assailed (they are your own countrymen) and those who have assailed that national honour—the bureaucracy, and I have no doubt as to what your verdict will be. That is all I wanted to say. (Prolonged cheers).

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta in reply to the debate spoke in Bengali. The following is a summary of his speech,

Friends, I have come here again to answer to the arguments put forward by Sjt Basanta Kumar Mazumdar in support of his amendments to the original resolution. It is not because we are anxious for the acceptance of offices that we have gone into the Councils. The resolution is no innovation made by us, but it is a mere reproduction

of Deshbandhu Das's programme which he drafted himself for the Swaraj Party, and which has now been accepted as the programme of the Congress. The little difference which has been introduced into the resolution has been made only to stiffen it more and in order to avoid all loopholes.

Then, speaking in English in reply to Sjt. Syamsundar Chakravarti's arguments, Mr. Sen-Gupta said :—

Friends, I regret that Syam Babu, though he could understand the position of the Responsivists, could not understand the position of the Swarajists going into the Councils. Does he not know why Sjts. Subhas Chandra Bose, Satyendra Chandra Mitra and Anil Baran Roy and many other Congress workers were spirited away and put into jails? I would ask Syam Babu what was the reason of the sudden arrest of these gentlemen from Bengal. It was only to break the strength of the Swaraj Party. Syam Babu said that the N.C.O. movement had great strength behind it. If that was so, I would ask him why it was that Mahatma Gandhi was not released so long as the strength of that movement was there. Does my friend realise why Mahatma Gandhi was flung into prison and not released? It was because of the movement which the Government wanted to demolish. Those gentlemen who are now in prison are not released only because of the strength of the Swaraj Party, because by keeping them in jail the Government want to kill the Swaraj Party and their policy in the Councils. I know the detenues will be released in one minute if we only go and express our readiness before Lord Lytton to accept offices and work the Reforms. But the Swaraj Party and now the Congress, will not and should not agree to such humiliating course which means the betrayal of the cause of the country." (Cheers).

The first amendment put to vote was that of Mr. Balkrishna Sarma which was declared lost by the President.

Mr. Basanta Kumar Mazumdar's amendment with regard to the deletion of words "subject to clause (d)" was next put to vote and declared lost.

Mr. B. K. Mazumdar's next amendment with reference to clauses (d), (e) and (f) was put to vote and also declared lost.

Mr. B. K. Mazumdar's amendment regarding the substitution of "All India Congress Committee" in place of "All India Working Committee" in clause (b) was then put to vote. The counting of hands block by block took a considerable time, and it appeared that the voting stood at 450 for, and 481 against. Whilst a recount was being taken the President announced that the voting on this amendment became unnecessary by reason of the fact that the mover of the original resolution had accepted this amendment.

The original resolution as amended by the substitution of words "All India Congress Committee" for words "All India Working Committee" was then put and carried *nem con.*

VI. WORK IN THE COUNTRY

The President called upon Pandit Motilal Nehru to move the resolution.

Pandit Motilal Nehru said :

I congratulate the House on passing the resolution relating to the work in the Councils. I must tell you that nothing can be achieved in the Legislatures without the work in those bodies being intimately connected with the work outside in the country. The proposition that I am now laying before you relates to the work outside the Legislatures and in the country.

The Resolution runs thus :

This Congress adopts the following programme of work in the country.

The work in the country shall be directed to the education of the people in their political rights and training them to acquire the necessary strength and power of resistance to win those rights by carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress with special reference to popularising Khaddar, promoting inter-communal unity, removal of untouchability, ameliorating the condition of the suppressed classes and the removal of the drink and drug evil and shall include the capture of local bodies, the organisation of villages, the promotion of education on national lines, the organisation of labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of the relations between employers and workmen and between landlords and tenants and the general advancement of the national, economic, industrial and commercial interests of the country.

Friends, you will observe that this resolution is a very comprehensive one and includes almost all kinds of national activities which are desirable to have in the country. As I have said before, the work in the Councils must be so inter-related to the activities in the country that both may be utilised for the advancement of the nation towards Swaraj. If there are no activities in the country your programme in the Council is bound to fail, and standing before you I am bound to admit that the failure of the programme in the Councils to the extent to which it has failed is due, in my humble judgment, not so much to the dissensions within and without, as to the lack of proper political sense in the country. It is our fault that we are today confronted with that lack of political sense because we have neglected to educate the masses—that is our supreme duty. Again, I am free to confess before you that the Councils with all the resolutions that you have passed or you may pass in

future can do you no material good unless you have that driving force in the country. What are the Councils? They are mere automata in the hands of the bureaucracy. Those hands can only be forced when efforts are made both in and out of the Councils. I do not think many words are required to commend this resolution to you and the various activities mentioned in the resolution. If there is any one who has any criticism to make, I think it can only be levelled against the comprehensiveness of this resolution. I feel myself that having achieved very little in the various directions in which this resolution asks you to work, it seems to me to be rather a very large order for us to engage in this ambitious programme, but the reason why the programme is ambitious and so comprehensive is that nothing will take you to Swaraj unless you work all these departments of national life. Unless they go hand in hand it is not possible for you to do anything or advance towards Swaraj. I may tell you that there were various resolutions proposed in the Subjects Committee suggesting that the activities may either be confined to some of these Departments or at least be concentrated upon more important ones. It is said that the most important, the most burning question is the communal discord between the Hindus and the Mahomedans in India. If, within the next twelve months, you can achieve success in restoring friendly relations between these two great communities, I think, we shall have achieved as much as it is possible to achieve, even if we make no other advance in any other direction. I think it was pointed out and rightly pointed out that it is for the Congress to lay down a policy, and it is for the executive of the Congress to issue instructions as to how that policy is to be worked out. You must therefore not go away under the impression that this is only a pious resolution expressing something that is desirable and not showing you the way to achieve it. That you may expect in a very short time from the executive, the All India Congress Committee or the All India Working Committee. Let me remind you that this is no new resolution. It reiterates the resolution which was passed at Cawnpore. This resolution was passed by a Congress which was attended by three thousand delegates, and practically passed unanimously. I remember various things which were raised in support of it, and I also remember the few stray things here and there which were raised in opposition to it—that was more with regard to the first part of the resolution. I therefore think that not many words are necessary to commend this resolution to you, and I reserve my remarks, if necessary, for reply. (Applause).

Pandit Motilal Nehru then explained the Resolution in Hindustani.

Maulana Shaukat Ali seconded the resolution in Hindustani.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Mr. President, Brothers and Sisters,

It is a pleasure for me to support this resolution. This is the most important of all the resolutions for me. You may go to the Councils but you should also look to the work in the country. There is no use in merely filling newspaper columns with your speeches. I remember the day when the bureaucracy shook in its shoes at your great organisation. If you work out this resolution we can reach our former glory. The Congress now is not so strong as before. Some people are laughing at us. Such men have no place here. We are very much disunited at the present moment. Let us unite and work. Or else shut this Congress and be bondslaves of Englishmen for ever. We have to choose between the two. Those of us who are outside the Councils should work out this resolution in the country. Our going over to this Congress would be a mere waste if we disperse without a serious determination for work. We should all wear khaddar. People must be made to realise the importance of it. Khaddar is our National uniform. It brings us all under one flag. It is a symbol of love. It gives food to crores of poor people. Please work this resolution on your return home with sincerity. We must undertake the reconstruction work of our nation in all its aspects. As long as God wills it, this bureaucracy continues. But we must organise for civil disobedience. India is anxious for independence. But there is nobody to lead. We are quarrelling among ourselves under different names. Let those who are in Councils work there. Let us work outside. Our supreme duty is to sacrifice ourselves at the altar of our motherland and free her from slavery. I would invite my Moslem brothers to join the Congress and strengthen it. Weakening the Congress means tightening the noose of foreign domination. (Cheers).

Dr. Satyapal (Punjab) supported the resolution in Hindustani.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Mr. President, Brothers and Sisters,

The resolution reminds me of the non-co-operation days. Leaders had already spoken on the resolution. We are always after new things. But is this not a new thing that the Congress is so weak today? Days were when the Government and the enemies of the Congress could not dare to raise their little finger. Now we are fallen on account of internecine strife. This resolution lays down work in the country and it is this that takes us nearer Swaraj. Congressmen have come out successful in the recent elections, not on account of their work in the Councils but on account of the influence of the great Congress which is proud to have produced Tilak, Gandhi, Das and many other leaders. Sardar Kharag Singh who is now in jail asked his jail

superintendent how the Congress was. The superintendent replied that Congress was dead. But the Sardar Sahib retorted that as long as India was alive Congress won't die. Such should be our faith in this fight for freedom. I once more commend this resolution to you and urge you to work it out immediately.

Mr. T. Prakasam (Andhra) on being called upon by the President spoke in support of the resolution. He said :

Mr. President and brother delegates, I support this proposition and I hope that it will not be merely a lip service that we will be doing to this resolution this year. This is a resolution that has been passed every year for the last four years, but we have not been able to give effect to the programme of the resolution.

A voice: Who is responsible?

Mr. Prakasam: We are responsible and you are responsible. There is no doubt about that. Today if the Council election results have been a substantial success, we must all know that it was due to the fact that the constructive programme had been carried on in 1920-21, and carried on successfully. This success is due, as I said, to the organisations in 1920-21 and to the knowledge, political consciousness, courage and spirit imbibed by the nation and the people although the Congress organisations had not been functioning in all places. We went to the country, to the farthest corners of the country, even into the jungles and the mountains. The spirit is evidently there because of the old organisations and work. During the last four years we have failed to do our duty, and we confess it to our shame. We shall at least now undertake to do the work. The National Demand has been made twice and there has been no response. The Congress called upon the Councilors to come out and appeal to the country and the people have recorded their verdict. It is still not responded to because there is no sanction behind it, there are no Congress committees behind it, there is no power in the villages behind it. I now say that if in this year a net work of Congress organisations be established, I do not think Lord Birkenhead would dare to keep back from giving a proper response. That is why our leader Pandit Motilal Nehru said that this work in the country is necessary and that without it there can be no good work in the Assembly and in the Councils. It is the people behind the Councils who should be ready to come forward and give a definite reply. What is meant by constructive programme? It means spreading of knowledge and giving strength and courage to the nation, and preparing the nation and the people to be ready and willing to make sacrifices when the hour of call comes. The hour did come and the supreme demand was made in 1920-21. The national spirit had been destroyed by the bureaucracy by the inauguration of a reign of

terror and repression. It was our duty to restore it but we have not been able to do so owing to internal quarrels and dissensions. What is meant by constructive programme? It has been shown to Great Britain that the whole of India can be organised in a manner that can stagger them. The completeness of the constructive programme was such in the remote villages of Andhra in those days that no legal cases and disputes passed beyond the village limits. The completeness of the constructive programme which was carried out by the Congress committees was such that the Government would not sleep until all the persons responsible were thrown into the jail, once twice and three times until that spirit was broken. We know what happened in Assam. That is why we are in this condition. We have survived all this, and the general condition is now known to us. A calm atmosphere is wanted for carrying it out. I think the Gauhati Congress would be the most important one in our national struggle. Mahatma Gandhi has stepped in after one year's rest and he is willing, if we behave properly, to lead us to the goal. (Hear, hear). The constructive programme is considered a very cold thing. Many people say there is nothing to enthuse the nation in it, it is a dry thing. But what did it do in 1921-22? The village was connected with the taluq, the taluq was connected with the district, the district was connected with the province and the province to the All India Congress Committee,—a constitution had been given to the nation and a parallel government was established in every village,—revenue was collected, money spent, institutions maintained and contributions were given to the superior committees. It was this situation that frightened the Government, and it was this thing that they wanted to destroy and did destroy. Now, Sir, those who have gone to the Councils and the Assembly, if they only spread themselves into the country, make themselves responsible to the Congress committees in all the villages and make them function in the manner in which they did function in 1920-21, I have no doubt that the Government will not hesitate to give you a proper response to your National Demand. The constructive programme is the greatest thing in our programme. Whatever it may be, it was passed, and it is for us to take it up, follow it out and work it under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. (Applause).

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

VII. WORK OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY

The following resolution was put from the Chair and carried unanimously:—

- (a) The work outside the country shall be directed to the dissemination of accurate information in foreign countries with a view to interest them in India's freedom.

- (b) This Congress appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its representative to the Congress of Oppressed Nations which will be held in Brussels on the 20th January next.

VIII. BENGAL DETENUES

Mr. B. G. Horniman rose amidst applause and moved the following resolution:—

This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Government had no justification whatsoever for the application of emergency legislation like Regulation III of 1818 which has been the subject, repeatedly, of condemnation by the Congress and other public bodies and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925, (which latter was passed into law as a result of an arbitrary exercise of autocratic power against the expressed wishes of the elected members of the legislatures) under which a large number of peaceful public workers of Bengal were arrested and imprisoned without the formulation of definite charges and without open trial and still remain without any knowledge of the charges against them and any trial.

This Congress strongly condemns their continued incarceration and deportation outside Bengal, notwithstanding the clearly expressed opinion of the elected members of the legislatures and the country.

Mr. Horniman said:

Mr. President and fellow delegates! This resolution is really of rather an academical character, because it is not like the resolutions which we have hitherto passed today, a resolution involving the carrying out of some definite action. And I am glad to say that the day when this Congress was in the habit merely of meeting to pass academical resolutions is now gone and that resolutions that we pass here are usually of a definite and active kind. But we have the satisfaction of knowing that if the resolutions that we have already passed here this afternoon are effectively carried out then the scandals with which the resolution I am now moving deals, surely disappear. But though this resolution is of an academical character, none the less it is necessary that we should move it here as an expression of the opinion of this great Indian National Congress, and that for two reasons. There is, my friends, the shadow of a great sorrow hanging over the homes of many families in Bengal today. That is a shadow whose reflection and gloom extends to every province of the country, because in every province the sorrow and humiliation of this is felt by every patriotic Indian. And in this Congress we desire, firstly, to express the opinion of the Congress representing every province of India, the whole Indian nation, we desire to express our sympathy with the afflicted province of Bengal that is suffering under the shadow and to tell our Bengalee brothers that the whole of India stands side by side with them in this

matter, that the whole of India regards the release of the Bengal detenués as the most essential part of the National Demand and that India will not accept any attempt at satisfaction of the National Demand unless it includes the unconditional release of the Bengal detenués. (Hear, hear and applause). I do not want to detain you very long on a subject that is well-worn. But there are one or two things which, I feel, I must say before I commit this resolution to your hands. I want to remind you that the whole of this miserable business of arresting people in Bengal, deporting them and imprisoning them without trial is a story of such "treachery and tyranny" as would make it impossible that the people of the country, no matter what advances were made to them, could ever co-operate with that Government unless full reparation is done in this matter. (Hear, hear). Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta, who addressed this Congress on this matter last year, reminded you and I would also remind you again that a few years ago, a very short time ago the Government appointed a Committee to enquire into the Repressive Laws and that Committee unanimously recommended the repeal of this Regulation III of 1818. Not only that but the Government themselves accepted the recommendation of the Committee and promised to put it into legislative effect. But what did they do? Instead of carrying out that pledge, they not only failed to repeal the Act but proceeded to carry out arrests and deportations under its provisions. And they went further: by the arbitrary action of the Viceroy they brought into enactment a further repressive measure, giving them still wider powers than they possess under this Act which they had promised to repeal. We hear people talking about Responsive Co-operation. But when we consider the things that we are asked to respond to, when we consider the character of the Government with which we are asked to co-operate as revealed by actions of this kind we know that it is impossible not merely for ourselves, but because we owe a duty to these men who for the sake of their country, are lingering and rotting in the jails of Mandalay and other parts of the country, men who have never been given the fairness of open trial, men who do not know even the charges that are made against them, men who are treated, (I want Lord Birkenhead to know that we say this) men who are treated as badly and as disgracefully as other prisoners are alleged to have been treated in the jails of Soviet Russia, which Lord Birkenhead is never tired of denouncing.

Friends, we are told in justification of this outrage that the evidence against these people has been carefully examined, that it has been traced for long periods from point to point and that it has been laid before not only the Government of Bengal but also before Lord Reading, the Ex-Lord Chief Justice of England, and

they are satisfied that these men are guilty of the crimes that are attributed to them. My friends, if Lord Reading is satisfied then I say shame upon him (Hear, hear and applause), shame upon the office which he held, shame upon the Government that sent him here to do this thing, for it does not matter whether it is Secretaries of the Government, or whether it is Members of the Council, whether it is the Governors, whether it is the Viceroy, whether it is the Lord Chief Justice, or whether—as a distinguished Ex-Judge in England, Lord Palmer once said—whether it is “a Committee of Archangels’ before whom you lay a case of this kind. So long as the proceedings are conducted in secrecy, so long as the evidence is not tested according to the requirements of honest, open justice, then it is humanly and legally impossible for any man, whether he be an Ex-Lord Chief Justice or an Ex-Lord Chancellor, to say that he is satisfied of the guilt of men who have not been brought into open court and properly tried. It is not justice, I do not know what to call it—to say the least, it is a prostitution of justice, a prostitution of all the principles for which the British Government pretends to stand in this country. Even we are told that Lord Birkenhead has himself examined the papers, examined the evidence and is satisfied that these people have committed crimes, that their complicity is such that their incarceration is justified. (Shame, shame). Mr. President, it is a shame. Lord Birkenhead no doubt is a very good judge of what constitutes rebellious conduct. There is a proverb in English, and I have no doubt that it is common to most languages, and it is this: “set a thief to catch a thief”. And I am prepared to admit that if any one is qualified to judge from ex-parte evidence whether people have been guilty of seditious conduct or rebellious conduct, then nobody is better qualified than Lord Birkenhead who has been something of a rebel and who has engaged in seditious activities himself and has made an open confession and boast of it.

When we are asked to accept the opinion of men because we are told that one has been a Lord Chancellor and another has been a Lord Chief Justice of England we say we shall refuse and refuse again and again to accept it, because British traditions of justice have fallen so low in India. We shall stand for justice, pure justice and nothing but justice. We shall refuse to accept a verdict of judgment unless these people are brought into Court and given a proper and open trial according to the forms of law.

Mr. President, there is one more thing I want to refer to before I conclude, and I do so because it brings out in a very lurid way the terrible effects and the terrible consequences which are so far-reaching that no man can say where they will end, once you begin to tamper with justice in this way. There has been a case heard in the High

Court of Calcutta recently, a suit for libel brought by Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose, one of the detenues in Mandalay against the "Statesman" newspaper. I have read the judgment in that case. I do not say that I have understood it because I have never read a judgment so wanting in lucidity as this judgment of Mr. Justice Buckland. I want to tell you briefly the facts and what this case was. The "Statesman" published an article in which they accepted all the statements that had been made by the Governor about Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose. They stated it very clearly, in fact they stated—no matter what Mr. Justice Buckland may say—they stated clearly that Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose was the directing brain of a criminal terrorist conspiracy. Now friends, Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose has never been brought to trial, has never been told what the charges against him are, has never had an opportunity of examining them and testing them, has never been before a jury and he has never been convicted. And if in the face of these facts it is possible for a public newspaper to say that such a man is guilty of abominable crimes, then by allowing that paper to go scot-free in an action for libel, it seems to me that the end of justice has come in this country; and there never can be any safety for any one in a country where these things are allowed to be published. The "Statesman" has even dared to congratulate the Indian people on its victory for fair comment. A journal which has witnessed every sort of attempt in this country for years past to suppress the freedom of the press, to suppress fair comment, to penalise newspapers for expressing perfectly legitimate opinions—a paper that has witnessed all that without ever once lifting its pen to utter a word of protest, now because it has established its own claim to libel an innocent unconvicted man and accuse him of crimes for which he has never been in court or before a jury, describes it as a victory for fair comment and has the audacity to congratulate the Indian people on the battle that it has fought and the victory it has won, not for them but against them.

If there be nothing else, I should feel myself that we must go on struggling and struggling permanently with a Government until it is overturned or driven out or brought in surrender to its bended knees, (Hear, hear), in order that these crimes against the people should not go on. (Loud applause)

I want to remind Lord Birkenhead and every one connected with the Government of this country that these methods have always led and can only lead to one result. It was not only on account of the Ship Money and oppression of that kind that a King of England once lost his head, it was on account as well of the existence of the Star Chamber and judicial methods, comparable with these judicial or rather injudicial methods which the Government are carrying

on in this country today. The French Revolution came about not only on account of the oppression of the peasants by the aristocracy but also by the existence and practice of methods of these kinds, the Bastille and lettre de cachet, which had the effect of infuriating the people until they rose in their wrath, burnt that horrible institution and sent to the guillotine the people who were responsible for those inhuman and tyrannical methods. My friends, it would be wise if those responsible for the Government of this country would realise in time that they cannot avoid any more than any other country has been able to do so, they cannot avoid and defy the lessons of history; and as sure as Nemesis overtook the King of England and destroyed the French Monarchy, so surely shall Nemesis overtake and destroy other Governments that practise these methods. (Hear, hear and loud applause).

Only one word more, it is not only shame that attaches to the people who do these things. You will forgive me for saying this because you know that it comes from an honest friend who regards this country as his own. (Cheers). You will forgive me for saying that it is our own deep humiliation and shame that we have not the power to open the jail gates and let these men go free. Let us, from now, work these resolutions that we have passed this afternoon with all the energy, with all the sincerity and all the determination that we can command, because if we carry them actively into effect we shall be able to remove the humiliation and shame of these countrymen of ours lying in jail without having been convicted of any crime. (Loud and continued applause).

Sardar Sardul Singh (Punjab) in seconding the resolution said :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, owing to the general depression in the country it is believed that Government now does not care what the Indians say and what they do. I am very glad to say that at least there are some persons in Bengal and some in the Punjab about whom the Government thinks that their liberty is dangerous to foreign rule in this country. (Hear, hear). Many arguments are put forward by Indian politicians for the speedy establishment of Swaraj in the country, but I think there is no stronger argument than the case of these detenues to strengthen our hands to get Swaraj as soon as possible. Gentlemen, this case shows that there is a wide unbridgable gulf between the Indians and their so-called friends,—a gulf which can never be crossed. Gentlemen, patriots like Subhas Chandra Bose whom we regard as an angel, whose name is a household word, are in the eyes of the Government criminals of the worst sort against whom even the law courts are shut. Gentlemen, what is white to us is black in the eyes of the bureaucracy. Those whom we call Satans and incarnations of repression, I mean men like Dyer and

O'Dwyer, this Government regards them as Saviours of the British Empire. (Shame, shame). When I see such a very great difference between the rulers and the ruled, there can be absolutely no co-operation between them and us and no reconciliation. (Hear, hear). This Government of ours now calls itself a reformed Government. They say that they have established in this country a responsible form of Government. You know how responsible this Government is to our wishes. Notwithstanding the fact that all the Legislatures in the country have passed resolutions condemning the behaviour and misconduct of the Government in this respect, these unfortunate people are still rotting in the jails. (Cries of shame, shame). This is the form of responsible government that has been given to us. Our government calls itself a civilised Government, but in order to save its skin from the criticisms of honest men it has unearthed a law more than a century old, a law which I can assure every one of you, is not being used in any other country by any Government which calls itself a civilised Government. (cheers). Our friends say that they are here in the best interests of our countrymen. Well, if that is so, why should they imprison such men? Why should they throw into the jails men for whom the Indians have so much respect? If, in order to save their lives or their honour, or to save their government they have to put such honourable citizens into jail, then I say that they have no business here in this country (applause). They are not here as friends and guides. They have no honourable work in this country. But gentlemen, if Government has done a great wrong, we too have not done our duty by these detenués. If the government ought to feel ashamed, we too cannot feel very proud of what we have done for them. If we had worked the constructive programme put forward by Mahatma Gandhi before the country in 1920, I am sure, these prisoners would not have been lying in the jails up to this time. We would certainly have broken not only the small jails but we would have also broken the shackles that bind all the Indians down to a perpetual imprisonment. (Cheers). If now we follow the lead given to us today by Pandit Motilal Nohru and Maulana Shaukat Ali, I am sure, you will have all these prisoners out of jail within this year, and on that you can not only congratulate yourselves but you can also congratulate those persons,—those orphans and widows who are now in trouble in their homes because their dear ones are now rotting in jail.

With these words, I support the resolution put before you by Mr. Horniman. (Cheers).

Mr. Sailes Nath Bisi (Bengal) supported the resolution and said:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour and pleasure of supporting the resolution so ably put forward by speakers

like Mr. Horniman and Sardar Sardul Singh. You will kindly bear with me a few minutes if I survey the whole situation and visualise before you the effect of these lawless laws.

This Act was first promulgated on the fateful midnight of the 24th October, 1924, in the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal, and came into operation on the midnight of the following day. The *modus operandi* applied was indiscriminate arrest of the people, who held very responsible positions beginning from Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation, down to the humblest of workers who were all pledged to the Congress creed of non-violence. The Government could give no justification for this sort of high-handedness and when this Act came before the Councils our representatives in the Councils in a body threw this Act into the waste paper basket, and the Government finding no other alternative passed this Act into Law by certificate. Since then its application is being resorted to by the Government very often in imprisoning or deporting people when the Government cannot dare to put them on trial in an open Court of Justice.

How long are we to bear it? How long are we to wail and bemoan the loss of our dear comrades behind the prison bars from the pulpits of the Congress and aspire for their release? We have since 1924 year after year expressed our indignation in the choicest rhetoric for the release of our dear comrades but have not been able to set them free yet. And why? We shall find the answer if we put our hands on our hearts. The answer is very simple, that it is only our lassitude in carrying out the Congress programme of Civil Disobedience in the country faithfully and successfully, which has enabled and emboldened the bureaucracy to carry on the nefarious practice of indiscriminate arrest without trial so long. Since the death of my Guru the great Deshbandhu Das Bengal is practically without a real leader to give a lead in this direction. Mahatmaji is keeping himself aloof from the Congress and all other leaders are hopelessly divided amongst themselves. And be it said to the great shame of all of us that the release of our dear comrades is pawned sometimes for the acceptance or non-acceptance of office. But, friends, can we pawn their imprisonment as antecedent or precedent to the acceptance of office or otherwise from a Government which violates the fundamental rights of a citizen by imprisonment without trial? If we mean our dear comrades' release let us prepare the country for civil disobedience. Unless we create the atmosphere of 1921 in the country, it is no use talking of the release of political prisoners. Unless we can make the bureaucracy feel the pressure of our resistance outside the Councils, in the country we cannot hope for the release of our brothers. Let us be serious. Let

us be up and doing, and before the Congress meets next year let us make this firm determination that we shall secure our brothers' release by our action, not by speech.

The fact that Sjt. Satyendra Chandra Mitra has been returned to the Assembly unopposed and Sjt. Subhas Chandra Bose returned to the Bengal Council by an overwhelming majority shows that they enjoy the confidence of the nation.

In conclusion, I request Mr. Pethwick Lawrence, the Labour M. P., to convey this message to his country that India is not going to be cowed down by any amount of lawless laws which the British Government may impose upon her from time to time to suppress her struggle for freedom, and let him convey this message also that under the Labour Government this lawless law was passed from which the country bleeds so profusely today (cheers).

The resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The Congress adjourned till noon the next day.

THIRD DAY.

December 28, 1926.

The Congress re-assembled at noon on Tuesday, the 28th December, 1926. As it was raining, the last day's proceedings of the session were gone through at some inconvenience to the delegates and visitors. The proceedings commenced at 1-30 p.m.

Messages of Sympathy.

Mr. Girdharilal then read the following messages of sympathy received by the President from Herr. L. Gibarti, General Secretary of the 'League against Oppression in the Colonies,' Berlin and Mr. Saklatvala M.P.

"On behalf of four hundred Nationalist and Labour organisations all over world we send Indian National Congress heartiest greetings wishing every success. India is the most important world problem today. The Brussels Congress of Oppressed Peoples including Canton and Mexican Governments, South African Indian Congress, Egyptian National party, Ceylon, China, Persia, Turkey, South America highly desires meeting representatives of Indian movement, your mandated delegates and all Indian leaders: Personally welcome Congress President, George Lansbury, Madam Sunyatsen (China), Henry Barbusse (France). Cable the names of delegation." (Herr. Gibarti)

"In spirit with you. Accept greetings. Earnestly wishing your deliberations worthy of the men and women who value mass liberty above political expediency, who realise tactical speeches in Parliamentary institutions only a passing consolation in return for the economic burdens and national serfdom. How long before adopting Andhra's honest, logical resolution, will Bombay sentimentalism prevail again to sacrifice national freedom and honour to fetish of forming voting combination inside Councils? I stand alone in Parliament of 615 conservative, liberal and labour imperialism, yet don't surrender principles for artificial political combinations. Voice of workers and peasants outside Councils is your real strength. Organise, organise them till they lead themselves and you to real emancipation as they are now doing in China, where political Councillors and opportunist mandarins favouring foreign imperialist masters are openly fighting the Chinese workers and peasants, though without hope. Wish success to your deliberations for freedom and strength to our motherland which I hope soon to visit." (Mr. Saklatvala M.P.)

Dr. Murari Lal of Cawnpore urged the Congress to bury communal differences and steer clear to the goal of freedom.

Srimati Sarala Devi, who presided over the Calcutta Hindu Citizens' mass meeting conveyed the text of the resolution passed at the meeting which said that the Mussalman leaders should cleanse the minds of their co-religionists of the erroneous anti-Islamic notion that the people of other faiths have not equal unassailable right to defend and propagate their own faith by Reform, Sangathan and Shuddhi.

Other telegrams were from Lodd Govindass, Zemindar, Madras ; Sjts. Chandradhar Barooah of Jorhat, Lakshminarayan Misra of Arrah, Jadu Nath Mazumdar of Jessore, Anjaneyulu of Tenali, Ambalal Sarabhai of Ahmedabad and B. S. Kamat of Poona.

IX. HINDU-MOSLEM UNITY.

The following resolution on Hindu-Muslim unity was put from the Chair :

This Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with Hindu and Mussalman leaders to devise measures for the removal of the present deplorable differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and submit their report to the All India Congress Committee not later than the 31st March, 1927.

And this Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to issue necessary instructions in that behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after a consideration of the said report.

The Resolution was explained in Hindi.

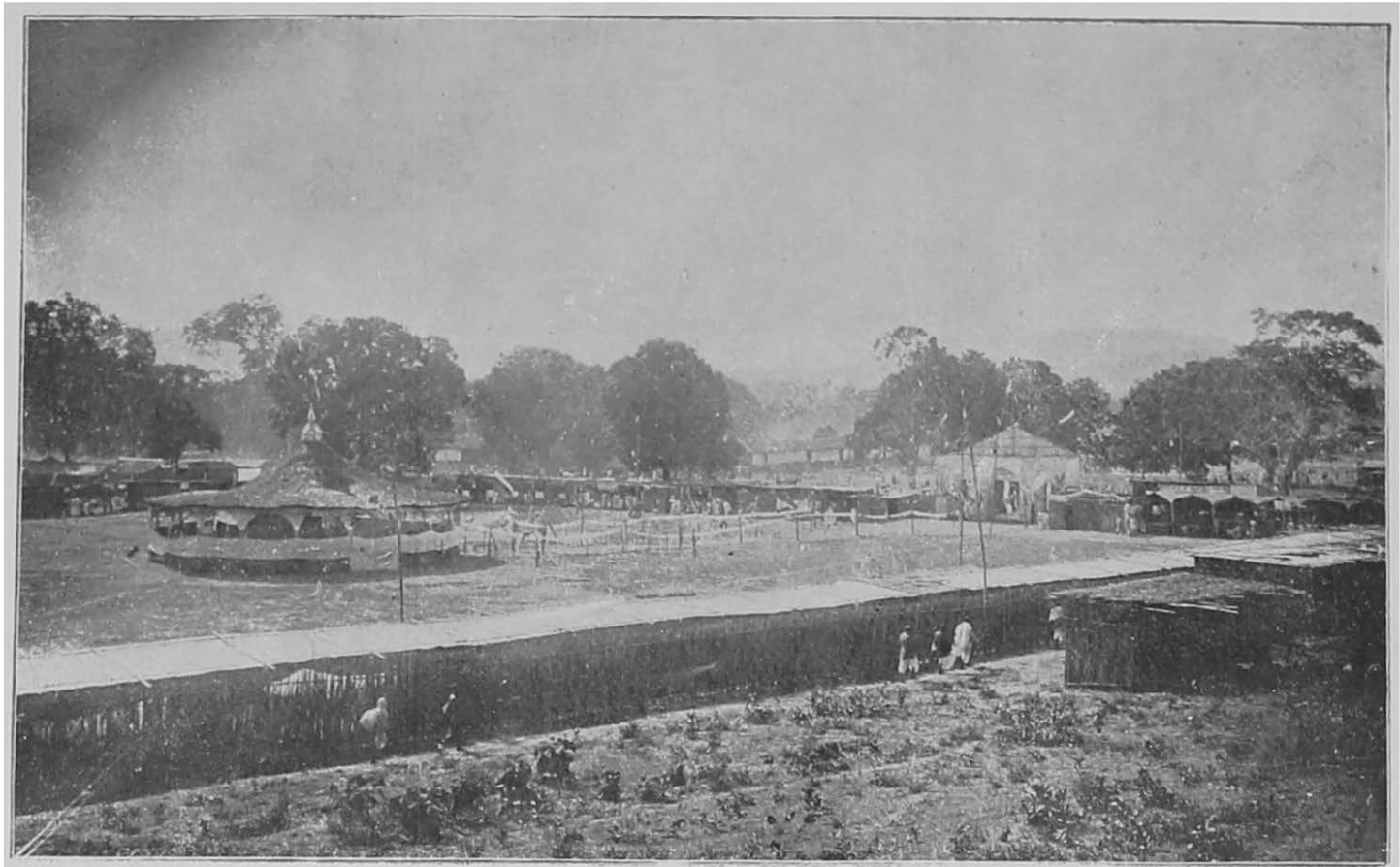
The President said : No words of mine are necessary to commend this resolution to your acceptance. It is every one's desire that we should do our best to bring about this unity, and we all understand the gravity of the position. This resolution will enable you all to take the necessary steps to bring about Hindu-Moslem unity. Therefore I venture to place this resolution before you in all humility as a resolution which is to be worked up in the way mentioned in this resolution.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

X. CURRENCY.

The President: The next resolution relates to Currency and Exchange, questions which are now seriously agitating the country. There might be differences of opinion, but there is not the slightest doubt that this Congress must realise the gravity of the issues and authorise the Working Committee to go into the matter so as to enable the members of the Congress in the Assembly to take adequate action in the matter. In that spirit and with that view this resolution was adopted in the Subjects Committee which I am now putting to you from the Chair :

" This Congress realises the gravity of the issues arising out of the report of the Royal Commission on Currency and authorises the Working Committee to go into the whole subject with the aid of experts, if



Khadi Exhibition

necessary; and issue instructions to the Congress members in the Legislative Assembly to take steps to safeguard the interests of the people of India in such manner as it may be advised."

The resolution was passed unanimously.

XI. OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1927.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu formally moved that the following Office-bearers be appointed for the new year.

General Secretaries.

- (1) Dr. M. A. Ansari,
- (2) Sjt. A. Rangaswami Iyengar,
- (3) Sjt. Vallabhbhai J. Patel.

Treasurers.

- (1) Seth Revashanker Jagjivan Javeri,
- (2) Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

XII. AUDITORS.

Mrs. Naidu moved the following:—

This Congress appoints Messrs. Dalal and Shah of Bombay auditors for the next year.

The motion was passed.

XIII. KHADDAR FRANCHISE.

Mr. T. Prakasam (Andhra) moved the following resolution:—

Resolved that the following changes be made in Article VII of the Constitution,

Substitute the following for Section (iv):

- (iv) a. No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organisation whatsoever or to be elected as such or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or Congress organisation or any committee or sub-committee thereof, if he has not complied with section (i) thereof and does not habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.
- b. The Working Committee shall frame Rules for the proper carrying out of the provisions of this section.

He said:

Friends, you know that the Clause as it stands now, to which I am proposing this amendment, does not say that one should habitually wear khaddar. On the other hand it lays down that it is enough if khaddar is worn on ceremonial occasions relating to the Congress business. That has been tried and it has been found that the door has been left open for a considerable amount of fraud. Even at

the time when the rule was adopted, I was one of those who protested against the omitting of the habitual use of khaddar. The wearing of khaddar on ceremonial occasions only is not enough if we Congressmen after working in the country for six long years and having adopted khaddar as the national dress think that we should not be able to do this, that is to say to accept this change and wear it habitually, it would be really very difficult for us to make greater sacrifices for winning the freedom of the country. The simple thing which the nation has accepted today is the wearing of cloth made in our own country. Instead of making it apply only to ceremonial occasions it is the duty of every one of us to accept this change and habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar. This is a very simple rule. I, for one, feel that we should first of all make it clear to the rulers of India and also to the outside world that we have the greatest feeling for our own dress and our own country, apart from the economic and political aspect of the khaddar question. That is the only thing distinguishing us; and it has been noticed and pointed out by some of us that this rule regarding the wearing of khaddar on ceremonial occasions has been abused. Whenever Congress business has to be done people who wear foreign clothes come almost to the door wearing them and then on entering put on khaddar cloth for the time being and then they go back and put on foreign clothes again. Time has come when such a thing should not be allowed to continue and we have to enact this rule to make it compulsory as far as possible by introducing these words "habitual wearing of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar". I therefore commend this resolution to your acceptance.

Babu Rajendra Prasad (Behar) rose amidst cheers and seconded the resolution in Hindi.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Mr. President, brothers and sisters,

This resolution moved by Sjt Prakasam is a very important one. I have followed the trend of discussion in the Subjects Committee and understood the opinion of the people. Every one agreed about the importance of the resolution. The very fact that it was passed by the Subjects Committee means that it will be accepted by this house. The noteworthy point is that support is forthcoming to this resolution from quarters which were not hitherto in agreement with this. A majority of the Swarajists, who were opposed to the Khaddar clause, are now supporting this resolution as a sign of their endeavour to co-operate with the other section in the Congress. It is a matter for gratification that there is not much opposition to this change, within the Congress.

I have great faith in khaddar and it is the only remedy to the poverty of our country. Khaddar can be produced in towns and

villages. Those that have faith in khaddar readily support this resolution. Our friends who were doubting hitherto have joined us. It is not enough if you merely pass this resolution. We shall demonstrate our capacity for Swaraj in our dress.

I know there are people who are not satisfied with this resolution and are therefore keeping out of the Congress. Let them keep their opinions.

Some people ask me how it would be possible for the Congress to put these resolutions into practice. They ask me how we can distinguish the wearers of khaddar from non-wearers. It is all right. But I say I depend on the faith of the people but not on compulsion. There is yet another challenge as to how the country can advance towards swaraj. My reply is that we should discipline the people through some method of work. Much sacrifice is needed for the success of our struggle. Unless we are prepared for this small sacrifice in the matter of khaddar we cannot be ready for greater suffering. The resolution is placed before you only after a proper appreciation of its necessity. I leave the matter to individuals and rely on their faith and honesty to work out this resolution. I have faith in khaddar and if we are to attain unity among the thirty crores of people it will be only by this slender cotton thread. With these words I commend this resolution to your acceptance (applause).

Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarti (Bengal) moved the following amendment to this resolution.

"After the words 'Hand-woven khaddar', add 'or any other Swadeshi cloth.'"

He said :

Mr. President and friends, I yield to none in my desire that every congressman in this country, every man and woman in this country should put on khaddar not only on ceremonial occasions, but on all occasions. I yield to none in my desire that every Congress organisation in this country should be managed not only by dilettante politicians or by arm-chair critics but by all persons who really feel for the country and are ready to encourage the khaddar propaganda even at the sacrifice of their personal comforts and luxuries. But it is one thing to encourage the Khaddar movement and it is a totally different thing to compel every congressman to wear hand-spun, hand-woven khaddar habitually. I therefore request you to consider the importance and seriousness of the resolution that you are now going to adopt. I would like to ask you whether you are going to have this only as a paper resolution, a pious wish, or whether you are really sincere in your desire to give full effect to it and not to violate it the moment you go outside the pandal. I take it that you are all very sincere, and therefore I make the following submission. Under the present Rules

and Constitution of the Congress, under Article IV, so far as the membership of the Congress is concerned it is stated that anybody who is of the age of 18 and who believes in the Congress creed and believes in the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means is entitled to be a member of the Congress.

I will now draw your attention to Article VII of the Congress Constitution. What does it say? There you find that every Congressman has to pay an annual subscription of four annas, or in the alternative he has to give 2000 yards of yarn of his or her making. One question, so far as this latter qualification is concerned as to the giving of 2000 yards of yarn of his or her own making, is this,—how far has this test been complied with by you? Or how many of you have done that? I submit that the change you propose goes to the very root of the membership of the Congress. It goes to restrict the membership of the Congress. The proposed change along with Article IV, if you read them together, means that you can be a member of the Congress by paying four annas or by giving 2000 yards of yarn. But now there is another difficulty. You cannot take part in any of the meetings of the Congress—that is the change proposed. You cannot be a member of any Committee, and you cannot take part in any meeting of the Congress unless you habitually put on khaddar. Now please note the difference between the two. What is the value of membership to the Congress, if a member is not allowed to take part in any meeting of the Congress on account of this disability that he does not habitually wear khaddar? Will any one care to become a member of the Congress if he is not allowed even the ordinary rights of membership, viz., to take part in the meetings of the Congress? It practically means that henceforth anyone who wants to be a member of the Congress must habitually wear khaddar. The mover of the resolution should have told you frankly and openly that no one would be eligible to be a member of the Congress unless he wears Khaddar habitually. He says that any one can be a member but he cannot take part in the meetings of the Congress unless he puts on khaddar. I have two objections to this change. First of all you style your Indian National Congress as an organisation of Indians of all shades of opinion but by inserting this technical clause you put this artificial check and you are going to shut out people from coming to serve their motherland according to their own capacities and lights. You claim that your organisation is democratic. Is it consistent with the principle of democracy that you should bar a large number of persons from joining the ranks of the Congress by this artificial check? Is there no scope for a broader view to be taken in the Congress organisation? Has the Congress become so narrow-minded in these days? I appeal to you to consider this matter in the name of the democratic character of the

Congress. Already the number of members of the Congress has dwindled and we should not allow it to dwindle down any further by enforcing this artificial check.

My second objection is that by making this clause compulsory you are going to put a premium upon insincerity and hypocrisy. If you mean to enforce this clause strictly it means that the number of members will dwindle and the organisations will suffer. On the other hand as I have been pointing out it will give scope to persons to become insincere we must remember that khaddar is only a means to an end and not the end itself. Please do not take away the liberty of others and let it not be said that the Indian National Congress is the monopoly of any one. Let it not be said that Indian patriotism is the monopoly of only those who wear khaddar. Let it not be said that the salvation of India is to be attained only by those who wear khaddar. Do not try to change your political organisation into any other organisation. An attempt was made at Patna at a meeting of the A. I. C. C. to make the spinning franchise compulsory but Deshbandhu C. R. Das opposed it, and as a result you have not got it here as a compulsory matter. (Cheers)

Mr. K. N. Joglekar. (Bombay) seconded the amendment.

He said :

Friends, I have come here to second the amendment moved by my friend Mr. Chakravarti. Khaddar is absolutely necessary for the welfare of the masses; but at the same time the khaddar propaganda was not the only activity which was going to bring about the salvation of the whole country. Equally with khaddar there are other industries which are essential and which we ought to support. There are so many other industries which will be neglected if we concentrate ourselves only on this narrow sphere of khaddar. The wearing of khaddar habitually must be looked at from this point of view. It must not be made necessarily and essentially a question of wearing khaddar. There is no doubt that some persons have objections to wearing it habitually, so we must do something to meet them. Therefore we should include these words "or any other Swadeshi cloth", and then we shall not be doing a great injustice to many people. You will find that khaddar is only a part of the whole scheme of regeneration. I request you to add these words "or any other Swadeshi cloth".

Mr. Pravat Chandra Ganguli (Bengal) supported the resolution and opposed the amendment in a Bengali speech. He said that khaddar alone will solve the poverty of India and that mills will not solve that problem.

Sjt. Jai Narain Singh (U. P.) opposed the amendment and supported the resolution in Hindi :

He said that even in Bombay, mills were owned by foreigners and cloth produced in them could not be called Swadeshi. He described the economic uses of Khaddar and how it gives an occupation to old women and widows who have no means of living.

Mr. R. S. Nimbkar (Bombay) next spoke and said: Friends, I rise to oppose the resolution. I belong to the minority in this Congress, and I request you to bear with me for a few minutes even if my remarks may be unpalatable. I belong to the Responsive Co-operation Party. Do not take it that I am against wearing khaddar. This is a question of the rights of individuals, and of safeguarding one's rights to vote in the Congress, especially when we are fighting for universal suffrage in this country. What is the Constitution at present, and what is it that this amendment means? In the olden days, when we met in Nagpur we had 22,000 delegates, then we had no such cloth or uniform, and it was only after some years that the spinning franchise was introduced. As a matter of compromise at Patna the clause regarding the wearing of khaddar on ceremonial occasions was adopted. That was something in the way of a uniform for Congress purposes. The clause that is proposed today binds us to the wearing of khaddar habitually. It is said that at Cawnpore the amendment created disgraceful scenes. Then it is said that it is a uniform for the national cause. Here in India we have got to achieve Swaraj and fight for it, and we cannot afford to keep any people away from us. Much has been talked about unity. May I warn you that if you change this clause as proposed, many of the members will have to leave the Congress. If you all want to be united and want to co-operate with each other do not have this alteration in the rules which will make many sever their connection with you. They are for working with you in the Legislatures but they do not want such restrictions to be imposed upon them. I want you to consider it from various points of view. Do not say simply that it is Mahatma Gandhi's programme and therefore it should be passed. I hope you will oppose the motion and support the amendment moved by Mr. Chakravarti.

Mr. T. Prakasam in reply to the debate said:

Friends, The mover of the amendment said that there was compulsion in this resolution. If there is compulsion, it is one which we should all accept wholeheartedly, because without compulsion, without restraint, without rules and regulations for our own conduct in this Congress we would not be able to conduct our proceedings for a single hour and we would not be able to do business for a single day. All the millions of India are really represented, in my humble view, by the Congress but they are not all allowed to come into the Congress. We have made rules and regulations for our business here. So the Congress as a national body is to be

represented by those who are willing to obey the rules and regulations. My friend, the opposer of the resolution was good enough to say that as honourable men every man in the Congress was bound to wear khaddar. If every one was bound to wear khaddar as honourable men what was the harm of preventing any dishonour coming upon them or preventing fraud? It was also pointed out that we are working for a democracy. Now if we are working for a democracy we must have discipline, and we must regulate our conduct according to the rules that have been framed. There will be no democracy if we are not regulated by strict rules, otherwise it will be mobocracy and everything will disappear in a second. There will be no Congress if there are no rules to regulate our conduct. I am surprised at the way in which we are quarreling over a very simple thing. Khaddar is made in our own country, spun in our own country and woven in our own country. If we people who have been sent to the Councils and the Assembly are regulated by rules which say that we must do a certain thing, we are willing to obey those rules. If we are asked as lawyers to wear gowns made of cloth not of our own country but of cloth imported from Manchester, we are willing to wear it. What a wonderful people we are! This is a very simple thing, and I respectfully ask you to make this rule and take the country forward.

President: I will only ask you to remember that this is a very practical resolution, and if you adopt it, it means that you will observe it.

The amendment of Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarti adding the words "or other Swadeshi cloth" was put to the vote and declared lost by a large majority.

The original resolution regarding the habitual wearing of khaddar was next put to the vote and was carried by an overwhelming majority amid cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai."

XIV. VENUE OF THE NEXT CONGRESS.

The next resolution which was moved from the Chair and carried unanimously was as follows:—

Resolved that the venue of the next session of the Congress be fixed by the All India Congress Committee.

XV. GURDWARA PRISONERS.

The President: The next resolution relates to the Sikh demand in connection with the Gurdwara movement and to Gurdwara prisoners. In this connection I must explain to you that I have received a notice of an amendment relating to the Maharajah of Nabha. That was discussed in the Subjects Committee, and it was resolved to reconsider the whole question as it relates to an Indian State. It was found advisable.

that first of all this question should be fully threshed out by the Working Committee before action is taken. Every one must realise that there is no desire to say anything, either for or against the amendment, but it does not mean that any one interested in it should not take one view or the other. All that it means is that the question will be decided by the Working Committee carefully after going into it. The amendment introduces a substantial motion not relating to the subject and that did not get the support of one third of the members, so I have ruled it out of order. That does not mean that the Working Committee is not to consider it. In point of fact it is to be considered, as was decided by the Subjects Committee this morning.

I now call upon Mr. Ranga Iyer to move the resolution relating to the Sikh prisoners.

Mr. C. S. Ranga Iyer said :

Gentlemen, the resolution which I have the honour to move runs thus :—

- (a) The Congress notes with great regret that though the Government has admitted the justice and righteousness of the Sikh demand in connection with the Gurdwara movement by passing the Gurdwara Act, it has not yet released Sardar Kharak Singh and other Gurdwara prisoners ;
- (b) In the opinion of the Congress there can be no solution of the Sikh problem unless :—
 1. all persons imprisoned in connection with the Gurdwara movement are unconditionally released,
 2. all repressive measures adopted by the Government against them are withdrawn, and
 3. The outstanding grievances of the Sikhs are removed.
- (c) This Congress further assures the Sikh community that in its struggles with the Government it not only has the entire sympathy of the Congress but the Congress also wholeheartedly supports the Sikhs in whatever legitimate and non-violent action they may take to vindicate their rights.

Gentlemen, I consider it a great honour to be called upon to move this resolution. I consider that this resolution is one of the biggest resolutions that have been put before this House, because when there is a lull in the land, when the lull sits like a nightmare on the land, when people are losing hope, when the faith of the people in national regeneration is dying, at such a time, there is a silver lining in the political clouds, and that silver lining is none other than the faith of the Akalis in the message of the Gurus, and that silver lining is none other than the soldiers of the Jaito

battle front, the Nabha battle front, soldiers of India's Independence movement. I refer to the great Sikh soldiers. You are aware of it because you are responsible to a great extent for sending the Congress Sub-Committee which went into the question of Gurdwara atrocities. You are aware, sir, of the limitless suffering, the unspeakable brutalities to which the great Sikh community were subjected. Through their representatives in the Guru-ka-Bagh, they proved the great saying of Mahatma Gandhi that non-violence is the weapon of the strong and not of the weak. By bearing on their shoulders and on parts of their bodies wounds inflicted by a heartless bureaucracy they proved that by non-violence you can lead a revolutionary movement to success. I salute the Gurdwara prisoners because they are forerunners of the revolutionary movement which I see on the horizon. The great revolutionary movement of 1921 will be greater in a few years. Can a nation like this be crushed, can a nation like this be put down by bayonets? Sir Malcolm Hailey said that the movement would not be put down by the bayonet but by the ballot box. At the point of the bayonet he asked the Sikh prisoners to give an undertaking, which is worse than an apology before he would release them. What is the undertaking?—that they should undertake to work the Gurdwara Act. It must have been a very bad Act indeed, because without the undertaking of these prisoners the Government dare not release them. I characterised the wisdom of Sir Malcolm Hailey's Government, in the Hindu Sabha leader's presence, as melancholy meanness, in the Legislative Assembly. I am sure if the Hindu Sabha leader was present here he would have agreed with me that it is melancholy meanness, because today the prisoners are still rotting in their jails and they are asked to give an undertaking. What is this undertaking but an attempt to break the backbone of the Sikhs, the Sikhs being the backbone of the nation. And after the backbone is broken the Government want to convert India into a huge jelly fish and feed on it. Jallianwala Bagh represented in all its horror, in all its sickening horror the depths to which Prussian Britishism could sink in India, while Guru-ka-Bagh represented in all its spiritual glory the heights to which Indian non-co-operation could rise. This is a great resolution because it brings to the Congress movement the faith of the Sikhs. Any one who sympathises with the Sikh movement, be he peasant or prince, comes under the shadow of bureaucratic wrath. You know the Jaito front is the Nabha front, and the Maharaja of Nabha's sympathy with the National Congress truly stated, was responsible for his being sent into exile by the Government which makes no difference between prince and people if the prince happens to be a nationalist. The sympathy of the Congress is on record. It was recorded at the Delhi sessions and if this question is going to be considered by the Working Committee of the Congress, I am

sure that my Akali brothers will be delighted. The tenth Guru said that the Nabha House, the Phulkian House was his own house. The spirit of the Akalis is the spirit of Guru Govind Singh. And what did Guru Govind Singh say? He said to his beloved wife when his four children were gone, "Why do you weep? Why do you shed tears? Tears never supply the wants of India. Your children are not dead. The Great Khalsa community are your children." You remember that Mr. Andrews was present on the spot at Guru-ka-Bagh, and Mr. Andrews is a believer in non-violence. Even Mr. Andrews said after witnessing the horrors and atrocities there that his spirit of non-violence was almost shaken and violence entered his heart. Such a race which gives to us such an ideal, a martial race which made British rule in India possible, may be trusted to unmake the British rule and make our masters become hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Indian nation, if the British do not change their hearts, if they do not change their vision.

In conclusion I must tell you who the Akali prisoners are. At any rate some of them were doing social service work, and are believers in social service. When the Congress says that it will help the Sikh community in whatever legitimate action, whatever non-violent action they take, I know that the Sikh community will take Congress at its word, for what in India is greater today than the word of the Congress. The word of the Congress has been maintained against the will of certain leaders, the word of the Congress has triumphed, and this word of the Congress will be vindicated once again in the Guru-ka-Bagh until the whole country becomes one Guru-ka-Bagh, even though Jallianwala Bagh methods may descend upon them. (Applause.)

Syed Murtuza Sahab (Tamil Nad) seconded the resolution in Hindustani.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Mr. President, brothers and sisters: I rise to support the resolution moved by Mr. Ranga Iyer. This is an important resolution. The Sikhs and the Akalis have taught the rest of India the great lesson of sacrifice and suffering. They are admirably brave and non-violent. We should give our whole-hearted support to our Sikh brothers in this fight. I urge upon you to pass this resolution unanimously (cheers).

Srimati Swarnalata Devi (Bengal) spoke in Bengali.

The following is a summary of her speech.

Mr. President, brothers and sisters: I rise to support the resolution proposed by Mr. Ranga Iyer. Do you know why Sardar Kharag Singh and other Akali workers were sent to jail? Their only fault was that they were prepared to sacrifice their all for their religion, for

their faith, for the cause of the Gurdwara. After the Gurdwara Act had been passed, Government should not keep them any longer in jail. Government should have the wisdom to realise the situation and release these noble band of Akali workers forthwith, or else there will be a vigorous campaign of non-violent non-co-operation throughout the country when they will be compelled to release them. (Cheers).

Baba Gurdat Singh (Punjab) spoke in support of the resolution in Hindi.

The following is a summary of his speech.

Mr. President, brothers and sisters: The resolution merely expresses sympathy for the Sikh prisoners and demands their release. The Sikh community will not be satisfied with this resolution. We are only sorry our amendment is ruled out of order by the President. We bow to it and do not question it. Various reasons prompted us to ask for the inclusion of the Nabha matter in this resolution. The Nabha question was talked over among the leaders and it was dropped. We have to complain against the Congress for this treatment. It is our work alone that either restores Nabha to his kingdom or gives Swaraj to our country. Everyone knows that the Maharaja is suffering for his patriotism and it is for this Congress to take up its cause. The Sikhs are ready to sacrifice themselves for the country's cause and I ask the Congress to recognise us.

(There was some excitement in the Punjab block towards the close of Baba Gurdat Singh's speech. It soon, however, subsided.)

The President: I am sorry that some of my Sikh friends have not understood the position. What was done was that the question of the Maharaja of Nabha was referred to the Working Committee as it referred to an Indian State. There has been no attempt to prejudice their case. All that happened was that in the first meeting of the Subjects Committee it received good support and there was no opposition. On further consideration owing to the difficulties of the subject it was resolved that it should be re-opened and referred to the Working Committee. Nothing has been done to prejudice the case of the Maharaja of Nabha or of the great Sikh community. Let me assure my friends that there was no such thing intended. I was obliged after some consideration to rule the amendment of Baba Mool Singh out of order. I now put this resolution to the vote.

The resolution was carried by a very large majority.

XVI. OTHER CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION.

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta said: I am in charge of a formal resolution. I am proposing that Article VIII of the Constitution should be changed

in certain particulars. In para 2 of Article VIII of our Constitution we want the following change:

“No one who had not enlisted himself as a Congress member on or before the 1st October immediately preceding a particular session of the Congress shall be qualified for election as a delegate to that Session.”

In the present constitution Article VIII, para 2, reads as follows:

“No one shall be qualified for election who is not a member of any Congress organisation”.

The new change merely says that he must be a member of the Congress before the 1st of October previous to the holding of the session. That is all the change that is effected, for which I am asking your sanction.

Mr. Girdharilal explained this in Hindi.

Mr. J.M. Sen-Gupta said: I have now to refer to para 3, Article VIII. It gave the right to the Provincial Congress Committees to send delegates to the Congress deducting the number of members of the All India Congress Committee who were *ex-officio* delegates.

The present constitution says that the number of members of the All India Congress Committee from any particular province, would have to be deducted from the total number of delegates allotted to that province. But the amendment suggests that the A. I. C. C. members should be delegates *ex-officio* and that their number should not be included in the number of delegates allotted under the constitution. Then instead of para 3 the new constitution will read thus:

“The members of the All India Congress Committee shall be *ex-officio* delegates to the Congress. Besides these *ex-officio* delegates, the number of delegates returnable by Provincial Congress Committees shall be not more than one for every fifty thousand, or its fraction, of the inhabitants of each province including the Indian States therein, in accordance with the census of 1921, provided, however, that the inclusion of Indian States in the electorate shall not be taken to include any interference by the Congress with the internal affairs of such states”.

Paragraph 4 of the same Article is therefore deleted. It is a consequential change. Paragraph 4 of Article VIII merely said that the A. I. C. C. members would be *ex-officio* delegates and their number would have to be included in the total number. The result of the alteration is that there will be 350 more delegates to the Congress, who are members of the A. I. C. C.

Mr. Girdharilal explained this in Hindi:

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta continuing said :

In para 7, line 2 of Article VIII, we propose to make a change by substituting "office of the All India Congress Committee" for "Reception Committee of the ensuing session of the Congress.

And also substitute the following for the words at the end of the para, beginning with "such rules "

Such rules shall not be valid unless they have been previously confirmed by the Working Committee,
and put a full stop before 'such.'

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta continuing said :

Friends, The original procedure was that the Provincial Congress Committee made certain rules under which the interim vacancies in the delegates was filled up. The rules of the Provincial Congress Committee made for the filling up of these vacancies will now have to be confirmed by the All India Working Committee. These are the changes that I propose in article VIII. After these are seconded and put to vote I shall have to propose certain other amendments which have been accepted by the Subjects Committee.

Mr. Girdharilal explained this in Hindi, and seconded the resolution.

The resolutions were put and carried unanimously.

Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta said : I have the honour and responsibility of moving a change in the constitution, not a very old piece of the constitution. It was only made a part of our constitution at Belgaum only two years ago. I feel the responsibility of placing this proposal before you and I do so with some diffidence, because I am afraid that it is not so popular with a certain section of the members of the Subjects Committee. But I can assure you that although the change is not so popular, when you realise that the Congress institution is a business proposition, and that we have to carry out its work from day to day from month to month and from year to year unlike the old Congresses before 1919— I can assure you that the change is necessary. This is a living organisation and we have got to get money. The permanent change that I propose in Article XI of the constitution is that the words :

"Fee of one rupee at the Congress-office", be substituted by the words
"fee of ten rupees- at the office of the A. I. C. C. at the Congress camp at the place where the Congress is held".

The net result of this change will be that the delegates instead of paying Re. 1 as the delegation fee, as you did at Cawnpore, will have to pay Rs. 10. (Cries of "No no. We are all against it") You know that a few minutes ago some of you said to the House that this was a democratic institution. Before you have heard both sides of the question how can you give your verdict? This is not the time to say 'no'

but when you are asked for your vote, do not decide anything on the impulse of the moment because somebody else shouts 'no'. (Cries of "No no, we are against it"). That is not democracy. There is also another proposal along with it. So far as the present Congress is concerned there is a temporary change made; it is called a "transitory provision." The delegation fee for the Gauhati Congress, as you all know, has been passed by the Subjects Committee and fixed at Rs. 5. You have already paid Rs. 5 because the Subjects Committee put that change into the constitution, but that change has to be confirmed by you here. You have already paid in anticipation of the sanction of the Congress. This money will not go into my pockets or anybody else's. It will go into the coffers of the Indian National Congress.

Mr. Girdharilal translated into Hindi the remarks made in favour of the resolution and seconded it.

Mr. Joglekar (Bombay) said:

Friends, I come before you to oppose this resolution which has been moved by Mr. Sen-Gupta. According to the old constitution every delegate has to pay only one rupee. This change was brought about under the regime of Mahatma Gandhi and it was sought to make the Congress a purely democratic one. To make the change proposed would be a mistake. They are now launching upon a new programme making the Congress non-democratic. They propose to change two things. One is to permanently levy a delegation fee of Rs. 10. In the old moderate days the Congress used to charge Rs. 25, Rs. 15 and Rs. 10, as much as they liked. The present-day politicians want the Congress to take a retrograde step. One proposal is that they want to make the delegation fee a permanent burden of Rs. 10 and the other is to make it Rs. 5 for the present Congress and that the entire sum will be handed over to the Gauhati Reception Committee. This is an injustice. I say that we should not be made to give Rs. 5 for this session at all. They have got funds and whenever any loss has been suffered it can be made up from them. They are also receiving public support and instead of doing that they want to try to raise the delegate fee in this way. I say that this fee of Rs. 5 for the Gauhati Congress also must not be sanctioned and the proposal wholesale should be thrown out.

A voice:—Do you want a refund of Rs. 4?

Mr. Joglekar:—Yes. (Loud cries of "No, no" from all parts of the house). Those who are at the helm must find the funds. The Congress must always remain a democratic institution. This charging of Rs. 10 is going to make the Congress something like a non-democratic institution. That is why Mahatma Gandhi did this.

Mr. Harisarvottam Rao, (Andhra) said:

Friends, I belong to the proletariat section of the Congress. You will be surprised that I am here to support the tem:

porary rule with regard to the delegation fee of Rs. 5. But I come here to support it, not because I feel that in a democratic institution every delegate should be taxed at Rs. 10, but because I feel that in the peculiar circumstances of this particular Congress, there is a necessity to support this contribution of Rs. 5. When I heard the Reception Committee's Chairman tell us that Gauhati contains only 16,000 people, I compared it with my own place, a tiny place, and I was really wondering how such a small place undertook the burden of a Congress like this. There was a previous announcement that the delegation fee for this session would be Rs. 10 and some of the delegates had paid in Rs. 10; and now that there is a transitory provision, all of us who have come here have already paid Rs. 5. There is a peculiar halo about the Dharma governing the host and guest of this country. We have traditional notions about the relations of hosts and guests. We have been guests of that daring, little town, Gauhati, which has taken upon itself this heavy burden. I feel that even belonging to the proletariat section of the Congress I would commend to you the Rs. 5, the contribution which we have already made. I remind you that the A.I.C.C. does not share in this contribution. I remind you also that this transitory fee of Rs. 5 does not affect Congresses to come. I appeal to you on account of the burden which my brethren in Gauhati have to bear and hope that you will unreservedly and without opposition vote this part of the charge.

I have to put before you one more consideration and that is that we have not yet arrived at that stage in Indian social life where we can expect the bounty of the rich to be so overflowing as to feed, house and bear all the expenses of this gathering. Without being a socialist or a communist, I feel that there is room enough in the Indian Dharma for such an attitude in public life. This being done according to the traditions of Dharma in the country, before we can turn the sources of wealth in the direction of Dharma to political institutions, it will take a little more time, and until that time arrives, even we the proletariat of the Congress will have to bear such burden. Therefore I have great pleasure in commending this temporary provision to your acceptance. I know it is difficult for some of the delegates who have come here to pay Rs. 5. I know that it is a hardship in the case of a few, but we have all to bear the hardship. We have to commence at the foundation to build Swaraj and until then we cannot build up Swaraj. Therefore I appeal to you to vote without a dissentient voice, without a discourteous word being uttered. I hope you will accept this temporary provision without any objection whatever.

The President: I am putting the two clauses to the vote separately.

The motion to make the delegation fee Rs. 10 permanently was then put to the vote and was negatived.

The second part that it should be Rs. 5 for the Gauhati Sessions only and that the entire proceeds should go to the Reception Committee was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The President then put from the Chair the following resolution which was carried unanimously :

In Article XVII substitute the following for clause (a):—"The A.I.C.C. shall pay to the Reception Committee within a fortnight after the termination of the Congress session half the delegation fees."

ANNUAL REPORT.

The General Secretaries' annual report was then presented to the Congress with the accounts of T. S. F. for 1926.

VOTE OF THANKS.

Mr. Satyamurti (Tamil Nad) rose to propose a vote of thanks to the Reception Committee and said :

Mr. President, Fellow-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are now at the end of our labours at this session of the Indian National Congress. I now rise to perform a very pleasant duty on which I know there will be no voice or vote of dissent, and that is to propose, on behalf of the delegates at this Congress, a very hearty vote of thanks to the Reception Committee for the magnificent arrangements that they have made in spite of the difficulties which nature and man alike have conspired to place in their way. (Hear, hear). I am sure, Sir, that it was only the high-souled patriotism and the quiet confidence of the Assamese people and, especially, of my friend Mr. Phookun, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, and of his associates headed by Mr. N. C. Bardoloi which tempted them to invite the Congress here and helped them to make it the success that it has been. More than anything else, their difficulties were increased, because even in this small Province of Assam, Sylhet belongs to Bengal, and they had very little time or resources to organise this Congress. This Gauhati itself is a very small town with just over sixteen thousand inhabitants, but the attendance at the Congress has been much larger than that number. More than that, they had this difficulty that they had to fight the elections this year. The number of Congress workers in any Province is limited, and is particularly so in Assam. My two brothers, Mr. Phookun and Mr. Bardoloi had to fight the elections, and then work for the holding of the Congress here. Then, again, just on the eve of the Congress the murder of Swami Shradhanandaji cast a gloom over our proceedings and on this our last day, nature has conspired to bring down rain over us, and I am assured by Mr. Phookun that during all his life time he has never witnessed such weather in Gauhati in December. All these difficulties notwithstanding, we have been enabled by the kindness, thoughtfulness and consideration of the Reception Committee

to hold successfully the Congress which I know, will mark an epoch in the history of India. We have had Mahatma Gandhi with us taking a more active part in the work of the Congress than he has done for over two years past. (Applause). Now that we have passed the resolution making the habitual wearing of Khaddar compulsory on the part of Congress members, I have no doubt, that it will make a powerful appeal to Mahatma Gandhi and very soon, I have no doubt, he will be found in his proper place among the leaders of the nation actively carrying on the struggle for Swaraj. (Cheers).

Then we have, in spite of dissensions, passed a very good resolution on Council work. We had before this Congress began, forebodings of different kinds, but in spite of that, today we have passed the resolution, and I am profoundly grateful to those who stated their points of view against this resolution clause by clause, and particularly to Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya who has kindly come here, and I have no doubt that very soon, having realised our sweet reasonableness, as he himself expressed it, he will once more join hands with us and lead this country in its struggle for Swaraj. (Cheers).

We have also this year concentrated our attention on the most baffling question of Hindu-Moslem unity, and we have charged our Working Committee with the task of tackling this question. We know our President—and I know his heart is set on it, and if only the Hindus and the Moslems will co-operate with him, very soon there will be established this Hindu-Moslem unity which will stagger our enemies and make Great Britain number her days in India.

I know you feel your obligation to the Reception Committee for all they have done to make the Gauhati Congress a success, because, although you are against the imposition of a delegation fee of Rs. 10 for all time and have voted for Re. 1, you have agreed to pay Rs. 5 for this year and have made it clear that the whole of this money should go to the Reception Committee. That shows better than any words of mine could show, how your hearts have been touched by their difficulties and how you have been wishful to help them. They have done their best, and I am sure that all the delegates will have felt that in a small town like this, in this small Province, to create a new town, as it were, by clearing the jungles and giving us all the amenities of ordinary civilised modern life, was an achievement worthy of them and worthy of the Indian National Congress. I am glad on your behalf to propose, and I trust you will carry it with acclamation, a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Phookun and Mr. Bardoloi and all the fellow-workers associated with them. (Cheers). All that they have done in the name of the Indian National Congress has helped us to mark one more milestone in our laborious struggle towards freedom and Swaraj. (Cheers)

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in proposing a vote of thanks to the President said :

Fellow delegates, the very pleasant duty of proposing a vote of thanks to our President falls upon me and I discharge it with great pleasure. This has been a very important session of the Indian National Congress. The whole country was looking forward to see what our deliberations would be. We met under circumstances of an exceptional character, and I am sure you will agree with me that the President has discharged the duties of his office with great ability, earnestness and decision. (Applause). I am sure you appreciated the very able address which he has delivered on the subjects that engaged your attention, and you have seen with what earnestness he has conducted the proceedings of the Congress. I am sure you will agree with me in offering him a very cordial vote of thanks for the services he has rendered to the country by taking up the office of, the President at this juncture. It is not the time to review the work of this Congress ; it must be left over for another occasion. But I cannot allow this occasion to pass without referring to one or two points which have been referred to by one of the speakers who preceded me, on more than one occasion. It is not right at this stage of the proceedings to enter into any controversial matter. Let all controversy be put aside for the moment. We will be dispersing in a few minutes and we should disperse on a high note of desire to unite. Mr. Satya-murti has found me inclined towards your "sweet reasonableness." I am glad he has made that discovery. He has also tried to correct me by saying that it was I who was coming round to common sense. I should not be so uncharitable as not to return the compliment to him. (Laughter). These are, however, considerations which are best left outside the pandal of the Indian National Congress. We have our differences, and I am sorry to say that I have not found the Congress accepting the view, which I believe to be the best, the most honourable view, having regard to the present situation in the country. I have indicated my views, and I am grieved to think that the non-acceptance of some of the views has made the task of unity between the parties more difficult than I had imagined. I did expect that you would have come round nearer to my views than you have done. But I am not daunted or depressed. I recognise that there are differences which still exist but these differences have still to be solved, and I have waited for years to see this *rapprochement*. I have still hope enough and patience enough to wait with confidence for another year to see a great unity brought about in our ranks. Therein lies the hope of the country. It is not possible for India to advance in political matters without perfect unity and greater unanimity of thought among the most earnest workers in the country's cause. We

have to arrive at that unity by throwing aside party politics, party dominance and party prejudice. Let us work with the hope that the next few months will show what changes will be necessary and that with our united efforts we can bring about greater unanimity and bring to our side those who do not agree with us. In that hope I live, and I sincerely trust that this hope will be realised in the near future. I assure you once again that it has always been my conviction, and it is my conviction today that without unity in the ranks of the Congress, without the Congress being re-established in its old strength there is not much chance of our making any impression upon the bureaucracy. Therefore it is our imperative duty and sheer necessity to learn to view the differences which exist among us with greater charity and to be animated with a desire to unite and remove those causes which still separate us. In that view I join with Mr. Satyamurti in the fervent hope that we shall be working together in greater harmony in the future than we have done in the past. But whatever it may be, you will all agree with me that the President, so far as it lay in him, has done all that was possible for him to do, to bring us nearer together. (Applause). And I am sure you will all join with me in once more cordially offering him a vote of thanks for so ably discharging his duties as President of the Indian National Congress. (Loud and continued applause).

Mr. N. C. Bardaloi, General Secretary of the Reception Committee who on stepping into the rostrum was greeted with loud cheers said:

Friends, I stand here just now to thank you and I must begin with our respected and revered President of this National Congress which has held its session at Gauhati this year. We have all been impressed with the way in which he has conducted the proceedings. We shall never forget the genial smile with which he greeted us and the courtesy which he extended to all the members of the Subjects Committee. He allowed considerable latitude to the speakers even when they wanted to contradict him, and altogether he carried on the proceedings of this session with such beautiful impartiality that we feel exceedingly grateful to him.

Addressing the President he said, "Sir, you come from such a distant land, Madras. When you were first elected, the people of Assam asked what sort of a President you would prove to be. I told them, 'You will see for yourselves what a great man he is'. They have seen for themselves and I am glad to tell you that the general consensus of opinion among the people is that my predictions have been fulfilled."

Gentlemen, the Presidential address which he delivered was, you will all agree, a very able address, and it would be difficult to conceive an abler address at this juncture in our political life. It is a very

important situation that we faced at this Congress, and his masterly address will leave a mark in our Congress history. Let me once again thank you for all the good things you have said of us notwithstanding all the inconveniences you have suffered in this camp life, after all the troubles and inconveniences you have been put to in coming all the way. And we cannot but feel grateful that notwithstanding all this, you have worked together with us so harmoniously and so kindly.

Then, I have to thank you, brother delegates, visitors and guests. My friend, Mr. Satyamurti has bestowed encomiums upon us which, I am sure, we do not deserve. There is nobody in this House who is more conscious of our short comings than I am, and I think I can also speak for my colleagues of the Reception Committee. We invited you to this jungle land in this distant part of India, and I am sure that we could not give you any of the comforts that you are used to. But my heart is full today in seeing your kind sympathy towards us. That has been proved just a few minutes ago when the resolution fixing the delegation fee for this session at five rupees was passed and you acclaimed with one voice that Assam should get the whole of the Rs. 5. The money was a matter of very small consideration, but it is the golden heart which people really value; and therefore when in this august assembly, representatives from all parts of India showed what profound sympathy, what kindness, what love they entertain towards us, we feel that we do not deserve so much, as I have said a few minutes before. You have excused all our short-comings and made so much of the very small attention we have been able to give you. So, on behalf of the Reception Committee I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I can assure you that for years to come we will remember this kindness of yours—and little Assam will follow the advanced Provinces of India like the Thebans of old, in the great fight for the liberation of the nation.

Then, I have great pleasure in thanking Lala Girdharilal. I do not know how to express our heart-felt gratitude to him. He came here fifteen days ago and for ten days and ten nights he had little or no sleep. He has exerted his utmost and by all that he has done for us he has made us his own, and today all the workers of this Congress consider him as such. I have great pleasure in offering Lala Girdharilal our heart-felt thanks on behalf of the Reception Committee.

Then, there is another gentleman Capt. Hardiker who has come all the way with a few of his own volunteers to train our volunteers, and in doing so he has minded neither trouble nor inconvenience.

We must also thank the workers. You know that the Reception Committee is composed of fifteen Sub-Committees,

each consisting of a Secretary and workers. Had it not been for their untiring zeal, energy and labours this Congress could not have been held. They all did their very best and they never grudged any hardships. Even when it rained last night, you are aware that the Secretaries and the workers and volunteers assisted in repairing your houses and carrying your luggage to sheltered quarters. They worked at their posts patiently. And I express my thanks to them also.

Last of all, I must thank the volunteers and Mr. Naidu who took upon himself the honorary duty of organising and leading the volunteers on some occasions. Of course, our volunteers had their own Captain in Mr. D. Sarma, but Mr. Naidu gave him very material help.

On behalf of myself and my colleague Mr. Phookun, I once more offer the President and brother delegates our grateful thanks, and pray that you will remember us and excuse our shortcomings. (Loud applause).

President's Concluding Speech

The President received an ovation when he got up the rostrum to deliver his concluding address in dissolving the session of the Congress. He said:

Brother and sister delegates, more than ever I feel keenly that I am unable to express myself to you in a language which will go from heart to heart. It is impossible for me in an alien tongue to express all that is in me in order to reach your heart. Nevertheless, I am sure that I have understood you and, I hope, you have understood me, to some extent, and that we will be able to labour together for the good of the country during the coming year.

Several handicaps prevented me from imagining that this Congress was going to be such a pleasant one for me. The first great handicap was my physical infirmity. A bad throat and ill health prevented me from being confident of discharging my task adequately. Then, again, when I was coming to Gauhati, while in the train, news of the assassination of Swami Shraddhananda came upon me like a thunder bolt, and what little confidence I had deserted me at that moment. Coming from a land of religious mysticism and unfaltering faith in God, I regained the confidence which for the moment was shaken. But I never expected this wonderful co-operation, this great kindness on every side, this friendliness which was visible everywhere, and but for which it would not have been possible for me to hold this place or rule as I have ruled, or to have conducted your proceedings in the way in which I have been able to conduct them. I thank you for your attitude both in the Subjects Committee and here in the open Congress, for the

very warm and whole-hearted co-operation which you have given me, which I craved at the beginning of my speech and which you have given me in such full measure. The success of this Congress is really due to the very great co-operation which has been extended by all the wings of the Congress.

When Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya proposed a vote of thanks to me, I remembered the time when as a young boy I listened to his silvery eloquence in Madras. I remembered that, and I was really proud that my venerable friend was spared to us by the kindness of Providence to thank me for working for the country as his own *chela*. (Cheers). This is not perhaps the least of the things that I have to be thankful for at this session, and the very warm words in which he proposed that vote of thanks really touched me, and I sincerely hope I deserve them. I do not think I can ever acquit myself in the same way in which Mrs. Sarojini Naidu with her sublime imagery and poetic eloquence did. I am a prosaic Tamilian. Therefore I do not think you will expect very much of me, but I am a business man. You have passed yesterday and today business resolutions, and it is my duty to see that your business resolutions are carried out in a business-like way by business people. Where the Englishman beats us is in his capacity for being business-like. We must do business with him. We have failed till now to do business with him, and that is the only contribution I hope to be able to make. I do not think I can bring to you the gifts of oratory or emotional appeal, nor can I bring to you the moving quality of courage, but I bring to you one quality, that of being a businessman who will do business with the Englishman. I am a very moderate person, and if you think my address was pitched in a moderate key, you will forgive my claim to moderation. I am glad that so many of my friends have taken it in the spirit in which it was intended. My moderation consisted in allowing people to come together, but I can assure you that you will not find any one in this audience who is more extreme or more advanced in his views. The great difficulty we have had till now has been the difficulty about our understanding one another. The heart of every Indian beats for Swaraj, but unfortunately misunderstandings have long existed, misunderstanding between groups, misunderstanding between religious communities, misunderstanding of a personal character, and difference of opinion and view in the Congress organisation itself; but we must remember that all these misunderstandings are exploited by the foreign bureaucracy for our own undoing. By all means let us fight for our own views, but when a decision has been come to I want you all to give effect to it. I found in my own province a serious difficulty which I have tried to remedy and which to some extent I have succeeded in doing, and that difficulty

was that we never differed till a decision was come to and when the decision was reached, it was then that we began to differ and disobey. You must fight out your battles before you come to a decision but the moment a decision is arrived at I hope you will learn the habit of loyally giving effect to that decision. That is my advice to this assembly today.

I do not think I have anything more to say by way of conclusion except to urge upon you to remember three or four things. The first feature of this year's Congress is to be found in the fact that everyone in India now recognises that a revision of the Constitution is impending, and that is the main reason why everyone desires to be united. Let us not make union impossible, but let those who seek union not lower the standard and quality of the National Demand. Let us not imagine that there is any one in this land who has ever personal ends to serve and therefore holds different views. I have known how differences have arisen between us. Differences have arisen, because those who believe that Khaddar will lead to Swaraj misunderstand those who think the Councils would be helpful and vice versa. Others again think that Hinduism will lead to Swaraj or that Mohammedanism will lead to Swaraj. What will lead to Swaraj is to put aside all these things and consider them in their proper places. Once more I appeal to you to remember our religious traditions; if they are to be kept pure, they must be kept on a higher plane and must not be brought into the realm of controversial politics. If you introduce controversial politics into it you lower the religious standard, and instead of religion being an instrument of advance it becomes an instrument of serious retardation. That is why we should learn to dissociate religion from politics. That does not mean that we should not have the highest idealism of the spiritual and moral culture. It is necessary that we should keep the two things apart.

Then, again, I think it is necessary for us to remember one or two other things. The foreign bureaucracy in this land is aware of this, that the curse of India is that after a single defeat we lose heart. We must not let ourselves be taken in. We are on the eve of success, and we must drive as hard a bargain as we can. We have a tendency whenever there is a quarrel, to compromise. You can compromise after the fight has proceeded to some extent but if you start compromising before the fight has commenced then you lay down your arms, admit yourselves vanquished and give the bureaucracy the upper hand. We all say that when you release the political prisoners we will enter into a compromise. What will happen is that the Government will always be able to keep a number of people in jail and then release some and call on us to surrender. We must get all our prisoners released, but that cannot be the sole condition though it must be an

indispensable one. It is an essential preliminary to the creation of a favourable atmosphere. Let us not understand that Bengal's demand for the release of her prisoners is a parochial matter or that the question is a provincial one. It concerns the whole of India. Every province must be equally insistent about the release of the prisoners whatever the Province is, because, as I have said it is not a provincial matter but concerns all India. Therefore I want you to remember that whether we are Bengalees, or Punjabis or Madrasees, we must insist upon the release of these political prisoners in the way in which we have been insisting. Then it is equally necessary for you to have some guarantee of Swaraj before you lower the flag of revolt. It is easy to say 'work the Constitution'. We have worked the Constitution in the past and we have found out that by working the Constitution we have really strengthened the hands of the Government. My humble opinion is that the Englishman in India sits firmly in his saddle, and it is necessary that we must make his seat uncomfortable and insecure. This can only be achieved by composing the Hindu—Moslem differences. By preaching it constantly we are not going to produce it. No amount of talk or no amount of exhortation will ever result in Hindu-Moslem unity. What we want is a common programme in which both Hindus and Moslems will join. It is my opinion that it is idleness which is responsible for these communal quarrels. You must harness both Hindus and Mahomedans to the cause of Swaraj, and if you give them a common programme which they will work, undoubtedly they will forget their differences. If you only talk of Hindu-Moslem unity and if you have nothing else, that only widens the gulf. That is the reason why this year there will be a very serious attempt made to give effect to the Cawnpore constructive programme.

You have very wisely passed resolutions of a business-like kind and I must congratulate you upon that resolution about the habitual wearing of khaddar. I think myself that if you wear it for 200 or 250 days, it is absurd to say that you cannot wear it for the remaining days of the year. Let us clearly understand that Khaddar is helpful and even essential to Swaraj mentality. Though I myself do not attach to it the same importance as Mahatma Gandhi does and though I do not treat it as identical with Swaraj, I have no doubt that it is indispensable to Swaraj, it is the foundation of Swaraj. Let us therefore spread the cult of the Khaddar movement more largely than ever before.

There is again another Resolution upon which I wish to congratulate you, and that is with regard to Currency question. You have passed it in a business-like manner and you have shown that it is a subject which requires business-like consideration and therefore you

have given power to the Working Committee to deal with it in such fashion as they find it necessary.

Now, I will only ask you to remember that whether you are in Kamrup, or in Bombay, or in Madras or in Karachi there is not the slightest doubt that you must constantly dream of Swaraj, your life must be filled with Swaraj, you must rise in the morning with Swaraj in your brain and go to sleep to dream of Swaraj. I have not the slightest hesitation whatever in exhorting you to make Swaraj your religion and keep it ever before you until you attain the freedom of your country. It is not to be argued about. It is a religion and a matter of faith. There is no use in imagining that we cannot win Swaraj. If you have any diffidence it will disentitle you to Swaraj. If you have confidence, if you have faith in yourselves that you can win Swaraj, you will certainly be able to attain it.

I do not agree with those who say that Council work will not be able to achieve anything. By occupying all the strategic positions which are necessary for the maintenance of the bureaucracy you will have taken the first step to frustrate their purpose. Our friends imagine that by occupying the strategic positions we will straightway win Swaraj. Not at all. But we do think that without occupying the strategic positions it will be impossible to do work in the country, because it will be frustrated by the allies of the bureaucracy as our past experience has shown. That is the reason why I wish all my friends who still talk as if Council-entry is of no use,—I want them to realise that it is necessary to show to the Government that there is no difference whatever amongst us.

I am so thankful to Mahatma Gandhi that he attended this session and actively took part in our deliberations. I do not know if he will rejoin us and lead us once more, but I have not the slightest doubt that if we also contribute our share and make the Council programme and the country programme sufficiently business-like, Mahatma Gandhi with his business ability will certainly see that we are likely to be useful, and therefore he will come forward and lead us again. (Loud applause). Let us not imagine that Mahatma Gandhi is altogether against the Councils. His present view may be that, because he imagines that we in the Councils did not do as much as we thought we would be able to do. But if the experiment is continued for this term it will show, and those who are with him will see, that the Congress Party in the Councils will have deserved well of those who think of the constructive programme. I would therefore request you to put aside all differences and I want the Council members to take great interest in the constructive programme, and I also want them to take as much interest in the Council work. They must not give us up; they must

not say that this Council work is of no use. We must unite together.

This Congress has witnessed a great fusion of parties. The Independent Congress Party led by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is visibly fusing itself with us, or at any rate, that is my belief. I have not the slightest doubt that in the Assembly Pandit Motilal Nehru and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will be able to give united battle to the bureaucracy even in a better fashion than during the last three years. (Cheers). In the local Councils too the prospects are not gloomy. The only thing necessary to remember is that some measure of self-sacrifice is required. If you keep to non-acceptance of office for even one year you will have solved many problems. Let us not be led away by measures like the Indianisation of the Services, for undoubtedly you will fall into the pit which has been dug for your undoing by the foreign bureaucracy. Time and again by giving us some such measure they have defeated our desire for Swaraj. The fulfilment of our dream will come true when we do not yield to that temptation.

My friends, I have very little to say by way of exhorting you to carry out the programme which has been chalked out for us.

I was very glad to see that in this North-eastern part of India, my Assamese friends take such a keen interest in Swaraj. Possibly this is the prelude to the great Asiatic Federation of which we have dreamed. I have come to the land of the rising sun and from what I have seen here, I hope we are at the beginning of better days. I do not agree with Mr. Phookun who says that people who come to Kamrup become sheep, for I know that you have given me the greatest co-operation both in the Subjects Committee and here, and especially when the counting of votes went on yesterday. You are by no means sheep and the Gauhati proverb is falsified. (Laughter). I was glad to see that there was so much of democratic assertion.

I have now the greatest possible pleasure in saying a word of thanks to Mr. Phookun and Mr. Bardaloi and the volunteers under the able leadership of Dr. Hardiker. There is not the slightest doubt that what is more important than Khaddar and the Councils is the Volunteer Movement. This is my particular hobby, and I hope you will give all possible support, material and moral, to the Volunteer Movement.

I have lastly to express my gratitude to Mr. Girdharilal who has behaved to me as my younger brother and has taken the greatest possible care of me.

I must also express not only my gratitude but my warm regard for our leader Pandit Motilal Nehru who has extended me the most valuable support. (Applause).

My thanks are also due to Mrs. Naidu our ex-President who initiated me into the mysteries of Presidentship.

Mrs. Naidu: This young boy of 52! (Laughter and applause).

I must also thank the other leaders of the Congress who have loyally co-operated with me and helped to make my task incredibly easy. (Loud and prolonged cheers and cries of "Bande Mataram").

The President then dissolved the Congress.

APPENDIX

The following is the text of the resolutions as finally adopted
by the Congress at Gauhati.

I. MURDER OF SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

This Congress expresses its horror and indignation at the cowardly and treacherous murder of Swami Shraddhananda and places on record its sense of the irreparable loss the nation has sustained by the tragic death of the brave and noble patriot who dedicated his life and his great gifts to the service of the country and of his faith, and espoused with fearless devotion the cause of the lowly, the fallen and the weak.

II. CONDOLENCE

This Congress places on record its deep regret at the untimely death of Mr. Umar Sobani who had rendered signal services to the Congress and the country during the days of the Non-co-operation movement.

III. SOUTH AFRICA

This Congress welcomes the Round Table Conference now sitting in South Africa to deliberate upon the best method of dealing with the question of the status of Indian settlers in that subcontinent and prays for divine blessing and guidance upon its deliberations.

This Congress once more tenders its thanks to that good Englishman, Mr. C. F. Andrews, who has been chiefly instrumental in preparing in South Africa a calm atmosphere suitable for the holding of the Conference.

This Congress authorises the President to cable the text of the resolution to General Hertzog, Sir M. Habibulla and Mr. C. F. Andrews.

IV. KENYA

In the opinion of the Congress the progressively restrictive legislation against the Indian settlers of Kenya as evidenced by the latest action of the Kenya Government in increasing the original poll-tax of 20 shillings which by currency manipulation was raised to 30 shillings and which has now been raised to 50 shillings by legislation is calculated to demonstrate afresh that British Imperialism means conservation of European interests at the cost of Indian interests, liberty and aspirations.

V. WORK IN THE LEGISLATURES

This Congress reiterates its resolve that the general policy of Congressmen in the Assembly and the various Councils shall be one of self-reliance in all activities which make for the healthy growth of the nation and of determined resistance to every activity, governmental or other, that may impede the nation's progress towards Swaraj. In particular Congressmen in the legislatures shall

- (a) refuse to accept ministerships or other offices in the gift of the Government and oppose the formation of a ministry by other parties until in the opinion of the Congress or the All India Congress Committee, a satisfactory response is made by the Government to the National Demand;
- (b) subject to clause (d) refuse supplies and throw out budgets until such response is made by the Government or unless otherwise directed by the All India Congress Committee;
- (c) throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers;
- (d) move resolutions and introduce and support measures and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life and the advancement of the economic, agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of the country, and for the protection of the freedom of person, speech, association and of the press, and the consequent displacement of the bureaucracy;
- (e) take steps to improve the condition of agricultural tenants by introducing and supporting measures to secure fixity of tenure and other advantages with a view to ensure a speedy amelioration of the condition of the tenants; and
- (f) generally protect the rights of labour, agricultural and industrial, and adjust on an equitable basis the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

VI. WORK IN THE COUNTRY

This Congress adopts the following programme of work in the country:—

The work in the country shall be directed to the education of the people in their political rights and training them to acquire the necessary strength and power of resistance to win those rights by carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress with special reference to popularising the spinning wheel and Khaddar, promoting intercommunal unity, removal of untouchability, ameliorating the condition of the suppressed classes and the removal of the drink and drug evil and shall include the capture of local bodies, the organisation of villages, the promotion of education on national lines, the organisation of labour, both industrial and agricultural, the adjustment of relations between employers and workmen and between landlords and tenants and the general advancement of the national, economic, industrial and commercial interests of the country.

VII. WORK OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY

- (a) The work outside the country shall be directed to the dissemination of accurate information in foreign countries with a view to interest them in India's freedom.

- (b) This Congress appoints Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its representative to the Congress of Oppressed Nations, which will be held in Brussels on 20th January next.

VIII. BENGAL DETENUES

This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Government had no justification whatsoever for the application of emergency legislation like Regulation III of 1818 which has been the subject, repeatedly, of condemnation by the Congress and other public bodies and the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1925 (which latter was passed into law as a result of an arbitrary exercise of autocratic power against the expressed wishes of the elected members of the legislatures) under which a large number of peaceful public workers of Bengal were arrested and imprisoned without the formulation of definite charges and without open trial and still remain without any knowledge of the charges against them and any trial.

This Congress strongly condemns their continued incarceration and deportation outside Bengal notwithstanding the clearly expressed opinion of the elected members of the legislatures and the country.

IX. HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

This Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with Hindu and Mussalman leaders to devise measures for the removal of the present deplorable differences between Hindus and Mussalmans and submit their report to the All India Congress Committee not later than the 31st March, 1927.

And this Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to issue necessary instructions in that behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after a consideration of the said report.

X. CURRENCY

This Congress realises the gravity of the issues arising out of the report of the Royal Commission on Currency and authorises the Working Committee to go into the whole subject with the aid of experts, if necessary, and issue instructions to the Congress members in the Legislative Assembly to take steps to safeguard the interests of the people of India in such manner as it may be advised.

XI. OFFICE-BEARERS FOR 1927

Resolved that the following office-bearers be appointed for the coming year:—

General Secretaries

- (1) Dr. M. A. Ansari
- (2) Syt. A. Rangaswami Iyengar
- (3) Syt. Vallabhbai J. Patel

Treasurers

- (1) Seth Revashanker Jagjivan Javeri
- (2) Seth Jamnalal Bajaj

XII. AUDITORS

This Congress appoints Messrs. Dalal and Shah of Bombay. Auditors for the next year.

XIII. KHADDAR FRANCHISE

Resolved that the following changes be made in Art. VII of the Constitution :—

Substitute the following for sec. (iv) :—

- (iv) a. No person shall be entitled to vote at the election of representatives or delegates or any committee or sub-committee of any Congress organisation whatsoever or to be elected as such or to take part in any meeting of the Congress or Congress organisation or any committee or sub-committee thereof, if he has not complied with section (i) hereof and does not habitually wear hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.
- b. The Working Committee shall frame Rules for the proper carrying out of the provisions of this section.

XIV. NEXT SESSION

Resolved that the venue of the next session of the Congress be fixed by the All India Congress Committee.

XV. GURDWARA PRISONERS

- (a) The Congress notes with great regret that though the Government has admitted the justice and righteousness of the Sikh demand in connection with the Gurdwara movement by passing the Gurdwara Act, it has not yet released Sardar Kharak Singh and other Gurdwara prisoners.
- (b) In the opinion of the Congress there can be no solution of the Sikh problem unless
 - (1) all persons imprisoned in connection with the Gurdwara movement are unconditionally released ;
 - (2) all repressive measures adopted by the Government against them are withdrawn ; and
 - (3) the outstanding grievances of the Sikhs are removed.
- (c) This Congress further assures the Sikh community that in its struggle with the Government it not only has the entire sympathy of the Congress, but the Congress also wholeheartedly supports the Sikhs in whatever legitimate and non-violent action they may take to vindicate their rights.

XVI. OTHER CHANGES IN THE CONSTITUTION

Resolved that the following further changes be made in the Constitution :—

Article VIII, para 2 to read as follows :—

“No one who had not enlisted himself as a Congress member on or before the 1st October immediately preceding a particular session of the Congress shall be qualified for election as a delegate to that session.”

Para 3 to read as follows :—

“The members of the All India Congress Committee shall be ex-officio delegates to the Congress. Besides these ex-officio delegates the number of delegates returnable by Provincial Congress Committees shall be not more than one for every fifty thousand, or its fraction, of the inhabitants of each province including the Indian States therein, in accordance with the census of 1921: provided however, that the inclusion of Indian States in the electorate shall not be taken to include any interference by the Congress with the internal affairs of such States”.

Delete para 4.

In para 7, line 2, substitute for the “Reception Committee of the ensuing session of the Congress” the “Office of the All India Congress Committee” and substitute the following for the words at the end of the para, beginning with “such rules” :—

“such rules shall not be valid unless they have been previously confirmed by the Working Committee”

and put a full stop before “such”.

Article XI to read as follows :—

“Every delegate on presenting such a certificate and paying a fee of one rupee at the office of the All India Congress Committee in the Congress camp at the place where the Congress is held shall receive a ticket entitling him to admission to the Congress.”

Transitory Provision.

The delegation fee for the Gauhati Session shall be fixed at five rupees and the entire proceeds shall be handed over to the Reception Committee.

Article XVII.

Substitute the following for clause (a) :—

“The All India Congress Committee shall pay to the Reception Committee within a fortnight after the termination of the Congress session half the delegation fees.”