

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

HELD AT RAISINA, DELHI

on February 12 and 13, 1923

INTRODUCTION AND OPENING OF CONFERENCE

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, SIR TEJ BHADUR SAPRU, K. C.S.I., LL.D.

OUR FLAG OF SWARAJ, RT. HON. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI, P. C.

VERBATIM REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

Price of the Book

THEosophical PUBLISHING HOUSE, Madras and Bombay.

INDIAN BOOK SHOP, 2nd Line Beach, Madras, E. and Meadows Street, Bombay.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE, P. O. Box, 904, Adyar, Madras, S.

GENERAL SECRETARIES OF THE NATIONAL HOME RULE LEAGUE,

Madras and Bombay

AND PROGRESSIVE BOOKSELLERS

Price Rs. 12., Post Free Rs. 13

INTRODUCTION

Before the National Conference met at Delhi, on February 12, 13, much spade work had been done, and the plough had been driven though the ground of ignorance and apathy. It is well to put on record here what had been done in the beginnings, so that Free India, looking back, may see the small origins of the movement which planned and opened up the last stage of the road along which she advanced to Swaraj, and to her right place in the Indo-British Commonwealth. Small beginnings are interesting, when great events have followed them.

The planting of the seed took place at the weekly meeting of the Political Section of the 1921 Club, Madras, on February 8th, 1922, and the discussions which followed are noted in the document which will be found below, and which was sent out by the first signatories on September 17th, 1922, when the Political Section had handed over the direction of the work to the Executive Committee, elected at Simla by members of the two Houses of the Indian Legislature on September 12th, 1922. The ground had been prepared by drafting and sending out the following circular (named in the document) under the order of a meeting on July 19th, 1922, to a list of persons drawn up by the Section.

Y. M. I. A.
ARMENIAN STREET
MADRAS E.
JULY 20, 1922

1921

Dear Sir,

All who love India and work to gain for her full Dominion status, or Home Rule, must see with dismay the growing tendency towards a kind of political guerilla warfare, which shows widespread discontent with present political conditions, but is spasmodic and irregular, without concerted action towards a definite end, or agreement as to means. Yet, beneath this disturbed surface there is a fundamental unity as to the goal to be reached—Self-Rule, Home Rule, Responsible Government, whatever the label may be. The real and deep division is only with regard to the means; can Home

Rule be more quickly and easily gained by Non-Co-Operation with the present mixed Governments of Indians and English, standing completely aside from all Government institutions, or by what the late Mr. Tilak happily termed Responsive Co-Operation, *i. e.*, Co-Operation between the Governments and the elected members, who form a majority in every Provincial Council, in the Assembly and the Council of State. That is the one difference of principle which divides the country into two parties, and it is clear that it is fundamental; it is the difference—to borrow terms from western politics—between Parliamentary and Direct Action. The remaining differences are details, like those which divide ordinary political parties in free countries. They will still exist after India becomes a Self-Governing country; some will be with the Government of the day, others will form the Opposition; or, as in France, there may be several groups, uniting or dividing from each other according to the exigencies of the day. But that is in the future.

The question of questions for Indians to-day is: can all those who believe in Parliamentary Action unite together so far as to seek election to the Councils, in the autumn of next year, in order to obtain a mandate from the electors to take concerted action for the gaining of Home Rule in the shortest possible time? The Political Sections of the 1921 Clubs of Madras and Bombay believe that such a temporary agreement is possible, and they are therefore addressing leaders of parties who differ much in detail, but are willing to seek election after agreeing on a common election programme, which might be hammered out at a small Conference, but the broad outlines of which should be accepted as a basis of discussion at such a Conference, all taking part in it being free to form their own parties and policies within the Councils, subject to their uniting to formulate a draft of the changes necessary for the gaining of Home Rule.

The following broad outlines are suggested as a basis of discussion:

1. The future Constitution of India should be framed by bodies consisting of members of the Provincial and of the Indian Legislatures, such bodies having power to co-opt a small number of non-members, whose aid is thought desirable.

2. That within a stated time after the meeting of the new Legislatures, the members shall elect such component bodies, or Conventions, to meet outside the Councils for the purpose of framing such a Constitution.

(*Question.* Should each Legislature form a separate component body?)

3. That apart from these component bodies, meeting outside the Legislatures, every member shall be free within the Legislatures, as stated above, to join any party or group.

4. That these component bodies shall formulate a scheme of Home Rule, that shall comprise complete Provincial Autonomy, the placing in the hands of Ministers responsible to the Legislature all subjects now controlled by the Governor-General in Council, except foreign affairs, army and navy, the two last-named being taken over by the Indian Cabinet, when India is sufficiently consolidated for Home Defence. It is further suggested that the Secretary of State for India should bear the same relation to India as the Secretary of State for the Colonies bears to the Self-Governing Dominions, and that the India Council shall cease to exist. Further, that foreign affairs should be relegated to an Imperial Council, in which all the Self-Governing Dominions, including India, should be represented.

The proposers of this Conference suggest that the Conference might be held at Delhi in November, when the Indian Legislature is in session, and the assistance of some of its members might be sought; that the months before the general election might be utilised in organising the electorates, pointing out the importance of selecting suitable members, and of giving them a mandate to carry out proposals 1, 2, 3, 4, as approved by the Conference; that the various groups in the country should organise themselves and form political committees to select candidates whom they would support, or to call meetings of electors to hear and question proposed candidates, etc.

This letter is sent to the gentlemen whose names are on the enclosed List, and the Secretaries of the Political Sections in Madras and Bombay would be glad to receive names of other leaders, who accept Parliamentary Action as the means of winning the changes suggested, so that the letter may be sent to them also. Representatives of the National Home Rule Leagues and the Liberal Leagues will be invited. The invitations to the Conference should be signed by well-known leaders of different schools of political thought, who are in favor of entering the Councils.

By Order

S. NATESAN,

Secretary, Political Section,
1921 CLUB, MADRAS.

KANJI DWARKADAS, M. L. C.,

Secretary, Political Section,
1921 CLUB, BOMBAY.

P. S.—The Secretaries would also be glad to receive any suggestions which might ease the present situation, and facilitate the convening and the work of the proposed Conference.

This circular was sent to the following persons, and later to the others named below :

N. C. Kelkar, M. A. Jinnah, M. R. Jayakar., B. S. Kamat, M. L. A., Dr. Gour, M. L. A., Dewan Bahadur T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, M. L. A., Dr. Nandilal, M. L. A., Dr. T. B. Sapru., Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar, M. L. A., G. M. Bhurgri, M. L. A., Sir Ashutosh Choudhry, M. L. C., Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Hon. G. S. Kharparde, R. P. Karundikar, Syed Hasan Imam, M. L. C., Fuzl Huq, C. R. Reddy, M. L. C., Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai, M. L. C., B. Chakravarti, Sir M. Visvesvarayya, K. Natarajan, S. Satyamurti, Narasimier, N. A. Dravid, G. A. Natesan, L. R. Bhopatkar, M. Ramachandra Rao, M. L. C., A. S. Krishna Rao, M. L. C., B. Venkatapati Raju, M. L. C., Dr. Subbaraya, M. L. C., Mrs. Subbaraya, Ishvar Saran, M. L. A., Gokarannath Misra, M. L. C., Hon. Mr. Harkishan Lal, M. L. C., H. Kunzru, M. L. C., V. V. Jogiah, Sadhu Ganapati Pantulu, Kalinath Roy, Ruchi Ram Sabni, Hon. Mr. C. Y. Chintamani., M. L. C., Hon. Mr. Jagat Narain, M. L. C., N. Subba Rao, K. K. Venkatarama, C. V. Venkataramana Iyengar, M. L. C.

The following document is the one sent out to invite signatures, and was published in the first week of October, with the signatures of 48 members of the Indian Legislature, 21 of Legislative Councils, 13 Presidents and Chairmen of Municipal, District and Taluq Boards (4 being also M. L. A. or M. L. C.), 13 members of the Central Council of the National Home Rule League (4 being also M. L. A. or M. L. C. and 1 a Chairman of a Municipality) 2 elected by Political Section, Madras 1921 Club, 1 Liberal Association and 1 People' Association—95 individuals in all. The complete list of signing members will be found in its proper place.

THE DELHI CONFERENCE

Dr. Annie Besant, D. L., Secretary, Convening Committee of the proposed Delhi Conference, has issued the following statement :

This movement had its inception in a paper read in the Political Section of the Madras 1921 Club by Mr. V. S. Ramaswami Sastri on "The Way Out," on Feb. 8, 1922, in which he suggested that a National Convention should be called. The idea was discussed on Feb. 8, 15 and 22, and finally approved. The subject was again taken up on April 26 by Dr. Annie Besant, on "Self-Determination and Self-Government," and a series of articles, which had been started in *New India*, under that caption on April 14, was continued by well-known politicians, such as the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C., Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, M. L. C., Advocate-General of Madras,

Mr. Jayakar, and others, during her absence in Australia. On June 28, the Political Section of the 1921 Club resumed action in the matter, and a Committee was appointed to draft a circular, with a view to obtaining the opinions of politicians of various parties. At a meeting on July 5, the discussions was resumed, and the following resolution was adopted: "That it is necessary for Indian constitutional Reformers to formulate proposals for a scheme of Home Rule, which shall include complete Provincial Autonomy and Responsibility in the Central Government, excluding Foreign Affairs, Army and Navy, the two last-named being taken over by the Indian Cabinet when India is able to take over Home Defence." The draft circular was presented for the Drafting Committee by Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, M. L. C., and agreed to at a meeting of the Political Section on July 19, and it was ordered to be sent out to persons named on a list agreed to, as well as to Liberal and N. H. R. Leagues. Meanwhile the Political Section of the Bombay 1921 Club joined in, and the circular was sent to politicians of all parties, to 100 N. H. R. Leagues, to 113 members of the Council of the All-India Liberal Association, and to 60 newspapers. It met with so much approval, that Dr. Annie Besant was authorised to lay it before members of the Indian Legislature, sitting in Simla in September.

By the good offices of Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, M. L. A., a meeting of members of the Legislative Assembly was held on September, 6, Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari in the chair. A very favorable discussion took place on a statement prepared by Dr. Besant, and finally it was approved, subject to any verbal alterations to be made subsequently, with one dissentient. A meeting of the Council of State was held on the 9th, with the Hon. Mr. G. S. Khaparde in the chair, and the general scheme was approved. Private meetings of the Democratic and National Parties were held, and decided to support the scheme. On September 12, a joint meeting of the two Houses was held, and the following Committee was elected, to make any changes thought desirable in the statement to be issued to the public, and to act as an Executive Committee for the members of the Indian Legislature who signed the statement, and who would form a Convening Committee, with other representative politicians whose signatures should later be obtained. This Executive Committee met, amended and confirmed the statement now published.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTED AS ABOVE

Assam—Rai Bahadur G. C. Nag, M.L.A.

Bengal—Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, M.L.A.

Bihar and Orissa—Khan Bahadur Sarfaraj Hosain Khan,
M.L.A.

Baidyanath Prasad Singh Esq., M.L.A.

Braja Sundar Das Esq., M.L.A.

Bombay—(Maharashtra) B. S. Kamat Esq., M.L.A.
 (Gujerat) Jamuadas Dwarkadas Esq., M.L.A.
 (Bombay) Muhammad Hajeebhoy Esq., M.L.A.
 (Sindh) Harchandrai Vishindas Esq., M.L.A., C.I.E.

Central Provinces—Hon. Mr. G. S. Khaparde,
 Dr. H. S. Gour, M.L.A.

Madras—Rai Bahadur T. Rangachariar, M.L.A.
 (Andhra) B. Venkatapatiraju Esq., M.L.A.

Panjab—Hon. Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das,
 Shah Nawaz, Esq., M.L.C.

United Provinces—Muunshi Ishwar Saran, M.L.A.

Hon. Secretary,

ANNIE BESANT, D.L.

P.O. Box 39, Madras, E.

The following letter was also passed, to be sent with the invitation, signed by any one of the above, each of whom can co-opt members of Legislative Councils, representatives of political associations, and other representative persons, to help in provincial organisation.

.....1922

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letter of invitation to the Conference to be held early in the next session of the Indian Legislature at Delhi, has been discussed and approved at meetings of members of the Council of State and the Indian Assembly, which appointed a Committee of their members from all Provinces to invite to the Conference members of Councils and others, such as representatives of political associations which support the Reforms. We hope that you will be willing to add your signature to those already obtained from the Indian Legislature. All signatures received by September 30th will be published with the letter enclosed, and we trust that you will send yours to one of the members representing your Province in time. Subsequent lists will be published at intervals.

The members of the Convening Committee will arrange for accommodation in Delhi for any Provincial Council members and others, who will kindly signify their requirements to any member connected with their Province.

I remain,

.....

.....

The following is the letter of invitation to the Conference, with the signatures of the Convening Committee so far as received. Other lists will follow, but the Members of Provincial Councils are scattered, and their signatures take time to collect. The dates first

fixed for the Conference were November 18 and 19, but as the November session of the Indian Legislature was cancelled, the Conference cannot meet until the January session. It is important that the Indian Legislature should lead, as it alone has the constitutional right to speak for the Nation as a whole.

CIRCULAR LETTER

SIMLA,

17th September 1922

Dear Sir,

The time seems to be propitious to put before the country a definite plan for utilising the Reforms in a way which will lead directly to Responsible Government or Swarāj, the goal of British policy in India. So far no definite plan for ending the present strain and utilising the general aspirations for Freedom has been generally accepted; a condition of unrest and mutual distrust is dangerous when prolonged, and to end it we submit the following:

The holding of a Conference in Delhi, shortly after the beginning of the next meeting of the Indian Legislature, in which the general outline of a Constitution for India shall be suggested for public discussion and criticism. The Conference should mark out the necessary subjects entering into such an outline and allocate these to sub-committees—chosen from among its members, with power to co-opt—these sub-Committees to collect materials and to embody the necessary details in Notes, to be laid before the Conference to be held later at a place and on a date to be fixed by it. That adjourned Conference will draw up the programme on the proposed Convention, on which the mandate of the electors will be sought.

The bases for discussion at the Conference will be:

1. The future Constitution of India should be framed by a Convention formed on essentially non-party lines, consisting of members of the Indian and of the Provincial Legislatures, such Convention having power to co-opt non-members of the Legislatures.
2. That the Convention shall formulate a scheme of Responsible Government that shall comprise complete Provincial Autonomy, the placing in the hands of Ministers responsible to the Legislature of all subjects now controlled by the Governor-General in Council, except foreign affairs (including Indian States), army and navy, the two instances named being taken over by the Indian Cabinet, when India is sufficiently consolidated to control Defence. It is further suggested that the Secretary of State for India should bear the same relation to India as the Secretary of State for the

Colonies bears to the Self-Governing Dominions, and that the India Council should cease to exist. Further that foreign affairs should be relegated to an Imperial Council, in which all the Self-Governing Dominions, including India, would be represented.

We propose that the points on which a mandate from the electors shall be sought shall be made familiar to them by a steady educative propaganda. The electors must decide whether they will continue in the present condition of unrest, while slow and partial Reforms are conceded, or will empower those they elect to shape India's Constitution, flexible enough to allow of modifications, but giving her freedom within her own borders once for all, as an equal partner in the Commonwealth of Free Nations.

We invite you to join the Conference, which the undersigned are taking the responsibility of calling, who will, until the Conference meets, form the Convening Committee. The Conference will decide whether any temporary organisation is necessary to serve as a rallying point for Reformers till after the elections.

Only those are admissible to the Conference who are in favor of obtaining further Reforms by constitutional means, as, for example, members of a Legislature, or representatives of political associations who are in favor of working and developing the Reforms.

The strength of our position is that we shall use the machinery made by Britain, and it will be difficult for her to reject a demand from the electorates which she created. The Congress of 1918 resolved that when India had representative institutions, their voice should be taken as the voice of India in determining her future. That time has come.

Once a Nation has turned its face towards Freedom, the Will to be Free will never cease its pressure till its object is obtained. The shorter the period of that pressure the better for all concerned, and there is no reason why our present Viceroy should not have the glory of co-operating with India in the final stage of Swarāj.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

held at Raisina (New Delhi) on February 12, 13, 1923.

The Conference was held in Raisina, at present a suburb of Delhi, the "New Delhi," in which are rising the great pile for the Indian Legislatures, the Viceregal Lodge, the Secretariat, and a large number of bangalows for the use of members who prefer them to the fine Hostels, already completed, where most of the members reside. There are two of these, Eastern and Western, the adjectives applying not to race but to manner of living. Muhammadan, Parsi and English members dwell in the Western Hostel, and Vegetarian Hindus and others in the Eastern.

The Conference, by the kindness of the members, met in the large Hall of the Eastern Hostel, which presented a fine sight at 5-30 P. M., on February 12. One end of the Hall was occupied by the Executive Committee, elected at Simla on September 19, 1922, with the Convening Secretary, who for the moment occupied the chair, and the President-elect, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. C. S. I., LL.D., who had been unanimously approved by the Executive Committee on the proposal of the Convening Secretary, on the previous evening. The rest of the floor was occupied by closely packed chairs for the members of the Convening Committee, who had been joined by seven additional members from the Council of State; ten M. L. A.s, 20 M. L. C.s, 1 Municipal Commissioner, 3 from the All-India Christian Association, 5 from Liberal Leagues, 2 from N. H. R. L. and 3 Public Workers, since the latest issue of printed lists. (The complete list will be found under Resolution 4, so the imperfect one is not printed here, most of the names being the same.) Behind the convening Committee were

accommodated two or three rows of visitors, who, of course, had no right of speech or vote.

On each member's chair were placed the memorandum above printed, a list of members without some of the above-named additions, headed by the following note, and the Agenda:

The Conference has been called by the following members of Indian Legislatures, Municipalities, District, Taluq and Union Boards and Panchayats, Political Organisations, and a few well-known men and women who represent substantial sections of public opinion. While representing various schools of political thought, all are at one in standing for the recognition of the right of India to be an equal partner in the Commonwealth of Free Nations, united by the Crown of H. M. George V. and in establishing that right as speedily as possible by Parliamentary means. The Conference is based on the Resolutions of the National Congresses of 1914—claiming the equality of India with the Self-Governing Dominions in the Reconstruction after the War—and of 1918—declaring that when India possessed representative institutions, their voice should be recognised as the voice of India for the purpose of Self-Determination. The Government of India Act, 1919, establishing such Legislatures, was declared in the Message of the King-Emperor to be “the beginning of Swarāj within my Empire,” and both H. E. the Viceroy, and the Messenger of the King-Emperor, H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught, then declared that “autocracy is abandoned”. To complete these declarations and to put an end to continual unrest and political agitation for Swarāj, this Conference is called, to draw up an outline to lay before the electorates next autumn for the calling of a National Convention early in 1924, to take such steps, as in its wisdom it may deem fit, to assure to India the status of a Self-Governing Dominion, thus giving her external equality in the Commonwealth, and internal Swarāj.

The following Executive Committee was formed at a joint meeting of signing members of the two Houses of the Indian Legislature, held at Simla on 12th September, 1922. (List as already given.)

This is my last duty as Secretary to the Executive Committee, and with this I surrender my powers to the Conference.

ANNIE BESANT, D.L.

Hon. Secretary

AGENDA

The object of the Conference is to outline a programme for submission to the electorates, and to provide an elastic machinery for the co-ordination of the efforts of its members and of organisations, to call a National Convention after the approaching elections, in

order to obtain for the Commonwealth of India Dominion status in her external relations and Swarāj in her internal affairs.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 12

1. Welcome Address by Dr. Annie Besant, Honorary Secretary of the Convening Committee.
2. Election of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K.C.S.I., as President of the Conference.

Proposed by Sir P. S. Sivaswamier, M.L.A.
(Madras)

Seconded by the Hon. Mr. Purushottamadas
Thakurdas, (Bombay)

Supported by Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari,
M.L.A., (Bengal)

Supported by Dr. Gour, (Central Provinces)

3. Presidential Address.
4. Address by the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C., (Madras), "Our Plan for Swarāj". (To be read by Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Esq., M.L.A. (Bombay)).
5. Resolution to be put from the Chair :

That this Conference—composed of the elected members of the Indian and Provincial Legislatures and Local Boards, of representatives of political organisations and public workers, recalling your Majesty's gracious message to the Reformed Indian Legislature, that it was the beginning of Swarāj within your Majesty's Empire, meeting to expedite its coming for the strengthening of the ties between Great Britain and India—lays its homage at your Majesty's feet.

THE CONFERENCE ADJOURNS

FEBRUARY 13

1. The Government of the Commonwealth.
 - (a) The King.
 - (b) The Viceroy and Governor-General.
 - (c) The Provincial Governors.
 - (d) The Legislatures.
2. The Federal Government.
 - (a) The Viceroy and Governor-General.
 - (b) A bi-cameral Legislature.
 - (i) A Council of State
(Revising Chamber).
 - (ii) An elected Legislature.
(Note.—How to provide for minorities).
 - (c) A Cabinet responsible to the Legislature.

- (d) A Supreme Court.
3. *Foreign Affairs*.—When India is a Dominion, she will obtain automatically all new powers which the other Dominions obtain.
 4. *Army and Navy*.—Under control of the Viceroy, but to be taken over by the Dominion as soon as the Government is ready to assume the responsibility.
 5. Provincial Governments.
 Provincial Autonomy, *i. e.*
 A Governor whose powers shall be defined by the Constitution.
 An elected Legislature.
 (*Note*.—How to provide for minorities.)
 A Cabinet responsible to the Legislature.
 6. Appointment of Committees to report on
 - (a) Defence.
 - (b) Powers of Central and Provincial Legislatures.
 - (c) Indianisation of Services.
 - (d) Constitution of Legislatures and Franchises.
 - (e) Finance and Taxation.
 - (f) The Supreme Court.
 7. The organisation representing the Conference :
 - (a) Central Council consisting of the Convening Committee with power to co-opt.
 - (b) Executive Council to be elected by the Committee.
 - (c) Provincial Councils to consist of members of the Convening Committee in each Province with power to co-opt.
 - (d) District, Taluq (sub-district) and Village Boards under control of Provincial Councils.
 8. Appeal to the people.
 9. Any other business.

THE CONFERENCE AT WORK

Business opened punctually at 5-30 P. M., when DR. BESANT, the Convening Secretary welcomed the delegates. She said that she had received, among others, two telegrams, which she would read, one was from Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, C.I.E., of Madras, who was a member of the Convening Committee, and whose unavoidable absence would be a great loss to their discussions :

"I am assuming charge of the office of Law Member in the Executive Council on Monday, so I regret my inability to be present at Delhi.

The other was from six gentlemen of Calicut, headed by Mr. Manjeri Ramaier, and was addressed to the President of the Conference; it ran as follows: "We are getting impatient under the will-o'-the-wisp policy of the Non-Co-Operators, which leads nowhere, and the provocative policy of bureaucrats, peeling away what little we have gained. We want full Home Rule. We will be masters in our own house. We will not wait indefinitely. Give us a clear strong positive lead. Define the goal, map out the way, so that we may go to the electorates and take our marching orders to advance rapidly to the promised land. We have complete trust in you, whom the spoils of office cannot spoil, and in Dr. Annie Besant and Right Hon. Sastri, two great servants of India. Lead us, we pray you, into a programme of positive work and we then, the Liberal and Home Rule party, who make the followers, shall so follow that you will not be ashamed of us. Country awaits a clear call from the Conference."

She did not want to trouble the Conference with the other telegrams that she had received. She said that the only condition which was made for joining as a member of the Conference, with the right to speak and vote, was being in favor of Parliamentary Action as against Direct Action. That did not apply in any sense to members of the Legislatures, because from the very fact of their presence in the Legislatures they must be assumed to be in favor of Parliamentary Action. As regards "creed" there was no creed, except that of Parliamentary Action as the method of gaining Dominion status and Swarāj, Home Rule. She continued, that the Committee had invited people of different parties deliberately, in the hope that if they agreed to Parliamentary Action as method, they would be able to join sufficiently together to go forward along the road of gaining freedom for India. The Agenda that was placed before the Conference was not in any sense binding on the Conference. It was only put before it as a draft which might be amended, rejected, or done with as the Conference liked. She said that the functions of the the Convening Committee, as such, ceased as soon as the Conference was established, and the Conference

would now take the place of the Convening Committee. What she hoped the Conference would do was to form a programme on broad lines which could be placed before the constituencies. The organisations which may affiliate with the Conference may follow their own methods and their own lines, and preserve their own identity, and it was not proposed that any body working already should merge its identity in this Conference. Only if they affiliated to the Conference, they would keep within the limits which were agreed upon in the Conference. Continuing, she said:—Our work is to educate the constituencies, by putting before them a clear programme of Reform and to obtain a mandate to those whom we may elect that they will take steps to call, after the next Councils have been elected, a National Convention, which according to its own view of the circumstances, and according to the views of the members that are elected, will choose the fashion in which they will advance to Dominion status and Home Rule, or Swarāj. An outline you will find given of what the Committee think are the necessary conditions, but it must be remembered that this is only valid so far as it is endorsed by this Conference, and until the Convention meets. The Convention is absolutely free to do whatever it chooses in this matter, and we have no right to dictate to its members. They will get their mandate from the constituencies, from the country, and they will decide what is the best way of getting full Provincial Autonomy and full Responsibility in the Central Government, that is, Dominion status and Swarāj.

These are the special points that it seem to me to be my duty just to mention to you, and then all I have to do in surrendering the office which has been a pleasant work for me since it was conferred upon me, is to say very briefly how this Conference came into existence. In February, 1922 there was a meeting in the Political Section of the 1921 Club of Madras in which a National Convention was suggested. The matter was taken

up by the Press, which pointed to the desirability of taking a decided step in that direction. After that I went up to Simla, as a delegate from the Political Section, to put the idea before the members of the Council of State and the Assembly. They met separately first, and afterwards met together, and appointed those who were willing to take the responsibility as a Convening Committee, and also appointed an Executive Committee, to which reference could be made by any one desiring information. Then we sent out invitations to people of different associations and opinions, who believe in Parliamentary Action, that is, entry into Councils and working through them. We sent them to the Congressmen who were in favor of this, but they did not care to join with us. We have sent them to all members of the Liberal Federation Council. Some of these have joined. We have sent them to a large number of other organisations, the Liberal Associations of different Provinces, and the National Home Rule Leagues, and you find their names in the list placed on your chairs. We issued three lists, but the names of those who have joined only during the last 24 hours are not down in this list which you have in your hands; but it contains the names of all the other members who have signified their assent to join the Conference. It is now my pleasant duty to proceed to the election of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, as President of the Conference. This should have been proposed by Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, but owing to high fever, he is forbidden to attend, and I call on Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar to propose that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru be elected President.

RAO BAHADUR T. RANGACHARIAR: Ladies and Gentlemen; When I first entered this room and was commissioned to take Sir Sivaswami Aiyar's place, to propose my esteemed friend and late colleague, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to the Chair, my feeling was one of regret, but on further reflection it converted itself into one of pleasure. Such a light mantle has

fallen on me, and an agreeable mantle which I am ready to wear. The duty entrusted to me is a most pleasant one. I consider this a historic occasion, a day which I hope and trust will prove to be one of great potentiality in the near future. Madam, the politicians in this country can be divided into four classes; writers, talkers, dreamers and workers. I take it, Madam, it is not a mere accident that on page 10 of the paper placed in our hands to-day, our friend Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's name heads the list among "public workers". (Hear, hear.) "Public workers" are preceded by talkers in the Legislative Councils and Assembly. Fortunately or unfortunately, we have not got that class of politicians here who are mere dreamers. What the country wants now is a class of real, earnest workers, and I do not think I can imagine a better name than that of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as leader, because it is that of a worker who can really carry on this work which is necessary to be done. I know Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru pretty closely and intimately within the last two and a half years, and I cannot think of a man more sober—sobriety perhaps is not a virtue now-a-days—a more stout patriot, one who can come with that profound knowledge of public questions, which he brings to bear upon the discussion of important matters here. I worked with him on several important Committees. Madam, he is the man to steer the vessel through storm. When surrendering points, his appearance, his sweet reasonableness—within which he conceals his real patriotism—does not make it apparent, so that his opponents may not take advantage of it. He appears to be sweetly reasonable, but at the same time he does not forget his duty to his country. (Hear, hear.) That is the man whom we want, and I do not think that to such an audience as is now before me, I need dilate upon the virtues of this great man of whom our country should be really proud. I have great pleasure, ladies and gentlemen, in proposing to the Chair Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. (Loud cheers.)

The Chairman :—Dr. Gour will second.

DR. H. S. GOUR :—Ladies and Gentlemen : It seems to be also an accident that I am to second this motion, for judging by the printed list I was merely to support it. But I think it is a matter of pride and privilege that I rise this evening to say a few words about our esteemed friend, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The mover of this motion has told you that he has known him intimately during the last 2½ years. I can safely assert that I have known Dr. Sapru for a much longer time, and my acquaintance, nay, friendship, has grown with the growth of time, till during the last 2½ years that he and I have worked shoulder to shoulder in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly, I have come to admire and to respect him. (Hear, hear.) As a man entrusted with the confidence of the Nation, and a member of the Viceregal Cabinet, Dr. Sapru was an ornament; but while he did not forget his duties to the State, he also remembered that he is a son of the soil, and in the great Council of the Empire his duty was equally to the people from whom he was drawn, and in whose interest he was striving to work with the Government. I shall not detain you, Ladies and Gentlemen, by recounting the many virtues of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, but I shall say one thing, that when we came back to the labors of the Legislatures, we found one stalwart patriot missing, one figure gone, and we at once felt the great loss that the Legislative Assembly, and through the Legislative Assembly the country at large, has suffered in that vanished figure. We felt that we had something last year which we missed this year, and I tell you that it is not myself alone but a great many members of the Assembly, who feel the permanent deprivation of his sapient wisdom and counsels from which we profited in the discharge of our duties. He was to us, to all of us, friends and strangers, an ever ready guide, philosopher and friend. His doors were flung wide open to all comers, and in moments of suspense and doubt there was

a chorus of voices: "Let us go to Dr. Sapru and see what he says." And on many an occasion, constitutional crises of great importance have been averted, owing to the timely intervention of Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru. When the history of the Indian Legislature is written, and the facts which still lie behind the screen are brought to view, the Nation will know the great services that the ex-Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council has done, not only to the Crown and the Government of India, but to the people of this country. (Hear, hear.) It is that man whom we ought to honor this evening, by asking him to adorn the presidential Chair, and it is supererogatory to say that we could not have found a better man to fill that Chair of great responsibility, at a moment when this great National Conference has met here to determine and decide about the future Constitution of this great land. I do not wish to say anything at all about the subject matter of discussion, but let me say this, that if there is one man, if there is one mind, whose guidance and advice will carry weight with the Government as well as with the people, it is Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and if we had to hold a universal election of the intellectuals of this country, I do not think that any other man would have the hardihood to challenge the supreme authority which he possesses of speaking in the name of the united People of India. (Hear, hear.) If, therefore, you elect him to the Chair and let him speak for the People of India, his voice will be the voice of thunder, and will be heard not only in this country but far away in the Cabinet of the British People, where his utterance will be examined, respected and given that consideration which no Council, which no Congress, which no Conference without him would ever achieve. I therefore think that it was in a moment of inspiration that the Executive Committee of this Conference decided to capture Dr. Sapru; and in asking him to take this chair, I do not so much congratulate him, for it is his desert, as congratulate

the members of the Executive Committee, who have decided to ask you to pass this motion, and thus enable Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to fill the presidential Chair on this occasion. Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to second the motion which has been made by Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar. (Loud cheers.)

THE HON. MR. PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS.—Ladies and Gentlemen, after the very eloquent words in which Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar and Dr. Gour have proposed this motion before you, I am sure you would like me to content myself with only saying, that I have very great pleasure in supporting this motion. (Cheers)

MOULVI ABDUL KASIM:—Dr. Besant, Ladies and Gentlemen, I think I will be guilty of bad conduct if, at this hour I intervene between Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru's admirable address, to which we all look forward so eagerly, and the audience here. I can only say that, as Mr. Rangachariar has said, in this printed list Dr. Sapru's name appears at the top of the list of "workers". I can add to it, that my intimate connection with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has lasted for more than a quarter of a century. I remember the days during the close of the last century, when young Sapru was working hard in the evening and in the morning in Allahabad for the old National Congress. He belongs to that noble and gallant band of workers, who created the National feeling in this country, and which is now rapidly passing away; but we are glad to find that Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru is here to help us, and he has been guiding us from various places in our National work. It is a matter of coincidence, but I think it is a good augury, that whenever we start a National organisation we have to go to the conjunction of the Ganges and the Jumna for a leader. When we started the Indian National Congress, we went to Pandit Ajodyanath for our guidance and leadership, and in this year of grace 1923, when we have to start another organisation—it is rather

unfortunate—with the same object in view, we have to go to the conjunction of those two sacred rivers and to a Kashmiri Pandit. Dr. Gour was pleased to observe that the Legislative Assembly sadly misses the personality and presence of Dr. Sapru. I say that it is a matter of congratulation for the people of this country that, at this critical moment, he has been freed from the trammels of office, and that what has been the Government's loss has been the country's gain. (Loud cheers.) Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru accepted office, if I may say so, when he thought that his duty to his country demanded it; he has left it when he found that he was called upon to discharge his duties elsewhere, outside the Executive Council of the Viceroy. With these few words, Ladies and Gentlemen, I support the motion that he be elected to the Chair, and I think we can safely congratulate ourselves that we have secured him for this office. (Loud cheers.)

DR. ANNIE BESANT:—I am sure that you will pass this motion with great acclamation. (Loud cheers.) She then vacated the Chair, and placed Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in it, amidst loud and prolonged cheers.

THE PRESIDENT SAID :

I am sensible of the honor you have done me by asking me to preside over the deliberations of this Conference and I request you to accept my sincere thanks. I am equally sensible of the responsibility which attaches to this position, but I have confidence that whatever be the conclusions you may arrive at in the end, they will be adopted after mature deliberation and full consideration of the delicate issues involved in a subject of the character which will engage your attention at this Conference.

OBJECTS OF THE CONFERENCE

At the outset I would beg leave to refer to certain misgivings and misapprehensions which exist in certain quarters with regard to the object of this Conference. When I was approached with the request that I should preside over this Conference,

I myself asked as to what it was that this Conference was intended to achieve. From all that I have gathered from the promoters of this Conference I do not think it would be fair for any one to hold that they were so rash as to assume that they could within two or three days prepare a Constitution for India and present it to the country as an accomplished fact. No one is more alive than myself to the inherent dangers of such an undertaking. I know and I realise that Constitutions cannot be made in the course of a day, and I am sure you also realise that in regard to political Constitutions nothing is more dangerous than to attempt a tampering with them on *a priori* grounds. We must come into touch with realities, take a full view of the present situation, bear in mind the historical background of such Constitution as we already possess, take stock not only of the sentiments and feelings of the people but also of the social and economic forces which surround them. Above all, such alterations as we may suggest or such demands as we may make must not only reflect your mature and deliberate views, but also have the support, if not of the largest number of the people, at least of the largest number of the electorate. These considerations necessarily involve, to my mind, a prolonged and careful consideration of the entire question in so many aspects, that I venture to hope that you will avoid being dogmatic and approach the whole question with calm judgment and full appreciation of the issues involved. It has been urged in certain quarters that the result of the last elections under the Constitution now in force could not by any means be relied upon as a clear indication of the approval of that Constitution by the electorate. I am not prepared to concede the truth or correctness of this criticism, but assuming that there is any force in it, it seems to me that our responsibility now becomes all the more heavy in view of the approaching elections. It, therefore, becomes imperatively necessary that those of us who believe in constitutional methods and constitutional progress

and who have given thought to some of the most vital problems affecting the future of the country, should seek the suffrage of the electorate upon certain distinct issues. It imposes on us the obligation of adopting a well-considered programme and placing it before the electorate, explaining it to them as best as we may, and inviting their mandate. When this has been done and when we are in possession of the wishes of the electorate on the subject, it will then be for us to consider how best to give effect to those wishes. It may then be necessary for you to devise means either by holding a Conference or otherwise to formulate in an effective and authoritative manner the demands of the country, or, at any rate, the enfranchised portion of it, and to adopt suitable methods for the achievement of those demands. Meanwhile, the necessity of explaining your own position and adopting a programme which you can place before the country to see how far it meets with its approval is obvious. If this Conference can therefore result in nothing more than furnishing a rallying centre to all those elements in the country which believe in constitutional methods, I think your labors will not have been in vain.

THE REFORMS

The Reforms associated with the names of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, and embodied in the Government of India Act, have now been in operation for a little over two years. They have formed the subject of a heated controversy among our own countrymen. One section, and that is by no means a small section, has during the last two years held that these Reforms are absolutely shallow and transfer no real power into the hands of the people. Another section decided in 1919 to work these Reforms for what they were worth and to build up further progress on the foundation furnished by these Reforms. The former section at one time held such strong views that it deliberately refrained from taking part in the elections and would have nothing to do with the Councils. A considerable

portion of it has, however, recently shifted its ground and now decided to enter the portals of the Councils. It is true that some of their prominent spokesmen have stated publicly that they will enter the Councils with a view to wreck them. Speaking for myself, I welcome their decision to enter the Councils, as a vindication of the view which many of us have held in relation to the Reforms. I do not feel alarmed by the threat of destruction which is held out by them. It has been my duty and privilege to study during the last two years the Government of India Act, and I have seen the machinery at work from inside the Government. It is, therefore, my deliberate opinion that the wrecking of the Councils is entirely out of the question. Besides, frankly speaking, I do not think that so far as this threat is concerned, there is any seriousness behind it. If all that is meant is that when the Government seek to adopt a policy or a measure which is held to be inconsistent with the best interests of the country, or which is calculated to retard its progress, or which is incompatible with the realisation of our aims and aspirations, then we shall offer a strenuous opposition to Government, there is nothing peculiar about the threat. That is a line of conduct which every Opposition must adopt, whatever be its political label. But I refuse to believe that even measures calculated to do good to the country, or to assist it in its advance towards Self-Government will or can be opposed merely because the present Constitution does not amount to complete Self-Government.

THE PRESENT POSITION

Before I proceed further I shall ask you to carefully consider the present position. There is no use now discussing whether it was wise or unwise on the part of His Majesty's Government to make the Declaration which they did make on the 20th of August, 1917. That is an accomplished fact, and I venture to think that no Government in England would, at any time, be guilty of the supreme folly of going back on that

Declaration. Not only was the Government of 1917 pledged to Responsible Government in India, but that pledge was further reiterated in even more emphatic terms at the opening of the new Assembly by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught and has further been repeated only recently by the present Prime Minister. Whatever unfortunate impression Mr. Lloyd George's speech a few months ago may have created in the country, and howsoever much we may resent the phraseology of it or the spirit underlying it, it cannot be forgotten that even he was a party to the Declaration of August 20, 1917, and the Government of India Act which embodies the Declaration in its preamble, and I refuse to believe that any responsible body of men in England will at all go back on what is now an accomplished fact. The only question, therefore, in which this country is interested is as to when that pledge is going to be fulfilled in its entirety. Section 84 A of the Government of India Act provides that at the expiration of ten years, after the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919, the Secretary of State with the concurrence of both the Houses of Parliament shall submit for the approval of His Majesty the names of persons to act as Commission and this Commission when appointed will enquire into the working of the system of Government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in British India, and matters connected therewith. It is to report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of Responsible Government, or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of Responsible Government, then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of a Second Chamber of the Legislature is or is not desirable. It is true that the Joint Parliamentary Committee said in their Report that the Statutory Commission should not be appointed until the expiration of ten years and that no change of substance in its constitution, whether in the franchise, or lists of reserved and transferred subjects, or otherwise, should be made in the

interval. It seems to me, however, that there is nothing in the terms of the section to prevent a Commission of this character being appointed even before the expiration of the ten years. And that this view is correct will also appear from the fact that even Mr. Montagu during the course of debate on the Bill expressed himself substantially to the same effect. It is, however, clear that even the supporters of the Reforms in India have, from the very beginning, felt that the measure of Self-Government introduced by the Government of India Act did not come up to the expectations of the country, and at an early stage of its existence the Legislative Assembly passed a resolution asking for a further advance which was communicated by the Government of India to the Secretary of State. The reply of the Secretary of State has just been published, and it is needless to say that it has caused widespread disappointment in the country.

The position at the present moment is this. In the Provinces we have got a partial element of Responsibility. In the Central Government we have got no Responsibility. Both the Provinces and the Central Government have been passing through a financial stress of the most acute character, and if the Provinces have been unable to show during the last two years a better record of progress than they might have been able to do, their failure has been mainly due to financial stringency. I believe the feeling is growing that Diarchy cannot endure very long, and even in certain responsible quarters I have found the feeling that the time has come when full Provincial Autonomy should be granted to the Provinces. I hope I am not giving out any secret when I say that even within the last two years I have heard it said by very responsible persons that the present Constitution is such that it cannot last very long. I do not wish to say more about the Provinces. I would much rather that our information with regard to the working of Provincial Governments and Councils came from the Ministers themselves. But as regards the Central Government, it is quite obvious that the

position is exceedingly delicate and unnatural. On the one hand, the Central Government has got to deal with a large non-official majority in the Lower House, the growing power of which cannot possibly be ignored. On the other hand, it must perforce submit to the direction, control and superintendence of the Secretary of State. A Government, situated as the Central Government is, cannot be in a very enviable position, and it is for responsible authorities in England to consider whether they will prolong this system of Government which, if the truth were told, affords as little satisfaction to those who have the responsibility of administration put on their shoulders, as to the people of the country.

THE CASE FOR FURTHER ADVANCE

I am aware of the arguments against further advance in the near future, and I wish to deal with some of those arguments. The first and the foremost argument which is urged against what is called a premature advance is that the electorates have not been sufficiently educated, and that there is so much instability in our internal politics that the risks attendant upon further advance are enormous. Now I do not wish to belittle the importance of educating the electorate, nor do I intend to deny that heavy responsibility rests upon our shoulders for educating the electorate, but it seems to me that this is an argument which may be carried too far. Were the electorates sufficiently advanced for the measures of Reforms introduced in 1919? Is it reasonably expected that upon the expiration of the ten years even with the most persistent campaign of education the electorate will become so much educated as to justify an advance on that ground? The truth of the matter seems to me that, having regard to the peculiar position of India, it is impossible to make the education of the electorate, in the sense in which this phrase is used in the West, an absolute condition precedent to all political advance. It appears to me that we must take the country as it is, and if there is any seriousness about the idea of

Responsible Government in the country, then the development of our political institutions and the education of the electorate must go hand in hand. To postpone the establishment of full Responsible Government in this country until the electorates have been thoroughly educated may, and will, amount to waiting indefinitely, and I venture to think that the dangers in this policy of procrastination will by no means be less great than the risks which a policy of courage must necessarily involve. Indeed it seems to me that the dangers in a policy of procrastination are perhaps greater. In the first place, it seems to me that the energies of the people which could be diverted into useful channels of constructive work are being and will continue to be dissipated in a struggle which provokes and excites unkindly feelings on both sides, and creates an atmosphere of suspicion which is wholly detrimental to the good relations of the two countries. In the next place, the longer the period of probation the greater is the chance for extreme views to grow and spread. In the third place, divided Responsibility in the Provinces and no Responsibility in the Central Government can neither be a fair test of the capacity of Indians, nor can it develop that sense of administrative responsibility among them without which no Government can render a good account of itself. As matters stand at present, all responsibility for everything that goes wrong in the country is cast, and I am afraid will continue to be cast, upon the British Government, and instead of the people applying themselves to consolidating and strengthening the elements of stability, the easier and more seductive methods of destruction will continue to suggest themselves to impatient minds.

INTERNAL PROBLEMS

I am further aware that for the successful conduct of Self-Government in the country, we must solve certain internal problems. It may be that the solution of them will come with the establishment of Self-Government, but whether the solution of those difficulties will come before or with the establishment

of Self-Government, they undoubtedly call for solution. The position of minorities, for instance, is one of the most serious problems which we shall have to face. Howsoever undemocratic according to western notions it may seem, the fact remains that there are important minorities whose interests require, at least in their view, to be protected and safeguarded. In spite of the much vaunted Hindu-Muhammadan *entente* during the last two years, the fact cannot be ignored that, excepting when it comes to a common attack against the British, the old element of distrust between the two communities appears to come to the surface now and again, and very unpleasantly reminds us that there is a skeleton in the cupboard. Speaking for myself, I am one of those who think that a genuine understanding between the two communities lies at the root of all our progress in the future. Quite apart from religious issues which divide the two communities, I think we must be prepared to recognise that the Muhammadans do insist, and will continue to insist, upon separate and adequate representation in the Councils and the Public Services of the country. The problem though difficult is by no means insoluble, and I for one should not hesitate to make any reasonable sacrifice, provided we could come to a genuine and abiding settlement with them in regard to our common internal interests. Similarly, I think we shall have to tackle the problem so far as it affects the Sikhs in the Panjab, or the Non-Brahmanas in the South, or the Anglo-Indians generally. But I do hope that, whatever be the effort which may be made in this behalf, it will be made in the light of actual facts, and not upon any philosophic or metaphysical basis. Again, to be absolutely frank, I think the problem of minorities must be approached now from a new angle of view. We cannot ignore, in any question of Self-Government in India, British interests in this country. It has always seemed to me a matter of great regret that the non-official Englishman has held himself aloof in the past from our domestic politics, and that the part which he

generally played in relation to our politics was that of a critic, generally misinformed, and very often unable to appreciate the Indian view-point. It is true that during the last two years, since the introduction of the Reforms, the non-official Englishman has felt himself called upon to take a greater amount of interest in our affairs, and I am prepared to testify from my personal experience that, in spite of some natural difference in the points of view in regard to certain matters, the contribution of the non-official English members to the work of the Legislature has by no means been negligible. Nothing pleased me more than the spirit of good fellowship which marked the mutual relations of the non-official Indian and the non-official European members of the Assembly. Being no longer a member of the Government, I can recall a few instances with a certain amount of gratification, when I found the Englishmen and the Indians joining hands together to put pressure on what they considered an unyielding and unreasonable Government. The Englishman is a very shrewd and practical man of business. For his lack of philosophy he makes up by a very vivid appreciation of the practical issues, and if we can set his doubts at rest, and assure him that so far as his interests in India are concerned, they will be as safe in a Self-Governing India as they have been in the past, I have no doubt that the part which he will play in the development of India as a Self-Governing member of the British Commonwealth will be all to his credit.

OUR GOAL

A question has been raised in certain quarters as to what it is that we exactly want. It has been, for instance, suggested that India does not want a Parliamentary form of Self-Government, and that the rule of the middle classes will really mean the transfer of power from the present foreign bureaucracy into the hands of an Indian oligarchy. I should have thought that in the years 1917, 1918 and 1919, both the sections of Indian politicians were agreed upon demanding a Parliamentary

form of Government, and so far as that demand was concerned, it has been conceded by the British Parliament itself. It may be, that now and for many years to come, political power may come to rest in the hands of what are known as the educated classes, but it is inevitable that with the exercise of that power and with the enlightenment of the masses, the mandate must ultimately come from the masses themselves. I refuse to believe that the educated classes, which have given some of their foremost political workers to this country, will be so selfish as to use their political power for their own ends at the expense of their less fortunate countrymen. Were they to do so for any length of time, I have not the least doubt that a well-deserved Nemesis will overtake them. The fact of the matter is that the only form of representative Government known at the present moment is the Parliamentary form of Self-Government, and it appears to me that the onus lies heavily on those who wish to depart from that form of Government to prove that their alternative is a better alternative. I certainly hope and trust that as to the form of Government which we want there will be no more doubt left, for it seems to me that the more doubt is expressed as to the expediency or desirability of the Parliamentary form of Self-Government the more shall we lay ourselves open to the charge of instability. It may be all very well to desire to be original, but originality in a political Constitution is not always to be commended.

QUESTION OF THE SERVICES

Again, I think it will be very necessary for us to solve definitely the questions of the Services and self-defence. As regards the Services, I do not think that it is possible to overlook the definite pledge about the Indianisation of the Services. I have absolutely no objection to any legitimate grievance of the Services being redressed, and there is no one more ready than myself to acknowledge their great ability and their great devotion to duty. But it is unthinkable to me that the

present system can continue for long. The position of the permanent Services in India must be approximated to that of the permanent Services in England and in the Colonies, and if that be so, the question to my mind is essentially one of recruitment in the future. I do not know who wanted the Royal Commission, which the Secretary of State is sending out. If it is really intended to redress the grievances of the Services, then the method adopted is unnecessarily cumbersome and expensive. If it is to solve the question of recruitment in the future, then it seems to me that the question cannot be tackled independently of the question of constitutional advance. I think, even in a Self-Governing India, the English public servant will have a considerable part to play, but it does not follow that his political power will be the same as it is now, or that his method of recruitment will be the same as it is now. In any case it seems to me that those, who are so much alarmed at the paucity of English candidates offering themselves for Indian careers, forget that at least for the next twenty-five years there is no fear of the English element disappearing from the Public Services of the country. With the Services recruited in the future in India, and practically wholly or mainly consisting of Indians, it is obvious that the present scale of salaries cannot be allowed. An Indian, who serves his own country, is to my mind not entitled to claim a scale of salary which was essentially fixed for the foreigner.

INDIANISATION OF THE ARMY

Similarly with regard to the Indianisation of the Army. I am fully conscious that the creation of a National Army under Indian officers must be a process which must make a large order on our patience. At the same time, it appears to me that a real beginning on an adequate scale must be made without delay, and a definite programme for the Indianisation of the Army within a reasonable period of time should be laid before the country, so that we may look forward to a time not in the distant future,

when we may be able effectively to guard our land frontiers and maintain internal peace. It will only be when India is able to defend herself, that she will have real Self-Government, but until that day arrives there is no reason why, regarding ordinary civil administration, the Central Government should not be made independent of the control of the Secretary of State, and be made answerable to the Legislature, and why at the same time, the Provinces should not receive a full measure of Autonomy.

DOMINION STATUS

Events have unfortunately happened which have given India a set back in England, and I think it is absolutely necessary that we should make our position perfectly plain. With those who want India to be raised to the full status of a Dominion under the ægis of England, we are in complete agreement. That is our creed, that is our hope, and that is our effort; but let there be no equivocation on this point. Those who indulge in the talk of an independent India having nothing to do with England, or who hold out threats that in certain circumstances India may go out of the Commonwealth, may be reminded that such talk legitimately gives rise to doubts and suspicions in the minds of those with whom we have got to deal. Such talk accompanied by threats of subversive methods is not only impotent, but does positive injury and harm to the cause of our progress. Once we accept the position that we want Dominion status for India, we are within our rights in bringing the utmost possible pressure to bear upon the Government here and the Government in England. But however pleasing it may be to pose as persons who can ignore the very existence of England, or who can destroy the present fabric of Government at their sweet will and pleasure, and repudiate all obligations incurred by the present Government, I do not think that this talk will lead to any substantial result, excepting that it may strengthen the forces of reaction against us by involving

our good intention in serious doubt. I have often been asked as to what we shall do if our constitutional methods fail. May I answer that question by a counter question? What will those who differ from us do if their methods fail? I do not think that the experiments hitherto tried have yielded any substantial results. The utmost that may be claimed is that they have evoked a new consciousness in the country, but so far as practical results are concerned, I do not think they can point to any achievement. So far as constitutional methods are concerned they may involve delays. They may not bring us quick returns, but they are the only methods open to us and, after all, if we trace back the history of Indian political agitation to the year 1885, can we honestly say that constitutional methods have altogether failed? They may not have brought us exactly what we wanted; they may have failed to achieve the ends that we have had in view as quickly as we should have liked them to have been achieved; but I maintain very strongly that our position in demanding Dominion status to-day and in hoping for it, is infinitely stronger than it was a few years ago. The hope may, therefore, be permitted that if we can settle our differences here and then make an unequivocal and clear demand for the raising of India to Dominion status at an early date, our demand shall not and cannot go unheeded. There is an ebb and tide in the political fortunes of every country. We are probably not very far off the timewhen the tide will be with us again. But we have got to watch it and take full advantage of it when it comes, and I do not think it will be long coming. (Loud cheers.)

The PRESIDENT: The next item in the programme is an Address by the Rt. Hon. V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI. He was to have been present here this afternoon, but on account of a prior engagement, which could not possibly be postponed, he had to leave last night for Calcutta. He has left behind his message in a speech, which will be read out to you now by Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas.

OUR PLAN FOR SWARAJ

TWO VIEWS ON THE SITUATION

One set of people believe that if the Indian Progressives forbore altogether to agitate for political advance, the operation of the Government of India Act, 1919, would automatically expand the Constitution, and that in course of time, without any strong or disorderly action on the part of the politically-minded classes, the attainment of Swaraj is certain to come about, and that it would come about at a safe and comfortable pace, taking, say, a few decades in the process. On the other hand, a considerable section of the educated classes in India maintain that the present Act was passed to meet an unexampled emergency, that those who wish for further steps towards Responsible Government must *make* another emergency, and that to trust the Section about the Commission at the end of ten years to take effect, as a matter of course, would be to court stagnation at present and the final defeat of our National purpose. The latter view would require our neglecting minor advantages and reforms, and heading straight for complete Responsible Government by vigorous and persistent agitation.

THE LIBERAL LINE

of thought lies between these two extremes. It credits the average British politician with a certain amount of good faith, but knows at the same time that he will abandon the true and just course of action, if the other party is not wakeful and determined to have his due. To cease utterly from agitation might lead the British representatives in India to think that the Indian was quite content with his lot and desired no more. He himself is accustomed to a very different style of behavior in politics. When he has any political cravings unsatisfied, he does not rest nor allow the authorities to rest. The present stand-still in India, and the tendency on the part of the Secretary of State to tighten his grip on Indian affairs, are only

manifestations of an essentially human quality, namely, to act only under compelling pressure.

WHAT IS THE STIMULUS?

Some years ago, the Government of Lord Minto, just before inaugurating the Reforms of 1909, protested that it moved forward in response to no external stimulus, but of its own sweet will and accord. But it protested so much that the public scarcely believed it. Now-a-days such a pretence is not made. It is commonly understood that the Government of India, whether the part of it in England or the part of it in India, is not impelled to beneficent activity by abstract considerations of justice, the freedom of peoples, or their right to govern themselves. When they profess to weigh carefully the capacity of the electorates, or the virtues of their representatives, or assess with scrupulous exactitude the precise proportion of the higher Services which must be occupied by the British element, they are thinking all the time: "How much can we keep, and how little need we yield?" Of course, I am not cynical enough to deny that the higher considerations are present in their minds; but their decisions on any given occasion are governed rather by more practical considerations and the expediencies of the moment.

WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE BE?

On our side, we must be prepared along both lines. While ready at all times to produce our testimonials and title deeds, we must manipulate the political forces of the country, so as to be able to exert at any given moment all the constitutional pressure of which we are capable. It is our conviction that the power to exert constitutional pressure is exactly measured by the progress we make under the present Constitution, by the use to which we put our new privileges and opportunities, and by the prosperity and strength which we build up for our Nation. For this reason, we cannot slacken in the slightest degree our efforts to ameliorate the material and moral condition

of our people, and evoke, on the common ground of our National and Provincial Legislatures, a bond of brotherhood and fellowship amongst the various communities of the land. An attempt at constructing a system of National Education in the true sense of the word, at improving sanitation and through that means the vitality and efficiency of the people, and at building up our industries and manufactures, is no bar to constitutional advance or a dangerous distraction, but a necessary condition of it; inasmuch as it furnishes a practical proof of the utility of political power and draws an ever-increasing circle of appreciative citizens into its pursuit. That is why we cannot afford to countenance, even for a moment, the morbid cry: "Paralyse the Government, paralyse the Administration, and paralyse all National work till Swaraj is attained." We part company decisively from those who have no use for the current Constitution and the Legislatures created under it, whether they profess to boycott them or seek, by entering, to destroy them. We insist on our allies having faith in these institutions, no matter whether the faith be large or small.

It is fairly clear that

THE TEN YEAR LIMIT

for the next stage of advance cannot be maintained. By a vote which, if not unanimous, was at least without contradiction, the Assembly recommended that the matter be taken up within the statutory period, and in this recommendation members of the Government and the non-official Europeans either concurred or acquiesced. By its failure to take action, not requiring the approval of Parliament, in furtherance of the Reform Scheme, Government has lent justification to the attitude of suspicion and distrust with which nearly all sections of the public regard the intentions of the suzerain Power. And it is desirable from every point of view not to allow this suspicion and distrust to grow unchecked for eight years more. The period of change is difficult for all concerned, and must be abridged as much as

possible. Government at the centre has to carry on without the support of any party, and subsists partly on the tolerant spirit of the new legislators, partly on their internal dissensions; and except the spirit of pedantry or excessive obstinacy, one does not see any conclusive reason for delay. And as both Mr. Montagu and Mr. Fisher have stated in Parliament, there is nothing in the Act to preclude a comprehensive enquiry within the ten years.

PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

It is common ground among Indian Progressives that Provincial Autonomy should be included in our next move towards the goal. The precise contents of that expression are hard to enumerate, but the essence is that the Governor should be more or less a constitutional Chief, and his Cabinet should consist exclusively of Ministers chosen from, and responsible to, the Legislature. The ill-defined demarcation between the Central Government and the Local Governments, the continuation, on however small a scale, of British personnel in the higher Services, and one or two other conditions, may militate against the integrity of Provincial Autonomy. But they are inheritances from our past, and must be tolerated for a time as anomalies.

RESPONSIBLE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

An irresponsible Government over a group of autonomous administrations would be an incongruity. At three or four meetings, the Liberal Party has demanded that, to the extent to which it is possible to-day, even the Central Government should be made Responsible to the Assembly. The obvious limitations are the Military, Political and Foreign Departments. The Ecclesiastical is hardly worth mentioning, though in reason it is difficult to defend its continuance. Military policy, like the position of Indian States, must be left to the personal conduct of the Governor-General. This does not mean, however, that military expenditure should continue to be non-votable. It is not an

unreasonable demand to make, that beyond a figure agreed upon as a fixed and irreducible item, expenditure on the defence of the country must be subject to discussion and vote by the popular Chamber. Theoretical considerations, like the interdependence of autonomy in the civil administration and autonomy in military administration, and the necessity of the two marching together in equal strides, can have no application to Indian politics, while British military policy has been disfigured from the outset by distrust of the loyalty of the people.

BEST MEANS FOR THE GOAL

Now that the Secretary of State has refused to take action, pursuant to the resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly in September, 1921, what is the best means of attaining our end? Regular Constitutions laid on democratic lines are based in the last resort on the Will of the People, as disclosed at a general election. Large measures cannot be undertaken by a Parliament which has no mandate for the purpose. And where there is such a mandate, nothing should ordinarily come in the way of its fulfilment. Now that India has a Constitution based on direct popular constituencies, however rudimentary it may be, a forward move in the direction of democracy must be based on

THE DESIRE OF THE CONSTITUENCIES

as expressed at the new election. Of course in the Provinces, a number of local issues will complicate the matter. The election of the Legislative Assembly, however, can be fought on a clear and simple issue, viz., the acquisition by peaceful and constitutional methods of complete Provincial Autonomy and of Responsibility in the Central Government, exclusive of Defence and Foreign Affairs. At the Provincial elections also, the issue can be brought more or less into the foreground, although it can only occupy it along with other issues, which to the ordinary elector will appear equally important. To ensure a thorough education of the electorates, this Conference proposes to put the subject before them under the auspices of an influential organisation,

and keep up the propaganda till the candidates to the next Councils announce themselves, and carry it on as an election cry. Such preliminary work is absolutely indispensable, and it is to be hoped that both candidates and their friends and well-wishers in fact all men of political influence, will take their share of this educative work in an ungrudging and zealous spirit. Assuming that a majority of those elected to the new Assembly and the new Councils have received such a mandate, the next step would be for them to elect representatives from themselves to

AN ALL-INDIA CONVENTION

It would be well if the Assembly and the Councils did so at a regular session convened by the Governor-General or the Governor. Should, however, the countenance of the Executive not be forthcoming, it would be well also, though not so well. The Legislators in each place, who respected their mandate, would not be deterred by official displeasure, but would meet of their own accord, and bring about the All-India Convention. The duty of this Convention would be to propose the precise steps necessary for the purpose of fulfilling their mandate, which is the attainment of Swaraj as qualified above. It might be helpful to empower the Convention at the outset to co-opt men and women of established political reputation, who are not members of any Legislature, and who express their general sympathy with the aim and methods of the Convention. My personal bias is towards building on the present Constitution, and I should, therefore, favor the idea of introducing modifications into the present Act, so as to convert it into an Instrument of Responsible Government. Possibly, however, the Convention may prefer to indicate the outlines of a distinct Constitution. The important thing is for its proposals to be published broadcast in the country. When sufficient time has been allowed for public criticism and suggestions, the Convention would meet again, revise proposals, and formulate them finally.

A SMALL DEPUTATION

of leading men from different parts of India would then be appointed by the Convention to take the proposals to Great Britain and negotiate with His Majesty's Government.

PLAN NOT UNWORKABLE

The Plan roughly sketched above is doubtless capable of improvement in the light of experience, and the political sagacity of the members of the Conference. To some persons it may appear too elaborate, but in my humble judgment it is none to elaborate, when we consider the great ends in view, or the amount of prejudice and opposition to be encountered. No step should be omitted which is necessary to swell the volume of opinion behind the movement, or which is calculated to win respect for the actual suggestions contained in the final scheme. Unfriendly critics, and perhaps some patriots of an academic disposition, might evolve grandiose ideas of Self-Determination by the masses of the people, or a universal referendum. We must sternly refuse to be tempted by these attractive notions, and content ourselves with working through the present Constitution and up to its limits.

WIDE TERMS OF REFERENCE—CONSTANT EFFORT

Too much emphasis cannot be laid on the importance of giving the All-India Convention fairly wide terms of reference, and a certain amount of latitude as to the methods of work. If the personnel were carefully chosen, their deliberations and conclusions will command respectful attention both in and out of India. It is not to be expected that their efforts would be crowned with success at once. On the other hand the probability is that, under the present Conservative Government, far-sighted counsels will not prevail. In this case, what should be done? I do not hesitate to answer that another effort should be made and, if necessary, yet another. We must win in the end. Besides, all the time the Convention is at work, the Legislatures would function as usual, and the work of Nation-building

go on continuously under the provisions of the present Act. I would not listen to the advice of those who would back up the Convention, or the deputation, by threats of Labor Troubles, Students' Strikes, or Civil Disobedience of sorts. Constitutional agitation has been rewarded before, and will yet be rewarded. A sudden catastrophe may frustrate all our hopes, like some untoward development in Kenya, but to the extent that we can control events, our influence must be cast on the side of faith, hope and charity.

The following resolution was put from the Chair and was carried by acclamation :

“That this Conference—composed of the elected members of the Indian and Provincial Legislatures and Local Boards, of representatives of political organisations and public workers, recalling your Majesty's gracious message to the Reformed Indian Legislature, that it was the beginning of Swaraj within your Majesty's Empire, meeting to expedite its coming, for the strengthening of the ties between Great Britain and India—lays its homage at your Majesty's feet.”

The Conference then adjourned till 11 o'clock on Tuesday, the 13th February, 1923.



SECOND DAY, FEBRUARY 13

THE PRESIDENT:—Ladies and Gentlemen: Before commencing the proceedings to-day, I would just like to make a few observations. A tentative programme has been prepared and laid before you. It is before us now for discussion, and the first thing we want to do is to elicit opinion from all quarters of this House. I myself do not propose to discuss any single item in the beginning: I would much rather wait for the expression of opinion among you. Now, perhaps you would like a clear statement as to what is exactly the significance and importance of this programme. As I propose to reserve my remarks till the end, I have asked Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar (*Madras*) assuming your permission, to make a short speech explaining the whole position, and then it will be open to any one of you to make any observations. When we have discussed the various items, then probably a resolution will be moved adopting this as a programme. Since the programme was printed there have been certain changes, draft changes, and changes to make it more harmonious, and they will be explained to you by Mr. Rangachariar. I therefore call upon Mr. Rangachariar to speak, and after he has made his speech, it will be open to any one of you to take up any item for discussion.

MR. J. DWARKADAS (M.L.A. *Bombay*).—There is one question I wish to ask, Sir; Do I understand that the House practically goes into Committee now, and then when we come to the stage of resolutions, the Conference again resumes sitting?

THE PRESIDENT.—The House is at present in the Committee stage.

RAO BAHADUR T. RANGACHARI (M. L. A. *Madras*).—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have to obey the direction from the Chair, and draw your attention to the subjects which

are placed before you for reflection and consideration. As you will see, first of all we take up the question of the Government of the Commonwealth. Our ambition is to become a Dominion in the Empire. We all know that consists of the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. These are the three main functions of any Government, and therefore we propose for the Executive, the King, the Viceroy and Governor-General, the Governors and Cabinets. They form the Executive. As you will see later on, the Viceroy's Cabinet will be one responsible to the Legislature. These will form the Executive.

Then we have the Legislature and the Judiciary. These form the Government of the whole Commonwealth.

When we come to the Federal Government, the Central Government, as we understand it, or the Government of India, we have the Viceroy and Governor-General, the Viceroy's Cabinet, responsible to the Legislature; then we have a bicameral Legislature, that is one which consists of two chambers—one the Council of State (Revising Chamber, is rather a provocative term), and an elected or popular Assembly. Of course questions will arise with regard to these things. The Viceroy's Cabinet is, as you will notice, to be responsible to the Legislature; there is no question of any division there, or diarchy, *i. e.*, some members being responsible to the Legislature and some responsible to somebody else. The Conference will have to consider whether there should be two chambers in the Central Legislature. Of course the elected Assembly will have the full power of the purse; on that matter all are clear; the elected chamber is the only chamber which will deal with money and money bills. The Council of State will have nothing to do with the question of finance; it will perhaps deal with legislation, pure and simple, that is, act as a second chamber for purposes of legislation not connected with money questions, but with questions of social legislation and such other legislation

as does not trench upon financial matters. We do not call it an upper chamber or revising chamber; we want to preserve the present name. I may mention that it is not the intention of the organisers of this Conference altogether to remove the existing Constitution. We want to take advantage of the Constitution as it is, and we want to make it one from which this thing which we aim at may evolve of itself, without any outside investigation or Parliamentary Commission, or any such thing. The ambition of this Conference will be to find out a Constitution which of its own force will grow into this thing which we are aiming at.

You will also find we have raised this question of minorities. That is a question which differs from Province to Province. You have one phase of it in the Panjab, you have another phase of it in Madras, and you have a third phase of it elsewhere. Therefore it is a question very difficult to deal with here satisfactorily. It is more a question on which the country's opinion ought to be elicited, so that we only raise this as a question for consideration by the country. It is an important question, and we should not lose sight of it, in aiming at a Constitution or even more at a programme. We have to keep our eyes on that question, since it is a burning question in some Provinces.

Then we come to the Judiciary. A Supreme Court, as all of you are aware, is desired ardently by many people in the land. There has been some difference of opinion, but there can be no doubt that in the final Constitution, which this will work itself into, you must have your own self-contained Judiciary in the country. (Hear, hear.) However much you may desire that the connection of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with this country should not disappear, a day must come when it must disappear, and when we will have to have a self-contained Judiciary. Because when you want Dominion status we must have all these things in our own country.

We have to make certain exceptions, or rather certain questions of importance have to be separately considered in this connection; that is why you will notice "Foreign Affairs" and "Army and Navy" separately mentioned. We have to recognise the existence of Indian States in our country, and the relations of the Central Government to Indian States is another troublesome question. It is a matter on which not only opinion in the country will have to be taken, but probably the predominant opinion will be that of the rulers of the States and the people of those States. Foreign Affairs includes Political Affairs. We have also to consider dealings with neighboring States like Afghanistan and Japan and other countries, as coming under Foreign Affairs. When India is a Dominion, she will of course obtain automatically all the powers which obtain in the other Dominions. That is a question which will have to be considered separately, and on that also opinion in the country will have to be taken.

As regards the Army and the Navy, of course, that will be under the control of the Viceroy to begin with, to be taken over by the Dominion as soon as the Government is ready to assume responsibility, that is, when the Army is Indianised in the sense in which we want it—not merely consisting of sepoys controlled by European officers, but Indian in the true sense of the term, both the officers and ranks consisting of Indians. When you have an army of your own to defend your country from external invasion, a perfectly self-contained army, then that will be taken over by the Dominion. Till then the Army will be under the control of the Viceroy. As regards the Navy, it will be a matter to be considered with reference to our relations in the Empire. The central idea of this programme is that India should become a Dominion as part of the British Empire. This is in the forefront of our programme. There is no suggestion that any Constitution which may be evolved out of this is to be outside the Empire at

all. That is put out of consideration altogether. No amount of quibbling on that subject will be allowed to those who join in this Conference. That is the central idea underlying all the ideas contained in this programme. Therefore, as regards the Navy, what arrangements will have to be made, what contract will be entered into with the Empire, whether it should be a self-contained Navy for India, or whether it should be an Empire Navy, to which all Dominions will contribute, these are matters which will have to be decided as Imperial questions.

Another matter of importance is the relation of the Central Government to the Provincial Governments. You want Provincial Autonomy. But in the course of evolving or developing into Autonomous Provinces, the question whether an intermediate stage is needed has also to be considered. Take the case of the All-India Services. When you talk of Provincial Autonomy, you will have to tackle that question; does Provincial Autonomy include a self-contained Provincial Service in all its branches, or does it mean some All-India Services, under the Central Government, and other Services under Provincial control? That is also a matter of immediate interest, so long as the present methods of recruitment continue, and it is one of the questions which should be taken into consideration.

Coming to the Provincial Governments, you will see that we have a Governor (it is not necessary to say, "whose powers will have to be defined by the Constitution"—we all know what the constitutional powers of a Governor in a Dominion should be), and an elected Legislature. There also the question of minorities comes in. There will be no diarchy, and the whole Cabinet will be responsible to the Legislature. That is the idea of Provincial Governments. This is so far as the programme for evolving a Constitution for the future Government of this country and for improving upon the existing Government is concerned.

These questions will require investigation in various directions in order to come to a conclusion on these points. To educate the country and the electorate on these matters to come to a right conclusion, it will be necessary to appoint Committees to investigate these matters, which are detailed in item 6 of this programme. Thus you will have to appoint a Committee to investigate into the working of the Reforms both in the Central and in the Provincial Legislatures. This is a necessary preliminary to embarking upon a programme for the future Constitution; for you should do that in order that you may know where the shoe pinches, where the troubles lie, and how the Reforms are unsatisfactory. We are all agreed—I do not think there is any difference of opinion among all sections of politicians—that the present Reforms are unsuited, inadequate and unsatisfactory; and the popular representatives who have had to work them have to see how far they have exercised the powers entrusted to them, and how far the Constitution itself has failed or succeeded. So that is a matter which we should put in the forefront of our enquiry.

Then we come to the question of Defence. This is connected with the question of the Army and Navy, and with the Indianisation of the Army and the steps that should be taken in that direction. This is a very important subject, and it will have to be investigated and reported upon.

The third subject is the Indianisation of the Services, which needs no explanation.

Then we come to the question of Finance and Taxation. Difficulties are bound to arise in connection with this subject; we have already had them in some form or another, as for example, what should be Provincial subjects of taxation and what should be Central subjects of taxation, and what should be the relationship between the Provinces and the Central Government with reference to particular heads of revenue, whether they should be self-contained or whether they should be

intertwined in certain subjects; all these questions will require most careful investigation, and it will have to be carried out with the help of representatives from all parts of the country; probably it will have to be made in each Province separately, and afterwards the evidence may be collected and discussed at a general meeting. Then there are questions of fiscal policy, and they will also have to be considered by the Finance Committee.

We have done with the Government and we have done with the sources of revenue, sources from which the Government has to be carried on. Then we come to the establishment of a Supreme Court. This has already been indicated. We will have to consider what its functions ought to be, where it ought to be located, and what will be its relation to the various High Courts in the country and how far it should have jurisdiction over Indian States; all these will have to be carefully considered and reported on. These are the subjects which have been suggested by the Executive of this Conference for your consideration, and for the consideration of the Committees to be appointed for investigating and reporting on these subjects.

Having dealt with these things, we come to the last item *viz.*, the organisation of this Conference, how to carry on its work, whether we may take it up separately afterwards, when we have discussed these subjects.

These, gentlemen, are the ideas underlying the programme chalked out on this paper which you have before you. I have indicated the various questions which are likely to arise, and I have made these remarks merely with a view to drawing your attention to the various aspects of the question; there may be other aspects which might strike us before we formally move the resolutions. I do not think I need take up more time, and I thank you for the patient hearing you have given me.

MR. P. P. GINWALA (M.L.A. *Burma*).—Sir: from the remarks just made by Mr. Rangachariar it appears to me that we are

about to draft a new paper Constitution which we are to present to the electorate.

THE PRESIDENT:—I said yesterday, and I repeat it again to day, that it is not the intention of the conveners of this Conference to draft a new Constitution; it will be for another body—before which we may place the results of our investigation and enquiry—to decide whether it will draft a Constitution or not, or whether it will ask that the present Constitution in force should be allowed to proceed to its natural evolution. This is a programme, and I think that is also what Mr. Rangachariar said this morning.

MR. GINWALA: I do not think I have made my point clear. The idea anyhow is that we should consider in this Conference on what lines we should proceed. The usual answer which we get when we ask for any further advance on the present Constitution is, first of all, that Parliament will not do anything for ten years, till the Statutory Commission is appointed. The other answer is that we have not explored all the avenues that are open to us under the present Constitution. The question that I wish to ask of the members of the Executive Committee is this, as to whether they have borne in mind this point as to how far we can attain the objects we have in view, by using to our utmost capacity the Constitution as it is now presented to us under the Government of India Act? In my own humble opinion I do not think we have reached that stage yet when we can reasonably ask for a fresh Constitution, or that we have satisfied ourselves that the present Constitution is such that nothing can be done under it. I am not trying to discourage any movement which would lead to a fresh constitutional advance, but I think it would be better for us to safeguard ourselves in this respect, and to consider from all points of view how far we can go under the Government of India Act. Only last year, for instance, we raised the question of the non-votable and votable items in the Budget, and I think that

though we went considerably in the direction of putting pressure upon the Government, I do not think that we went far enough. We started with the idea that if the military expenditure was not made votable, we should refuse to give them any money, but I do not think we actually went to that extent in the end. Now the question that legitimately arises is: "Have we exhausted this power of the purse, which has been given to us under the Constitution?" We must remember this, that we have got to deal with a very practical Nation, who are not influenced by any theories, and who would naturally ask us: "Have you exhausted all your powers before you ask us to amend the Constitution?" I beg of this Executive Committee, or whatever other body you appoint to draft this Constitution, to study the Government of India Act, and the Rules made thereunder, to find out how far we can reasonably go. Another question I want to ask is this: in this Constitution of which the details are given in this programme and in the speech of Mr. Rangachariar, I do not see any reference to the Secretary of State, an individual whom we do not wish to perpetuate, it we can help it, but one with whom we have got to reckon. Even under the Dominion form of Government there is a Secretary of State.

MR. JINARAJADASA (N.H.R.L. *Genl. Council*): Excuse me, I do not think there is a Secretary of State for the Dominions.

MR. GINWALA: Excuse me, I think there is, and what is more, Parliament, though it does not exercise that power, has got the power of legislating for the whole Empire, and therefore in any constitutional scheme that you may prepare you cannot leave out Parliament, or the representative of Parliament in the person of its Secretary, or some other person corresponding to him. I should like that point to be considered further, when a Constitution comes to be made up. The third question is this. Of course I do not wish to be misunderstood, but I think that when you are taking account of all your assets, you are not justified in ignoring a

very important asset, and that is that in the formation of the Executive Committee you have omitted one whole Province, and that is Burma. I do not think that that should happen. As I say, I have no desire to represent Burma personally on any Committee, but you have created a feeling in Burma that India does not take any interest in her, and that is a justification for Burma asking for separation.

RAO BAHADUR RANGACHARIAR: Why do you say we have excluded Burma?

MR. GINWALA: I do not see any name on the Executive Committee. This point has a bearing on another question. If you have a Federal form of Government you will have to make provision for a Province which wants to secede, and so far as Burma is concerned that is a point which has to be borne in mind in any scheme of Federal Government; that is to say, if a Province wants to secede it ought to be at liberty to secede from the Federation, and this point will arise as far as Burma is concerned, not to-day or to-morrow, but in course of time. As you know, in America that was a most difficult point to get over, and I do not think this Conference ought to frame any Constitution which ignores the possibility of one Province wanting to secede from the Federation as a whole.

RAO BAHADUR RANGACHARIAR: With your permission, Sir, may I say at once that the object of this Conference is not to frame any Constitution? The object of this Conference is to put ideas before the country, so that the future Legislature, which comes into existence with a mandate from the country, will frame the Constitution, that is, the Convention which is going to be called after the elections. These are merely our ideas and our aims. That is why we have put in the forefront this investigation into the working of the present Reforms both in the Central and Provincial Legislatures. That will be the first Committee which will have to report. As I said in my opening remarks, it

is not with the object of displacing or removing or destroying the present Constitution that this Conference has been called. We only want to see where the defects are and how they have to be remedied. I took care to say that it was not to uproot this Constitution and bring in a new Constitution that this Conference was called; that is not the idea at all. How to improve upon it, how to make it grow, that is the object of the programme—it is purely a programme—that is placed before you. The Constitution will be framed by somebody else, not by this Conference; the country really will have to frame the Constitution, not this Conference. The country may not, perhaps find it necessary to frame a new Constitution at all; the country after investigation may find that the existing Constitution itself can be allowed to grow, and be made to grow, into the thing which we are aiming at. Therefore it is a matter for investigation.

So far as the position of the Secretary of State to the Colonies is concerned, we have a King in the Constitution, and the King may make such arrangements as he likes to perform his functions. He may be represented by a Secretary of State; that is how he is represented in all the Dominions. The Secretary of State represents the King, and therefore we are not ignoring him. But how this Parliament in England, whose electorate knows nothing absolutely about this country, is going to be responsible for the government of this country and for its welfare, I have yet to see. That is a question on which we should have to express ourselves pretty strongly. I have my own views on the subject. I do not think it is any use making any Executive responsible to the Parliament in England. The ignorance of the Englishman is proverbial, so far as regards Indian conditions, and Indian affairs. The die-hards take advantage of that ignorance and betray the interests of this country there. What interest does the English electorate take in Indian questions? What interest do the English newspapers take in Indian questions?

MR. C. S. SUBRAHMANYAM (M. L. A., *Madras*) On a point of order, Sir, may I say a word? Is this going to be a debate between Mr. Rangachariar and every other speaker that gets up, or is it to be a Conference where each member here will have a chance of expressing his opinions, and finally the Chair will sum up and get the matter decided?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Mr. Rangachariar is bringing his remarks to a close very soon.

RAO BAHADUR T. RANGACHARIAR: That is the second point. The third point as regards Burma, I do not think it was anybody's idea—it was far from the minds of the Executive Committee to exclude Burma. As Mr. Ginwala has rightly said it is for the country to decide whether Provinces should have the power to secede or not from this Federation. I do not think there is anything more which I need say now.

MR. S. C. SHAHANI, (M. L. A., *Sindh*): We have all heard very carefully what has been stated by the previous speakers. I find that Mr. Ginwala's suggestions are being brushed aside. I have looked at the programme and I find that item 6 ought to include for investigation these two points, namely, a study of the Government of India Act, and a study of the position which the Secretary of State occupies in this country. What objection can there be to adding these two points to this item? I therefore suggest that these be included in item No. 6 in the programme. Now, Sir, just a point with regard to the programme as it is viewed by myself. I feel that the programme has not carried us very far. There is no doubt it is a very carefully outlined programme, conceived by those that have brought their minds to bear upon the present Constitution of India. The object with which this Conference is arranged to my mind is to bring together all sections of people who do believe in a Government for India within the Empire. If, for instance, you propose to include those who have hitherto stayed away from the Councils, but who are now coming nearer to it, it is only

desirable that the demand should be carefully defined. You say this is not an attempt at drawing up a Constitution. You will permit this remark from me, Sir, namely, that you are trying to throw dust into the eyes of the people; you are trying to tell them that we are doing nothing of the kind when we are doing it. There is this programme, an indication of the lines on which our demand is to be defined, is to be enunciated. You may say anything, because you want to make out a case for those that have organised this Conference; you want to strengthen their hands, you want to kill any protest or criticism that may come forward with regard to this scheme, but my humble request to you is to consider, and very kindly consider, the adverse criticism that is brought to bear upon the programme, such as it is. Why is it that the main question of the time limit is studiously kept out? Do you think that any sections of the people in this country are going to be conciliated, if you keep out this main question? You indicate all the other lines with the exception of this time limit. We ought to have the point; and if you do not make any suggestion of that kind, be sure that you are simply trying to blindfold the people. The people will refuse to be blindfolded. However clever, however intellectual you may be, your definition ought to be honest; you should come forward honestly to define what you think the time limit should be, with regard to the gaining of Dominion status, and if you keep back this opinion, the different sections will not come together; it will only serve to heighten the importance of some leading persons, perhaps, but it will not serve any other useful purpose. What I have said may perhaps be hateful and unpalatable to some of those who have organised this Conference, but I think as earnest students of politics, they should welcome a suggestion such as the one I have made.

DR. ANNIE BESANT (N.H.R.L., Gen. Council, *Madras*). Mr. President, if you will permit me, I should like to draw very

clearly the distinction between the Conference which is met here and the body which, after the next elections, we hope, will meet in order to draw up a Constitution for India, in the way in which it thinks it ought to be drawn up. We put forward only the objects at which we are aiming. How those objects should be carried out will depend on the next elections, and we cannot lay down the law as to what the Convention shall do as to method. We can lay down what we have laid down here, our definite object to win a mandate to the newly elected members to call a Convention after the approaching elections, in order to obtain for the Commonwealth of Indian Dominion status in her external relations, and Swaraj in her internal affairs. I think that puts the matter clearly as to what our object is. But to rush into a number of details beforehand, before you have carried out this investigation which is suggested into the present working of the Act, to lay down a time limit which would only be another promise to be broken soon afterwards, because you have not considered the facts and the circumstances which surround the possibility of accomplishing your promise, to do that is only to copy the methods which are current outside, to say we are going to get so and so, but we do not in the least know how we propose to get it. What we are trying here to do is to say; "These are things that we want to do in this Conference," and then we propose to appoint Committees to make the necessary investigations and to report the result of those investigations; when that report is before the Conference—which will remain, we hope as an organisation—that might be called back again to consider the reports, then you will have something or other on which you may base your further opinions. Mr. Ginwala, I think, entirely misunderstood us when he insisted that a great many people think it ought to be done by an expansion of the Act. That may be so. It may either be an expansion of the Act, or it may be by a new Constitution. That really is a point for the Convention to

decide, after the electorates have stated their opinion on these subjects. We do not propose to dictate to India what India shall do; we propose to go to India and ask: "Do you agree with these objects to begin with? If you do, will you appoint a Convention, to arrive at the best method for carrying out these objects?" We shall supply that Convention with a mass of facts. Having supplied that, it will be for the Convention to decide according to the mandate given by the electorate, what they will do; they may frame a brand new Constitution; or they may take this Act and say: "By this alteration, or that alteration, or the other alteration, you can carry out everything you want in a new Constitution." But for us to say so here, before we have the facts before us, to lay down a date, where we have no possible ground on which that date can be laid down, and to take up questions which do not concern the objects of this Conference, this is surely premature; the methods by which those objects are to be attained are left to the Committees; and I say therefore that we are not dishonest to anybody, as our friend from Sindh was inclined to think we have been. What we are trying to do is to get opinion instructed, and one great work of the Conference is to go over the country and put before the electorates our facts, when we have ascertained these facts, and leave them to decide.

MR. S. C. SHAHANI: Sir, the suggestions that have been made by Mr. Ginwala and myself might be included in the subjects to be referred to Committees.

THE PRESIDENT: I may frankly state that this question about investigation proceeded from me; and I hope the Conference will believe that I, at any rate, have made it the business of my life—at any rate for the last two years—to study the Government of India Act; and there will be no one more happy than myself if this Conference, and those outside this Conference, will make a serious study of the Government of India Act. It was not my intention to exclude that. On the

contrary, no investigation of the present situation would be complete without a reference to the Government of India Act and its possibilities. Therefore, if there is any insinuation that we wanted to throw dust into the eyes of the public by ignoring these elementary questions, I must, in the name of this Conference, strongly repudiate it. It was not intended for the aggrandisement of anybody. The Conference has not overlooked the question of the time limit. Surely if we intended that this Conference should be a party to the postponing of Self-Government in India until 1929, then there was no object in having this Conference at all. I made it abundantly plain in the course of my speech yesterday, that there were dangers in procrastination. I referred to the Statutory Commission. Therefore I must take very strong exception to the remark which has been made; we are not throwing dust in the eyes of any one; at any rate I am not.

MR. SHAHANI: One point of explanation, Sir. I have never implied that the Committees are seeking to exclude subjects of this kind. I merely said that such exclusion would be throwing dust into the eyes of the people, and I therefore wished that the programme should be amended.

THE PRESIDENT: I have no objection to that suggestion of yours being taken in. There is only just one word more which I will state for the purpose of discussion, with reference to Mr. Ginwala's remark, because it is likely to mislead people. He made a reference to the Secretary of State; I do not mind at all, if Mr. Ginwala is so very tender to the Secretary of State. The position to my mind is this. So far as I have been able to study the Constitution of the Dominions, take Canada, South Africa and Australia, there is no mention of the Secretary of State there; he is not a part of the Executive. He represents His Majesty's Government in their dealings with those particular Dominions. On the other hand, ever since 1858, when the Crown took over India, the Secretary of State for India has a

statutory position; he is in fact for certain purposes, if not entirely, treated as a corporation sole. In him the revenues of India are vested for the purposes of the statute. In him is vested the power of direction, control and superintendence over the Governor-General in Council by Section 2 and Section 33, and other sections of the Government of India Act. In any scheme of Constitutional Self-Government that you may have, the position of the Secretary of State for India *vis-a-vis* to India cannot be higher than that of any Secretary of State for the Colonies. Therefore it is not necessary for us to include the Secretary of State; in fact it would be suicidal for us to do so in any Constitution dealing with the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

DR. BESANT: In addition to drawing a very strong distinction between what our work was to be and the work of the forthcoming Convention, as we hope, I should like to add that with regard to Burma, we have not mentioned any Province specifically. Burma comes under the Government of India Act, and has now a Legislative Council like any other Province; hence any Reforms which may be suggested for India will apply to Burma also; certainly we do not want any Province to secede. The reference to the United States is not quite appropriate; because that Constitution originally left too much power to the individual States, and this led to the Civil War. There is no reason why that should be raised here. If I understood Mr. Rangachariar aright, I think that in the appointment of Committees, there was to be one for investigation into the working of the present Reforms in the Central and Provincial Governments. So that, after all the Committees have reported, we shall have a mass of information, which we can utilise in our propaganda among the electorates. Our work between this and the next election will be to popularise our objects, and then, when the new elections are over and the newly elected members meet, it will be for them to decide

exactly what should be the method by which the Reforms should be obtained, whether by changes in the Government of India Act, or by a new Constitution. We have deliberately left that to the Convention, which will have the authority to decide. We are not an authoritative body in that sense; we have only put forward these objects which we propose, and on which we want to educate the electorates, in order that their opinion may be given with knowledge, when they come to vote at the end of the present year, as they probably will in November or December, if the Councils are extended for a few months—which might happen. I think it is very important that we should keep that distinction in mind; we have no right to lay down the exact way in which this thing should be done; we can only put forward clearly the objects, and leave it to the Convention to decide the methods by which those objects can be attained.

MR. J. N. MUKHERJI (M.L.A. *Bengal*):—Sir, my object in placing a few observations before this present meeting is to introduce a subject which I think has been omitted. If I had any doubts as to the method of procedure that was to be adopted at the Conference, and at the Convention which is going to take place, in future, those doubts have been removed by the presidential speech of yesterday, and the speeches of Dr. Besant and Mr. Rangachariar. I have no doubt that this is a very proper procedure for focussing the attention of the people on certain important points of constitutional ideals and procedure, which are now before the country. What I am going to submit to the Conference is, perhaps, incidental to the subjects, and in a manner included in the heads which have been put down. What I mean to say is, that we should direct our attention pointedly to the question which I am going to mention, namely, the interference of Parliament with the Constitution of India. We have very clearly stated that India wishes to attain Dominion position. Now, so far as the other

members of the British Empire are concerned, there is some constitutional definition so far as the powers of Parliament are concerned. What we have just heard about the Secretary of State is perfectly clear as to his position as an executive limb of the Constitution; but his position has been described as a link, a connecting link, between Parliament and the Government of India. He is a member of the British Cabinet, and he has to execute the will of the majority of the Cabinet, and the Cabinet itself is the mouth-piece of Parliament, so far as the largest questions of policy are concerned. Now, it is perfectly true that the electorate of England is not very familiar with Indian conditions in any detail. But England is always alive to her own self-interest, and she is anxious to retain the hold of Parliament so far as the Government of India is concerned; and unless and until we clearly define the matters in which Parliament can interfere, any attempt to introduce a Constitution in the way desired will not perhaps bear that fruit which we want it to bear. We have under the first head—"the Government of the Commonwealth"—the King; the Viceroy and Governor-General, and so forth, but we have not drawn pointed attention to the question of the interference of Parliament in Indian affairs. To my mind it seems that although, incidentally, that question could be introduced, it will be desirable to draw the pointed attention of the Conference to that question. No doubt we have no authority over Parliament, but if we wish to introduce any change in the Constitution, we shall have to ask for the sanction of Parliament, so that in a way all that comes in. But I should think that there are so many statutes, so many different ways in which Parliament can interfere in the affairs of India, that we should try to focus all those statutes of Parliament, and the relation of Parliament to the Indian Government, and so forth, and then I think we may achieve success in the object that we have in view.

MR. J. CHAUDHURI (M.L.A. Bengal):—I will just point out that there is some misapprehension in the mind of my friends Messrs. Shahani and Ginwala, that in this programme, because the Secretary of State's powers have not been specifically mentioned, therefore.....

MR. P. P. GINWALA: May I rise to a personal explanation? My intention was not that the Secretary of State should be preserved in your Constitution. I merely wanted to know what position you wished to assign to him. I never meant to keep him.

MR. J. CHAUDHURI: As the question of that Secretary of State was raised, I shall point out that that question is included in the object. The object, if you note it, says: "to call a National Convention after the approaching elections, in order to obtain for the Commonwealth of India Dominion status in her external relations, and Swaraj in her internal affairs". Those words, that we want to attain Dominion status at once include the fundamental difference between the Constitution of Australia and other Dominions and the Indian Constitution. I shall point out only two of the most salient distinctions. One is that they have what are called constituent Legislatures. We have not. We are now implying that, in the future, we shall have to change our Constitution by sanction of the Secretary of State or by sanction of Parliament; but what the Commonwealth Act of Australia provides is that the Legislatures there can change their own Constitution in any way they like. So, the fundamental difference is that their Act provides that they are masters of the situation. Any day they like, they can change their Constitution, and they have not got to take the sanction of either the Secretary of State or any other. The second difference is this. As our learned President has pointed out, the Secretary of State has supreme control over the Government of India. He has the whip end of it, and his directions and control are bound to be

followed. I congratulate the President, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, that he is out of it. (Hear, hear.) He perhaps recollects that there is a section in the Government of India Act, that unless his directions are complied with by any servant of the Crown, he may be prosecuted and punished. What authority have the Members of the Executive Council of the Viceroy, or anybody else, under this statute? So, the Secretary of State is the master of the situation. He is an autocrat, he is an absolute autocrat, with regard to the Indian Constitution. But what is the position of the Colonial Secretary? (MR. P. P. GINWALA: "I never denied all this.") The Secretary for the Colonies is what may be called a conduit pipe, only a conduit pipe, between the Crown and the Colonial Government. He only communicates. If you see the constitutional troubles that have taken place, the Governors that have been recalled—the Colonial Secretary cannot dictate to the Dominion Government what is to be done by them, or what is not to be done by them. Of course, the veto exists in the King, but according to the constitutional practice, whatever the Colonies do the Crown always sanctions. I shall just mention a word or two with regard to external relations and the internal administration. I have explained they have constituent Legislatures. They are absolute masters of themselves. Of course, the British Parliament has a theoretical right to legislate for the whole of the Empire, but as a matter of fact, it never legislates for the Colonies. (MR. P. P. GINWALA: "What about official secrets?") But if they choose, they can have their own Act, and they can claim exemption from any such Act passed by the British Parliament—the Dominions can. Recently, there has been no fight between the Colonial Secretary and the Colonies. With regard to external relations, all of you know that for some time past the Colonies, the Dominions, have been demanding that they should have a voice with regard to peace and war. They are entitled even now to conclude trade treaties with

other States. Canada has a trade treaty with the United States, and their recent demand is—during the late War they were called in to help the British Empire after the declaration of War—“If you want to declare War or make peace, unless you consult us beforehand and we sanction it, we shall be no party to it.” So, you see that with regard to our external relations and with regard to our internal Government, we want to attain the status of the Dominions, and that is comprehensive enough to include the question of the Secretary of State for India’s powers, the British Parliament, and the question of foreign relations. Everything is comprehended within the portion of the object which I have just read out. I appeal to you not to make the programme more cumbrous. What Dr. Besant wants to do is to follow what was done in the year 1900 in the Commonwealth of Australia. There were six States. They met together; they drafted a Constitution, submitted it to Parliament, and Parliament enacted that Constitution. So we too are now going to do that. After the next elections, if the Legislatures agree, they will meet together, draw up a Constitution in the same manner as Australia did. Of course, then, I do not think the British public, or the British Parliament, can refuse to pass that draft legislation that may be unanimously submitted from India, with the consensus of the different Legislatures.

PANDIT GOKABANNATH MISRA (M.L.C. *United Provinces*):—Sir, while this discussion has been going on, there is a little confusion in the minds of many of us. It has been pointed out only a short time ago by Mr. Rangachariar and also by Dr. Besant, that the object of this Conference is not to draft a Constitution, but that the Constitution will be drafted by a Convention, which will be called into existence after the next elections are over. (Mr. Rangachariar: “May be.”) Now, while this discussion is going on, I should like to know what is the thing with which a person who has to go to his constituency to

educate his electorate, should do. What work are you entrusting him with? What is the work which you are placing before that man, who has to go to his constituency and fight out the election? At present, what is it that you ask the person who has to fight an election to do? Are you going to tell that man that he is to go to his constituency, and tell them that the country should now ask for the grant of Self-Government within a particular period, or what is he to do? That is really the thing that you ought now, having met in this Conference, to decide upon. I am not concerned here at the present moment with those nice questions as to what will be the position of the Secretary of State, as to what will be the position of any other officer of the Government; I am not concerned with them. The real point on which I should like to be clear in my mind is this: When I go back after this Conference to my constituency, what am I to tell them? We are discussing this question, that question, and a third question; but the one supreme question, the one question of paramount importance, which we have got to meet, because we have very soon to start work in our constituencies and educate them—the lines upon which the electorates have to give their vote, let us discuss that question. That question I consider to be of supreme importance, and having discussed that question, you may discuss other questions.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS (Bombay):—Ladies and Gentlemen, if we are going to take up this question first, I have nothing to say. If this question is settled—I have not got to meet my constituency for two years more, but—

PANDIT GOKARANNATH MISRA: You may never have to meet your constituency either, because many of us think that the Council of State ought to go.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: If you are going to discuss that question, which is of more paramount importance to my friends in the Legislative Assembly and in the Legislative

Councils, because they want some mandate from the Conference with which they want to go to their constituencies—if you are going to take up that question first, I have nothing more to add, and I will speak later on, when the other points come up.

THE PRESIDENT: You had better speak now.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: As representing the Council of State—I have a few friends here who are members of the Council of State—we all feel very strongly that unless we have full powers over money grants, we had better commit suicide. (Laughter.) (MR. P. P. GINWALA: “I think it will be the latter.”) It may be a matter of laughter to you, ladies and gentlemen, but a friend of mine, who comes from the North-West Frontier Province, and is a big Zamindar, tells me: “Are not members of the Council of State as good Indians as the members of the Legislative Assembly? Do we not pay taxes such as others pay? Why should we not have the same control over money grants as the members of the Legislative Assembly?” (A voice: “Come into the Assembly.”) Leaving aside that question, we represent the country—elected members do represent the country—and we have as much stake as, perhaps much greater stake, than the other House; we pay income-tax and land revenue even more than the members of the Legislative Assembly, and why should we not have the same money powers?

MR. HARCHANDEAI VISHINDAS: May I rise to a point of order? This is rather a side issue.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: Mr. Rangachariar referred to it and he said that money power should not be given—Mr. Rangachariar made it quite clear that the Second Chamber, whatever you may call it—he was good enough to say that he would like it to be called the Council of State—whatever it is, we, the Council of State, do feel, and I want this Conference to take note of it—we all of us feel that unless we have real powers not only over money bills but over money grants, it is no use

continuing the Second Chamber, and we had better do away with it altogether. That is what I really wanted to say. The members of the Council of State come here not to play, and we are not members of a debating society; but we want to do work. The Council meets for one or two hours and goes away, and unless the Assembly feels it is competent enough to create some work for us, unless they create some work for us (laughter.), we are nowhere. Gentlemen, this is not a question of laughter. The Assembly goes on from day to day with a large number of lawyers—I have great respect for lawyers.....

THE HON. PROFESSOR. V. G. KALE :—On a point of order, Sir. I should like to know whether we are discussing all the matters of detail here.

THE PRESIDENT :—I do not think it would be right to do so, but I thought the Hon. Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas was coming to the end of his speech.

THE HON. PROFESSOR. KALE :—I also belong to the same Chamber, but I do not agree with what he says. If we are going to discuss at this rate, we shall be discussing all the matters of detail and wasting our time. That is my view.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS: That question will have to be taken into consideration by the Convention, when it meets, whether the Council of State, as constituted at present with the constituencies, is necessary, or whether any alteration should be made in the electorate and the franchise of the voters, and the work to be done by the Council of State. I therefore propose that this may also be considered, when you take up the question of the working of the Reforms, and this should be a term of reference to the Committee that is going to investigate into the working of the present Reforms. I am sure that my friend Mr. Ginwala cannot have much love for the Secretary of State. What he wants, and what I want also, is that the relations between the Government of India and the Secretary of State should be considered very carefully by the

Committee that you are going to appoint to consider the working of the present Reforms. I have only one more word to say. I believe that unless we carry the Indian States with us, we won't be able to achieve real Dominion status. We must carry them with us. (A voice: "How?") I realise the difficulties. We must have a Conference, either with the Rulers of the States, or their people. Personally, I think it would not be tactful or politic to carry on negotiations with the people of the States. I would therefore submit that a Committee may be appointed, if the Conference so decides, to carry on negotiations or carry on pourparlers—we have the Chamber of Princes. . . .

THE PRESIDENT: I do not think that it is within the scope of this Conference. That may be open to the Convention, but we have got nothing to do with that.

THE HON. MR. LALUBHAI SAMALDAS:—A note may be taken of that.

THE PRESIDENT:—That may be raised at the time of the Convention.

MR. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS (M. L. A. *Sindh*):—As Mr. Ginwala has raised this question of Burma, I may state that it is our desire that India should include Burma.

DR. H. S. GOUD, (M.L.A. *Central Provinces*):—Mr. President, I regret my pre-occupation elsewhere has prevented me from being present here to hear the previous speakers on the subject of this morning's discussion. If the few speakers whom I have heard indicate the trend of the discussion which has preceded their speeches, I should like very briefly to reply to them, and to state my own opinions on the subject of the proposed Convention. I should like in the forefront of my speech to state what is the present Constitution, how far it is capable of improvement without any modification of the present Government of India Act, and lastly to what extent we want a modification of the Government of India Act, or its replacement by a

Constitution which we shall present to Parliament. These are the three questions which will, I think, answer all the queries which my friends Mr. Gokarannath Misra and Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas addressed to the Chair.

I think it is abundantly clear that the sole centre of power under the present Constitution of the Government of India Act is the Secretary of State. If you read the very second section, the whole of the scheme of the Government of India Act is so drafted, that right away at the very head of the Constitution is the Secretary of State, and that is the thing which people generally forget, that the Secretary of State is the sole individual, irresponsible officer, who is not responsible to the British Cabinet, who is not responsible to the British Parliament, who is responsible to nobody. He has the sole power of supervision, direction and control. The Government of India, in its turn, has similarly the sole power of supervision, direction and control over the Provincial Governments. So, the power that primarily vests in the Secretary of State, is filtered down from the Government of India to the Provincial Governments. That is the present Constitution. Certain limitations have been set out by the Government of India Act, 1919, namely: "Subject to certain Devolution Rules hereinafter referred to," and these Devolution Rules do not affect the central power of the authority who is the Secretary of State. That is the present Constitution. Under the present Government of India Act, the Secretary of State has got the power of making Rules by which he can transfer that power of supervision, direction and control to the Government of India. If he wants, he can throw his whole mantle on the shoulders of the Government of India and say: "I shall hereafter exercise no power beyond the power which a Colonial Secretary exercises, and I shall hereafter transfer by these Rules the whole of my power of supervision, direction and control to the Government of India." If the Secretary of State could be made to do that, we have

then an autonomous Government of India, and once we have an autonomous Government of India, we can go hammer and tongs for the Government of India, and make it responsible to the Legislature. But the position of the Government of India is between the devil and the deep sea—I do not know which is the devil and which is the deep sea, either the Assembly or the Secretary of State must be one or the other—and the position of the Government of India is, therefore, the position of a person, or a body of persons, who has to serve two masters. That is intolerable, and that is the position against which we must, as members of a responsible House here, unitedly protest.

How can we do it? Now the Convention should abundantly make it clear that whatever may be in the womb of the future, the present Government of India Act must be so exploited, as to confer the maximum power upon the Government of India, which the Reform Act of 1919 promised; in other words, the Secretary of State must be compelled to make Rules for the purpose of transferring to the Government of India so much of the power as he is entitled to do under the Act. That is the first thing.

The second thing that can be done, without in the slightest degree reshaping or reforming the Government of India Act, is to make the Provinces completely autonomous. If you see one of the sections of the Government of India Act, you will find it provides that under the Act, all the subjects which have been reserved may be transferred to the administration of the Ministers. That is the second thing that can be done. These two things, supposing they were done—and you will remember that, in that celebrated despatch of Lord Peel of the 2nd of November, 1922, he points out in paragraphs 2 and 3 that such a thing is quite possible: "Why don't you exploit the Government of India Act?" Our reply is: "Who is to exploit? You, the Secretary of State, could have done that. You should have made Rules and transferred your power to the Government of India."

That, I think, the Convention should emphasise, namely, that whatever power can be transferred from the Secretary of State to the Government of India must be transferred immediately, and whatever transfer can be effected in favor of the Provinces must no longer be delayed. The Secretary of State is morally bound to do so. He has said that in the Government of India Act has been provided an elastic Constitution, and the elasticity of it has never been put to the test.

Then we pass on to the next question. Supposing he was to transfer all his powers by Rules to the Government of India to-day, will the Government of India become responsible to the Legislature? That is the next point. No. It is the substitution of one autocrat for another autocrat. The centre of gravity will shift from England to India. But as the Secretary of State is irresponsible to Parliament and to the British Government, so the Government of India remains, and would remain, irresponsible both to the Legislature and to public opinion. Therefore, you ought to introduce an element of responsibility in the Government of India. That cannot be done under the present Government of India Act. It can only be done by a convention which, I believe, at the present time neither the Government of India nor the Secretary of State are prepared to introduce. But we must force their hands and say: "You shall introduce immediately a convention, simultaneously with the devolution of power to transfer all power from England to India. You shall introduce a healthy convention, which will make you practically responsible to the Indian Legislature." That is the next point.

The third point is about the Provinces. It was said in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, and by Lord Selborne's Committee, that the responsibility will be one of steady growth in the Provinces.

RAO BAHADUR C. S. SUBRAHMANYAM (M.L.A. Madras):—A good many friends here wish to know what it is we are now

discussing. Is it the Constitution as it at present exists, with its difficulties and with its good points—is that what we are discussing; or are we now discussing what should be the future plan which we wish to put before the electorate?

THE PRESIDENT: My word is “programme”.

RAO BAHADUR C. S. SUBRAHMANYAM: The programme of this meeting here, which is on the agenda. That is all we are discussing. It seems to me, with very great deference, it is necessary to limit the time for speeches, as it is only a question of programme and not of constitutional principles, not of constitutional theories. If we do so, it would advance the work of this meeting, and would keep all the members here to attend to what goes on. If you could kindly limit the time of the speeches, and direct the speakers to the particular point which is under consideration, it would facilitate the dispatch of business.

THE PRESIDENT: That is what I propose to do now. In fact that was my intention originally that, after an expression of opinion generally on these questions, I might put each one of these items to the House, but I considered it necessary that there should be a general expression of opinion in a general way.

THE HON. PROFESSOR V. G. KALE: Will you not put to the meeting this point, whether this Conference should at all discuss this question of detail about the Constitution? Should it not be left to the Convention?

THE PRESIDENT: We agree about that.

DR. H. S. GOUR: I think we must generally understand how far the present Constitution goes, what you must scrap and how far it can be replaced by a fresh Constitution. It will be utterly impossible to make a jump into the future, without knowing how far we are able to stretch and pull the present Constitution, for the purpose of obtaining, without any effort on the Parliament or on the part of anybody else concerned, the additional

powers which we can immediately obtain, if the whole country is unanimous and united upon the demand for these powers. As regards the future plans, I think Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Dr. Besant and everybody else are agreed, that it may not necessarily take ten years. But it may take time. We have, as all of us know, a long-flung battle-line. We have to fight the Secretary of State, and the Conservative Government; and how long that Government will be in power, and when it is likely to be replaced by a more Responsible Government is a matter of uncertainty and doubt. Therefore, it is rather better that we should first of all start by taking the fullest advantage of the promise contained in the Secretary of State's despatch, and the Convention should see that we are quite prepared to receive all that is implied in the despatch, "exploit the Government of India Act," because you find there materials for additional power, which you are able to obtain without an amendment of the Government of India Act. Now, as regards the future plans, I do not think that we should go into the details of these. My Hon. Friend Mr. Subrahmaniam is perfectly right, that if we were to discuss in detail the position of the King, the Viceroy, the provincial Governors and the Legislatures, we should be usurping a function which, I think, a Committee of constitutional lawyers should go into and examine; and when the whole question is cut and dry, it should be presented to a meeting of the Conference for general confirmation. I shall now very briefly reply—I do not know if my friend the Hon. Mr. Lalubhai Samaldas was in a humorous vein, or whether he was serious—he said that if the Council of State does not get power over the Budget "we had better commit suicide". The question about a single or a double Chamber is a question which the Conference will consider now or hereafter, as it is put down here: "Council of State, (revising Chamber, bi-cameral Legislature)". That is a question which

comes up hereafter. Then, it has been said that in Australia, the Commonwealth of Australia Act, 1900, constitutes a constituent Legislature. That is perfectly true. My friend Mr. Chandhuri pointed out that the Parliament of Australia has got power to alter its Constitution, without further reference to Parliament. That is perfectly true, and South Africa has also got the same power. They could alter their own Constitutions without reference to the British Parliament. Perfectly true. That again is a question which will have to be examined and gone into, as I understand, by a Committee which will be appointed for the purpose. We cannot in this large meeting go into these minutiae of constitutional questions, which can only be gone into by a number of constitutional lawyers who have studied the Constitution of the various countries, and then formulate their demands. Then Mr. Gokarannath Misra said: "That is all very well; but I am now on the brink of a terrible precipice. Our new elections are due. With what battle cry shall we go and fight in the elections?" That is not a question which agitates his mind alone. That is a question which agitates me, and agitates everyone. The answer I can give him, and that I have given to myself is this: We must go to our constituencies and say: "The first thing we have decided to do is to demand of the Secretary of State the fulfilment of the promise contained in his despatch of the 2nd November, 1922, for the grant of further Reforms without an alteration of the Government of India Act; and we shall, if returned to power, see that the Secretary of State fulfils his promise. That promise, if fulfilled, will give you complete Provincial Autonomy and will also make the Government of India independent, or practically independent of the Secretary of State." It will not introduce real responsibility in the Central Legislature. That can only be done, as I have said at the opening of my speech, by a Convention, or a revision of the Government of

India Act. If your electors say that it is not a very appetising programme (Mr. Gokarannath Misra: "That is what I was going to say,"), we are not enamored of it; please go and tell them: "If anybody else offers you larger plums, please look at them before you cast your votes. Do not go by larger plums, which are incapable of fulfilment within the next three years. What we promise is in sight; what others promise are, I think, the apples of Sodom. The moment you touch them, they will crumble into dust. Therefore, their promises are illusory. Our promises are real. Choose between the real and the illusory." As regards the future development of the Constitution of this country, that, of course, is a matter which must be left to the Convention, and that Convention will formulate its plans, go before the Parliament, go before the British Cabinet Ministers, and strive to obtain a revision of the Government of India Act. That will no doubt be a matter of time, and the certainty of it is equally uncertain, because it must all depend upon the change of the Cabinet, the change of Government, and the constitution of the House of Commons.

MR. JAMNADAS DWARKADAS: (M. L. A. Bombay): Mr. President: With your permission I shall make only a few observations, and I promise that they will really be a few observations, on the discussion that has gone on before in this Conference. In the first place, I want to deal with the remarks made by my friend Mr. Shahani, in the otherwise useful speech, full of suggestions, that he made. Mr. Shahani seemed to me to attack the Executive Committee for all sorts of things.

(PANDIT GOKARANNATH MISRA: "We have discussed all that thing. Mr. Shahani said he did not mean it.")

MR. JAMNADAS DWARKADAS: I only say this, as a member of the Executive Committee, that the Executive Committee has drafted this agenda as a tentative agenda, to be discussed by this Conference. I hope neither

Mr. Shahani nor any other member will take it for granted, that they have submitted to the laws of the Medes which cannot be disobeyed. This is only a tentative agenda that has been drawn. The Conference is entitled to make any suggestions and any changes that they think necessary. Coming to the pertinent question raised by my friend Mr. Gokarannath Misra, and I think it is really that question that we have here to consider, the answer is provided by the agenda that is drawn. We are met here to do two things, amongst various other things that we are called upon to do; first of all, to draw up an outline, so as to give an indication of what our demands are going to be, which we are going to promise our electorate that we are going to try to fulfil in the next three years after election. That is the first one. How we are going to do it is the second question. This agenda provides the necessary answer for both. In the first place, it places before you a tentative agenda which we are called upon by our suggestions to improve, and finally to put in the shape of a resolution on behalf of this Conference. That tentative programme includes the demand for Dominion Status, so far as our relations with other partners of the Empire and other Governments of the world are concerned, and, secondly, complete Swarāj within this country. That is the first demand. What does that demand mean? Again we give general broad indications of what this demand will mean, how it will react on the Constitution so as to change it altogether, and make the Governments responsible to the people. There, again, broad indications are attempted by the Executive Committee, and after the necessary changes have been made, those indications will be adopted. So, we can go before the electorates and say: "Our first demand is Dominion Status outside and Swarāj within this country. Secondly, what does that mean? It means that we shall have a constitutional Viceroy; a Cabinet that is responsible to the Legislature; we shall have an elected Legislature. We may, or,

we may not, decide to have a Council of State, and so on, and we also deal with the question of Autonomy so far as Provinces are concerned." With these broad outlines of our demand we approach the electorates. We do not merely stop there. Having given this skeleton of the demands that we are making, demands that are intelligible to anyone who is interested in the political welfare of India, we say that we are going to appoint Committees on all these important questions that constitute the demand of the country, and when these Committees have met and collected materials, and after a good deal of deliberation made a full report of what their conclusions are on each subject, we shall place these reports before the country for discussion, and submit them to the Convention appointed by the newly elected Councils, so that they may draw, if necessary, a Constitution based on the material supplied to them, after due deliberation, by the various Committees. I think the answer is quite clear to the electorates. We give an outline of the general demand that we are going to make and we also provide a method of collecting material for submission before the Convention, in order that the Convention may, if necessary, draft a Constitution or may suggest, if it is not necessary to draft a new Constitution, that in such and such a manner the present Constitution may be expanded so as automatically to bring about Dominion Status to India. Whether we want a new Constitution, or whether we want to achieve everything by the expansion of the present Constitution, is a matter entirely for the Convention that will come into existence and decide. It may be that some of us think that, however much you may expand the present Constitution, so far as our position in respect to the outside world is concerned, unless Dominion Status is conferred by Parliament, that cannot do. But that is a matter of opinion, and that is a matter which is entirely within the purview of the Convention, that will come into existence after the new elections have been held. So far as the present business is concerned,

it is perfectly clearly laid down on the agenda that we approach the electorate with a broad outline giving an indication of the demands that we are going to make, and this demand is nothing short of the conferment of Dominion Status on India. We provide also methods for collecting material for expert deliberation, which can be placed before the Convention, in order that a draft Constitution, if necessary, may be made, or suggestions may be made for extending the present Constitution.

MR. HARCHANDEAI VISHINDAS: I will answer Mr. Gokarannath Misra's question. The answer is: you simply provide yourself with a copy of the programme and read the items one to six.

PANDIT GOKARANNATH MISRA: The only question I wish to put to the Conference in order to make the point clear, because that is what I am anxious about, is this. My friend has just now said that the point that we are at present discussing in this Conference is what will be the broad outlines on which we shall have to tell the constituency that we are going to make our demand for Self-Government. If we tell our constituency that, the people who will be returned in the next elections are to meet in a Convention, and draft a Constitution, obviously the question which will be put to us by the constituencies will be, how the fact that the Convention will draft a Constitution for the conferment of Self-Government upon this country, how that draft will give us that Self-Government which we want. I want that question also to be considered here, because we ought to bear in mind what we are to tell our constituencies with regard to these matters. The other matters are matters of detail, but we must be clear upon this one question.

KHAN BAHADUR ABDUR RAHIM KHAN:—Mr. President, Though I have been listening to the speeches of the different Hon. Members, I am a little bit in the dark. An Hon. Member asked, when we go back to our constituencies, what should we tell them? I will go a little bit further. When we go

back to our constituencies what share should we tell them we have brought for them. Mr. Rangachariar in touching the question of minorities has overlooked that point. When this question of minorities appears in agenda, as a member of this Conference it will be my sacred duty to impress upon this House and the country that unless you deal fully with this question, unless you decide definitely what will be the share of the minorities, and unless you respect the rights of minorities, I assure you there is no chance of success whatsoever. When these things are published in the papers to-morrow morning, and the public read the report, they will say there is something happening in the dark. I will be the last person to insinuate anything against anybody. I have great respect for Mr. Shahani, because he had the moral courage to say what he felt, and did not want to keep anything in his mind. He did not mean any insinuation against anybody. Unless you settle this question of minorities once for all, I regret to say that India is doomed, and India will never succeed however much you may make a programme, prejudicing this point. If that question is once for all settled, every other question is settled. India is not like England. India is made up of different castes and different countries. We should be Indians first, but unfortunately in the school of practice we are lacking in that. This is the first cry heard everywhere, and as this question of minorities is settled, everything else will be easy. No effort should be spared to solve that question. I would like Mr. Rangachariar to solve that question, because as it is he has given it a very insignificant place in that note (A voice: "Mr. Rangachariar belongs to a minority.") If he belongs to a minority, my Hon. Friend will excuse me if I have given him any offence, because I feel it is my sacred duty not to be hypocritical. I must give vent to my feeling, and I should not appear what I do not seem to be. I say my suggestion is this. This question is hot in the Assembly; it is hot in

the Press; it is hot in every Province, and I wish that there were no religion here, no caste; but as there are, it is the duty of every statesman, it is the duty of every true Indian, to approach it with a full sense of responsibility and with a full sense of true patriotism. My humble suggestion is that this question of minorities should be first considered thoroughly; and I submit, I assure the House, that if this is settled everything is settled.

KHAN BAHADUR SARFARAZ HUSSAIN KHAN:—Mr. President, As regards this (b) the first thing I wish to know is whether the Council of State will be elected. (A voice: "These are details.") With regard to what has fallen from my Hon. Friend, as a Muhammadan representing the Muhammadan community, I must say that the Muhammadans will never be satisfied unless it is clearly decided, what is to be the fate of these minorities. Our President has very wisely said:

I am one of those who think that a genuine understanding between the two communities lies at the root of all our progress in the future. Quite apart from religious issues which divide the two communities, I think we must be prepared to recognise that the Muhammadans do insist, and will continue to insist, upon separate and adequate representation in the Councils and the public services of the country,

Before I joined the governing body of this Conference, some Muhammadan friends in the Assembly asked me if I had joined it. They said: "The Muhammadans have got now separate electorate and separate representation. Swaraj will do away with that." I feel it my duty to place before you the views of the Muhammadan community, and if I had not placed those views before you I should be failing in my duty. I wish you to make this point clear. It is simply how to provide for minorities. You have got a compact in the National Congress. You have been given representation in our Assembly, and in the Councils, and now why should this subject be in the background? This gives room for suspicion and that is

why I think it is necessary that the point should be made clear.

MR. B. N. MISRA :—If we are united, we shall get all that we desire, and we shall compel the Secretary of State to give up his power, the Parliament to give up its power. Everything depends upon that word “if”. I ask the members of this Conference if we are united, and if we are not, why we are not united. That is the sole question before us. Unless we are united, we cannot achieve our object. Then how to get united? First try to get united. My Muhammadan friends have already appealed to you that they must be expressly given an understanding that their rights will not be trespassed on. Be he an English bureaucrat or an Indian bureaucrat, if one man usurps the rights of another, that other complains, and so we must come to a fair understanding between ourselves. There is the question of Muhammadans *versus* Hindus, the question that Bengalis are taking away this, the Mahrattas that, and so on. If you want a Federated India, you must have Federated States, and you must first think how these States are to be formed. Mr. Lionel Curtis proposed that the States should be formed on a linguistic basis. Unless you come to some understanding, you will have States with constant friction. If your houses are properly arranged, your villages will combine, your districts will combine, and the Provinces will combine. If you put opposite elements near each other, one Muhammadan here, one Bengali there, one Oriya, one Parsi—unless you see these things settled, you cannot have a real homogeneous India. I would appeal to the members of this Conference here to consider whether this should not precede other things. We must just, as the Congress has done, divide the Provinces on a linguistic basis...

THE PRESIDENT: I am afraid this question is not before the Conference.

MR. B. N. MISRA :—I am putting this forward in order that members who are present here may feel that they should not go

by communal creed or caste, or by feelings of that kind, and I do think that we should develop our local interests and join a Central Government on certain understandings.

SARDAR BAHADUR GAJJAN SINGH:—As is well known, I represent a minority, a very important minority in the Panjab. You rightly in your presidential address yesterday showed that the claim of the Sikhs in the Panjab is a very important point to be considered and settled. Personally speaking, I have not the least doubt that unless you settle the question of the minorities and you satisfy them, things will be very, very difficult. Though the question is difficult enough, I should think it is not impossible of solution. I join with the Muhammadan members who represent the Muhammadan community here, that the question of the minorities should be decided first. I belong to a minority which, unfortunately, was not taken into consideration even in the Lucknow compact. We appealed to the Southborough Committee, and we have been agitating and agitating and sending our petitions to England and so on. We are not properly represented in the Panjab Legislative Council, and not even in the Legislative Assembly here. Therefore I wish to impress upon the audience the necessity of settling the minority question. That is a very important question which cannot be so easily ignored as Mr. Misra tried to do. There are no members of the minorities who wish to annihilate themselves, but they also want Swaraj.

MR. KRISHNA PRASAD KAUL:—May I suggest that the Conference should now proceed to the framing of the resolutions, with which we should go to the country before the next elections?

The Conference then adjourned for lunch, to reassemble at 2.40.

THE CONFERENCE MET AFTER LUNCH, DR. TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU PRESIDING

THE PRESIDENT:—Gentlemen, I feel that we have sufficiently discussed many of the items at great length this morning, and

I think it would be desirable now to consider in a much more practical manner the various items that have been placed before us. In the end it is proposed to lay before you two or three resolutions with a view to give effect to your discussion and decisions. As has been amply indicated this morning, I may say that it is intended to appoint a few Committees with a view to examine the general constitutional position and to discuss the question how far we can achieve what we want under the present Government of India Act, what will be the changes necessary and within what time we want these changes to be effected so that India may achieve full Dominion Status. That general question resolves itself into several questions which are indicated in the programme, and it would, I think, be too much to expect in one single day meeting to deal with every one of these questions. Therefore it is intended to appoint a few Committees which will consider these various questions in all possible aspects, and from all possible points of view, and these Committees will submit their report to the Executive of this Conference, which report will be circulated among members of this Conference, and, if necessary, we will call another meeting of this Conference—that will depend entirely on your wishes in this matter, so that you may consider at length these reports of the Committees; the reports will not be binding on this Conference; they will not be binding upon any individual; they will only collect together certain materials and certain data upon which you could then form your own independent conclusions. So far as I am concerned, I do not propose to exclude any single point of view which has been put before this Conference to-day, for the very obvious reason, that we want light to come from every possible direction, and every possible point of view to be examined. We are not arriving at any definite conclusions beyond the fact that we express our general agreement with certain basic principles on which we want to proceed, which will be embodied in the

resolutions. It is for that reason that without discussing the question further, I will now mention to you these various subjects and the names of the various gentlemen who will be on those Committees. Please do not understand from what I shall say that those names have been selected by us finally, and that we are not going to add any other names; it is open to any member of this Conference to suggest any other name either in addition to, or in substitution of, any individual member.

I shall take up first of all the question of the Committee which was mentioned this morning, the object of which will be to investigate the constitutional position. It will be a Committee for investigation into the working of the first reforms in the Central and Provincial Governments. The suggestion by Mr. Shahani was—I will read his own words—to add the words “time limits for further reforms in the Central Government, in Provincial Governments, and the management of the Army and Navy”. So far as I am concerned, I have not the slightest objection to having those words there; so that the work which this Committee will perform will be that it will report after examining the working of the Reforms in the Provinces, in accordance with such information as may be available to it from official records or otherwise, and also in the Central Government, and then it will also indicate a time limit within which you think a further constitutional development should take place, both in the Central and Provincial Governments, and also what is to be done as regards the Army and Navy. I take it further that no Committee which will consider these subjects will discharge its functions properly unless it refers to the existing Government of India Acts, and an examination of the various provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919, to show in what manner it is suited to satisfy your aspirations, and whether it falls short of your expectations. Suppose you come to the conclusion that there are certain provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919, which require

a slight modification or amendment so as to give effect to your wishes in the matter, you will report accordingly. Suppose you come to the conclusion, on the other hand, that with a view to give effect to certain parts of your resolution here a material modification of the Government of India Act may be necessary, the Committee will report accordingly. We do not wish to fetter the discretion of the Committee either in the manner in which it will prepare its Report or in its recommendations. The question is a very serious one, and it will have to be examined from many points of view, and one will have to spend a good deal of time in examining the Government of India Act as it is. I am sure that this will meet the wishes of every one of you. Certainly it will meet the wishes of my friend, Mr. Shahani, because we accept his own words in framing the resolution. I shall now read out the names of each one of these Committees. I was going to suggest that instead of prolonging the discussion, it would probably be more desirable and more practical if these various Committees could meet to-morrow to do their preliminary work, and settle the details; it will be for them to appoint their own Secretary and fix their own dates, and to settle the details of their work; that will probably be a better use of their time.

Now, so far as this first Committee is concerned, the names that have been suggested are :

Mr. Seshagiri Aiyar, Mr. T. Rangachariar, Mr. Kamat, Mr. M. Ramachandra Rao (of Madras), Mr. Ginwala, Mr. Abdul Rahim, Bhai Man Singh and myself.

Here I may say one word of explanation. This morning we have had speeches, which I very much welcome, from representatives of minorities: that is one of the questions in which I feel personally very much interested; and I therefore considered it necessary that the representatives of the two important minorities who are represented here should be on this Committee, because it will be one of the functions of this

Committee to examine the position of the minorities and to make recommendations in regard to the protection and safeguarding of the interests of minorities, and their representation either in the popular assemblies or in the Public Services of the country, or any other recommendation that they may have to make. It would be absurd for any one to expect that on a big question like this we could across the table settle our differences. I do not think so; even if you were to settle anything, it will not be binding on the rest of the country, or even on the rest of the members of your own community. Therefore it is necessary that this Committee should meet and discuss among themselves in a friendly spirit what possibilities there are for providing the safeguards which each one of these minorities wants, and I hope the discussion will be carried on with absolute frankness and in a spirit of perfect friendliness. I do not think a question of this character could possibly be discussed in a big assembly; and it is for that reason that we have provided for the inclusion of two representatives of the minorities, viz., Bhai Man Singh and Khan Bahadur Abdur Rahim Khan. I have taken the consent of Mr. Abdur Rahim; he is agreeable to serving on this Committee. I have also taken the consent of Bhai Man Singh.

MR. JORDAN (*All-India Christian Association*):—Mr. President, Some of us were under the impression that some of these points would come up for discussion in detail; for example, the question of the minorities; most of you are aware of the stand that the Indian Christian community has taken in the matter of communal representation, and as the matter is to be discussed by a Committee, I would suggest that Mr. Rudra's name be added.

THE PRESIDENT:—With the greatest pleasure. I am very grateful for the suggestion. I will certainly add that name.

BABU BRAJA SUNDARA DAS (*M. L. A. Bengal*).—May I suggest one thing? As the question of minorities is to be considered,

I put before you the question of the Ooriya community, who should come under a separate Provincial Government.

THE PRESIDENT:—So far as that matter is concerned, it is not, technically speaking, a question of minorities; it is a question of territorial readjustment. But you can raise that question in the Committee.

MR. BRAJA SUNDARA DAS (*Bengal*):—But I want one representative of the Ooriyas on the Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like to serve? (Mr. B. S. Das nodded in the affirmative.) The names of the Committee will now include: Principal Rudra, Mr. B. S. Das in addition to the others.

DR. BESANT (N.H.R.L.):—I want another point to be referred to this Committee. I possess a vote now in Madras and also in the United Provinces. If there is a divided and not a general electorate where people of different races could vote, I shall be in this position that I cannot vote for an Anglo-Indian because I should not agree for him in the least, and I could not vote for an Indian because I am an Irish person and cannot vote for an Indian. I think you should make some arrangement which would allow people to vote without regard to color; otherwise I am disfranchised although I have the vote for the first time in my life.

THE PRESIDENT:—Certainly; any person would be entitled to bring the matter before the Committee.

DR. BESANT: Shall we say a Committee with power to co-opt?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly, yes.

BHAI MAN SINGH (M. L. A. *Panjab*):—Are we justified, Sir, in making any remarks about the items referred to these Committees? There is the question of the bi-cameral legislature, for example.

THE PRESIDENT:—I think those questions must really be discussed in Committee. This is only a tentative list of subjects to

be discussed. You are entitled to express your opinions just as strongly as you like in the Committee itself.

DR. BESANT:—It does affect one point as to whether the programme should include that or not; it would include that, if you are going to send out this programme or this first part of it.

THE PRESIDENT:—It will certainly be open to any individual member to say that he does not agree with any particular provision.

DR. BESANT:—We might possibly leave it to the Committee to say whether it should be bi-cameral or not.

BHAI MAN SINGH:—That would be better, because it would be more comprehensive.

THE PRESIDENT: We will come now to the next question, viz., Defence. For that we propose to appoint another Committee consisting of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer, Munshi Iswar Saran (who unfortunately is ill and cannot be present to-day), Sardar Gulab Singh, Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari.

KHAN BAHADUR MIR ASAD ALI KHAN (M. L. A. Madras):—May I suggest the name of Sarfaraz Hussain Khan?

THE PRESIDENT:—Certainly.

DR. GOUR (M. L. A. C. P.):—And Mir Asad Ali Khan.

BHAI MAN SINGH (M. L. A. Panjab):—I have to submit one point about this Defence Committee; by clause 4 we are practically prejudging the work of this Committee. We say that when India is a Dominion she will obtain automatically everything necessary for Dominion Status, as soon as she is ready to assume responsibility. I submit that this clause—"Under control of the Viceroy, but to be taken over by the Dominion as soon as the Government is ready to assume the responsibility"—is redundant at this stage. We are appointing a Committee to explore the field, how the management of the Army and Navy should be carried on, to what extent the burden of Defence should fall on us, how far we should have the control

of the Army and how far we should not have any control. But by putting in this special clause in this programme we are really putting difficulties in the way. One is that we are really admitting that we should in a way postpone taking over the Army for an indefinite period; the Army is the real strength of every Government. Moreover if we leave this clause as it stands, it would mean that we leave the control in the hands of the Viceroy. I do not know what the Defence Committee would in that case have to do. It is for the Defence Committee to decide whether there should be control by us or by the Viceroy; we have up till now found that the Army has remained under the Viceroy or the Government of India, uncontrolled by the Legislature. So far as our strength of Defence is concerned, we have suffered a lot. The Government has not at all tried to make us fit for self-defence. If we still leave that portfolio under the Viceroy directly, untrammelled by our control, we would still be incompetent as we have been up till now. The Viceroy may or may not take any steps to create a territorial force to give Indians training for their own defence. If the portfolio is under our control I think we could say 'to-morrow we shall have our territorial force. Panjab alone, I think, could supply you some lakhs of men at once, who would plough their fields in times of peace and who would be willing to take their military training for six months. We may thus be able to dispense with the larger portion of our Standing Army in due course. There is no reason in our pinning ourselves down at this stage to the fact that the Army and Navy should remain under the control of the Viceroy. We are prejudging the fact; we now admit our weakness that we are unfit to defend ourselves. This has been the position taken up by the Government of India very often, and I at least perfectly well remember that on many occasions the Government benches have told us: "Look here, India is not fit for its defence; therefore India has to submit to the control of the British Parliament to the extent that it has to."

MR. SHAHANI (M.L.A. *Bombay*) :—Are we prepared at once?

BHAI MAN SINGH :—I think we should not postpone it. We are not, I think, prepared to take charge of a good many other things. You may say that engineering and a good many other things are technical, if you say that the Army is technical.

MR. SHAHANI :—May I suggest that the work of these Committees should be co-ordinated.

BHAI MAN SINGH :—My definite suggestion is that we should take away this clause, and we should leave the point to be decided and reported on by the Defence Committee.

DR. BESANT :—It seems to me there is one difficulty in this matter; the question is sure to be raised outside; it is suggested here in a very mild form “to be taken over by the Dominion as soon as the Government is ready to assume the responsibility”. If you do not say as much as that about it, I am afraid that you will raise a large amount of very unfavorable opinion as to the knowledge of facts and practical nature of the suggestions we make, and I would put it rather this way. In all the other lines of National activity, you have men who are trained; when you speak of engineering, you do not say you will take over engineering when you have no engineers; nor do you say you will take over the medical Services having no doctors. Now, the Army is clearly a very markedly technical piece of work, specially in modern times, where with regard to the artillery and far-firing weapons you require a considerable knowledge of mathematics in order to shoot people three or four miles away—not a very desirable thing, I admit, but you have to deal with it. Then you have the Air Force, and that is becoming more and more important. If you say that, you leave out a thing which is vitally important; unless you put it there, so that you can take it as soon as you are ready, it implies that you are already training along military lines. I have a great complaint against the English Government, and it is that it has deprived this Nation of the use

of arms, and so rendered it impossible for them to train. You must have a little time for training. I hope that the University Corps will soon be able to supply officers for the territorial army, and so on, but even then it takes a few years. I do not see how you can propose to take over at once a technical service, in which India at present, unhappily, has had no training in the higher ranks at all. Your Army of course is perfectly good and thoroughly well trained, and you have a very large number of non-commissioned officers who might very well rise to commissioned rank; because, if you remember, there were occasions in the Great War when all the British officers were disabled or killed, and the non-commissioned officers took the lead and led their men to victory; so that you have there a certain body of men who are technically trained; but your difficulty would be that you have not got officers, commissioned officers, at present. It will take some years to make them; however short you may make the time, it will take some years. Hence I would submit, that if you propose to take over the Army without any preliminary training at all, people will say you are perfectly unpractical, and that you are leaving your country to the risk of probable invasions without any proper control to arrange your frontier defence. I cannot think that will be a wise thing to do. The wording of this was framed so as to make it possible for us to take over the responsibility as soon as possible, and to say enough to show that you have not left it out of consideration. Dominion Status gives you a right to control both the Army and Navy, and in Australia they had no Army at all when they took Dominion Status; that is a point to answer when people tell you that you cannot have Dominion Status without an army; it is not the case. Australia had none at all; it had hardly any till 1909, and its effective army really dates from the War; it was trained in the late War. It may possibly be for the Defence Committee to fix a date on which it was possible to do it; but to say that you are going to take it right over, without

judging accurately in what way the country has to be defended, will stand in the way of attaining what you desire. I have never hesitated to say that it is the default of the Government that it has never made any attempt to train the people; you may remember the saying of a famous Congressman, Raja Rampal Singh, that they have turned a fighting race into a flock of "quill-driving sheep," and that is really what has been done to some extent; but it can be quickly got over if you get a military training in your colleges. And if in your territorial armies you take in men who are professional men, you would be able perfectly well to get your officers quickly trained, in the course of a few years probably; but I would suggest that this should be left for the time as it is.

MR. B. N. MISRA (M.L.A. Bihar and Orissa):—With the greatest respect to what has fallen from Dr. Besant, I am sorry I have to differ. Dr. Besant tells us that we are not fit and that we cannot take charge of the military. She says we must have training, and unless we get more people trained we cannot take charge of the Army at once. As regards that, I may say that the Tatas started their iron works; they were not engineers, but still they employed trained men. If I start a hospital, it does not mean that I should be a doctor; I may employ a doctor. Similarly, if Indians take over charge of the Army, they can employ the very men who are working now; they will be in our pay; they will be controlled by us, that is the point. Now, we do not have any facility for training; the other day there was a resolution on the subject, and I said that we could train our men more quickly than if they were not under the control of the Viceroy or others. There is no doubt we have got fighting men in India; we have the Rajputs, Gurkhas Panjabis, Sikhs and Muhammadans and others; we have trained men; we want only officers. Under the present scheme, we do not get a chance to train enough officers; and if we take the Army under our control we can train our men

quickly, and in a shorter period of time than it is contemplated under the present scheme.

MR. SHAHANI:—I have listened carefully to what Mr. Misra has had to say on this point, and I must strongly enter my protest against the scheme that has been suggested by him. If we come to get Dominion Status even to-day, it will be one with one reservation that we shall have to make, namely, that we should like things to continue as they are, that we would like our army to be directed as it has been directed just now, only we should have our Military Colleges as early as possible, and that there should be a time limit within which we should find it easy to train our own men to take the place of those who are in command of our armies now. If we do anything else and try to secure results better than this, I am afraid we shall not command the sympathy of intelligent men.

MR. JOSHI (M.L.A. *Bombay*):—May I know exactly what the point is before the meeting?

THE PRESIDENT:—The question about the appointment of a Defence Committee. Bhai Man Singh has raised the question that we should not agree to this proposition, namely, that the Army shall be under the control of the Viceroy until it is taken over by the Dominion, as soon as the Government is ready to assume the responsibility.

BHAI MAN SINGH:—My definite proposal is that we should leave this point altogether for the Defence Committee to report and we should not prejudge the point.

KHAN BAHADUR ABDUR RAHIM KHAN (M. L. A. N.W.F.P.): I have much pleasure in supporting Mr. Shahani. I think we will be lacking in gratitude for our education by the British officers, because they have been playing the part of teachers towards us. They have been our masters, and as pupils it should be our duty to emulate their example. What my Hon. Friend, Mr. Misra, said was absolutely wrong, and I strongly protest against it.

KHAN BAHADUR SARFARAZ HUSSAIN KHAN (M. L. A. *Bihar and Orissa*):—I have also to oppose my friend, Mr. Misra. It must be seen that the Army is not like the other things. We know very little of the Army, and it will be very unwise and indiscreet on our part, if you say on behalf of the whole of India, that we are prepared to have the control of the Army at this time.

THE PRESIDENT:—I do not know whether it is necessary for me to put this formally to the vote of the Conference, because I find that so far as Bhai Man Singh's views and Mr. Misra's views are concerned they are not supported by the vast majority.

I pass on to the next question, and that is the Indianisation of the Services, item 6 (c) on the agenda. We propose to have the following gentlemen on this Committee :

Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C., Hon. Mr. G. S. Khaparde, Moulvi Abdul Kasem, Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru, Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer, Rao Bahadur C. S. Subrahmanyam, Sardar Bahadur Gajjan Singh, O. B. E.

The next question is of Finance and Taxation. The names that have been suggested to me are the following :

The Hon. Mr. Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Professor V. G. Kale, Mr. Jammadas Dwarkadas, Sir Dinshaw Petit, Bt. Mr. Venkatapatiraju, Mr. K. C. Neogy, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtolla.

The last Committee that has to be appointed is with regard to the Judiciary, clause 6 (f) instead of the Supreme Court, I should say Judiciary. Dr. Gour, who has made the subject peculiarly his own, has agreed to serve on this Committee, the other names being :

Pandit Gokarannath Misra, Mr. J. N. Mukherji and Mr. J. Chaudhuri.

Mr. H. Vishindas, C. I. E. and later Dr. Annie Besant were added to the Committee on Constitutional Reforms.

Mr. S. C. Shahani was added to the Defence Committee.

The Conference then proceeded to pass resolutions embodying the results of the discussion.

Mr. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS (M. L. A. *Bombay*):—With your permission I now wish to move the following resolution :

RESOLUTION I

That this Conference is of opinion that with a view to enable India to attain Dominion status : first, the control of the the Secretary of State over the Governor-General-in-Council should be removed ; second, Responsibility in the Central Government should be established at an early date in regard to the Civil departments ; the control of the Army and Navy and Foreign Policy being retained in the hands of the Governor-General, until India is able to take control of the Army and Political affairs ; and third, full Autonomy should be carried out in the Provinces.

Mr. JAMNADAS DWARKADAS (M.L.A. *Bombay*):—I second it. The Resolution was carried, *nem con.*

DR. BESANT:—Mr. President, I have drafted the following resolution, modifying it in the light of the discussion of this morning from the text on the agenda, so to as include the original Nos. 1 and 2, that we may pass it formally :

RESOLUTION II

This Conference is of opinion that the following plan of reforms be placed before the electorates as a programme, and that it be also referred to the Committees to be appointed by the following resolution, for the examination of questions of detail and of methods for carrying out the programme :

1. That the Government of the Commonwealth of India, in the exercise of its Executive, Legislative and Judicial functions, shall comprise :

THE EXECUTIVE

- | | |
|---|---|
| { | (a) The King |
| | (b) The Viceroy and Governor-General with his Cabinet |
| | (c) The Governors with their Cabinets |

THE LEGISLATIVE The Federal and Provincial Legis-
latures

THE JUDICIAL The Judiciary

2. That the Federal Government shall comprise :

- (a) The Viceroy and Governor-General
- (b) The Viceroy's Cabinet, responsible to the Legis-
lature
- (c) An elected Legislature
- (d) A Supreme Court

3. That the Provincial Government shall comprise :

- (a) The Governor
- (b) The Governor's Cabinet, responsible to the Legis-
lature
- (c) An elected Legislature
- (d) A High Court

(DR. GOUR (M. L. A. C. P.)) :—I second the Resolution.

MR. JOSHI (M.L.A. *Bombay*) :—I want to ask for some information; we were given to understand that most of these points were only points for discussion, but we are now finding that there are resolutions after resolutions before us, without our having seen them at all. Do you ask us to vote on resolutions which we have not considered? I have not seen any resolution since I came here. I think it is rather unfair.

THE PRESIDENT :—I should have thought that the whole trend of the discussion should preclude an observation of that character from Mr. Joshi. What we have done in these resolutions is not anything new; we have been discussing the appointment of certain Committees, and we are only adopting these resolutions formally to appoint these Committees just to give them an idea.

MR. JOSHI :—I am not against the appointment of Committees at all. It is the resolutions I was talking about.

THE PRESIDENT :—So far as Dr. Besant's resolution is concerned, we have been discussing it all this morning; we are

not doing anything new. It is only a question of drafting ; we are putting the results of the discussion in the form of resolutions. So far as the question of the basic principle is concerned, I do not think that was a matter for discussion by the Committees.

MR. JAMNADAS DWARKADAS:—In supporting this resolution of Dr. Besant I wish only to say this, that the resolution only focusses the salient points brought out in the discussion this morning on the programme as it was outlined on the agenda paper. I take it that those of us that were present at this morning's discussion will have no doubt in our minds as to the fact that the resolution does bring out all the points that were brought into prominence this morning, and I hope, therefore, that the Conference will carry it.

MR. GHARPUREY:¹—If that is so, why appoint Committees ? The impression was that these Committees have to consider all these points as they are detailed here and then submit a detailed report, which report will come before the Conference, and the Conference would then go into the whole matter and then finally decide what kind of resolution will be passed. Now the Conference is in a state of passing resolutions. I think that was not what was intended in the morning, and I join with Mr. Joshi in protesting against the passing of such a resolution.

MR. CHAUDHURI (M. L. A. Bengal): I venture to submit that these are only the terms of reference to the Committees ; the Committees cannot work unless we give them some terms of reference. They may accept them or they may reject them, when they consider their report.

MR. GHARPUREY :—We are arriving at a definite stage which amounts to binding this Conference, if there is any meaning in

¹ I have not succeeded in finding this name in the Convening Committee, but do not like to omit his objections as given by the Reporters. He may have joined at the last moment. Gen. Sec.

passing this resolution it is this, that we accept the resolution and the Committees should go further and examine it; I do not think that was the intention.

DR. BESANT :—I thought we had thoroughly discussed this matter this morning, and the controversial points that were raised have been dropped out—for instance, the word “bi-cameral,” but we cannot separate without having an outline of a programme which we can put before the electorates. If we do nothing from now till June, we shall not have very much time for the education of the electorates; this subject in the programme was before the Conference this morning and no objection was raised then, except to the points which have been dropped out, owing to objections. I have thrown it into the form of a resolution and any one is of course at liberty to move any amendment he thinks necessary.

THE PRESIDENT :—As the resolution is in your hands, will you then move an amendment?

MR. JOSHI :—Yes.

MR. GHARPUREY :—There are many points on which it is possible to submit our opinions to the meeting in June; I understood from what you said that we have discussed points in general, and which points will be perfectly open. For example, the composition of the Federal Government. You only say “The King”; I should have suggested the King-Emperor—I mean these are minor points, but they ought to be expressed and considered. We have said that in the whole of India we ought to have autonomy. As regards internal affairs we have not taken any notice of Indian States. If we decide to take notice of these States, then we have to consider whether all the component parts have been properly mentioned. This is only one instance of the imperfect understanding of the proposition that has been moved.

MR. JOSHI :—If it is the intention of the Conference that

only these points should be placed before the Committees, we may say that this Conference is of opinion that among others these points should be considered and reported on by the Committees.

DR. BESANT :—Would you prefer the following wording : “This Conference is of opinion that Committees be appointed to consider and report on the following programme”? It is the same proposal, only put in more technical language, which was circulated in the very first statement regarding the Conference, that we wanted full Provincial Autonomy and Self-Government, and so on. It is only on these propositions that the Conference was called, which come in here in a slightly more technical form and there is nothing added. Owing to the objection which has been raised to the word “bi-cameral” that word has been taken out. You want something as a result of your Conference on which you will go to the constituencies. This is only an outline of the terms of reference to the Committees on the subjects noted, which does not commit you to any of the Reports of the Committees, but deals only with things on which they are going to report, in order that the Convention may have full information before them. We are not making a Constitution, or making anything else but a programme for the Committees, and later, if approved, for the electorate.

MR. JOSHI :—We have not given sufficient detailed consideration to these points. We have had only a general discussion, and beyond that we have done nothing. I do not think it is right to commit anybody here to such a resolution. I am only willing to vote for the resolution that the Committee should consider and report on these amongst other points.

DR. BESANT :—It was stated in the original letters that went out on this matter that we wanted to give a programme on which we could educate the electorate. All members had that originally. If we separate without doing anything at all—that

is practically what it would come to, because the work of the Committees will not be out before May, we should not have done that for which the Conference was publicly called—to give a programme on which the electorates could be educated; and the object of the Conference would be lost, as far as the public is concerned.

MR. JORDAN (All-Indian Christian Association):—May I suggest that the names of these two gentlemen should be added to the Committee?

MR. N. M. JOSHI:—I protest against this sort of thing.

MR. JORDAN:—What I mean is that all the points that they have in their minds may be brought out in the Committees.

SHETH MAVJI GOVINDJI (1921 Club, *Bombay*):—We have come here from long distances not for the sake of the appointment of a few Committees. The Committees could have been appointed by a circular. During all these six months we have been told that this Conference was going to be held in Delhi, with a view to claim Dominion Status and appoint Committees. I am one of the office bearers of the 1921 Club, Political Section, in Bombay, and the letter inviting participation definitely said that we were invited for the purpose of laying the foundation stone for Self Government and giving a lead to the electorate. It is clearly and unmistakably stated:

The object of the Conference is to outline a programme for submission to the electorates and to provide an elastic machinery for the co-ordination of the efforts of its members and of organisations, to call a National Convention after the approaching elections, in order to obtain for the Commonwealth of India Dominion Status in her external relations and Swaraj in her internal affairs.

I beg to submit that is the outline of programme for submission to the electorate, and Dr. Besant seeks to approve it in a resolution, and nothing more. With what face shall we go back to our constituencies and tell them, if we separate without passing any such resolution, that we have come back having appointed Committees and left everything to the Committees, and that until the Committees report we should

go to sleep? With what face shall we go back to our constituencies? This has not been sprung upon us now. This has been before us for the last six months. We thought that there was no difference of opinion on these points. The difference of opinion was with regard to details, and therefore I cannot understand Mr. Joshi's and Mr. Gharpurey's objection at this stage, when a practical shape is being given to our object. We claim Dominion Status, and this resolution only gives an indication how to give effect to our wishes in the matter. These wishes have been before us all along.

MR. A. RANGASWAMY AIYAR (VICE-PRESIDENT, N. H. R. L.):—I am at a loss to know as to what changes my friends want to introduce in the resolution. We have got Committees to appoint for specific purposes under paragraph 6. Then there is a specific resolution brought here. Now, if we know what objections our friends there have got, then we may know how to vote on this resolution. But if they say that this resolution was sprung on us, I cannot understand it. This morning's discussion was a general discussion to bring out the different points. Then we came to the resolution stage, and the President said that after lunch the resolutions would come on. The resolutions could not be circulated before the ground was cleared, and the draft resolutions are now coming before us, and if there be any changes or modifications, then we can understand what changes should be introduced. We have not come here long distances for the purpose of separating after appointing some Committees with the prospect of seeing their reports after 6 or 7 months. Therefore we want some tangible proposal made here as the outcome of this Conference.

MR. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS (M. L. A. *Bombay*):—I would suggest to the President to ask Mr. Joshi whether he has any amendment to propose to the resolution?

MR. A. RANGASWAMI AIYAR:—There is the King, there is the Viceroy, there is the Legislature. They are all general

propositions to which I want to know what objections they have got.

MR. GOKARANNATH MISRA (M.L.C. U.P.) :—I suppose we have been working under some misapprehension. Early in the debate which was held this morning, I pointed out to this Conference that we wanted the proceedings of this Conference to be embodied in certain resolutions, which resolutions should be placed before the country. Now, that difficulty of mine has been solved in two ways. One is, Sir, that you have just now asked Mr. Vishindas to place a resolution before us in which it has definitely been said that these are the lines on which Self-Government is to be demanded. Then the rough lines on which the Committee will proceed to consider the question are embodied in this resolution which has just now been proposed. I would have agreed with Mr. Joshi that we should not commit ourselves to this resolution had I known that this was the only line on which we were asked to commit ourselves, but these are only rough lines on which we are asked to consider and report; and if we do not pass this resolution, then it will be impossible for us to go before the electorate till the month of June, and tell them: "These are the rough lines on which we are being asked to report." We can safely, if we pass this resolution, go before the electorate and say: "This is the first resolution which was passed demanding Self-Government at an early date for the entire country, and this is the way in which the details of that Self-Government will be considered, with regard to which Committees that have been appointed will now report." I think Mr. Joshi's objection will now be met if the resolution says that the Committees are asked to report on these lines. If these lines are not indicated the position will still be vague and obscure and we will not know where we really stand. If I had found that we were being committed to anything which was really not considered, or which we were not going to

consider, I most certainly would have supported Mr. Joshi, but I think the lines have been indicated, and it is also proposed that the Committee should consider these points, and I think there is no object in opposing this resolution. I do not think there is any difficulty in passing this resolution.

M. T. V. SESHAGIRI AYYAR (M. L. A., Madras):—Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry I was not here when the discussion was going on, but it seems to me that we are making some mistake, if we think that we must simply appoint Committees and do nothing else at this Conference. I take it the object of calling this Conference is to find out in what matters we agree, so that we may be in a position to know on what major matters we should concentrate our attention, in order that we may go to the electorate with a particular programme. I believe this discussion would have shown to the members who have come here upon what major matters we are all agreed, and after that indication, if it is desirable, Committees should be appointed to send in a Report. That Report will be the programme upon which we will go to the country. Therefore, I think that the idea of having Committees with a *carte blanche* without telling them upon what matters they are to report would be a mistake. You must give some indications, and ask them to report on the basis of the discussion which has been elicited in the course of this day's meeting, and I do not see how Mr. Joshi could have any objection to that course. I am rather under a great difficulty by not knowing what preceded this discussion. It seems to me that we are all agreed upon the main points, and that a certain indication should be given as to the subjects which should appear in that Report. I do not think there could be any objection at all to having Committees appointed.

THE HON. MR. V. G. KALE (Bombay):—It appears to me that Mr. Joshi has been misunderstood, and we are using a hammer to kill a fly. We are not opposed to the appointment of Com-

mittees; he is not opposed to making a reference to the Committees. He wishes to know exactly what the resolution is, and he wishes to include in that resolution the points which have already been indicated, and he wants to put in "amongst other things," because there may be points which have not been discussed here.

Mr. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS :—The scope of the Committee is defined. How can you say "amongst other things"?

THE HON. MR. KALE :—You cannot exhaust all points here.

MR. DRAVID (M.L.C. C. P.) :—I did not take part in the discussion because I thought the whole matter was going to be referred to a Committee, and if I had any suggestions to make I might make it there. That is why I did not take part in the previous part of the discussion. I will mention now only one or two points where we are likely to encounter very many difficulties. We are talking of Provincial Autonomy. What shall be our attitude towards the question of territorial re-adjustment, which is a very live issue in many of the Provinces, some parts wanting to go to other Provinces—Orissa wanting to separate itself and Berar also wanting to do the same thing. All these questions will have to be considered, and we have made no allowance here for territorial re-adjustments. Under the present circumstances, you should not be surprised if there are tracts of the country which will refuse to have Provincial Autonomy on the present basis of territorial administration. These are matters for a Committee to consider, and not for the general Conference. Unless that question is solved, you may have to encounter very great opposition.

DR. BESANT :—May I point out that this is only a resolution giving an outline of the Government of India generally? The greater part of it is simply a statement of fact, that it consists of the King, the Viceroy and the Governor-General with his Cabinet, the Governors with their Cabinets, the Legislatures and the

Judiciary. That is merely a statement of fact, which no one can challenge. Then when we come to the details of Government, we say the Viceroy and Governor-General, Viceroy's Cabinet responsible to the Legislature—that is one point on which discussion might arise. If you want to keep autocracy, then you leave out the words "responsible to the Legislature". If you do not want to keep autocracy, but want responsible Government, then you must put in the words "Viceroy's Cabinet responsible to the Legislature". That is the first thing. Then we come to the Legislature, which is clearly a necessary part of the Government of the country, and because it is a doubtful point whether we should have a bi-cameral Legislature or a uni-cameral Legislature, I have struck out the word "bi-cameral" because some people objected to a bi-cameral Legislature, and we do not now discuss any of the details. Put in any case you must have a Legislature, and if you want Self-Government, you must have a Cabinet which is responsible to the Legislature. The same is the case with regard to the Provincial Governments. (Mr. B. N. Misra: "There lies the difficulty.") The Provincial Governments shall comprise a Governor, and a Governor's Cabinet, that is, not diarchy, responsible to the Provincial Legislature. Everything that is done in the Provinces will be done by a single Cabinet, and not by a diarchy, as it is now, on which I think we are all of us agreed. That is the only point on which an amendment may be moved, but it is a question whether you should have autocracy or diarchy, instead of responsibility. Then you have an elected Legislature and the High Court. There is here really nothing except the question of responsibility that can be challenged. Therefore the resolution is simply reciting what is already there.

MR. B. N. MISRA :—There was some indication that a clause should be added saying that the Committees should consider and report on these points?

DR. BESANT:—That is in the preamble I have already put and read, but I said “that it be referred to the Committees to be appointed by the next resolution”.

MR. N. M. JOSHI:—I do not want to obstruct the work of this Conference at all. (Cries of “No, no.”) At least some members here tried to make out that I wanted to obstruct the work of the Conference—an indirect suggestion that I was obstructing the Conference because I was not put on the Committee. My desire is this: that you should give us a chance of seeing what the resolution is. Once I was told that it was only a resolution giving a mandate to the Committee to consider certain questions. Again I was told that the main resolution was that we should go to the electorate on a particular programme. It will be better if you adjourn for half an hour and give us a chance of seeing what the resolution is. I have not the slightest desire to obstruct the work of the Conference. I have never done that in my life, and will never do it. You are asking us to pass a resolution when you do not show us what the exact terms of the resolution are. In a matter like this, when people have come from different provinces after spending money, it is not too much if they expect to see the resolution beforehand on a piece of paper. I am quite sure nobody will consider that to be too much to expect.

DR. BESANT:—I think I need not say that if Mr. Joshi wishes to move an amendment I will accept it, if I can, and refuse it, if I must. I shall only say that the resolution is in favour of complete Provincial Autonomy and for the non-introduction of diarchy in the Central Government, taking the Civil Government, and it is the same as that passed in this country not only in the last but one Liberal Federation, but also in the last Liberal Federation, by the different National Home Rule League branches, and by the Central Council of the National Home Rule League, and it is, I think, generally the opinion of progressive Indians everywhere in India. It is

nothing more than that, but it is only put in a more technical language, reciting the elements of Government, as it is in this programme, which was distributed yesterday and has been in the hands of members ever since. I am perfectly willing to accept any amendment that does not touch the essence of it.

MR. N. M. JOSHI:—I accept this resolution.

DR. BESANT:—Would you prefer this, at the beginning, slightly modified from what I read?

“This Conference is of opinion that the following programme be placed before the electorate and that it be also referred to the Committees to be appointed for examination of questions of detail connected therewith and report to the Executive Committee,” and then it runs on with the programme as we have it here.

DR. GOUR:—I understood Mr. Joshi really to object to the opening portion of the resolution as it was read out, and with a view to meet his objection and to remove all possible doubt from his mind as to whether this is a departure from what was said in the morning, the opening portion of that resolution stands re-drafted as follows, so that it will appear to him that this Conference is not adopting a Constitution which may not be acceptable to him, nor is it imposing any restraint on him which he is not prepared to accept. All that this Conference is seeking is to stick to the general idea which, I think, is shared by every member of this Conference, the idea of responsibility in the Central Government and Provincial Autonomy. If you examine the details of the resolution as read out by Dr. Besant you will find that it practically reiterates the present constitutional position and asks for responsibility in the Central Government and responsibility in the Provinces. There is the King, there is the Viceroy, there are the Governors, there is the Viceroy's Cabinet. That Cabinet happens to be an irresponsible Cabinet and we want to convert it into a responsible Cabinet. There are the Governors' Cabinets, partly consisting

of Ministers and partly of Members of Executive Councils, and we want it to be uniformly responsible. That is all the programme. But it may be with a view to achieve all those things which we have not yet got, the Committees may make certain definite recommendations. Those recommendations may relate either to questions of detail, or to the machinery which we may have to employ for achieving those ends in view. That was all I understood Dr. Besant to say from the beginning. But I quite realise that the opening portion of it may legitimately give rise to a suspicion in the minds of Mr. Joshi, and for that reason the preamble of that resolution has been re-drafted as follows and I think it completely brings out the points which Mr. Joshi has in view. It is:

“That this Conference is of opinion that the following programme be placed before the electorate and that it be also referred to the Committees to be appointed for the examination of questions of detail connected therewith and report to the Executive Committee and this Conference.....then the rest which was read out by Dr. Besant.

THE HON. MR. V. G. KALE:—I should like to know whether you make reference in this resolution to a programme of some action that is going to be taken. What you are laying down here is a kind of Constitution which you are placing before the country for approval. I think the wording is rather unhappy. This is not a programme that you are placing before the country. What you are placing before the country is a kind of Constitution, that which you would like the country to adopt, a skeleton Constitution, the outlines of it. It is not a programme of action.

DR. GOPE (M.L.A. C. P.):—The preamble to the resolution is this:

This Conference is of opinion that the following plan of reforms be placed before the electorates as a programme and that it be also referred to the Committees appointed by the

following resolution : (Then will follow the programme that has been already read out.) I think that obviates all objections. I see Mr. Kale does not object to it.

THE PRESIDENT :—I put this resolution now before the Conference, with the preamble as read again by Dr. Gour.

The resolution was carried *nem con.*

DR. GOUR :—Ladies and gentlemen, this is another resolution submitted to you for your acceptance.

RESOLUTION III

That this Conference appoints the following Committees with power to co-opt three members on each Committee, that the Committees so appointed shall submit their reports to the Executive of the Conference, and the latter shall then circulate them amongst the members of the Conference, and take steps, if necessary, to call a special meeting of this Conference at a convenient centre, not later than the end of May.

1. Committee to investigate the working of the Reform Act, to explore its further possibilities and suggest desirable amendments ; to collect information on Dominion Constitutions and date bearing thereon, on the extension or restriction of communal representation, and generally to collect facts and suggest methods for gaining Dominion Status : Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K. C. S. I., LL. D. (Convener), Rai Bahadur T. Rangachariar, Dewan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao, Principal S. K. Rudra, Moulvi Abdul Rahim, Bhai Man Singh, Messrs. T. V. Seshagiri Iyer, B. S. Kamat, P. P. Ginwala, Harchandrai Vishandas, Braja Sundara Das.

2. Committee on Defence : Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer (Convener), Munshi Iswar Saran, Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari, Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hussain Khan, Sardar Gulab Singh, Khan Bahadur Mir Asad Ali Khan, Mr. S. C. Shahani.

3. Indianisation of Services: Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C. (Convener), Hon. G. S. Khaparde, Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghavaier, Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru, Moulvi Abul

Kasim, Rao Bahadur C. S. Subramaniam, Sardar Gajjan Singh.

4. Finance and Taxation : Hon. Purshottamdas Thakurdas (Convener), Hon. Mr V.G. Kale, Sir Dinshaw Petit, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtolla, Messrs. Jamnadas Dwarkadas, B. Venkatapatiraju, K. C. Neogy.

5. Supreme Court. Dr. H. S. Gour (Convener), Pandit Gokarannath Misra, Messrs. J. N. Mukerji, J. Choudhuri.

The resolution was carried *nem con*.

DR. BRSANI :—Gentlemen, the last resolution which has been placed in my hands deals with the organisation representing the Conference. If you agree with the general idea, then I would ask you to allow the absolute resolution to be drawn up this evening, and submitted to you to-morrow—I mean the drafting of the resolution, because we have several people like Pandit Gokarannath Misra and Pandit Kunzru who have a great deal of experience in the absolute detail, and if you agree with the general plan which is proposed here, you may just meet in the evening after this draft resolution, containing the things which are proposed in this resolution, is drafted. The question which this resolution is intended to decide is whether there should be a continuing body representing the Conference, so that it may be able to take up any questions of detail and deal with them, without summoning the whole Conference again to meet on subsidiary points. It is suggested that the Central Council representing the Conference shall consist of the Convening Committee, with power to co-opt. That is, that all those who agreed to come to this Conference shall form a Central, or General, Council ; then an Executive Committee should be elected by this Council to carry on the work, and that Committee should be chosen by this Conference acting after its election as Council. It would be desirable that all of you should consider whom you would like to have on that Executive Committee, remembering that every Province ought to be represented upon it. The

Executive Committee will require to have a Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer ; that also you might consider. I suggest that we might have as Chairman, the Hon. Mr. V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, P.C., who will be staying in the country, and that we have as President of the Central Council our present President (hear, hear). Then as we have to deal with the Provinces, which consist sometimes of forty millions of people and so on, we suggest that there should be Provincial Councils, consisting of the members of the General Council belonging to each Province; with power to co-opt ; that is, that we have the Central Council, which is equivalent to the Convening Committee, which now has lost its functions, and then, from every Province without exception, including of course Burma—we have two members from Burma—those members in every Province shall form the Provincial Council ; that will be the place where all the work will have really to be done, and it will take as part of those Councils members who represent here the Conference as a whole. They will be the nucleus of each Provincial Council, and they will have power to co-opt. Then there shall be district, taluk (or sub-district) and village Boards under control of the Provincial Councils. It will be entirely for the Provincial Councils to decide whether they will create such bodies, whether they think they are necessary, and if they do, whether they should be under their general control, that is, that they shall not go outside the programme which is to be submitted to the electorate in their work as members of this Conference. It is also suggested, as part of this body, that any political organisation in favour of Parliamentary Action—that is the only limitation—that any political organisation desiring to work in accord with the Conference, which adopts the Conference plan of reforms, can affiliate through or by the Executive Committee, without in any way losing its independence and its right of action. It is not desirable where there are many organisations, that they should merge into each other, because each organisation has ways of its own, adapted to the work it

does; and while it may be useful to co-ordinate these, so that no strength may be wasted by overlapping, it is not desirable to ask any one of them to merge in some other. Some may go a little further than others; some might not go so far, and there is no reason why political bodies doing good work in the country and generally agreeing with and accepting our plan of reforms, should not all work together so that when the elections come they shall not clash; practically, it would come to this, that they would have lists of voters which they would get from their village, taluk and district Committees, and keep them in the office of the Provincial Council, and they would have lists of candidates who were willing to stand at the elections; and if in any case a fit candidate was not found by the affiliated body, they could apply to the Provincial Council, and say: "Have you any one who will be a good man for us to put up?" No candidates would be run against each other, who agree with the programme. A separate organisation would not run a candidate in opposition; it may run him in addition, but not in opposition to one who accepted the general plan of reforms of this Conference; and in this way we should have our united strength to press the plan suggested and various organisations could agree among each other in the Provincial Council.

That, roughly, is the plan of organisation that has been suggested and that has been discussed in various places; in case there should be any difference of opinion on this with regard to the form of the resolution to be passed, it was suggested, and I think wisely, that a few members, perhaps those who specially represent different organisations might meet together when the Conference rises; and draft the resolutions forming this organisation representing the Conference. It is a question whether you would have it a continuing organisation, or whether you would simply go away from here, as having done the greater part of your work, and not co-operate any further. I need not say that personally

I am very strongly in favor of such a permanent body. I think in some Provinces we may be weak; they ought to be helped by the stronger ones; it may be desirable to have a Central Fund, or Provincial Fund, or both. That will have to be administered, and under these considerations it seems well to have the whole of you as forming a Central Council; each group of you in your respective Provinces, as forming Provincial Councils, the Executive elected by you as your Executive Committee, and the officers and members of that Executive Committee and the Council as a whole, forming the Central Council. Those are really the points we are concerned with, and if you think it desirable to leave this open till to-morrow morning, and then meet with a resolution drafted by those whom you appoint, we shall probably get through the business rather more rapidly than otherwise. Then the Executive Committee could meet here to-morrow and make a plan of work. I presume that the members of the Provincial Councils will afterwards meet in their own Provinces, but any general work which we want to consider might be considered to-morrow by the Executive Committee that you will elect after the resolution is passed, creating the General Council if you accept that resolution. I do not know if there is any point that is not clear, or that you would like to propose for the consideration of this informal Committee that I now suggest should meet in order to draft the resolution which will be placed before you.

The Conference then adjourned for half an hour, as it was decided that the meeting should continue the same evening.

On the Conference reassembling, DR. BESANT SAID: I have talked over with one or two members of the Conference the question as to the organisation representing the Conference. We are all agreed on (a) and (b). There is difference of opinion on (c) and (d). I propose to drop them, and to leave it to the Provinces to arrange their own local affairs in their own way,

in fact to give them Provincial Autonomy. So I withdraw (c) and (d), and move :

“(a) That there shall be a Central Council, consisting of the Convening Committee with power to co-opt, and with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru as President ; (See Appendix I)

and (b) an Executive Committee to be elected by the Conference with the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri as Chairman of the Council; (name to be filled up) as Treasurer, and (name to be filled up) as General Secretary. (See Appendix II)

THE PRESIDENT :—Gentlemen, as the names have got to be filled up by you, I am sure I represent your wishes in the matter if I suggest Dr. Besant as the General Secretary. (Cries of hear, hear.)

Dr. Besant was appointed General Secretary, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Chairman, and Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas was appointed Treasurer by acclamation.

MR. T. V. SESHAGIRI AYYAR (M.L.A. Madras) :—I propose that members of the old Executive Committee be allowed to constitute the members of the new Executive Committee. (agreed.)

MR. JAMNADAS DWARKADAS :—I have only one amendment to make to this. In the old Committee we had certain names omitted which we may also add to this Executive Committee. For instance, I should like to add the name of my friend Mr. Seshagiri Aiyar. Then I would like to add the name of Sir Sivaswami Iyer. I may also be permitted to assure Mr. Ginwala that the omission of his name was an oversight and therefore I would add his name. (“agreed.”)

The names of other gentlemen also were added to the Committee in addition to the above. (See Appendix II)

THE PRESIDENT : There is only one other matter which I should like to mention to the Conference and that is this. Among the members of the first Committee that we appointed this morning, the Committee to investigate the constitutional

aspect of the whole matter, we omitted the name of Dr. Besant or rather it was suggested, and she refused it. I have been speaking to her and I think that Mr. Shahani suggested her name, and if you will approve of that, I will include her name. (Voices :—" Certainly.")

The Chairman then announced that the Committee to consider the constitutional matters should meet at Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas's House after the Garden Party on the 14th instant.

Mr. Gokarannath Misra suggested that it would facilitate business if a Convener could be appointed for each Committee, and the first name on each Committee was made that of the Convener.

Mr. T. V. SESHAGIRI AYYAR, in proposing a vote of thanks to the President, spoke as follows :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :

I have been commissioned to perform a very pleasant task, and that is to propose a hearty vote of thanks to our revered President, for the exceedingly able way in which he has conducted the proceedings of the Conference. Ladies and Gentlemen, I began my life in the Legislative Assembly with a prejudice against Dr. Sapru. At one time, I think when he was in office, I have called him a black bureaucrat ; I thought he was really that. But when I continued for some time in the Assembly, and found him doing his work in the way in which he had been doing, I changed my view, and began to think that the greatest loss that the country could sustain at this moment was his disappearance as Law Member from the Government of India. (Hear, hear.) As was said the other day, that loss has been the gain to the public life of this country, and his presiding over our deliberations has shown how sadly we have been missing him, during the time that he was serving the Government of India. His high character and sweet temper would ensure success in any undertaking. (Hear, hear.) In an undertaking like this, where he

has to control and guide a large number of people, those qualifications are absolutely essential, and the singular success which has attended this day's proceedings is solely due to him and we must therefore pass a hearty vote of thanks to him. (Loud applause.)

MR. HARCHANDRAI VISHINDAS: I have great pleasure in seconding this motion. After the speeches that you have heard yesterday in praise of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, to every word of which I subscribe, and the words of praise that Mr. Seshagiri Aiyar has just now uttered, it is hardly necessary for me to add anything. But still I have one remark to make, which I think will at once appeal to you, with regard to Dr. Sapru. Really speaking, when Dr. Sapru's retirement was announced, I personally can tell you that I went into mourning, because I thought that that was a great loss. He was a very genial friend and companion, always ready to help and advise—whenever asked his advice, he was always ready with his very sound advice. Another thing that I want to bring to your notice is this. In him you find one particular characteristic which is, in these days, a very rare thing. He is popular with everybody. When we have got so many splits, when we have got so many schisms, Co-Operation and Non-Co-Operation, there is not a single soul from whom I have heard anything but praise of Dr. Sapru. That is one particular characteristic which I want to bring to your notice. Therefore, Ladies and Gentlemen, you will join in this motion for a hearty vote of thanks to our President. (Cheers.)

DR. H. S. GOUR rose and said: Ladies and Gentlemen, I think it would be a gross dereliction of duty on my part and yours, if we allowed this occasion to lapse without a most cordial vote of thanks to that venerable lady, without whose untiring energy and steady and strenuous work this Conference would never have met. (Hear, hear.) Though she is not the presiding genius of this Con-

ference, she is heart and soul of the Conference and every part of it, and has infused into this Conference that energy of hers for which this Conference is itself the best witness. It is on account of her efforts throughout the country that this Conference has been popularised, and now that we have entered upon a stage of practical plans which are to be drafted and presented, it is entirely due to her great ability and incessant efforts. (Hear, hear.) I think it is only up to us that before we disperse, we should accord to Dr. Besant our most cordial and respectful thanks. (Hear, Hear and loud applause.)

KHAN BAHADUR SARFARAZ HUSSAIN KHAN: I rise in my place to give my whole-hearted support to the motion that has been made. She it was, that lady, who inaugurated the Home Rule League. Then after some time when the country has been divided by this Non-Co-Operation movement, it is she who has brought about this Conference. Therefore it is meet and proper that we all of us should whole-heartedly thank her for what she has done. (Loud cheers.)

SIR TER BAHADUR SAPRU: Ladies and Gentlemen, I cannot tell you how very deeply grateful I feel to you for the very extreme kindness which you have shown me during the last two days. It would be absurd for me to say that we have achieved miracles. This Conference was not intended to achieve miracles. We recognise that we are making a small beginning, but all the same I hope every one will agree with me here that it is a very genuine and a very earnest beginning. (Hear, hear.) If our proceedings have been carried on with sobriety, and with that care which the nature of the subjects before us demanded from us, I think it has been due not in the slightest degree to any part which I have played, but to the uniformly good temper which has been shown by every member of this Conference. I therefore feel that thanks are due to you and not to me.

Ladies and Gentlemen, before I proceed further, I will in your name and on your behalf convey our sincere thanks to

those gentlemen who have spared no pains for the comfort of the various people who have arrived from the different parts of the country, and for the arrangements which they have so zealously carried out. (Cheers.) I am afraid Dr. Gour has again stolen a march on me. I had thought that I would be able to refer for the first time this afternoon to the part which Dr. Besant has played in bringing about this Conference. Dr. Gour has, however, anticipated me. (A voice :—"As usual.") But I hope you will not mind if I make my humble addition to the remarks which he has made about the venerable lady who sits on my left here.

Gentlemen, I have times out of number during my life been warned against Mrs. Besant. Some of those who do not know what my religious views are have often suspected that there is some sort of a lurking loyalty in me to her Theosophical doctrines. No one can disabuse you more of any such suspicion than Mrs. Besant herself. I have never belonged to the Theosophical Society, or for the matter of that, have never been within a hundred yards of any Samaj in my life, and if people are prepared to describe me as an absolutely secular and irreligious individual, I do not grudge that criticism. But the fact of the matter is that, whatever may be my religious convictions, whatever my own views on these eternal problems, I have never allowed these to make me forget the great services which this lady, born in the West, but wholly associated with the East, so much so that we look upon her as a very genuine Indian now (hear, hear), has rendered to India during the last 29 years. In the field of education it was left to her to bring into existence that magnificent College at Benares which has now risen and developed into a University. At a time in this country when the spell of the West was so strong over us, she sounded the note of warning, and reminded us that there were our ancient traditions to guide us, and that it was not all to the good of this country that the younger generation should be

westernised in its outlook. Then Mrs. Besant appeared in the field of politics. A trained, well-seasoned fighter in England, who knew when to strike and when not to strike, it did not take her more than a few months to produce a most profound impression upon the politics of this country. When you reflect upon the beginnings of the National Congress what is it that you find? At that time, in the year 1885 and onwards, the boldest of our politicians spoke with bated breath about representative institutions in this country. There is scarcely a report of the Congress from the year 1885 downwards which I have not read, and some of which I have read more than once. But when I read the speeches of the leaders of an earlier generation, and when I compare them with the speeches to-day delivered by the most moderate among us, what do I find? That those gentlemen, perfectly patriotic, every inch of them as patriotic as any one of us, at that time spoke in very measured language about the desirability and expediency of introducing representative institutions into this country, while the bold idea of India occupying Dominion Status, as a member of the British Commonwealth on terms of perfect equality, had yet to be conceived, or at any rate had yet to be expressed, and that was reserved to Mrs. Besant. (Hear, hear.) It is all very well for those of us who claim that they have captured the country to-day, or who claim to have swayed the masses, to say that they have made the question of Home Rule, or Self-Government, or Dominion Status, a real live issue; but I cannot forget that it was in the years 1915 and 1916 that Mrs. Besant first among all politicians made the idea of Home Rule for India a live issue; and not only that; she suffered for that, as every one of us knows. A politician may have many assets in life; he cannot always afford to have one asset, that is, mere popularity. Every one among us has passed through a phase of popularity which has been followed by a phase of unpopularity. Mrs.

Besant also, like every other politician in the world, has been popular, more than popular—a popular idol. Mrs. Besant in her own turn has suffered, but whether popularity came to her, or whether she was covered with unpopularity, through good report and through evil report, she has stuck to her principles, and worked for the good of this country as no other daughter or son of this country has ever worked. You may differ from her, and she knows that I have differed from her in many respects, and I am one of those born dissenters who always dissent from many people; but you cannot shut your eyes to her great services to this country, services which must be recognised by us Indians all the more readily when we remember that she originally came from the West and made India her home. (Cheers.) I will not say more.

Gentlemen, so far as this Conference itself is concerned, as I told you in the beginning I had no misgivings at all about either the scope of the work of the Conference or about the results. I have heard it said, and I have also read it in papers, that this Conference was going to evolve a new Constitution and to present it to the country as an accomplished fact. As I said in the course of my opening speech, I do not think the Conveners of this Conference or the promoters of the idea of this Conference have been guilty of any such indiscretion. No one realises it better than Mrs. Besant herself, who has all her life dealt with Constitutions, that nothing is more difficult for any responsible individual, be he an Englishman or be he an Indian, whatever be his political label, than to undertake to evolve a Constitution in the midst of a meeting, in the course of a day. That was not our object. Then what was our object? As I conceived it, the object was to place before the country a good working fighting programme, to obtain its approval, and having obtained its approval then to go ahead in our demand for the further modification, amendment, change or whatever you like to call it, of such Constitution as we have. It is quite

obvious, and it is no use disguising the fact, that even those of us who have worked this Constitution, whatever be the party to which they belong—whether they are members of the Liberal League or whether they are members of the Democratic Party, of which my distinguished friends on both sides of me are such distinguished ornaments, or whether you are what it is now the fashion to call yourselves—an independent politician—the fact remains that very few of us have felt that the be-all and end-all of our political existence was the measure of Reforms which has already been granted to us. We have worked the Reforms most genuinely, most whole-heartedly. I am not one of those who, like many others, tried to belittle the Reforms that have come into our hands. I am not one of those who out of party feeling will say: “Oh, these Reforms are shallow, and transfer absolutely no power into our hands.” Well, if I were to tell you all that I knew in my official position and if I were to tell you how we approached each question as it was sent to us, by, say, Mr. Shahani, or Mr. Seshagiri Aiyar, or by Mr. Rangachariar, you would feel surprised to know what power in the eyes of even the present Government the Assembly really wields. (Hear, hear.) I am not talking of the Provincial Councils; I dare not talk about the Provincial Councils because I have not worked in them during the last two years, and probably some distinguished member of a Provincial Council here may undertake to contradict me, and I am prepared to take any contradiction in regard to the work of the Provincial Councils. The fact remains that the Assembly has acquired a great position and a great power, and that position and that power have been steadily increasing and have been steadily growing. (Hear, hear.) With the advantage, therefore, that you have acquired, will you or will you not avail yourself of the present position in pushing forward? It may be that some of your critics may say that you are a little impatient. But I have never known a time when critics have

not brought the charge of impatience against those who wanted Reforms. Even though you were absolutely silent, and even though you were to leave a solemn warning to your successors that for the succeeding generation they were not to open their lips in regard to any constitutional advance, I am quite sure that even if thirty years hence your successors demanded any Reforms, the same charge will be levelled against them. Therefore, when this criticism is made against us, when we are described as impatient, my answer to it is that we share the criticism which preceding generations of politicians have shared, in every part of the world, and which each succeeding generation of politicians will share in the future. There is nothing surprising, therefore, in that. At the same time, it is only right and fair that we should recognise that the question of further constitutional advance is not so simple as some of us imagine it to be. You cannot tear up the Constitution, which you have already got, into pieces without taking into account its present power and its potentialities, nor can you shut your eyes to the possibility that in your attempt at securing something higher and something larger, you may run certain very grave risks. At the same time while you must bear that in mind, I think that you owe it to yourselves and that you owe it to our country, that you must put in the biggest effort to make a further advance. What after all is the ideal before the country? Let us not fight shy about it. The ideal that we have before us is the ideal of an India occupying the status of a Dominion in the British Commonwealth. Here again we have got to consider whether that ideal is a far-off distant ideal, a dream to be realised at some remote period, or something that we want to achieve even in our own time, long before the year 1929. I have never concealed it from myself, and I have never concealed it from those with whom I have come into touch, that the present Constitution is such that, although its framers may have introduced it with the best intentions, it cannot

endure for a very long time. It is therefore up to the British Parliament, and up to British statesmen, to consider whether they will postpone the introduction of farther Reforms, or the realisation of our aims and aspirations by another six years, and meanwhile give rise to further bitterness, further suspicion, and further estrangement; or whether they will not begin to work towards that direction long before the expiry of the ten years' period of probation. It is always said that the Assembly has not acquired sufficient experience, that the Legislatures have not acquired sufficient experience. Well, personally speaking, I think there will never come a time when it can be said of any Assembly that it has acquired all the experience that it is capable of acquiring, and I wonder whether the experiences which this Assembly and the Councils can acquire within the remaining six years will be so very large and so very great, that my honorable friends here could on the basis of that new acquisition go to the British Parliament and say: "We were not so much experienced in the year 1923; we are very much more experienced now, and we can now run the machinery of Government." I therefore think that all the argument that is based upon the acquiring of experience and upon the education of the electorate—while there is some force in it—is not an argument which to my mind can stand in the way of further progress. (Hear, hear.) Assuming that you were to acquire Dominion Status twenty years hence, or twenty-five years hence can any of us honestly say that even then you will not make blunders? I am sure that whenever you may acquire Dominion Status, whenever you may begin to govern your own country, you will make blunders and horrible blunders for the matter of that. But where is the Government, ancient or modern, well established or beginning to be established, which has not made blunders? (Hear, hear.) It will be blunders and blunders alone that will teach us how to avoid blunders in the future. So far, therefore, as blunders are concerned, they do not matter very

much to me. It may be said: "Oh, yes; but the efficiency of the administration will suffer." But the efficiency of the administration did suffer from the year 1919, when a partial measure of responsibility was introduced, and after all, if it is a choice between a more efficient Government and at the same time a more dissatisfied people, and a less efficient Government and a more satisfied people, I do not know that any reasonable body of men, including Government, can hesitate to make their choice. (Hear, hear.) Undoubtedly I am prepared to concede that the bureaucratic form of Government is more efficient than any democratic form of Government can be; but the fact remains that this efficient bureaucratic Government has failed to afford that satisfaction which we think a democratic Government with all its inefficiency will afford us. (Hear, hear.) Therefore, gentlemen, let us not lose faith either in the ideal or in our capacity to achieve it. No one among politicians, whatever be his school, can, if he reflects upon it, guarantee success in politics. Even those who have promised miracles in politics have failed. Therefore, if you fail in your attempt, it will be no dishonor and no disgrace to you. You will at least have the satisfaction of saying to yourself first, and to your countrymen later that you have done the best that you were capable of, and if you have not achieved success that is not due to your fault.

It is for that reason that I have ventured to associate myself with this movement which, I understand, is a movement for effort. You are not here like an insurance company, which will guarantee against loss; you are here to try. But then it is said: "Oh, well, how are you going to try? What is the force behind you? What is the sanction behind you?" My answer to it is, that the force behind us is the justice of our cause. (Hear, hear.) The force behind us is reason; the force behind us is the sympathy of our own countrymen. We do not profess to hold out threats, and I only hope, sincerely hope and trust, that you will never hold out threats, because threats

are a very dangerous thing. Either you can give effect to your threats, or you do not. If you give effect to your threats, instead of improving the position of the country— if you bear in mind all the circumstances surrounding you— you may make the position of the country worse. If you are not able to give effect to your threats, then you cover yourself with ridicule; you expose your weakness and your impotence, and then you are not seriously taken into consideration. It is true that the method which you have followed hitherto and which you propose to follow, the method of constitutional pressure inside the Government, and outside the Government in this country and in England, is rather a very trying and laborious method, but that is the only method, I repeat, which is open to you. (Hear, hear.) You must be prepared for many disappointments, and it would be a great mistake for any of you to think that merely because you have passed certain resolutions, or merely because you have gone about the country from one part to another, or merely because you are treated as very popular leaders, you are going to succeed. Nothing of the kind. You will be disappointed yourselves, and you will be piling up disappointments for your own country. Therefore, let us hope for everything but let us not think that we have achieved anything, or that we are certain to achieve anything. Let us only proceed in the spirit of quiet, earnest workers. Let us not mind such criticism as is bound to be levelled against us. I think criticism, instead of irritating and annoying you, should be treated as really a further stimulus to better and more continuous exertion, and to stronger work. (Hear, hear.) For whatever you may say, the fact remains that even before full Responsible Government has been established in this country, party spirit has been established. You cannot possibly deny it. When I read a good deal of criticism of this association, or that association, or of this party or that party, I tell you honestly that I rejoice. I say: "Here

is the beginning of the party system," and without party system I do not think that even at the present moment you could run even the limited measure of Self-Government that you have got in the Provinces, or, for the matter of that, that you could exercise the influence that you do want to exercise in the Central Legislature either. I therefore think that it was a wise decision on the part of my friends in the Assembly, to have divided themselves into parties, because so far as the two parties in the Assembly are concerned, my experience has been that it is really one party which keeps the other party always on the alert, and instead of there being petty-minded jealousy actuating the two parties, there is a very healthy rivalry to outshine each other in the service of the country. So long as there is that healthy rivalry actuating the two parties, it does not matter to me, but I only hope that that party spirit will not degenerate at any time, and it ought not to degenerate at any time, into mutual recrimination. Let each party work out the programme that appears to it best according to its own method, so long as it is recognised that all the parties which are serious about this question of Responsible Government are approaching the question from the point of view of the country, and not from their own personal points of view. Gentlemen, I am afraid I have taken much more time than I intended to take. I again thank you for all the kindness that you have shown me, and for all the patience that you have shown me yesterday and this afternoon. I do sincerely hope and trust that the small beginning which you have made this afternoon will lead to solid and substantial results. (Hear, hear.) If it does, no one will be more happy than I am. If it does not, no one will feel surprised, and I certainly will not be disappointed even then. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

Dr. ANNIE BESANT: I do not propose, Friends, to keep you here for more than two or three minutes, but I cannot leave this Conference at all without expressing my deep and real gratitude

for the kind words which have been said of my work here by Dr. Gour and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and the kindness with which you have received them. I do not think I can convey to you what working for India is to me. (Hear, hear.) Next year, 1924, I shall have completed fifty years of political life (loud cheers), but I can tell you that the greatest reward that I feel for having striven, first to serve the country of my ancestors, that unfortunate Ireland, then to serve England as far as I could among her poor—the greatest reward for that to me is that I am allowed to consecrate the latest years of my life to the service of this great Motherland of India. That is my real reward, and when you thank me for it, you are thanking me for doing the one thing which my heart most delights in doing. Popular or unpopular, I care very little. The mere breath of applause, of censure, is nothing to those who are striving to fulfil a great ideal, and to me the freedom of India means more than the freedom of any other country in the world. (Hear, hear.) There is no other country so ancient, so mighty, who can trace her history back thousands upon thousands of years. All the Nations that were her contemporaries in the past—we can seek them only in their sepulchres, and trace them only by their ruins. But India lives, and lives with a new life to-day. If, some years ago, for a time she was sleeping, Nations must sleep sometimes in order to renew their vigor and their strength. But while she has passed through the furnace of affliction, while she has been humiliated, while she has been defeated, she has never been disgraced, and she has never lost her place among the immortal Nations of the world. Knowing that, believing that, finding that it was my Theosophy, that turned my heart most to India although I had served her for some ten years before that great joy came into my life—knowing that, and looking back over her past, I dare to say that her future will be mightier still, that she shall rise once again to be the teacher and the helper of the world, that she

has not gone through 7,000 years of life and prosperity, admitted even in the West, without having learnt some lessons not only in religion and philosophy, in intellect, in drama, in art, but also in political science, and in the knowledge of human nature; that such a Nation has something to teach the West in political organisation as well as along other lines; that India will be not only the spiritual teacher of mankind, her mightiest and most radiant crown, but also her leader out of the Democracy of the West, which only counts heads and never merit and thought, into that truer, that nobler form of Democracy where wisdom shall guide, where strength shall serve, where service shall be the crown of public life. (Cheers.) India shall make Democracy what it ought to be, where the King is the greatest servant of the people, and that I believe will be India's greatest triumph, that after the young Nations of the West had failed, India, the Mother, shall have made Democracy the pattern of a prosperous and happy world. I thank you. (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

The Conference then dissolved.



APPENDIX I.

(Names representing more than one body, are in brackets
on repetition)

GENERAL COUNCIL

COUNCIL OF STATE

Hon. Mr. Lallubhai Samaldas, C. I. E.,	Bombay.
Hon. Mr. V. G. Kale,	"
Hon. Mr. Purshottandas Thakurdas, C. I. E.,	"
Hon. Mr. G. S. Khaparde,	Central Provinces.
Hon. Raja of Kollengode, C. I. E.,	Madras.
Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, P. C.,	"
Hon. Mr. K. V. Rangaswami Iyengar,	"
Hon. Lala Ram Saran Das, C. I. E.,	Panjab.
Hon. Lala Sukbbir Sinha,	United Provinces.
Hon. Raja Sir Rampal Singh, K. C. I. E.,	"

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Rai Bahadur Devi Charan Barua,	Assam.
Rai Bahadur Girish Chandra Nag,	"
Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari, Kt., C. I. E.,	Bengal.
J. Chaudhuri, Esq.,	"
K. C. Neogy, Esq.,	"
Moulvi Abul Kasim,	"
Kabiruddin Ahmed, Esq.,	"
T. P. Mukherji Esq.,	"
Jogendranath Mukerji, Esq.,	"
Braja Sundara Das, Esq.,	"
Rai S. Tulsan Bahadur,	"
Rai Bahadur Lachmi Prasad Sinha,	Bihar and Orissa.
Khan Bahadur Sarfaraj Hussain Khan,	"
Khan Bahadur Syed Muhammad Ismail,	"

Rai Sahab Lakshmi Narayan Lal,	<i>Bihar and Orissa:</i>
Ambica Prasad Sinha, Esq.,	"
Biswanath Misra, Esq.,	"
Baidyanath Prasad Singh, Esq.,	"
Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Esq.,	<i>Bombay.</i>
Harchandrai Vishindas, Esq., C. I. E.,	"
B. S. Kamat, Esq.,	"
Wali Muhammad Hussanali, Esq.,	"
Muhammad Hajibhoy, Esq.,	"
S. C. Shahani, Esq.	"
Lt.-Col. H. A. F. Gidney,	"
N. M. Joshi, Esq.,	"
P. P. Giwalla, Esq.,	<i>Burma.</i>
J. N. Basu, Esq.,	"
Dr. H. S. Gour,	<i>Central Provinces.</i>
Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar,	<i>Madras.</i>
Rao Bahadur P. V. Srinivasa Rao,	"
Khan Bahadur Mir Asad Ali Khan,	"
Rao Bahadur C. S. Subramanian,	"
B. Venkatapatiraju, Esq.,	"
J. Ramayya Garu, Esq.,	"
M. Sambanda Mudaliar, Esq.,	"
T. S. Muhammad Hussain Sabab Bahadur,	"
Naraindas Girdhardas, Esq.,	"
T. V. Seshagiri Aiyar, Esq.,	"
Khan Bahadur Abdur Rahim Khan,	<i>N. W. F. P.</i>
Dr. Nand Lal,	<i>Panjab.</i>
Khan Sahab Raja Muhammad Ikramulla Khan,	"
Sardar Bahadur Gajjan Singh, O. B. E.,	"
Sardar Gulab Singh,	"
Bhai Man Singh,	"
Rai Bahadur Bakshi Sohan Lal,	"
Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi,	"
Rai Bahadur Sankata Prasad Bajpai,	<i>U. Provinces.</i>

III

Rai Bahadur Pandit Jawahar Lal Bhargava,	<i>U. Provinces.</i>
Munshi Iswar Saran,	"
Lala Girdhari Lal Agarwala,	"
Muhammad Yamin Khan, Esq.,	"
S. M. Zahid Ali Subzposh, Esq.,	"
Muhammad Faiyaz Khan, Esq.,	"
Radha Kishen Das, Esq.,	"
Piary Lal, Esq.,	"
Munshi Mahadeo Prasad,	"

PROVINCIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS

Amarnath Ray, Esq.,	<i>Assam.</i>
J. Chaudhuri, Esq.,	<i>Bengal.</i>
Babu Kishori Mohan Chaudhuri,	"
Rai Purnendu Narayana Sinha,	<i>Bihar and Orissa.</i>
Shyam Narayan Sinha, Esq.,	"
Devki Prasad Singh, Esq.,	"
Rao Bahadur Ramanbhai M. Nilkanth,	<i>Bombay.</i>
Rao Bahadur Dalabhai R. Desai,	"
Rao Bahadur G. K. Chitale,	"
Rao Bahadur R. K. Kale,	"
Rao Bahadur S. D. Garud,	"
Sardar V. N. Mutalik,	"
C. M. Gandhi, Esq.,	"
B. S. Pahalajani, Esq.,	"
G. B. Trivedi, Esq.,	"
P. R. Chikade, Esq.,	"
G. C. Bhat, Esq.,	"
Kanji Dwarkadas, Esq.,	"
S. K. Bole, Esq.,	"
N. A. Dravid, Esq.,	<i>Central Provinces.</i>
Hon. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, C. I. E.,	<i>Madras.</i>
Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer,	"
Dewan Bahadur Keshava Pillai, Deputy President,	"
Dewan Bahadur M. Krishnan Nair,	"

IV

Rao Sahab P. Ethirajulu Naidu,	Madras.
Rao Sahab S. Ellappa Chettiar,	"
Dr. M. Appalunarasayya Naidu,	"
Dr. U. Rama Rao,	"
A. Ranganatham, Esq.,	"
S. M. Padshah, Esq.,	"
M. Ramachandra Rao, Esq.,	"
T. M. Narasimhachari, Esq.,	"
K. Sarabha Reddy, Esq.,	"
T. Sivasankaram Pillai, Esq.,	"
P. Siva Rao, Esq.,	"
C. Venkataranga Reddy, Esq.,	"
C. V. Venkataramana Iyengar, Esq.,	"
B. P. Devarajulu, Esq.,	"
V. C. Vellingiri Goundar, Esq.,	"
T. C. Thangavelu Pillai, Esq.,	"
M. R. Sethuratnam Iyer, Esq.,	"
T. C. Srinivasa Iyengar, Esq.,	"
Bishvanath Das, Esq.,	"
Sasihushan Rath Esq.,	"
M. Suryanarayana, Esq.,	"
Shah Nawaz, Esq.,	Panjab.
Syed Muhammad Hussain, Esq.,	"
Alakdhari, Esq.,	"
Rai Bahadur Thakur Mashal Singh,	United Provinces.
Khan Bahadur Syed Jafar Hussain,	"
Rai Sahab Pandit Gopal Das Sharma,	"
Rai Sahab Daya Shankar,	"
Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ismail,	"
Ravi Narayan Prasad, Esq.,	"
Ayodhya Das, Esq.,	"
Gokarannath Misra, Esq.,	"
Iqbal Narain Gurtu, Esq.,	"
Ananda Swarup, Esq.,	"

Rai Sahab Sitaram,	<i>United Provinces.</i>
Thakur Harnam Singh,	"
Thakur Jagannath Baksh Singh,	"
Thakur Manak Singh,	"
Narayan Prasad Asthana, Esq.,	"
Shakir Ali Batchi, Esq.,	"
Hridaya Nath Kunzru, Esq.,	"
Krishna Prasad Kaul, Esq.,	"
Chail Behari Cipoor, Esq.,	"
Nanak Chand, Esq.,	"
Braj Nandan Prasad Misra, Esq.,	"
Soti Vishnu Swarup, Esq.,	"
Gurshai Tilhar, Esq.,	"
Bhayya Hanumant Singh,	"
B. Parameshwari Dayal Amist, Esq.,	"
Prasidha Narayan Singh, Esq.,	"
Gamdani Lal, Esq.,	"
Pandit Baij Nath Misra,	"

MUNICIPALITIES, DISTRICT AND TALUK BOARDS

O. Krishnamurti Rao, Esq., Chairman, Municipality,	<i>Adoni.</i>
Jamshed N. R. Mehta, Esq., Chairman, Municipality,	<i>Karachi.</i>
Baidyanath P. Singh, Esq., M. L. A., Chairman, Municipality,	<i>Muzaffarpur.</i>
N. Ramaswami Ayya, Esq., Chairman, Municipality,	<i>Kurnool.</i>
T. M. Narasimachari, Esq., M.L.C., President, District Board,	<i>Cuddapah.</i>
Dewan Bahadur P. Keshava Pillai, M. L. C., President, District Board,	<i>Anantapur.</i>
Venkata Ranga Reddy, Esq., M. L. C., President, District Board,	<i>Kurnool.</i>
B. Tammi Reddy, Esq., President, Taluk Board,	<i>Adoni.</i>
D. Ella Reddi, Esq., President, Taluk Board,	<i>Dhone.</i>
H. Shiva Rao, Esq., President, Taluk Board,	<i>Anantapur.</i>
K. Sarabha Reddy, Esq., M.L.C., President, Taluk Board,	<i>Markapur.</i>

VI

- K. N. Aiya Iyer, Esq., Chairman, Municipal Board, *Kodaikanal.*
- C. V. Gopalan Nair, Esq., Chairman, Municipal Council, *Tellicherry.*
- C. V. Narayana Menon, Esq., Chairman, Municipal Council, *Calicut.*
- Rao Bahadur M. Gopalaswami Mudaliar, Chairman, Municipal Council, and President, District Board, *Bellary.*
- M. Narayana Rao, Esq., Vice-Chairman, Municipality, *Anantapur.*
- B. S. Tripurantaka Mudaliar, Esq., Vice-Chairman, Municipality, *Calicut.*
- A. Naganatha Aiyar, Esq., Vice-Chairman, Municipality, *Tellicherry.*
- V. Madhava Raja, Esq., President District Board, *Malabar.*
- K. Brahma Sastri, Esq., President, Taluk Board, *Bellary.*
- K. T. Chandu Nambiar, Esq., President, Taluk Board, *Kottayam.*
- Kerala Varma Raja, Esq., President, Taluk Board, *Chirakkol, Cannanore.*
- K. Rama Rao, Esq., Vice-President, Taluk Board, *Bellary.*
- V. K. Raman Menon, Esq., Vice-President, Taluk Board, *Badagara.*
- S. K. Bhimasena Rao, Esq., President, Union Board, *Siruguppa.*
- Sivarama Reddi, Esq., President, Union Board, *Maddikara.*
- T. Ramannjam Iyengar, Esq., Vice-President, Taluk Board, Ramnad, and President, Union Board, *Ramand.*
- Chenna Reddy, Esq., President, Union Board, and Vice-President, Taluk Board, *Dharmavaram.*
- Ghulam Jaseen, Esq., Municipal Councillor, *Mritsar.*
- S. M. Narayana Iyengar, Esq., President, Union Board, *Chiraganga.*

VII

- Rao Bahadur K. S. Venkatrama Iye, President,
Taluk Board, *Negapatam.*
- Sardar Sahab Sardar Sabha Singh, Municipal Com-
missioner, *Delhi.*
- Hansraj Prægji Thackersey, Esq., Member, Corpo-
ration. *Bombay.*

PUBLIC WORKERS.

- Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, K.C.S.I., *Allahabad.*
- Sir Dinshaw Petit, Bart., *Bombay.*
- Sir Nilratan Sircar, Kt. *Calcutta.*
- Bhulabhai J. Desai, Esq., Advocate, *Bombay.*
- D. G. Dalvi, Esq., M.A., L.B. *"*
- Major B. P. Dube, *Allahabad.*
- N. Subba Rao, Esq., ex-General Secretary, Indian
National Congress. *Rajahmundry.*

- Narottam Morarji, Esq., *Bombay.*
- R. G. Pradhan, Esq., Editor, *Bharata Sevaka,* *Nasik*
- Daya Narain Nigam, Esq., Editor, *Zimana,* *Cawnpore.*
- E. Arunachalam, Esq., Editor, *Dakshinamitran,* *Madura.*
- Raja Manindra Chundra Singh of *Saikpara.*
- R. V. Sabnis, Esq., *Kolhapur.*
- Mir Ahmed Ali, Esq., *Madras.*
- Ramdas Bagai, Esq., *Dehra Ismail Khan.*
- V. R. Mainkar, Esq., *Sangli.*
- Sardar M. V. Kibe, *Indore.*
- Satyanand Bose, Esq., *Calcutta.*
- Satindranath Ray Chaudhury, Esq., *"*

OTHER ASSOCIATIONS

NATIONAL HOME RULE LEAGUE COUNCIL

(Over 100 Branches)

- Hon. President :—S. Subramania Iyer, LL.D., *Madras*
- President :—Annie Besant, D.L., *U. P. & Madras.*
- Vice-President :—P. K. Telang, Esq., *U. P.*
- „ (Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Esq., M. L. A., *Bombay.*)

VIII

- Vice President* :—(Iqbal Narayan Gurtu, Esq., M. L. C., U. P.)
 „ A. Rangaswami Aiyar, Esq., Madras.
 „ (Purnendu Narayan Sinha, Esq., M. L. C., Bihar.)
 „ (Jamshed N. R. Mehta, Esq., Sindh,
 President, Municipal Council, Karachi.)
 „ Hirendranath Datta, Esq., Solicitor, Bengal.
Gen. Secretary :—Dwarkanath Telang, Esq., Madras.
 „ (Kanji Dwarkadas, Esq., M. L. C.,) Bombay.)
Co opted Members :—C. Jinarajadasa, Esq., Madras.
 „ B. Shiva Rao, Esq., Bombay.
Provincial Officers :—H. K. Patwardhan, Esq., Bombay.
 „ (A. Ranganatham, Esq., M.L.C., Madras.)
 „ Manjeri Ramaier, Esq., Malabar.
 „ N. G. Paranjpe, Esq., U. P.
 „ Chandra Deva Narayana, Esq., Bihar.
 „ Leonora Gmeiner, Delhi.
 „ (Bengal and Madras are
 served by Vice-Presi-
 dents.)

Raja of Nilambur (also President, Malayalam Pro-
 vince, and President, Mallapuram Taluk Board.)

V. K. Krishna Menon, Esq., O.g. Secretary, Malabar Province.
Bombay Presidency Branches

- Dr. V. S. Trilokekar.
 J. R. Gilder, Esq.,
 K. D. Khote, Esq.,
 J. D. Mahalaxmiwala, Esq.,
 R. M. Alpaiwala, Esq.,
 (H. K. Patwardhan), Esq.,
 W. L. Chiplonkar, Esq.,
 J. H. Billimoria, Esq.,
 S. V. Hora, Esq.,
 Govind N. Paranjpe, Esq.,
 N. Sri Ram, Esq.,

IX

- M. N. Mulla, Esq.,
 Y. R. Bhende, Esq.,
 H. K. Mehta, Esq.,
 D. R. Gandhi, Esq.,
 M. B. Kolhatkar, Esq.,
 Mulchand C. Bhagat, Esq.,
 J. N. Dandekar, Esq.,

LIBERAL ASSOCIATIONS

- Tabl Ram Ganga Ram, Honorary Secretary, *Liberal Federation,*
Panjab and N.-W.-F.-P.
 Pandit Prakash Narain Sapru, Liberal Association *Allahabad.*
 D. N. Bhargava, Esq., " *Muttra.*
 D. P. Bhargava, Esq., " "
 H. N. Bhargava, Esq., " "
 Brij Narain Gurtu, Esq., *Cawnpur.*
 G. P. Sanyal, Rai Sahab, Liberal League, *Benares.*
 Hari Keshav Sanyal, Esq., Liberal League, "
 B. R. Ramsingh, Esq., Honorary Secretary, Liberal
 League, *Dhulia.*

POLITICAL SECTIONS, 1921 CLUBS

- V. S. Ramaswami Sastri, Esq., *Madras.*
 S. Natesan, Esq., "
 Mrs. D. Jinarajadasa, "
 (Raja of Nilambur, *Calicut*)
 (Manjeri Ramier, Esq., ")
 L. R. Chand, Esq., "
 (C. Gopalan Nair, Esq., ")
 (Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Esq., M.L.A., *Bombay.*)
 (Kanji Dwarkadas, Esq., M.L.C., ")
 (Sheth Mavji Govindji, ")
 P. Pathak, Esq., "
 A. K. Bawa, Esq., "
 S. V. Rao, Esq., "

X

Rajaram S. Bhagwat, Esq.,	<i>Bombay.</i>
(B. Shiva Rao, Esq.,	„)
S. P. Kabadi, Esq.,	„
<hr/>	
Margaret E. Cousins, Joint Secretary, Women's Indian Association	<i>Madras.</i>
Sarat Chandra Chakravarti, Secretary, People's Association,	<i>Dacca.</i>
H. Shankara Rau, Divisional Association,	<i>Dharmavaram.</i>
C. R. Parthasarathy Iyengar, President, Sub- Divisional Association,	<i>Chittoor.</i>
S. K. Redra, All-India Christian Association, Principal, S. Stephen's College.	<i>Delhi.</i>
Rev. J. C. Chatterji, All-India Christian Association.	„
N. Jordan,	<i>Muradabad.</i>

APPENDIX II.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rai Bahadur G. C. Nag, M. L. A.,	<i>Assam.</i>
Rai Bahadur Debi Charan Barua, M. L. A.,	"
Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, Kt., C.I.E., LL.D., M.L.A., Bengal.	"
J. Choudhuri, Esq.	"
Khan Bahadur Sarfaraz Hossain Khan, M.L.A.,	<i>Behar & Orissa.</i>
Baidya Nath Prasad Singh, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
Braja Sundara Das Esq., M. L. A.,	"
P. P. Ginwala, Esq., M. L. A.,	<i>Burma.</i>
B. S. Kamat, Esq., M. L. A.,	<i>Bombay.</i>
Muhammad Hajibhoy, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
Harchandrai Vishindas, Esq., M. L. A.	"
Jamuadas Dwarkadas, Esq.,	"
Professor S. C. Shahani, M. L. A.,	"
Sir Dinshaw Petit, Bart.,	"
The Hon. Mr. V. G. Kale,	"
Seth Mavji Govindji, Esq.,	"
The Hon. Mr. G. S. Kshaparde,	<i>Central Provinces.</i>
Dr. H. S. Gour, M. L. A.,	"
Rev. J. C. Ohammerji,	<i>Delhi.</i>
Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar, M. L. A.,	<i>Madras.</i>
The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri,	"
Khan Bahadur Mir Asad Ali Khan, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghava Iyer, M. L. C.	"
Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar, M. L. A.,	"
B. Venkatapati Razu, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
T. V. Seshagiri Aiyar, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
Khan Bahadur Abdul Rahim Khan, M. B. E.,	"
M.L.A.,	<i>N. W. Frontier Province.</i>
The Hon. Rai Bahadur Lala Ram Saran Das, C. I. E.,	<i>Punjab.</i>

XII

Sardar Gulab Singh, M. L. A.,	<i>Punjab.</i>
Shah Nawaz, Esq., M. L. C.,	"
Bhai Man Singh, M. L. A.,	"
Munshi Iswar Saran, M. L. A.,	<i>United Provinces.</i>
Piarey Lal, Esq., M. L. A.,	"
Pandit Gokaran Nath Misra, M. L. C.,	"
Pandit Iqbal Narain Gurtu, M. L. C.,	"
Pandit Hridaya Nath Kunzru, M. L. C.,	"
The President,	<i>Ex-officio.</i>
The General Secretary,	"
The Treasurer,	"

The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee, but he thought that his position as the head of the Liberal Federation precluded his acceptance of the Chairmanship, though he gladly remained as a simple member of the Committee. *Gen. Sec.*

APPENDIX III.

Fourteen members of the Executive Committee met at 2, Hastings Road, Raisina, Delhi, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, President of the General Council of the National Conference, in the Chair, on February 14, 1923, at 6 p. m., and after discussion, the following Resolution was proposed by Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar, seconded by Professor S. C. Shahani, and passed *nem con*, one member not voting: Resolved that the Executive Committee of this Conference shall be at liberty to carry out their programme through any Association or organised body which is willing to accept the general programme adopted by the Conference and work in association with it; and will also be at liberty to form their own Organisations whenever necessary." The Resolution was afterwards submitted to ten other members, who added their signatures.

A meeting of fourteen members was held in a Committee Room of the Legislative Assembly on February, 15, 1923, at 12.30 noon, the General Secretary in the Chair. The following Resolution was passed, unanimously: "Resolved that the Executive do take steps to obtain the co-operation of existing organisations in the United Kingdom and in the Dominions, for carrying on the programme of the Conference, with a view to bring it to an early fruition." Moved by Rao Bahadur T. Rangachariar, and seconded by Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari. Eight more members, to whom it was submitted, also signed it.

The General Secretary saw Sir Ibrahim Rahimtolla in Bombay, on her way to Madras, and informed him that he had been elected to the Committee on Finance and Taxation, and that the formal invitation would reach him, when he had given over charge on his retirement from office.