

REPORT
OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

SECOND SESSION

OF THE

ALL-INDIA CONFERENCE
OF THE MODERATE PARTY

HELD AT THE TOWN HALL,
CALCUTTA.

On the 30th and 31st December, 1919, and 1st January, 1920.

P R E F A C E.

The second all-India Conference of the Moderate party held in the Town Hall of Calcutta under the Presidency of Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer proved an unqualified success in every way. From the point of view of the number of delegates and of the visitors present the Conference left nothing to be desired. The Conference commenced its session on Tuesday the 30th of December, 1919, at 1-30 p.m. when the spacious Hall was packed to its utmost capacity. Several prominent men occupied the platform amongst whom were to be found the Hon'ble Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, Sir Ali Imam, Sir Ashutosh Chowdhury, Sir. Devaprosad Sarvadhicari, Dr. Dwarkanath Mitter, Mr. M. N. Sen, Mr. Nibaranchandra Roy, Mr. Krishnadhan Roy, Mr. K. L. Dutt, Dr. M. N. Banerji, Mr. Jogendranath Basu, Mr. R. C. Bannerji, Mr. Nagendranath Banerji, Rai Mahendrachandra Lahiri, Bahadur, Hon. Mr. Krishna Sahav, Hon. Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Mr. Rajput, Mr. Taritbhusan Roy, Mr. Jatindranath Basu, Hon. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, Sir Binode Mitter, Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Herambachandra Maitra, Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitra, Raja Bahadur of Dighapatia, Raja of Santosh, Sir Rajendranath Mukerji, Mr. J. N. Roy, Rai Janakinath Roy Bahadur, Rai Sitanath Ray Bahadur, Rev. B. A. Nag, Mr. P. C. Mitter, Sir Nilratan Sircar. Mr. Sachindranath Mukerjee, Mr. Jitendranath Banerji, Mr. Satyananda Bose, Mr. Hemendranath Sen, Mr. Alfred Nandi, Dr. M. N. Basu, Dr. Narendranath Basu, Mr. Sureschandra Basu, Mr. J. Chaudhuri, Hon. Kumar Arunchandra Singha, Mr. Muralidhar Ray, Mr. S. R. Das, Mr. Amuyladhan Addy, Mr. Prafulla Chandra Chakravarti, Mr. G. A. Natesan, Mr. Kalinath Mitter, c.l.e., Mr. K. L. Dutt, Mr. Charuchandra Biswas, Hon. Mr. Surendranath Roy, Mr. B. L. Mitter, Mr. D. P. Khaitan, Mr. D. C. Ghosh. Mr. F. L. Dey, Sir Krishna Gupta, Dr. S. P. Sarvadhikari, Mr. N. C. Sircar, Mr. S. N. Sircar, Mr. M. M. Basu, Mr. B. K. Basu, Dr. Haridhan Dutt, Hon. Venkatapati Raju, Hon. Narsingha Raju, Rai Saheb A. P. Patra, Sir Gangadhar Chitnabis, M. Gokuldas Parekh of Bombay, Mr. Madhusudan Panigralih, M. Sasi Bhusan Rath, Hon. Mr. Ram Chandra Rao, Dr. Surendra Nath Sen, Hon. Rai Mahendra Chunder Mitter, Rai Nalinaksha Bose Bahadur, Rai Radha Ballabh Choudhuri, Kumar Manindra Chunder Singh, Mr. P. Chaudhuri, Babu Bijoy Lal Dutta, Babu Khitish Chandra Neogi, Babu Jnan Chandra Kumar, Babu Upendra Nath Mitter (Comilla).

Among the ladies present were Mrs. P. K. Roy, Miss. Ewing O.B.E., Mrs. S. K. Sen, Mrs. J. N. Roy, Mrs. J. N. Ghosh, Mrs. J. C. Gupta, Mrs. B. C. Sen, Miss P. M. Nag, Miss. S. Nag, Miss Sarojini Dass, Miss Pratima Sen, Mrs. S. C. Roy and others.

Numerous telegrams and letters expressing regret and inability to attend the Conference but communicating sympathy with the movement

were received from prominent moderate leaders in all parts of India. The Rev. B. A. Nag read out a large number of telegrams but they are too numerous to be printed in this report.

Immediately after the Conference copies of Resolutions passed at the Conference were forwarded to the Secretary of State, to the Government of India and to all the Provincial Governments. They were also sent out for circulation to all the Provincial Moderate Organisations. The Secretaries greatly regret the delay in publishing the full Report of the Proceedings but it was due to causes which were beyond their control.

The following gentlemen composed

The Subjects Committee.

EX-OFFICIO.

1. The Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea.
2. „ Sir D. P. Sarvadhikari.
3. „ Sir B. C. Mitter.
4. „ Sir R. N. Mookherjee.
5. „ Mr. P. C. Mitter.
6. Mr. D. C. Ghose.
7. „ N. C. Roy.
8. „ J. N. Bose.
9. „ A. Dutt.
10. Rev. B. A. Nag.
11. Mr. F. L. De.

Elected by the Reception Committee and Bengal Delegates.

Sir K. G. Gupta.

Mr. Krishna Kumar Mitter.

„ Krishna Lal Datta.

„ Mahababul Haque.

„ R. C. Bonnerjee.

„ H. C. Maitra.

Rai Mahendra Ch. Mitra.

Mr. Hemendra Nath Sen.

„ N. C. Sircar.

„ Bijoy Kumar Basu.

Mr. Debi P. Khaitan.

Rai Sahib Ramdeo Chokhony

Mr. Mahaboob Ally.

„ Tilak Chand Surana.

„ Nirmal Ch. Chunder.

K. B. Moulvi Abdus Salem.

Mr. R. D. Mehta.

„ Rajendranath Ganguli.

„ Bijoy Lal Dutt.

„ M. N. Basu.

Dr. S. K. Mullick.

Dr. Dwarkanath Mitter.

Mr. T. H. Campbell Howes.

„ Jatindra Mohan Mitter.

„ Monmohan Bose.

„ Pannalal De.

„ A. M. Biswas.

Lt. G. Sircar.

Mr. Alexander.

„ B. De.

PABNA.

Babu Jatindranath Lahiri.

DINAJPUR.

Babu Jogendra Ch. Chakravarti.

BIRBHUM.

Mr. Erfan Ali.

Hon'ble A. Sinha.

HUGHLI

Hon'ble Rai Mahendra Ch. Mitter.

Rai Mahendra Ch. Lahiri Bahadur.

Mr. Charu Ch. Biswas.

Mr. Amulya Ch. Dutt.

„ Nirmal Ch. Ghose.

„ Nagendranath Sadhu.

KRISHNAGAR.

Maharaja of Naddia.

MIDNAPUR.

Mr. Sital Prasad Ghose.

Hon'ble Dr. A. Sahrawardy.

BURDWAN.

Rai Nalinakaha Bose Bahadur.

Mr. Srimohan Ghose.

RAJSHAHI.

Hon'ble Mr. Kisori Mohan Choudhuri.

Mr. Birendra Kumar Maitra.

Raja of Dighapatiya.

Surendra Mohan Maitra

JESSORE.

Mr. Rajuiddin Ahmed.

„ B. L. Mitter.

NUDDIA.

Mr. Nanda Gopal Bhaduri.

„ Indu Bhusan Sanyal.

„ Nagendra Nath Banerjee.

MURSHIDABAD.

Mr. Hemendra Nath Sen.

„ Praphulla Chandra Chakravarti.

RUNGPUR.

Mr. Syeduddin Ahmed.

KHULNA.

Mr. Indu Bhusan Mozumder.

„ Suresh Chandra Dutt.

„ S. K. Sen.

MYMENSINGH.

Lt. K. C. Nag.

Mr. Jnanendra Nath Lahiri.

„ Kedar Nath Chakraverti.

CHITTAGONG.

Mr. Annada Ch. Dutt.

NOAKHALL.

Mr. Jasoda Kumar Ghose.

DACCA.

Mr. Tarit Bhusan Ray.

„ Priya Nath Sen.

„ Dharendra Ch. Ray.

„ Satish Ch. Ghose.

MALDAH.

Mr. Radhika Lal Singh.

„ Nilmani Ghattak.

„ Prasanna Kumar Raha.

„ Hari Gopal Chatterjee.

„ Surendra Kumar Roy.

BANKURA.

Mr. Baidyanath Mukherjee.

HOWRAH.

Mr. Khagendra Nath Ganguli.

„ Phanindra Nath Mukherjee.

„ Girija Prasanna Ray.

BERAR.

Rao Bahadur R. G. Mundale.

Mr. S. K. Bhalehandra.

„ V. T. Deshpande.

UNITED PROVINCES.

The Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Saparu.

„ Munshi Narayan Prosad Asthana.

Rai Krishnaji.

Lala Sheocharan Lal.

Babu Bisheshwar Prosad Saivastova.

Dr. Surendra Nath Sen.

Munshi Gulzarilal.

Rai Brij Narayan Gurtu.

Babu Gourishankar Prosad.

Pandit Venkatesa Narayan Tewari.

Rai Vaijnath Das Shalपुरi.

Mr. Damodardas Khandeswal.

„ S. N. Sundaram.

„ R. S. Bajpai.

The Hon. Mr C. Y. Chintamoni.

CENTRAL PROVINCES:

The Hon. Sir G. M. Chetnavis K. C. I. E.

Rai Bahadur D. N. Choudhuri.

Mr. N. A. Dravid.

„ Kashinathrao Panday.

MADRAS.

Dewan Bahadur M. Ram Chandra Rao.

The Hon. V. Narasinha Raju.

„ „ B. Venkatapati Raju.

Rai Saheb A. P. Patro.

Mr. G. A. Natesan.

„ Maulana Abdus Subhan.

„ S. B. Rutu.

„ Kalandavela Mudaliar.

„ Mahomed Valinallah Burdha Sahib.

„ Mukendaraja Aiyengar.

„ J. R. Venkatarama Sastri.

„ A. Rangaswami Aiyengar.

„ O. V. Jagannadha Sastri.

Mr. M. S. Panigrahi.

„ P. L. Narasimham.

The Hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswarma Aiyer.

BOMBAY.

The Hon. Mr. G. K. Parekh.

The Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.

Mr. G. K. Deodhar.

„ J. R. Gharpure.

Mr. A. V. Thakkar.

„ C. D. Mehta.

„ T. A. Kulkarni.

„ V. R. Gupte.

„ G. K. Gadgil.

Mrs. G. K. Gadgil.

Mr. D. V. Ambelkar.

„ C. S. Devli.

„ Rahimatulla Currimbhoy.

„ Cowaji Jehangir Currimbhoy.

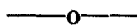
„ Nawab Abdulla Khan of Kasmundi.

„ Ardesher R. Billimoria.

„ D. M. Captain.

THE PANJAB.

Mr. Alfred Nundy.



The following gentlemen were

The Office-bearers of the Reception Committee.

CHAIRMAN.

Sir Benod Mitter.

SECRETARIES.

The Hon'ble Mr. P. C. Mitter.

The Rev. B. A. Nag.

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Mr. B. C. Chatterji.

Prof: N. C. Ray.

Mr. A. Dutt.

Mr. F. L. De.

Mr. D. C. Ghose.

Address

OF

SIR BINOD CHANDRA MITTER

Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Sir Binod Chandra Mitter, Chairman, Reception Committee, in welcoming the Delegates said :—

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mittee.

ON behalf of the Reception Committee of the Second All-India Conference of the Moderate Party let me bid you a most cordial welcome to this great city of ours. The times are such and the occasion is so momentous that I will not use the language of convention and beg of you to forgive us for the many short-comings and deficiencies in our arrangements for your reception.

Sir
Binod Chandra
Mitter.

Let me assure you, if assurance were needed, that we are sincerely glad that so many of you have been able to come together at the country's call at such short notice and probably at great personal sacrifice and inconvenience, I wish that the task of welcoming you had been committed to abler hands. I see around me the faces of war-worn veterans, — among whom I miss the familiar features of Sir Dinshaw Wacha to whom we convey our deepest sympathy in his great bereavement,—men of yesterday, but who undaunted by the frowns and unswayed by the smiles of power have for the life-time of a generation never faltered in their steady march to the high road to Responsible Government.

I am but a humble camp-follower by their side ; but though compelled by circumstances in the past to linger behind, my zeal for the common cause and my desire to serve my motherland has always remained and will always remain undiminished and unabated, and may I not add that I claim to possess a hereditary interest in our great cause.

This Conference has been called at very short notice but I may be permitted to say that it is being held on a very auspicious occasion when the war clouds have rolled away and when peace reigns again throughout the length and breadth of the Empire. The claims of right, justice and freedom stand vindicated to-day and India has entered upon a new era. And need I remind you that we meet on one of the happiest occasions in

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the history of British India,—an occasion even more momentous than that which witnessed the proclamation of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria of revered memory.

THE ROYAL PROCLAMATION.

The 23rd day of December 1919 will always be remembered as a red-letter day in our history—as that on which was issued the Royal Proclamation which will be cherished with the deepest affection and gratitude by the most distant generations of our people. And there will now go forth from millions of Indian homes and hearths one universal cry for the prosperity and greatness of the Empire and of its Sovereign to whose loving care our destinies have been committed.

OUR GRATEFUL THANKS.

On such an occasion as this we desire to offer our humble and loyal homage and grateful thanks to His Majesty for the deep and abiding sympathy which His Majesty himself and His Royal House from generation to generation have manifested in the well-being of the teeming millions of the great Empire of which he is the constituted head. We also desire at this the earliest possible opportunity to convey to His Majesty's Government our warmest felicitations on the passing of the Bill which for the first time has introduced the beginnings of a Responsible Government and placed the full realisation of it within sight. I think I voice the sense of the majority of my countrymen when I say that the Right Honourable Mr Montagu's name will for all time to come remain associated with this great measure. We had never faltered in our deep and abiding faith in him and the great cause which he had made his own. He has our sincerest gratitude and our warmest appreciation for the great courage, devotion and statesmanship which amidst calumny, ridicule and contumely he has throughout displayed. His name will go down to a grateful posterity linked with those of Canning and Ripon, Bright and Morley, and other great benefactors of the Indian people. In this connection we as Indians should not, amid the heat and dust of controversy, forget the debt of gratitude which we owe to His Excellency the Viceroy. He was the joint author of the Report along with Mr. Montagu. He lent to it the whole weight of the Government of India and but for this, his cordial co-operation, the measure would not have reached the stage which eventually culminated in its enactment as the law of the land, and though we differed from several of the recommendations in the despatch of the 5th of March, 1919, which in our opinion had a tendency to reduce the beneficent scope of the Bill we cannot forget that His Excellency cordially accepted the amended Bill and pledged the loyal co-operation of the Government of India in carrying it

out. And what shall we say to express our deep debt of gratitude to the Right Hon'ble the Lord Sinha of Raipur. Speaking in Calcutta, need I mention Lord Sinha's name without calling from you your most enthusiastic applause in grateful appreciation of his devoted labours? Lord Sinha has crowned a great and remarkable career by the supreme service which he has rendered to his motherland in the most critical period of its history. Both in the House of Lords as the Under-Secretary of State for India, and as a member of the Joint Committee of the Houses of Parliament, he has rendered the most conspicuous service to our motherland. We desire also to express our warmest acknowledgments to Lord Selborne and his colleagues on the Joint Committee for the care and sympathetic interest and the keen insight with which the problems of India were investigated. The labours of the Southborough Committees will not be forgotten by the people of India. They travelled from one part of India to another, collected a valuable mass of evidence and made recommendations which have mainly been accepted by the Joint Committee and which form one of the most notable features of the whole scheme of Reform. Lord Southborough's tact, judgment and consummate ability made it possible for the Committees to finish their work within so short a period and it is with sorrow we notice the fact that his devotion to duty has impaired his health. Among those who have helped India in this supreme moment in her history must be mentioned the names of Sir Michael Sadler and Sir Stanley Reed who gave evidence before the Joint Committee which was very helpful to the Indian cause. Both spoke from personal knowledge and produced a profound impression on the Joint Committee. The services of Sir William Duke should not be forgotten and we may be permitted to express our satisfaction at the news that the mantle of Sir Thomas Holderness has fallen on him and to convey to Sir William our best wishes. It is only right and proper that we should observe in this connection that it was Mr. Curtis who first converted the dry bones of this measure into a living organism and impressed upon it that which indeed is its fundamental feature, namely the principle of dyarchy. In this statement of our personal acknowledgments, we should not omit the name of our dear friend, Mr. Bhupendranath Basu, who has been described by a well-known journalist as the power behind the throne. None took a deeper interest in the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme or worked more assiduously to give it a practical shape and form than Mr. Basu.

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CO-OPERATION OF THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.

And now that the Reform Bill has been passed into law, we must depend in a great measure for its success on the co-opera-

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tion of the Indian Civil Service. It is a mistaken idea that the Civil Service is unwilling to co-operate with the people in the new Government that will now be ushered by the passing of the Reform Act. I am confident that the Indian Civil Servants will prove in the future, as indeed they have proved in the past, that they are in truth and in theory the devoted servants of the Government under which they serve. The Indian Civil Service has never spared itself in the discharge of what it conceived to be its duty in the past, and I feel sure, that now that it has received its new mandate, ratified by the most exalted authority in the realm, His Gracious Majesty the King Emperor himself, it will not fail to conform to the new conditions and to serve the country with the same single-minded devotion to duty which has characterised it in the past.

CLEAVAGE BETWEEN THE EXTREMISTS AND OURSELVES.

It may perhaps be necessary for a moment to advert to the circumstances which led to the cleavage between the extremists and ourselves rendering a separate organisation necessary for the effective expression of our views. For some time past, differences between the two distinct groups in the Indian National Congress were manifesting themselves. Those differences became acute over the election of Mrs. Beasant as the President of the last Calcutta Congress and it was the publication of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme which cleared the atmosphere and brought out a distinct division between the two wings of the nationalist party. On the publication of the Scheme, the extremist leaders declared that it was unworthy of their acceptance and characterised it as a mere sham. The moderates, from the very first, saw in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report the real beginnings of Responsible Government, capable of full realisation by progressive stages in no distant future. Our respective points of view were absolutely divergent. A patched-up truce would never have been of any use. Mr. Surendranath Banerjea and other prominent leaders of our party realised that opportunities such as those that presented themselves do not come frequently in the life of a nation. They, therefore, felt that their supreme duty to the country demanded that they should extend to the Scheme a cordial welcome and at the same time press for improvements and modifications. Subsequent developments demonstrated the wisdom of their decision. The demands of the Extremists were extravagant. There was in the mind of many of our extremist friends a suspicion that if the whole Provincial Government was not made over at once, it would never be made over afterwards. This betrayed a distrust of the great English people. The apprehension was utterly unfounded. The progress of India towards the path to Responsible Government hitherto has been slow, probably very slow; at times there might have been a tempo-

rery set-back ; the pendulum might have swung back now and again, but it would be inconsistent with facts to deny that the march has been steady towards the progressive liberalisation of the Government. The angle of vision of the members of the extremist party was fundamentally different from ours. They looked upon the whole scheme of reform with suspicion and mistrust. We, on the other hand, believed in the good faith of the illustrious authors of the Report. The demands of the extremist friends were not merely extravagant, but their reading of the message of the 20th of August, 1917, was illogical. They attempted to create suspicion and distrust not merely between the Government and the people but also between the different sections of the community who inhabit India — especially between Europeans and Indians. I venture to think that for the successful working of this new measure co-operation between the new Government and the people is essential and it is equally necessary to create an atmosphere of peace, amity and goodwill.

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POINTS OF DIFFERENCE.

We maintained and still maintain that we ought to co-operate with the Government whenever and wherever feasible and oppose it only when the interests of the country so demand. In short, we believed and believe in co-operation wherever possible. The extremists do not believe in this creed. We must accept all the conditions which are necessary for the realisation of self-government within the British Empire. The extremists while professing to subscribe to the same ideal are impatient of such conditions and believe that they have a dwarfing influence over national aspirations. Gentlemen, our differences in many respects were and are of a fundamental character. They are not evanescent or personal as has been suggested in some quarters. We must therefore have a separate organisation of our own.

THE WORK OF THE MODERATE DEPUTATION.

In connection with the passing of the new Government of India Act our separate organisation has rendered the greatest service to the country. Our Conference of last year accepted the principle of the scheme and pressed for various improvements. It decided to send a deputation of its own to England and in this connection I cannot be silent as to the extremely valuable services rendered by the Deputation of the Moderate Party. The Moderate Deputation urged the further liberalisation of scheme as embodied in the original Reform Bill and many of our demands have been conceded. It is fairly well-known now, at any rate, the result has proved that neither the Indian nor the European extremist opinion created any impres-

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sion on the Joint Committee. The Moderate Deputation on the other hand pleaded its cause with emphasis, but with sobriety and necessary restraint, never forgetting that it had a just and strong court before which it had to plead its cause. The efforts of the Moderate party have been greatly instrumental in securing for India an Act which ought to satisfy our just aspirations for the present.

ATTENDING THE CONGRESS.

It has been suggested in some quarters that we should meet and settle our differences by attending the Congress. The old Congress veterans who are familiar with the constitution of the Congress and of the All-India Congress Committee and of the details of their working realise the hollowness of the suggestion. But many of our countrymen do not realise the same. They think that attendance at the Congress is the only solution to the present situation, and not unnaturally they blame many of the Moderates for keeping away from it. There are some amongst us who insist on our having our own party organization and at the same time believe in an United Congress. As long as the Indian National Congress was a true National Assembly, *i.e.*, as long as on the All-India Congress Committee and the Subjects Committee the Moderates and the Extremists were both adequately represented, our leaders as a body attended the Congress. But now the Congress has been turned into a party institution by the extremists and is run on party lines. The Congress does but only register the decrees of the Extremist executive bodies. If then those who are in authority in these executive bodies are really anxious to have an effective joint deliberation regarding matters which come before the Congress and if their real object is not to discredit the Moderates, the suggestions should come from them to secure substantial and adequate representations of both parties in the executive bodies of the Congress. Otherwise we, as a body, should not agree to be a party to decisions which in reality are and will be the decisions of the Extremist Party.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE.

The new Act will bring about a great change. It has placed before us great opportunities for serving our country. Hitherto the Indians had no share in the actual government of the country. We were in the position of mere critics. Now a fair portion of the actual government of the country will be made over to us. We must forget to be mere critics and forget to oppose everything and propose nothing. We shall henceforth have to solve real difficulties which daily confront our present administrators. We shall be new to this task but it is highly necessary for the success of the new Government that Extre-

mists and Moderates, Indians and Europeans, should try to co-operate with each other whenever possible and in the words of our Gracious Sovereign in His Royal Proclamation of the 23rd of December we must remember that patriotism transcends party and communal boundaries. For successful co-operation, it is necessary on the one hand to create popular opinion in favour of co-operation, for in a responsible Government the ministers must be responsive to popular opinion—on the other hand, it is equally necessary that the officials should so conduct themselves as to make proper co-operation feasible and possible.

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THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY.

The European community generally were adverse to the Reform proposals and subjected them to severe and as we think sometimes extravagant criticism. But now that the verdict of both Houses of Parliament has been pronounced in no uncertain voice in favour of the new Act and now that the Government of India has pledged its loyal co-operation to make it a success, may we not hope that, as practical men, they will let bye-gones be bye-gones and co-operate with us Indians in shouldering the new responsibilities and thus ensure its success. Let us remember that in the constructive work of nation building, mere politics will not lead us on to the promised land. The importance of politics cannot indeed be over-estimated. But party politics should not be allowed to interfere with the practical problems in the nation's onward march in the paths of industrial and economic development. We must not allow the science of economics and commerce to degenerate into a game of party politics. In the past, there has been too much tendency in this direction, both amongst the British and the Indian, with the result that India has suffered herself to be exploited by foreign nations to the common detriment of Great Britain and India. In industrial matters who can help us more than the Britishers in India? And in co-operating with us in this matter will they not be advancing their own interests also?

IMMEDIATE WORK BEFORE US.

Gentlemen, we must not forget that strenuous and arduous work is still before us. And whilst we are justified in welcoming the great measure which has been passed into law, we must fully realise that we have got only the frame-work before us; the edifice is not yet complete. We must render such assistance as lies in our power to complete it.

Important rules and regulations have got to be framed yet. We must not spare ourselves in securing that they should accord with the spirit of the Act. May I not suggest for your consideration the formation of a committee of our own which

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will make it its business to be in close touch with the authorities charged with the duty of framing such rules and regulations and offer its hearty co-operation in the matter?

Another subject of great importance is the adjustment of financial arrangements in connection with which it is reported Lord Meston is coming out to India at an early date. In this matter also we should assume a watchful attitude and offer our services to the authorities. It may become necessary for us to consider whether it would not be advisable for us to send a small deputation again to England when the rules and regulations have been finally settled and the financial arrangements finally adjusted by the Government of India.

DEFENCE OF THE COUNTRY : OUR DUTY.

There is another topic which I desire with your leave to touch upon. If we are to participate in the fruits of freedom and aspire to the position of partnership in the British Empire, we must learn to bear the burden and responsibilities which freedom imposes, *viz.*, of defending one's own country. It is not fair and just to claim that England should undertake the defence of this country whilst we shall enjoy the powers and privileges of free and equal citizenship to which we are aspiring. We should therefore prepare ourselves gradually for this task and to that end direct our energies. If it is possible to do so, I hope the Conference will take up this matter and make its suggestions to the Government.

THE PUNJAB AFFAIR.

Let me now proceed to a topic which looms large on the public view. Whilst we must await the Report of the Hunter Committee, and we have no reasons to think that it will not come to a just verdict on the various questions that await its decisions, we cannot remain unmoved by the disclosures of the proceedings of some of the officials charged with the maintenance of law and order, *e. g.*, as those of General Dyer and Colonel Frank Johnson. Such acts must arouse as indeed they have done both in India as well as in England a sense of universal surprise and indignation. We have condemned before now the murders of Bank managers and other crimes committed in the Punjab and elsewhere. Nothing can palliate these crimes, and such acts must always be put down with a strong hand. We convey to the bereaved relatives our deepest sympathy and we deplore that these outrages should have been committed by Indian hands. But it is necessary at the same time to express our sense of deep indignation that we feel at the conduct of some of the officials concerned. I desire on your behalf to extend to the people of the Punjab in their affliction our deepest sympathy and to convey to them the

expression of our firm resolution to stand by them and to co-operate with them in any reasonable measures that may be determined upon at the proper time to prevent a recurrence of events such as those we have witnessed. We regret the decision of the All-India Congress Sub-Committee not to place before the Hunter Committee valuable evidence which it had taken great pains to collect and for which the thanks of all of us are due to it. Its decision has deprived the Hunter Committee of materials which would have been helpful to it in settling the grave issues concerned.

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We cannot but also regret the decision of the Punjab Government not to release some of the Punjab leaders now in prison during the sittings of the Committee in the Punjab. We are grateful to His Excellency that he has already set free the Punjab leaders.

WORK OF THE MODERATE DEPUTATION.

I have already mentioned in general terms the great services which the Moderate deputation rendered to the cause of the Reforms. It also tried to secure for the Punjab a searching public enquiry over the Punjab affairs and a general amnesty to political prisoners. It succeeded in its efforts with regard to the first immediately. The second object which it had in view has now been attained through Royal clemency.

OUR GOAL.

More than 12 years ago the great Gopal Krishna Gokhale in his memorable speech at Allahabad observed as follows :—

“I recognise no limits to my aspirations for my motherland. I want our people to be in their own country what other people are in theirs. I want our men and women without distinction of caste or creed to have opportunities to grow to the full height of their stature, unhampered by cramping and unnatural restrictions. I want India to take her proper place among the great nations of the world, politically, industrially, in religion, in literature, in science and in arts. I want all this and feel at the same time that the whole of this aspiration can in its essence and in its reality be realised within the Empire.”

OUR METHODS.

This indeed is a noble idea which will appeal to the hearts of all patriotic Indians. The impatient idealists who doubted those prophetic words of wisdom of one of India's greatest sons declaring that within the British Empire and by constitutional methods we can attain to the full height of our stature must stand discredited to-day. The great ideal of the illustrious patriot has now been placed on the road to realization by the

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new Reform Act and the Proclamation of our Gracious Sovereign. Step by step and stage by stage we shall develop those qualities and those gifts which are ours and which will make us the equal citizens of the greatest Empire of the world.

It now rests with us to make or mar our future. If by solid work we can ensure the successful administration of the departments that will be committed to us, is it conceivable that England can ever forget her duty to us? What have been her past traditions? England throughout her long and glorious history has always been the champion of freedom and the protector of oppressed nationalities. England supported Italy in her struggle for unity and independence. Englishmen shed their blood to secure for Greece her long lost freedom. Look upon more modern events and more recent times. The Boers were crushed in their struggle against England. The two South African Republics lay prostrate at the feet of Britain. What was her conduct? She wiped from their brow the stigma of defeat and gave them self-government and ample has been England's reward. Rebellious foes have been converted into staunch supporters of her imperial system. And finally remember what she did for Belgium. To be a component part of the Empire of which England is the centre seems to me to be the guarantee of our progressive advance to the full measure of that imperial citizenship of which civic freedom is the watchword. If we secure such freedom in association with the British Empire it will rest on a rock of adamant impervious to the ravages of time and vicissitudes of fortune.

But it is obvious that the glowing prospect which I have presented is possible of attainment only on one condition, namely, that we do qualify ourselves to the fullest extent by our patriotism, by our self-sacrifice, by our self-restraint and by our moderation. We must now address ourselves to real solid hard work in which the spirit of co-operation shall be the predominant note. We must vindicate our capacity by deeds and not by words. For the next ten years we shall be on our trial. The eyes of the whole world will be on us, and we shall be tested not by our powers of agitation but by our capacity for work and let me say this, that if we of the Moderate Party find that we have come out of the ordeal satisfactorily and that yet a further stage is delayed or unreasonably postponed we shall be the first to lead the agitation by all the constitutional methods that may be open to us for the attainment of what has been promised and what constitutes our right. We shall not flinch or falter but lead the vanguard in this noble task. But I have no doubts in my mind. England, true to herself, will redeem her pledges and lead us on to the full measure of self-Government.

Once again I accord you a hearty welcome and invite you to elect your President.

The Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea said :—

The Hon.
Mr. Surendra
Nath Bannerjea.

I am charged by the organisers of this conference to lay before you a Resolution which I am sure will be received by you with unanimity and enthusiasm. I beg to propose that Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer be elected president of the conference. Sir Sivaswamy does not come to us as a stranger. He is not unknown to the public life of India. His has been a record—a brilliant record of public services which have won for him the affectionate gratitude of his countrymen and the unstinted love and esteem of all who have watched his career. He is and has been a lawyer. It has been said by a great author that the profession of the law exercises a narrow, cramping illiberalising influence upon the human mind. Against it is to be said the fact that the members of the legal profession in many countries, in France, in Italy and notably in America, have formed the vanguard of all public movements for the emancipation of the communities concerned and the expansion of the bounds of human freedom. However that may be Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer is not a mere lawyer. He is something better and higher than that. In an administrative capacity he has been associated with a profession, the noblest to which the mind of man can address itself, the profession of education. He was the first elected Indian Member of the Senate of the University of Madras. His interest in educational problems was so keen, his grasp of them so firm, his treatment of them so statesmanlike that he was appointed Vice Chancellor of the Madras University. He held the same position the other day in connection with the University of Benares. But his activities have been varied and many-sided. After the lamented death of Krisnaswamy Aiyer, one of the foremost of our public men, he was appointed his successor in the Executive Council of the Government of Madras, the office of which he filled with credit and distinction. Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer's record of official work is now closed, but he has now employed himself in another, and I might say higher capacity. He is the brain of the Liberal or Moderate party in Madras and he is its trusted guide. We look to him to place that party on a footing which will make it active, virile and militant in its work of organisation and propaganda.

OURS, SIR, IS A GROWING PARTY.

Ours is no longer a voice like that of one crying in the wilderness. It is now resonant with the note of triumph achieved in a cause pregnant with vast potentialities to the motherland. We of the Moderate party claim that we have saved the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme from being wrecked by wild extravagance and senseless criticism. The country is veering round to our views. There are tides in human affairs, says the greatest master singer of human nature, which taken at

**The Hon.
Mr. Surendra
Nath Bannerjea**

the flood leads on to fortune. One of these tides has set in our favor with an irresistible current. We must make the best of the situation. We can make or mar the future of our party and of our country. At such a time amid prospects so cheering which may, however, be darkened at any moment by recklessness or extravagance, we need the guidance, the wise, careful and statesmanlike guidance of a leader like Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer. Therefore, Sir, we acclaim him with enthusiasm as the President of our Conference. I beg that the proposition may be carried by acclamation.

**Mr. G. K.
Parekh.**

Mr. G. K. Parekh :—I wholeheartedly support the Resolution which has been so ably placed before you by my friend the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea. He has so ably stated to you so many facts in favour of it that it would be useless for me to talk to you any further and I commend the resolution to your unanimous acceptance.

**Sir Gangadhar
Chitnavis.**

Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis :—After all that has been said I will only mention this that the Conference will welcome the election of Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer with universal satisfaction. Sir Sivaswamy has rendered many public services which have won him the esteem of everyone in this country. I am perfectly satisfied that his occupation of the Presidential Chair will give widespread satisfaction

**The Hon. Dr.
Tej Bahadur
Sapru.**

The Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru :—After the eloquent words in which our distinguished leader the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea has commended this resolution to you, I think it would be a sheer waste of time on my part to say one word more. I will however beg leave to associate myself most heartily in the tribute which he has paid to the President this afternoon. However Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer has been in the vanguard of our national progress in the Madras Presidency. He has held positions of trust and responsibility. I wish also on this occasion to enter an emphatic protest against the insinuations made by Mr. Bannerjea against the profession of law to which both I and the President belong (laughter). Whatever department of activity you may take, you will find that the lawyers have always rendered a good account of themselves. I am proud to think that on this occasion a former advocate general of the Madras High Court has been called upon to give us a lead and a clear lead. With these few words I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

**Mr. Ajit Prosad
Singh and
Mr. Mahhubal
Haque.**

Mr. Ajit Prosad Singh and Mr. Mahhubal Haque both formally supported the Resolution which was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The Secretary **Rev. B. A. Nag** then read numerous letters and telegrams from gentlemen who were unable to attend the

Conference. The Maharaja of Durbhanga, the Nawab of Dacca, the Hon. Mr. Mudholkar, Sir Rash Behari Ghose, Sir B. K. Bose, Nawab A. F. M. Abdur Rahman, Rai Baikuntha Nath Sen Bahadur, Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar, Babu Kali Pada Ghose, Mr. M. B. Dadabhoy and Hakim Habibar Rahaman Khan of Dacca were amongst those who were unable to attend the conference on account of ill-health. The Hon. Mr. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer regretted their absence on Tuesday but expected to attend the Conference on Wednesday. Mr. R. K. Malaviya, son of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, regretted his absence owing to his being detained at Amritsar.

Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer, the President, then addressed the Conference. He said :—

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Sir P. S. Sivaswamy Aiyer.

FELLOW-DELEGATES AND GENTLEMEN,

Let me thank you most heartily for the high honour you have conferred upon me by requesting me to preside at the second session of the All-India Conference of the Moderate party. On the eve of the momentous political changes which are to be initiated in the country, I cannot help wishing that your choice had fallen on some one more worthy of the high office which you have called upon me to assume. When I look back over the roll of the great men who have adorned the presidential chair of the Congress, when I remember that at the first session of the Moderate Conference the chair was occupied by no less a person than our distinguished countryman and veteran political leader Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea and when I realise that we are meeting to-day in a city whose position as the intellectual capital of the Empire and as the great centre of learning, culture and oratory has remained unshaken by the transfer of the seat of Government, I am overwhelmed with a sense of my own deficiencies ; and if I am found unequal to the responsibilities of my task, I hope you will extend a generous measure of indulgence to my shortcomings.

When the Conference met last year, the great war which had been devastating the world for four years and more had taken a decisive turn in favour of the Allies and the armistice was in sight. Since then the war has come to an end, peace has been concluded with the central powers and the cause of liberty, humanity and nationality for which the Allies were pouring out their blood and treasure has been gloriously vindicated. The idea of a League of Nations which when it was first adumbrated by President Wilson was received with considerable scepticism, has now materialised and become an established fact. Though the peace treaty has not yet been

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ratified by America, it is not unreasonable to hope that she will soon do so and help to lay the foundations of the peace of the world on a permanent basis. We are proud to reflect that by the loyalty and co-operation of her princes and peoples in the hour of the Empire's trial, and by the prowess and devotion of her armies in various arenas of the war, the claim of India to a share in the counsels of the Imperial war cabinet and War conference has secured recognition, that she has been represented at these deliberations by our distinguished countrymen, His Highness the Maharajah of Bikaner, and Lord Sinha, and that she has been accorded a position of equality with the other great dominions of the Empire in the Peace Conference and admitted as an original member of the League of Nations. Though the strain and anxiety of the war are over, the world has not yet returned to normal conditions and is now in the throes of birth of a new order of things, of a reconstruction of the whole scheme of life, political, industrial and social. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms was the subject of heated discussion at the time of our first conference. The Government of India Bill which was introduced into Parliament six months ago has just been placed on the Statute Book and we have met to celebrate with heart-felt rejoicing the auspicious event which has started India on the path of Self-Government and is destined within a measurable period of time to lead her to the goal of full responsible government. Our profound gratitude is due to all who have laboured to this end, to the authors of the Joint Report, to the members of the various deputations, who at great personal sacrifice went to England and placed the views of their respective constituents before the Joint Committee and especially the Members of the Moderate Deputation headed by our leader, Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, to the members of the Joint Committee, who conscientiously endeavoured to remove the defects in the original Bill, to Mr. Montagu for his statesman-like grasp of the situation, his fervid sympathy with Indian aspirations and his wonderful tact, persistency and powers of Parliamentary management and last but not least to our illustrious countryman Lord Sinha for his wise patriotism, skilful advocacy and devoted labours at the expense of health and under the weight of domestic calamity. The whole of India has cause to be proud of the services of Lord Sinha. No Secretary of State for India will have a more abiding place in the affections and gratitude of the people of India than Mr. Montagu. Our thanks are also due to the members of the Cabinet, who realising the importance of the measure decided to push it through without delay, to the members of the Labour party for their strong support, and to both Houses of Parliament for their genuine, if cautious, sympathy with the claims of India. We have been deeply moved by the gracious and soul-stirring Proclamation of His Majesty the King-Emperor whose abiding

sympathy has ever been a source of encouragement to us and whose message of exhortation will be an inspiration to all to the fulfilment of his wishes. India is profoundly grateful to His Majesty for the exercise of his Royal Clemency and for his desire to inaugurate the Reforms in an atmosphere of general good-will and harmony.

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When at the first conference we expressed our opinion of the scheme embodied in the Montagu-Chelmsford report, we pointed out modifications and improvements which, in our opinion, were needed in the Bill. Many of the defects pointed out have been removed and several of our suggestions have been carried out. One important suggestion which we made related to the simultaneous introduction of the principle of diarchy in a limited sphere of the central government and it is a matter for regret that the Joint Committee and the Cabinet could not see their way to the adoption of this suggestion ; but there can be no doubt that in spite of the refusal of Parliament to introduce the principle of division of functions in the central government, the measure now passed is a substantial fulfilment of the pledges contained in the declaration of the 20th of August, 1917. It is now desirable to make a brief survey of the provisions of the Statute and see how far it is an advance upon the present constitution and to what extent the proposals in the Congress-Moslem League have been adopted.

SURVEY OF THE REFORMS.

Taking the constitution of the provincial government first, the strength of the Legislative Council has been expanded, the proportion of the elected element being raised to 70 per cent and that of the official element restricted to 20 per cent. The franchise has been greatly lowered and widened and provision is to be made on a larger scale than originally intended for the rural population and for the urban wage-earning class. The representation proposed for the depressed classes is to be enlarged. Except the first President of the Council who is to be appointed by the Governor, the presidents and deputy presidents of the Legislative Council are to be elected by the Council itself. The proposal for a Grand Committee and for legislation by recourse to the certification procedure has been discarded and provision is made for necessary legislation on reserved subjects which may be refused by the Legislative Council by empowering the Governor to act on his own responsibility without recourse to the farce of the official bloc. In cases where the Governor so acts on his own responsibility, the Governor-General has ordinarily to reserve the enactment for His Majesty's pleasure, who will be guided by the Secretary of State acting on the advice of a

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Standing Committee of Parliament. The system of separate purses for the reserved and transferred departments has been negatived and excepting certain items of fixed charges, all proposals for expenditure will be submitted to the vote of the Council in the form of demands for grants. In cases where the Council refuses to vote for the necessary expenditure on a reserved subject, it is open to the Governor to retain the allotment, if he considers it essential for the discharge of his responsibility for the reserved subject. This must be admitted to be a necessary corollary from the principle of diarchy, but it is seldom likely that the Governor will exercise his power in opposition to the reasonable wishes of the Council. If it is remembered that there is an Indian element in the Executive Council and that the ministers will be consulted on important matters like the framing of the budget, it will be readily realised what great scope there is for influencing the proposals of the Governor in Council in regard to reserved subjects. In the Executive Council the Indian element will be equal in strength to the non-Indian. The ministers in charge of the transferred departments will be responsible to the Council from the start and will have the same status as the Councillors.

In the Government of India the strength of the Legislative Assembly will be enlarged and provision will be made for direct election. The elected element is fixed at a minimum of five-sevenths and of the remaining two-sevenths at least one-third is to consist of non-officials. Except the first president who will be appointed by the Governor-General, the presidents and vice-presidents will be elected by the Assembly. The Council of State is to be radically altered in character and converted into a true revising chamber of which not more than a-third will be officials. Any affirmative legislation required by the Governor-General in Council which either legislative chamber refuses to pass can be passed by the Governor-General on his own responsibility in a straightforward fashion, if he certifies that it is essential for the safety, tranquility or interests of British India. In such cases the Governor-General has ordinarily to reserve the enactment for His Majesty's pleasure, who will be guided by the Secretary of State acting on the advice of the Standing Committee of Parliament. The only exception to this procedure is in cases of emergency calling for immediate action in the opinion of the Governor-General, but in such cases the act will be subject to disallowance by His Majesty in Council. In the Executive Council of the Governor-General the Joint Committee recommends that not less than three members of the Executive Council should be Indians. Though the Joint Committee disclaim any intention of introducing any measure of responsible government into the central administration and though the Governor-General in Council has therefore got the power to restore the allotment made by

the Government of India, all proposals for expenditure with some exceptions like military, political and ecclesiastical charges and moneys required for the service of loans have to be submitted to the Legislative Assembly and its votes taken on the demands for grants.

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Turning to the home administration of Indian affairs, all the charges of the India office other than agency charges are recommended to be placed on the British estimates. The minimum and maximum of the Council are fixed at 8 and 12 and the introduction of more Indians is recommended. The most important recommendation of the Joint Committee in connection with the control of the Secretary of State is that a convention of non-interference should be established in all matters of purely Indian interest, wherever the Government of India and the legislature may be in agreement. This provision will pave the way for the growth of the fiscal autonomy of India which has been the subject of demand by all classes of politicians. The Statutory Commission which is to come into existence after the expiry of 10 years is empowered to examine not merely into the working of responsible Government in the provincial sphere but also to inquire into the working of the Government of India. The Committee have recommended the creation of a Standing Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament with advisory functions by whose advice the Secretary of State will be guided in his approval of legislation or rules which may be sent up to him by the Government of India.

CONGRESS DEMANDS.

Comparing these provisions with the substance of the proposals made by the Congress, it will be seen that in some respects, as in regard to the removability of the executive, they are a great improvement on those proposals and that the only important matters in which the proposals of the Congress have been departed from are (1) the omission to grant full provincial autonomy, (2) the omission to introduce the principle of diarchy in the Government of India, (3) the omission to give a statutory guarantee that full responsible Government shall be established in the whole of British India within a period of 15 years and (4) the omission to provide for a declaration of rights. With regard to the demand for a declaration of rights, it may be pointed out that any such declaration is unknown to the British constitution, that the proper line of progress is in the direction of the development of the powers of the Indian legislature and the introduction of the responsibility of the central government towards the Indian legislature and that the enactment of a fundamental law by a superior authority restricting the powers of the Indian legislature is inconsistent

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with the true goal and bound to be embarrassing in practice. Under the new constitution the central government will, by influence, if not control, be daily brought more and more into consonance with the wishes of the public; exceptional or discriminative legislation is bound to disappear; and the obligation which will be imposed on the Secretary of State by convention to consult the Standing Joint Committee will prove a most valuable safeguard against any improper encroachment of the liberty of the subject.

DECIDED ADVANCE ON THE PRESENT.

Taking the Act as now passed, is it not obvious that it represents a decided advance upon existing conditions and that it gives us great opportunities for acquiring a practical knowledge of the art of responsible government. The act provides for a ten years' period of apprenticeship in the provincial administration and is only intended as a transitional measure. In spite of the fact that it has fallen short of the demands of the Congress, it must be conceded that it provides in the language of the Joint Committee "a generous measure of opportunity of learning the actual business of the government and of demonstrating by our conduct of the administration to the first statutory commission that the time has come for further extensions of power." If we remember the conditions under which the scheme has been carried through and the fact that a Coalition Government representing different parties and shades of opinion has been in power all the time, we shall be able to realise the difficulties with which Mr. Montagu had to contend and the statesmanship which he has brought to bear upon the elaboration of a measure acceptable to all parties and upon steering it through a Parliament which included conservative and reactionary elements opposed to any bold or venturesome experiment. It would have been quite easy to frame an ideally perfect scheme which would meet the largest demands of the Congress; but the scheme would have had no chance of passing through and the fulfilment of our aspirations would have been indefinitely delayed, if not retarded. It was the height of political sagacity on Mr. Montagu's part to have perceived how far he could carry the government and Parliament with him and frame his proposals in accordance with his practical limitations.

RECEPTION BY EXTREMISTS.

While the reforms call for the largest measure of grateful appreciation, they have been hailed by several extremist organs and leaders with expressions of unmitigated contempt and dissatisfaction. I shall give a few instances:—Speaking of the recommendations of the Joint Committee the 'Independent' of

Allahabad described them as "a colossal sham calculated to perpetuate our unmitigated probation under the British Rule as the hewers of wood and drawers of water. They do not vouchsafe a particle of hope and they fail to transfer an iota of real responsibility to the people of India." The leader of the Congress deputation from Madras expressed the hope that "the people of India would with one voice vote against the reform scheme at the next meeting of the Indian National Congress." He observed that "Indians required no training in the art of government, that the bill was not an improvement on the existing state of things and that if it did anything, it increased the powers of the autocracy." The President of the Nationalists' Conference recently held at Madras remarked that "it would not be a national disaster, if by the mutations of party-conflict in the House of Commons the present Cabinet went down and with it the present Reform Bill." You will remember the description of the bill as "a little thing" by the Congress Secretary in England. Persons who do not regard the measure as going sufficiently far may be entitled to ask for further concessions, but there is neither justification nor need for belittling what has been granted. Inability to perceive the merits of the scheme can only be ascribed to intellectual obliquity.

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OPINIONS OF COMPETENT JUDGES.

Let us now turn to the views expressed by some of our sincere friends and well-wishers in England and by distinguished Indians whose patriotism and judgment are beyond all question, Lord Carmichael, Lord Crewe, Lord Clwyd, Lord Islington, Sir Michæl Sadler, Sir Stanley Reed, Sir J. D. Rees, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Polak, His Highness the Aga Khan, Lord Sinha, Sir Sankaran Nair, Sir M. Visveswarayya, Sir P. D. Pattani and Mr. Basu. They all consider that appreciation of the present measure of reform and an honest endeavour on our part to co-operate in the successful carrying out of the first instalment of responsible government would go a great way to convince the British people of the desirability and expediency of granting a greater measure of responsible government. Major Ormsby Gore considers the revised reform bill as the most remarkable and epoch-making advance ever made at one bound in the history of British India. Our extremist friends attach more weight to the opinions of Labour Leaders than to those of any other party in England. Mr. Ben Spoor has expressed the opinion that it is important that the Bill should become law without further delay. In the face of the unanimous advice expressed by those who are best entitled to pronounce an opinion, it is idle to suppose that any further concessions could have been obtained from Parliament at this juncture or that the postponement or abandonment of the Bill would have been of no conse-

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quence to this country. The fact that the reforms have been passed by a Coalition Government is an advantage to this country rather than otherwise, for, the members of every party have given their support to the policy adopted in the Bill and it will not be possible for any party to repudiate the policy hereafter on the ground that it was adopted against their wishes. It is imagined by our extremist friends that if the bill had been thrown out, the Labour Party would soon come into power and introduce a much more spacious measure of Reform and grant India all that she asks for. But, is not this belief based upon a number of assumptions of a very unreliable character? Is it known when the next election will come off, or when the Labour Party will come into power? Even if they do come into power, is there any certainty that they will not be too preoccupied with their own domestic questions to devote their attention to Indian Reforms? And even if they were willing to do so, do we know that any measure introduced by them will successfully run the gauntlet of the House of Lords or that if it fails to do so, the Labour Party will be prepared to make it a party issue and appeal to the country on it and return to power? Instead of making these wild calculations, is it not prudent in the interests of the country to accept with gratitude the first generous instalment of reform and devote our efforts to the successful working of the scheme, so that we may be able to convince the Parliament and the first Statutory Commission that we have not merely the capacity for self-government but that we have acquired the necessary training. Remember that there is nothing in the Bill to prevent the transfer of additional subjects within the ten years' period of training. Even the Delhi Congress was willing to leave the departments of law, police and justice for a period of six years as reserved subjects in the hands of the Executive Government. Can it be said that a period of apprenticeship in the art of responsible administration is really unnecessary? Self-assertion however loud or persistent does not amount to training. We, of the Moderate Party, do not hold the view that because it has taken centuries of political experience for Englishmen to acquire their present constitution, we must go through the same period of training. The world is now moving much quicker and it is because statesmen in England have recognised it, that they propose a short course of apprenticeship for a decade or two to acquire the necessary training. The success of any scheme of democratic government does not merely depend upon the fitness of a number of gifted individuals but involves the education and training of the electorate. There is an immense field of constructive work before us, more than enough to occupy all our energies and if we only turn our attention to the constructive task that lies before us and work for the success of the Reforms, we need have no fears that the next instalment will be delayed by the British Nation.

PARTY DIFFERENCES.

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The success of the scheme requires the fullest co-operation between the people and the government with mutual good-will and forbearance and a spirit of compromise and conciliation. On the last occasion our veteran leader, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, dealt with the events which led to the split between us and the party now in the ascendant in the Congress. It is not necessary for me now to go over that ground again. Let me briefly advert to the differences which have emerged between the two parties. As already pointed out, we regard the Reform Act as a substantial advance in the direction of responsible government, while the other party looks upon it as altogether disappointing and unsatisfactory. The next instalment of reform is, in our opinion, to be won by whole-heartedly working for the success of the new scheme and endeavouring to make the best of its merits and opportunities rather than by agitation. The practical demonstration of our fitness by actual work will be a far more effective means of attaining the end than incessant agitation, which will have the effect of diverting the energies of the people from action to talking. Believing that the fullest co-operation between the two halves of the government is necessary for the success of the principle of diarchy, our policy is to co-operate with the government and support them in all measures for the good of the people and to criticise them without flinching whenever their measures require to be opposed. While stoutly opposing all improper measures of repressive legislation, we shall not seek to fetter the powers of the Indian legislature. We recognize no antagonism between the interests of reserved and transferred departments and consider the maintenance of all these departments in efficiency as necessary for the well-being of the State. There is no subject of administration, whether reserved or transferred, in which the people are not interested and our attitude towards the budget proposals will be determined by a comprehensive view of the requirements of all departments in the interests of the public and of orderly progress. While endeavouring to get rid of any defects in the reconstructed machinery which experience may disclose, it will not be our aim to exploit the defects for the purpose of wrecking the scheme or creating a dead-lock in the hope of Parliament coming to our rescue and granting us full autonomy. While the pursuit of ideals by the members of the other party seems little likely to be tempered by a perception of practical limitations and hard facts, ours will be a practical idealism based upon a knowledge of existing conditions, a sense of proportion and perspective and a comprehensive view of progress in all directions. It will be our endeavour to consolidate our gains so that our march to the final goal may be firm and sure and we may not lose the ground we are about to occupy. While it would be hazardous

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to prophesy about the future of parties under untried conditions, it is hardly likely that the differences of opinion which have emerged between the two parties in connection with the Reform Scheme will disappear shortly. Nor is this tendency towards the formation of distinct parties a matter for regret, so long as party organizations are based upon principles and not upon ill-will and rancour between persons and classes. One may go the length of saying that sound party organizations are an indispensable condition of healthy political life and especially so in the working of any constitution based upon the British model. So long as the people had no voice in the administration and it was only a question of wresting privileges from the bureaucracy, the policy of a united front was indispensable. But it is less so, when responsibility for administration has to be assumed by the people, and differences spring up as to aims and methods and it serves no purpose to conceal radical differences of opinion and maintain the semblance of a single political organization when its capacity for action must necessarily be impaired by lack of agreement and cohesion among its constituents. As regards our relation with parties in Britain, it would be a mistake for us to enter into any exclusive alliance with any particular party, instead of cultivating friendly relations with all.

NOMENCLATURE.

The name to be adopted by our party is a matter which may perhaps be considered here. At the last session of our Conference our President expressed his dislike of the term 'Moderate' and suggested the name "the center group of the Nationalist party." If I may be allowed to offer a remark, it seems too long an expression for the purpose of nomenclature and the word 'group' is suggestive of an undesirable fissiparous tendency. I have no particular predilections. We may call ourselves 'Liberals' or 'Progressives' or 'National Liberals' or by any other name you like. I would only respectfully suggest a much shorter and handier name than the one suggested last year.

THE PUNJAB OCCURRENCES.

I shall now pass on to a subject which has been engrossing the mind of the public even more than the subject of constitutional reforms. The disturbances in the Punjab in April last and the measures taken by the authorities to deal with them attracted the keenest and most wide-spread interest at the time. While the acts of lawlessness committed by the mobs were duly published at the time, the public were not kept equally informed of the doings of the authorities and the nature and extent of the measures adopted

by them in the restoration of order. The movements of people to and from the Punjab were prohibited or restricted. Accused persons were deprived of the services of counsel from outside the province. A rigorous censorship was exercised over the press and security was demanded from papers which had the temerity to publish accounts of the manner in which martial law was administered. Such information, however, as leaked out and was published sent a thrill of horror over the land. While all political organisations expressed their detestation of the wanton destruction of life and property and communications and all the other outrages committed by the mobs and their approval of all measures reasonably necessary for the suppression of disorder, they felt it their duty to condemn the excesses of the authorities administering martial law and press for the prompt withdrawal of martial law. After a delay of several months, the promised Committee of Enquiry has been appointed and the inquiry has been going on for two months. It is to be deeply regretted that the Government should not have seen their way to suspend the sentences of the leading citizens who were convicted in Lahore and Amritsar and enable them to be present when evidence affecting them was being given at the inquiry and to give instructions to counsel for the cross-examination of the witnesses. It is also unfortunate that for this reason the Congress Committee to whose patriotic labours we owe an ungrudging tribute of praise should have decided to withhold their assistance from the Committee and let in no evidence on behalf of the people. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, the evidence tendered by the government and especially the evidence of the European officers who were charged with the duty of restoring order, has thrown a flood of light upon the administration of the Punjab during those eventful months. The disclosures now made have confirmed the worst suspicions of the public as to the ruthless and inexcusable barbarity of the administration and have created a feeling of intense indignation throughout the country. In view of the fact that the inquiry is not yet concluded, a considerable measure of reserve is called for in expressing an opinion on the matters pending before them. It is neither possible, nor desirable at this stage to express any opinion as to the causes of the disturbances or as to the necessity for the employment of military force or for the introduction of martial law ; but the evidence of the European officers which has been already taken has made it abundantly clear that martial law was continued long after the necessity for it, if any, had ceased, that the means adopted by the military authorities to put them down were far in excess of the requirements of the situation and that the proceedings of the officers concerned were not guided by any considerations of common sense, humanity or decency. Whether the disturbances in the various localities amounted only to riots or rebellion is a matter

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which may be left, for the present, to the decision of the Committee. It is well settled that necessity is the sole measure of the duration and extent of the force to be employed for putting down an insurrection and restoring order and that it is only when it is impossible for the ordinary courts of law to sit or enforce the execution of their judgments, that martial law can be indulged. There is nothing to show that except perhaps during the few days immediately following the disturbances the ordinary civil courts could not sit. Apart from any question of the legality of the ordinance providing for the trial of offences by special or martial law tribunals, there was no moral justification for the continuance of martial law or for the continuance of the special tribunals after the disturbances had been put down. The fact that trial by courts-martial is bound to be quicker or would serve as an example of terror to others and help to keep them in due awe and obedience is no justification whatever for the establishment or continuance of martial law. It is also clear that the martial law officers had no right to treat contraventions of their own orders as offences and proceed to try and punish people for infringement of their orders. Let us turn our eyes to some of the facts disclosed in the evidence of the principal European witnesses. The wholesale slaughter of hundreds of unarmed men at Jallian Walla Bagh without giving the crowd an opportunity to disperse, the indifference of General Dyer to the condition of the hundreds of people who were wounded in the firing, the firing of machine-guns into crowds who had dispersed and taken to their heels, the flogging of men in public, the order compelling thousands of students to walk 16 miles a day for roll-calls, the arrest and detention of 500 students and professors, the compelling of school children of 5 to 7 to attend on parade to salute the flag, the order imposing upon owners of property the responsibility for the safety of the martial law posters stuck on their properties, the flogging of a marriage party, the censorship of mails, the closure of the Badshahi mosque for six weeks, the arrest and detention of people without any substantial reason and especially of people who had rendered services to the State in connection with the War Fund or otherwise, the flogging of six of the biggest boys in the Islamiah school simply because they happened to be school boys and to be big boys, the construction of an open cage for the confinement of arrested persons, the invention of novel punishments like the crawling order, the skipping order and others unknown to any system of law, civil or military, the hand-cuffing and roping together of persons and keeping them in open trucks for 15 hours, the use of aeroplanes and Lewis guns and the latest paraphernalia of scientific warfare against unarmed citizens, the taking of hostages and the confiscation and destruction of property for the purpose of securing the attendance of absentees, the hand-cuffing of Hindus and Muhammadans in pairs

with the object of demonstrating the consequences of Hindu-Musalman unity, the cutting off of electric and water supplies from Indian houses, the removal of fans from Indian houses and giving them for use by Europeans, the commandeering of all vehicles owned by Indians and giving them to Europeans for use, the feverish disposal of cases with the object of forestalling the termination of martial law, are some of the many incidents of the administration of martial law, which created a reign of terror in the Punjab and have shocked the public. It is a strange feature of the mental constitution of those military officers that they should have imagined that the steps they took were a remedy for the sullenness of the people and a means for promoting the popularity of the government. We are naively told by General Sir William Benyon that instead of being unduly severe, the administration erred on the side of leniency and that he and Sir Michael O' Dwyer approved of General Dyer's exploit. It is inconceivable that such things can ever happen under the name of martial law in England or even in Ireland. That they could have happened in India shows the ineptitude of the present system of government. It is obvious that the Government of India must have regarded the opposition to the Rowlatt Bill as a direct challenge of their authority and as a trial of strength between the people and the government and that having given their promise of support to the local authorities, they were prevented by panic and love of prestige from listening to the representations of Indian leaders, or making any attempt to see things for themselves. It is no wonder that the hearts of our people have been stirred by these doings to their inmost depths. The indecent haste with which the Indemnity Bill was rushed through the Imperial Council is now intelligible. It will also be clear how wellfounded the objection of the people was to the provisions of the Rowlatt Bill which entrust the liberties of the subject to the mercy of the executive.

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We do not know what the findings of the Enquiry Committee may be ; but if we may be allowed to voice the wishes of the people we should ask, (1) for reparation for all serious hardship and suffering caused by unwarranted acts of severity, (2) for steps being taken to bring to justice any officials, high or low, civil or military, who may be found to have acted unreasonably and in excess of their powers or authorised such acts, (3) for the provision of safeguards against the recurrence of such things in the future and (4) for the abolition of flogging in the Indian Army. Let us see what reasonable safeguards it is possible to suggest. One remedy which may perhaps be thought of is that in dealing with internal outbreaks the civil authorities should only invoke the aid of military forces, but should not allow the introduction of martial law. This suggestion raises a very large issue and in view of the incidents of the martial law regime in Ireland, Egypt, India and Ceylon may

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deserve consideration, but it seems to me doubtful whether it is likely to be entertained as a practical proposition. No enactment of any declaration of rights as suggested by our friends in the Congress can avert the possibility of the introduction of martial law ; for, by the very nature of the case martial law is a creature of necessity and transcends all law. Martial law is a state of no law where the will of the General who commands the army prevails ; but if, as is only too likely, the abolition of martial law for the purpose of suppressing internal outbreaks is put aside as an impracticable suggestion, we are entitled to ask that the constitutional limitations to which its exercise and duration are subject according to the opinions of eminent English jurists shall be authoritatively set forth either in a statute or in a memorandum of instructions to be issued to the Governor-General. It should be made clear that martial law should not be introduced, unless it is impossible for the civil courts to sit and exercise their functions. It is further necessary that the power of creating new offences for breach of regulations and providing penalties therefor should not be delegated to Military Officers and that if courts-martial and civil courts are both sitting, any person not subject to the Naval Discipline Act or to Military Law, who is alleged to be guilty of the contravention of any regulation should be allowed to claim to be tried by a Civil Court instead of by a Court-Martial.

The happenings in the Punjab have emphasised the necessity for providing that the Indian element in the Executive Council of the Viceroy shall be at least equal to the European element. They point to the urgent need for the cheapening and quickening of cable communications with England. They have also demonstrated the evil effects of a prolonged exodus to the hills and the consequent isolation of the government from the world of humanity beneath.

PRESS ACT.

The manner in which the Press Act has been administered has brought into prominence the necessity for a revision of it on radical lines. While I am prepared to concede that the provisions for security and forfeiture would serve a useful purpose in dealing with sedition and more especially with Bolshevism at our frontier, I am inclined to think that the deposit of security should not be demanded in the first instance and should be called for only upon its being shown to the satisfaction of a court that the liberty of the press has been abused. Forfeiture also should be made consequential upon an order of the court to be obtained by the Local Government on proof of publication of objectionable matter. The conditions in the Press Act entailing forfeiture are expressed in such wide terms that it has been found that the safeguard of an applica-

tion to the High Court is practically illusory. An amendment of the Act on the lines here suggested would remove a keenly-felt grievance and is especially necessary in view of the need for encouraging the growth of a vigorous and honest press under the new conditions of administration.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE.

Even more than the subject of constitutional reform the question of the re-organisation of the military system of the country is vitally connected with the growth of our nationhood within the empire. It is unfortunate that the scope of the reference to the Indian Army Re-organisation Committee recently appointed with Lord Esher as its President should have been so restricted and that it should have included only one real representative of Indian public opinion. It is also a cruel irony of fate that Sir Michael O'Dwyer whose repressive measures have provoked a storm of indignation throughout India should not merely be a member but the President of the Committee during its inquiry in India. For years past we have been asking that the commissioned ranks in the regular army shall be thrown open to Indians on a liberal scale under conditions which will be compatible with military efficiency. The contention that Indians are only fit to be employed as sepoy under the leadership of British officers and are not qualified for the highest ranks is too hollow to be put forward with any show of plausibility. Even under the existing conditions men who have risen from the ranks to Indian commissions have acquitted themselves with credit. Modern wars are becoming more and more scientific and a country which does not employ the best brains and talents in its army is bound to go to the wall in any conflict with the forces of any of the modern powers. One possible objection to the employment of the educated classes in the army is that they may use their military knowledge, training and influence against the government. But are not the educated classes those who can most clearly realize the manifold advantages of membership of the British Empire and has not their loyalty been amply demonstrated by their conduct during the war and by their sincere solicitude for partnership within the British Empire? To adopt the language of the Joint Report, "we believe profoundly that the time has now come when the sheltered existence which we have enjoyed in India cannot be prolonged without damage to our national life." The war has painfully brought home to the mind of every Indian his military helplessness and inutility and has quickened the desire for self-reliance for all purposes of national life. We wish to have the fullest scope for the cultivation of the manly virtues and for attainment of the full stature of our manhood so that we may be able to defend ourselves against any external aggression or internal disorder. In the words of

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His Majesty, the progress of a country cannot be consummated without the right of her people to manage her affairs and safeguard her interests. The defence of India against foreign aggression is a duty, an Imperial interest and pride. As a preparation for the goal of responsible government which has been definitely announced as the objective of British rule and in fulfilment of the pledge of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration we are entitled to demand that the policy which has hitherto guided the administration of the army in India shall be changed, and that the pledges contained in the great proclamation of Queen Victoria should be fulfilled. The continuance of our exclusion from the commissioned ranks is a slur upon our capacity and loyalty. The problem of commissions is stated in the Joint Report to bristle with difficulties, the most serious difficulty probably being the one created by the prejudice of Military Officers against the possibility of service under Indian officers. But the beginning of an attempt has been made towards breaking down the barrier and let us hope that the change in the angle of vision of the British public and of British Statesmen which is alleged to have been brought about by comradeship in arms and by participation in the perils, hardships and sacrifices of the war may overcome the prejudice and opposition of the military authorities, and promote a sympathetic view of our aspirations. Our desire to take the same part in the military organisation of our own country as is enjoyed by the subjects of British colonies in theirs will not be satisfied by the grant of commissions alone. We claim that Indians shall be freely admitted to employment in all arms of the defensive organisation of the country including the artillery, the navy and the air-force and that no time should be lost in taking steps for the organisation of a territorial army which will serve as an auxiliary force to the Indian army. We do not know anything of the contents of the report which must have been presented to the Imperial Government by Lord Jellicoe with reference to the naval defence of India, but costly as any scheme of naval defence must be, we shall be prepared to cheerfully shoulder our burdens on the condition that the Indian section of the navy is manned and officered by Indians. The Indians employed on board the mercantile marine have given ample proofs of their capacity, pluck, sense of duty and discipline and there can be no doubt that we have sufficient material in our sea-faring population for the manning of naval crews. Knowing as you do how the two young Bengalees who were admitted into the Royal air force and those who were sent to the front in various other capacities distinguished themselves, do you have any reasonable doubt that if the opportunities are given the necessary personnel required for the air service will be forthcoming? Provision should be made in India for giving the highest standard of instruction in military and naval engineering, in the construction and management of air-

craft and sub-marines, in the knowledge of tactics and in all the technical and administrative subjects required for members of the general staff. It is possible that our demands may not be readily granted, but we must make up our minds to carry on a strenuous agitation in England till we gain our object.

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You will probably have noticed the announcement in the papers that the Government of India intend to introduce during the next Delhi session of the Viceregal Council a bill for the constitution of an auxiliary force of European subjects. Is it not significant that there is no mention of any intention to introduce a similar measure for the voluntary training of Indians? We must of course recognise that the question of universal service is for some time to come put out of the pale of practical politics by the immensity of our population, but there is no reason why the formation of an auxiliary Indian force on a voluntary basis and in sufficiently large numbers and at least on a scale which will bear the same proportion to the European Auxiliary Force as the Indian army bears to the British units in India, should not be taken in hand. I have heard it said that the response which was made in the year 1917 to the call for voluntary enlistment in the Indian Defence Force was not satisfactory. This is not the time or place to go into the history of this question, nor am I in a position to speak with reference to the response in the other provinces, but having been connected with recruitment to the Indian branch of the Indian Defence Force in the Madras Presidency I am in a position to contradict, so far as Madras is concerned, the statements that have appeared in the Viceregal Legislative Council and in influential journals on this subject. Notwithstanding the fact that the Indian section was treated as the Cinderella of the Indian Defence Force and the numerous difficulties we had to contend against, the establishment of the first Madras Infantry was brought up to full strength and the question of augmenting this branch of the Indian Defence Force was being considered by the Army Headquarters. I may add that the military authorities who from time to time inspected our recruits were satisfied with their progress and attainments.

ARMS ACT.

The invidious racial distinctions underlying the rules framed under the Arms Act used to be the subject of complaint in Congress after Congress and it is a matter of satisfaction that the Government of India have at least taken action by their resolution of the 21st of March 1919 to abolish all distinctions of a racial character and to provide facilities for the taking out of licenses.

INDIANS IN AFRICA.

While the sisterhood of India in the nations of the British

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Empire has been acknowledged in the war and peace conferences and in the League of Nations, the treatment accorded to our citizens in the self-governing dominions of the Empire is calculated, not merely, to wound our sense of self-respect, but to bring about the expulsion of the Indian settlers by a steady policy of humiliation and persecution. The subject was mooted at the Imperial War Conference by Sir S. P. Sinha (now Lord Sinha) and the views of the Indian representatives were embodied in a memorandum prepared by him. The Resolution passed at the War Conference of 1918 recognised that it was an inherent function of the governments of the several communities of the British Commonwealth including India that each should enjoy complete control of the composition of its own population by means of restrictions on immigration from any of the other communities. As regards the questions raised with reference to the position of immigrants who were already settled in the self-governing dominions, the Conference recommended them for early consideration to the various governments concerned and Sir S. P. Sinha expressed the hope that on the return of General Smuts he might be able in process of time to remove all or at any rate some of the grievances. The news, however, we have received from South Africa are of a very disquieting character. The Asiatic Land and Trading Amendment Act which has been passed this year extends the restrictions of the Boer Law III of 1885 by prohibiting Indians from acquiring property either by way of transfer to a company or by means of mortgage except as security for a *bona fide* loan. A telegram received about a week ago from Bloemfontein stated that in the course of a speech General Smuts referring to the Asiatic question declared that a fresh invasion had been stopped but a new danger had arisen especially in connection with trade and that steps would have to be taken. We are not informed what exactly the danger referred to is, or what steps are contemplated by General Smuts. In view however of the broadminded statesmanship of General Smuts it is to be hoped that he may exercise his influence in favour of justice to the Indian settlers. We are glad to be able to acknowledge the efforts of the Government of India to protect the interests of the Indian settlers. The Union Government have agreed to the representation of Indian interests before the Committee by Sir Benjamin Robertson and an Indian representative and we have to await the result of the investigations of this Committee which has been appointed in response to the demands of the Anti-Asiatic League. It has sometimes been suggested that the objection to the Indian settler is based not upon racial prejudice but upon economic grounds and that by unfair competition he injures the interests of the white labourer or tradesman. We can appreciate the force of economic objections but the remedy in such a case would be rather to prescribe mini-

imum rates of wages and admit the Indian workman to membership of Working Men's Unions and if necessary to prescribe that the Indian workman or tradesman should live in houses conforming to the same standard of sanitary or other conditions as may be reasonably prescribed for the corresponding classes of white settlers. The economic objection, however, is merely a cloak for the deeper objection based on racial prejudice. The colour prejudice of the white races and the commercial greed which tempts them to mark off vast regions of the surface of the earth for their exploitation threaten to be the most disruptive force of humanity and are an abiding menace to the peace of the world.

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Equally disconcerting news has been cabled to us by Mr. Andrews from East Africa, where a united attempt is being made by the European associations to close the door against future immigration and to stop Indian franchise. Moral depravity is said to have been the result of Indian contact and the South African exclusion policy is approved.

We know what value to attach to these allegations against our countrymen. Mr. Gandhi has pointed out that it is the Indian who was the pioneer settler in East Africa long before a single European set foot on East African soil and who developed the uplands of East Africa. The crusade against our countrymen is inspired by the same feelings of racial prejudice and trade jealousy that have actuated the white settlers in their relations with our countrymen in other parts of the world. The significance of the agitation of the European associations is not confined to British East Africa alone. Under the terms of article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations which provides for a mandate to advanced nations for the administration of the former German Colonies, it is distinctly provided that the mandatory power must secure equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of all other members of the League. It was pointed out sometime ago by the Paris correspondent of the Times that the mandate drafted for the administration of German East Africa which was typical of the mandates for the German Colonies in central Africa included provisions establishing absolute equality of trade for the subjects and citizens of all the high contracting parties. The correspondent observed that complete equality of trade had for many years existed in such British protectorates as Nigeria and East Africa and that the same practice and policy would be carried out by Great Britain in German East Africa. The threatened interference with the rights of our countrymen in British East Africa is bound to be the precursor of a similar policy of injustice in German East Africa. As India is an original member of the League of Nations, Great Britain is bound to protect our rights and strictly maintain the policy of the open door to His

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Majesty's Indian subjects and citizens. It is our duty to support our countrymen in their claim to the exercise of civil, municipal and political rights and to appeal to the Imperial Government to discharge their obligations under the mandate.

EDUCATION.

The reform and improvement of our educational system is an essential condition of our national progress. The subject has been most carefully examined by the Calcutta University Commission which was fortunate in its personnel and especially in securing the services of Sir Michael Sadler as its President. No commission that has ever sat in this country has brought to bear a greater wealth of experience, sympathy and wisdom upon the discharge of its task. Where can we find a more generous appreciation of the merits and aptitudes of Indian students, a more sympathetic understanding of the defects and requirements of students and of the limitations and difficulties under which the vast army of teachers has to work, or a keener perception of the needs of an awakened nation? The dissatisfaction with our system of education which has been felt by the public for years has been proved to be well-founded. They have found defects in our educational organisation from top to bottom and pointed out how the primary school system is out of touch with the actual needs of the community, how extremely inefficient the secondary school system is and how it renders the pupils unfit for useful occupations and how the arts colleges have failed to realise the aims of university education. They have recommended a comprehensive scheme of reforms covering the whole field of education and the new machinery which they have proposed for enlisting the active co-operation of the public, for co-ordinating all educational agencies and for the re-organisation of the teaching profession must command general acceptance. It is a matter for satisfaction that the subject of education as a whole is to be transferred to popular control, a result to which Sir Michael Sadler largely contributed by his evidence before the Joint Committee. It will rest with our new legislatures and ministers to set about at once to carry out, as far as may be, the recommendations of the Sadler Commission subject to any modifications that may be suggested by special local conditions. The provision of facilities for the preparation of our youth for callings in agriculture, commerce, engineering and other walks of life, the extension of facilities for the education of the backward and the depressed classes and the expansion of primary education must engage the unremitting attention of our reformed councils. Care has to be taken also that in the inrush of new ideas which will follow the introduction of the reforms, the preservation of what is precious and vital in Indian thought and culture is not neglected.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

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In view of the extreme poverty of our country compared with the standard of any other civilized country, the want of suitable openings in life for our youth, and the need for making the country as self-contained as possible the problems of economic development are of tremendous importance. The report of the Indian Industrial Commission presided over by Sir Thomas Holland makes a wide survey of the situation and offers recommendations calculated to achieve the ends we all have so much at heart. Some of the recommendations have been the subject of adverse criticism and it is not for laymen to pronounce an opinion on matters where experts differ. Among other things referred to in the report of the Commission I should like to draw your special attention to the need for the encouragement of ship-building in our own waters and for the creation of a mercantile marine. It is one of the gratifying results of the war that a change has come in the angle of vision of the government in regard to the policy to be adopted for the encouragement of industries. It is also a matter for satisfaction that the subject of industries has been proposed by the Joint Committee for transfer to popular control but in view of the discussion in the House of Lords we have to see to it that this proposal is not modified or abandoned in the rules to be made under the statute. The question of tariffs which was excluded from the scope of the inquiry by the Commission will have to be carefully considered by our public men in the light of the experience of progressive countries like Japan and the United States and with due regard to the interests of the country as a whole and especially of the poorer consuming classes. Apart from any question of the bearing of tariffs upon the encouragement of industries, it is also worthy of consideration whether the customs duties which form an imperial source of revenue may not be raised to some extent as a matter of pure fiscal policy so as to relieve the provincial governments of a considerable part of the burden of contribution to the Central Government. In connection with the subject of economic regeneration, the treatment of labour is bound to come into prominence and will require to be solved with the fullest sympathy. No economic progress can be considered satisfactory which is not accompanied by an amelioration of the conditions of the labouring classes, by securing to them a fair subsistence which will enable them to secure healthy and cleanly conditions of living and some share of the amenities of life. It is only by a timely attention to these problems and their wise solution that it will be possible to avert the class conflicts which are threatening to break up and destroy society in the west.

The subjects now proposed to be transferred include the most important and growing departments of public administration :

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Education, Industries, Local self-government, medical administration and public health, agriculture, co-operation and excise. They are the subjects which are most vitally connected with the health, well-being and prosperity of the people and in which the stimulus of popular control will be most fruitful of results. The field of work is as large as it is interesting. But there is another task which is even more arduous and that is the training of the electorates who will be our masters. In several respects government by a responsible ministry is more difficult than government by bureaucratic methods. You have not merely to persuade the masses to appreciate the blessings of a progressive administration but to convince them that they are worth paying for. The system of administration which has been laboriously built up is efficient, though costly, and any impairment of efficiency is bound to react on the interests of the public. The margin for retrenchment of expenditure will be found to be small and the necessity for additional taxation will have to be squarely faced by the new councils and ministry. The electorates will have to be educated to an appreciation of the needs of the whole body-politic and to a sense of just proportion between the various objects of expenditure. With the experience of other countries behind us, we have to learn to avoid the vices and pitfalls of democracy. The temptation to appeal to ignorance or to sectional interests, to hold out promises that are incapable of fulfilment has to be resisted. The preparation of a programme of constructive work is one of the tasks that lie immediately before us. It may not be possible for us here and now to chalk out a detailed programme of constructive work in all the departments which are to come under popular control and it may have to be entrusted to a committee and carried out in consultation with the provincial organisations. The ultimate aims of the different parties may not differ very much. It is with regard to the methods of approach and the means to be adopted that differences are more likely to arise. Our guiding principle must be *orderly progress* in every department and our organisations must be multiplied and strengthened to carry on the work of propaganda effectively.

Every one of the deputations which has recently gone to England has been struck with the ignorance of Indian matters which prevails in England. In addition to the work of educating the electorates, it will be necessary for us to send out deputations of competent representatives every year to England to create an interest among public men in Indian affairs and to educate public opinion there. A living and watchful interest in the administration of India on the part of the British public and Parliament is a necessary condition of the further fruition of our hopes. The eyes of the world will be fixed upon us and upon the Imperial Government and if we only make a wise use of our powers and opportunities I am sanguine enough

to believe that the next instalments of reform are bound to follow quickly and as surely as noon follows dawn. I am confident that full provincial autonomy will be reached in 10 years and that a considerable measure of responsibility will be granted at the end of the first decade. The goal of full responsible government may not improbably be attained within 20 years. The Declaration of Rights of the 20th of August, 1917, the Report of the Joint Committee, the Statute and the ever memorable Proclamation of His Majesty the King-Emperor will together constitute a Charter of our liberties and by far the most momentous Charter in our history. The fulfilment of our hopes will be mainly dependent upon our own achievement in carrying out the reforms. Let us hope that the appeal of His Majesty for co-operation will be loyally responded to alike by the officers of government and by the people and their representatives. It must be our loyal duty so to promote mutual good-will and confidence among all classes so that when His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales returns to England after inaugurating the new constitution he may be able to report to His Majesty that his exhortation has not been in vain and that his elevating message has inspired the princes and people of India and the officers of government to enthusiastic co-operation for the fulfilment of the noble destiny that lies before this land. I trust that from this day forward India will be described as a "Dominion" and not a Dependency of the Empire and I look forward to the day when India will walk proud and erect among the nations of the earth conscious of a partnership on equal terms in the greatest Empire which the world has seen and of a right of British citizenship which will connote equal privileges for all members in all lands over which the British flag waves, proud of the glorious contribution she can make to the strength of the Empire, to the thought and culture of the world and to the moral forces that will tend to make this world a better and a happier one for all. May God grant us the wisdom and the enthusiasm which with high purpose and steady effort will help us safely to accomplish the journey to the goal.

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Gentlemen, though I have not dealt with the Khalifat question in my printed address, I may assure you that the question is one on which the Hindus are in full sympathy with their Mahomedan fellow citizens. A resolution on this subject will be placed before the Conference after consulting the Mahomedan members of the Subjects-Committee and the subject will then be dealt with by the speakers at the Conference.

At the close of the Presidential address, the Conference adjourned till noon on Wednesday.

At 5 o'clock the Subjects-Committee was formed and sat

till nearly nine o'clock at night to draft resolutions and met again next morning from 7 to 10 o'clock.

The Moderate Conference resumed its sitting at noon on Thursday, 31st December, 1919.

Rev. B. A. Nag.

The Secretary Rev. B. A. Nag said :— Gentlemen I have been asked by the President to read out to you the telegrams. I have several telegrams in my hand but I will not trouble you with the contents of all of them. I will only say that several prominent gentlemen from different parts of India, have telegraphed wishing us success in this Conference, and expressing their deep sympathy with our movement. (cries of read them, read them). As there is a general feeling that the names should be given I will read them.

The Secretary read out the names.

The President said :—Gentlemen, the first Resolution on the Agenda to-day is one which has been entrusted to me and I will read it to you first.

**RESOLUTION
I.**

Resolution I.

This conference begs to convey to His Majesty the King-Emperor its profound homage and sense of deep gratitude for the Proclamation of the 23rd December, 1919, which opens a new era in the History of British India by inaugurating the beginnings of responsible Government. By the exercise of his Royal clemency in favour of political prisoners, by his deep sympathy with our political aspirations and by his confidence in our future, His Majesty has ensured an atmosphere of harmony and good will which is bound to contribute to the successful working of the reforms.

Very few words are needed from me to commend this resolution to your unanimous acceptance. There have been several Charters in the history of British India but the Proclamation which was issued by His Majesty has been by far the most momentous Charter in our history (Hear, hear). It has reiterated and renewed all the assurances given in our earlier Charters and has surpassed them all in the confidence it has expressed in our future, in the pledge it has extended for the fulfilment of our aspirations within a reasonable period. Sympathy and understanding have been the most characteristic traits of His Majesty the King-Emperor. We had evidence of that sympathy in the message which he sent on his return to England after his visit to this country as Prince of Wales. We have had recent proof of that sympathy, and the most abundant proofs are furnished by this Royal Proclamation. His Majesty has called upon us all to work for the success of the Reforms, has appealed to all to continue as far as it lies in their power to their successful working by harmonious co-operation. This Proclamation and the act of clemency which he has most generously exercised have

already tendend to soothe the feeling of the people and have brought balm to the wounded hearts of our brethren in the Punjab. We hope that all classes of people in India will respond most loyally and heartily to the appeal which he has made for co-operation, harmony and good will and for doing everything in our power to accelerate the attainment of responsible government. With these few words I beg to commend this resolution to your unanimous acceptance and I ask you all to stand up and carry it by acclamation.

The Resolution was put and carried by acclamation all standing.

The President : Gentlemen, the next Resolution which will also be put from the Chair is as follows :—

Resolution II.

RESOLUTION II

This Conference desires to express its profound satisfaction at the announcement of the visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to India next winter to inaugurate the Constitutional Reforms and to assure him of a loyal and most hearty welcome.

Sympathy has been the characteristic of the Royal House of England. The visit of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales will be a most auspicious inauguration of the new era upon which we are about to enter. I have no doubt that the visit of His Royal Highness will cement the feeling of attachment which binds us to the Throne of England and will be productive of the happiest result to this country. With these few words I beg to put this proposition and request you to carry this also standing.

The Resolution was put and carried all standing.

The President : Gentlemen, the third Resolution will also be moved from the Chair. It is as follows :—

Resolution III.

RESOLUTION III

- (a) This Conference desires to convey to the Right Honourable Mr. Montagu its heartfelt appreciation of the statesmanship, courage and single-minded devotion displayed by him in initiating and carrying the reform proposals and setting India firmly on the road to responsible government.
- (b) This Conference desires to record its proud appreciation of the Right Honourable Lord Sinha's services to the country in his capacity as a member of the War Cabinet, as a representative of India at the Peace Conference and in his conduct of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords.

- (c) This Conference desires to thank the Joint Committee for removing several defects in the original Reform Bill and improving it.

I do not think I need say much to commend this resolution either to your acceptance. The services which have been rendered to this country by Mr. Montagu and by our illustrious countryman, Lord Sinha (Applause) have been dwelt upon fully in the addresses which were delivered yesterday. India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Montagu and will cherish his name as that of one of the greatest benefactors of this country. We are proud of the service rendered by Lord Sinha. He has rendered most valuable service by the manner in which he represented us at the various Imperial Conferences and by the manner in which he piloted the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, by the manner in which he pressed our claim on the attention of the Joint Committee. We are also proud to find that he has vindicated the claims of the Indians, to fill the highest offices in the gift of the Crown. We are thankful also to the Joint Committee for having done their best to improve the Bill in as many respects as it was possible for them to do consistently with the policy underlying the Bill. I beg to lay this resolution before you for acceptance.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

The President : Before I call upon the speaker entrusted with the next Resolution, I wish to announce that it is necessary to impose a time limit upon the various speeches which will be delivered here. Except by exercising some self-restraint it will not be possible for us to go through the long programme of business which has been placed on the Agenda. I propose to fix a limit of ten minutes for the mover of each proposition and a limit of five minutes for the seconder and supporters and I hope you will all help me to get through the business, by observing these time limits and giving me no occasion for reminding you of any transgression of these time limits. I will now call upon the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea to move the fourth Resolution (Applause).

**RESOLUTION
IV.**

Resolution IV.

While regretting the omission to introduce some measure of responsibility in the central government, this Conference welcomes the Government of India Act of 1919 as the first definite and substantial step towards the progressive realisation of responsible government. This Conference appeals to all sections of the community, European and Indian, officials and non-officials, whole-heartedly to co-operate for the successful working of the Act.

The Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, in moving the fourth Resolution, said : Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I confess I feel somewhat embarrassed by the announcement of the President that every speaker including the mover is to be restricted to a time limit (Cries of 'Not you'). In any case I hope Sir, that having regard to my age you will make an exception in my favor. Old men are apt to be garrulous and bearing that fact in mind I am sure that you will be pleased to restrict the rigidity of the rule which you have just laid down.

**The Hon.
Mr. Surendra-
nath Bannerjea.**

Sir, to-day we stand upon a somewhat different footing from what we did 14 months ago when the first Moderate Conference met at Bombay in November 1918. In the judgment of our critics we were then a discredited party, seeking for official favors or relying with the simplicity of children on pledges and promises which in the past had proved illusory. The language of criticism, and if I may add, of vituperation was exhausted in condemning us. We suffered in silence, we bore it all with dignity and, I may add, with self-restraint. We did not indulge in any recrimination. Our hour of triumph has now come. Our faith has been vindicated and justified by recent events and we are in a position to proclaim to the Indian world, to critics and friends alike, that the Reform proposals which are embodied in the Reform Act—the Reform proposals contained in the Montagu Scheme represent a distinct and definite stage—the words are “the first and progressive stage towards responsible self-government.”

There is however a note of dissent, scarcely audible, perhaps indistinct, but there it is. This welcome is subject to a reservation. We express our regret that some element of responsibility has not been granted in the Central Government. Mr. President, this was the unanimous demand of educated Indian and we urged it with unanimity and emphasis in the evidence that it was our privilege to give before the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee have not been able to accept our recommendations in that matter. All the same we welcome it. It may be that it is open to this reservation but in that message and in the Bill there is a substantial advancement towards the progressive realisation of responsible government and we welcome it. Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's are the words which spontaneously occur to my lips. It would not be correct to say that in the Reform Act the Central Government has been left untouched. A distinct advance towards liberalisation is apparent in the Constitution and methods of the Central Government. Let us for a moment examine the provisions. For instance the Legislative Assembly is to contain a two-third-elected-majority. The official majority has given place to a non-official majority. What is the significance of this change? It means that in matters of ordinary legisla-

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tion the representatives of the Indian people will have a determining voice. But that is not all. The Budget and Estimates are to be laid before the Legislative Assembly. They are to be voted upon by the Legislative Assembly. Perfectly true that the resolutions are not to be binding but it is obvious that a Government which has to rely upon an Assembly for its legislation cannot long continue to ignore its resolutions. So far as the Legislative side of the Central Government is concerned, look at the Executive Government. The Executive Council of the Viceroy is to consist of three Indian Members. Therefore in the every-day administration of this vast Empire the voice and the vote of the people of India will have a substantial place. It has been said, I am sorry to say by an Extremist organ of public opinion, that *Ap-ke-waste* men may be selected as Members of the Viceroy's Council. May I ask who was it that selected Sir Sankaran Nair? Was it not the Viceroy? Who was it that selected Sir S. P. Sinha now Lord Sinha or Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyer or our distinguished President as Members of the Madras Executive Council? I am sure that public opinion in this country is bound to grow and increase in volume and intensity. I am sure that under a responsible Government an atmosphere will be created which will render it impossible for the Government of the country to flout public opinion.

Then as regards repressive legislation it cannot be placed on the Statute Book without the consent of the Secretary of State. It will be open to His Majesty to revise it and the Joint Committee of both Houses will have to consider it. It seems to me that with these safeguards it is quite impossible for any Government to introduce martial law in any part of the country unless it is the only solvent of the situation. If we had three Sir Sankaran Nairs in the Viceroy's Council instead of one at the time of the Punjab troubles I am sure that the state of things in India would have been different.

Then, Sir, there is another point which has to be noticed. We have been crying ourselves hoarse over fiscal autonomy. We have got it in an indirect way. Direct or indirect, it is there, let us welcome it. If the Viceroy of India and the Legislative Assembly are in agreement over any matter then the Secretary of State cannot interfere except on high grounds of Imperial Policy. That means fiscal autonomy. That means control over the fiscal system of the country introduced not in an indirect but in a definite and tangible way. Let me illustrate my point by referring to a particular case. We have Excise Duty over cotton goods. We all know that successive Governments of India have protested but successive Secretaries of State have over-ruled the views of the Government of India. Now we have got this in the Statute Book. If the Govern-

ment of India and the Legislative Assembly are in agreement with regard to the abolition of Excise duties, they are bound to do it. There is no doubt about it. Therefore it will be seen that a definite step will be taken in sounding the death knell of these duties. The President of the Indian National Congress was pleased to say the other day that this was only a pious hope. It is something more than that. It is a definite concession pregnant with vast potentialities for the future of this country.

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Mr. Surendra-
nath Bannerjee.

I desire now to say a word or two with reference to the Provincial Governments. Here we have a large, definite, substantial measure of responsible government. Look at the Executive side of the Government. Every Government, every Province major or minor will have two popular Ministers and two Executive Councillors, one of whom will be an Indian. Therefore out of the four Members of the Executive Government in every Province three will be Indians. In Bengal it will probably be four. Therefore in the Executive Government the voice and the vote of the people of India will predominate. The Budget will be framed by the Executive Government. It will be voted only by the Legislative Assembly in which there will be a substantial majority of elected Members. Seventy per cent. at least will form the elected element in the Councils and therefore both in regard to the Executive Government as well as in regard to the legislature of the country in the Provinces there will be control afforded to the representatives of the people—large, definite, substantial, I was going to add overwhelming control. Does not that represent a substantial step towards responsible Government? The Ministers will be responsible to the Legislative Councils. They alone will be Ministers who have a large following in the House. They will be liable to be censured by the House. Then if they are unpopular their budgets will be cut by the Legislative Council. This is an indirect method of pressure which can be brought to bear upon the Ministers.

Yet in spite of these substantial concessions we are told by an organ of Extremist opinion that these Reform proposals represent a huge sham. Another organ of the same class and type of opinion expresses the view that the situation has been rendered a hundredfold worse than it ever was before. I am sure you will agree with me that we in this Conference regard statements of this kind as wild, grotesque misrepresentations of the actual state of things. The President of the Indian National Congress speaks in a somewhat qualified and more subdued tone. He says "We do not accept or reject." What does he mean? Is there a halting house between acceptance and rejection? Is it necessary to find a *via media* between these two extremes? They say they reject. I tell you that

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you cannot reject, for the simple reason that it is in the Statute Book. You can no more reject the Reform Act than you can reject the Penal Code or the Criminal Procedure Code and the numerous offences mentioned therein.

They say they cannot accept. As a matter of fact they do accept but they only affect not to (Applause). I want to prove that they do accept because they say "We want to get into the Council, we want to take advantage of the provisions of the Act". And I suppose they also want to become Ministers and kiss the hands which confer these gifts upon them. Therefore when they say "We neither accept nor reject" they indulge in a species of language which has the color and complexion of camouflage, or to speak in blunt English, of hypocrisy (Laughter and applause).

The difference between the Extremists and ourselves is this: they accept and we accept. We say so frankly as honest men. We have said so from the very beginning without any camouflage or hypocrisy. We take our stand on the house tops and without any insincerity we proclaim the fact that we acclaim with enthusiasm the Reform Act as a substantial step towards the realisation of responsible government. They on the other hand also accept it, but not with good will. They accept it and what will be the result? They will create an atmosphere of irritation, of conflict, of discontent and controversy in the Legislative Councils which will seriously interfere with the successful working of the Reform Act.

Diarchy—that famous word which has given rise to so much misconstruction—needs above all things a spirit of conciliation and co-operation between the two divisions of the House. If there is friction, if there is controversy, then the experiment of diarchy must of necessity fall.

There is another point of difference between the Extremist leaders and ourselves and I am anxious that they should know it. They say—and I think Mr. Tilak has given expression to that view—that we must begin to agitate at once. I say on my behalf and on your behalf that we deprecate agitation. Gentlemen, I have been an agitator all my life. If the history of these times comes to be written and if the narrator cares to think about me or to write about me, he will probably set me down as one of the most obstinate, as one of the most persistent, as one of the most effective agitators of this generation. What is more, I have always been successful in my agitation and why? Let me unfold to you the secret of my success. I have been successful because I have studied and I know the art when and how to agitate. Time is a great factor in politics, and he who starts a premature agitation takes the very first

step towards wrecking the cause. Yes there will be a time for agitation but that time has not yet come. We must consolidate what we have got. Not agitation but work is what is needed. We must shew our capacity for the task that has been imposed upon us and when we have justified for a further expansion of responsible government, if we don't get it, you and I will then agitate and I will be the leader (Applause). Not before that. Therefore this is the fundamental point of difference between the Extremist people and ourselves. I don't know that I ought to detain you longer because the mandate of the President is supreme (Cries of "Go on, go on"). At the back of my mind there is the feeling that the President will agree that there is no higher authority in this Assembly than the President. We are all going to have responsible Government. He is responsible to this Assembly and I am responsible to him (Laughter). But be that as it may I desire to associate myself fully with the appeal made to Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials whole-heartedly to co-operate for the success of this movement. To Anglo-Indians and to members of the Civil Service we extend the right hand of fellowship and we invite them to grasp it with alacrity and enthusiasm. We desire to tell them that we have changed our angle of vision. We regard them as brothers and fellow citizens, colleagues and comrades in the great task of responsible government and we invite them to reciprocate that sympathy and to change their angle of vision. The Anglo-Indian community were frankly hostile to the Reform proposals but the verdict has been pronounced against them. They are Britishers and in the spirit of true Britishers I am sure that they will accept the situation, acquiesce in it and co-operate with us in order to ensure the success of the experiment (Applause) upon which the good name and honor of England is at stake. I have a similar appeal to make to the members of the Civil Service. I frankly admit that they have built up the great fabric, they have built up the great fabric of law and order which has been firmly established in this country. It is their handiwork, it is their achievement. It has contributed to the progress of this ancient land and we pay to them the tribute of gratitude which is their due. But law and order are only means to an end. What is that end? The British Parliament and the British Government have declared that self-government is the end and aim of British Rule in India and His August Majesty the King Emperor, our Sovereign, has invited the members of the Civil Service as his agents to co-operate with the people and with all sections of the community in order to make the experiment a success. Will they not respond to the call? I am sure that they will (Applause).

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Mr. Surendra-
nath Bannerjee.

Lastly let me appeal to my fellow countrymen, to the

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Extremist branch of the National Party. May I invite them to assume a more reasonable attitude in regard to the Reform Scheme. We shall be on our trial. Ten years hence the Parliamentary Commission will be here. They will institute an enquiry ; let us see to it that it will not be open to them to say that we have been tried and found wanting. The future is committed to our care, we can make or mar it. Oh let us make it with these qualities of patriotism, self sacrificing determination, earnestly working in the cause of self government which will improve the destinies of India.

Brother delegates, we have entered upon a new era. Criticism must give place to construction. Work and not agitation, co-operation and not criticism must be the watchwords of that construction. Inspired by these grand ideals, let us start our march upon the grand road to the Promised Land which has been held out to us in glorious vision by our august Sovereign. It is a holy pilgrimage which we are undertaking to the holy of holies, and these eyes of mine, bedimmed with age, may not perhaps be permitted to witness the wonders of that sacred shrine, but, God willing, I am sure that our entrance into the holy land is assured. In the fullness of time we shall reach the goal, take our place, our rightful and legitimate place, among the great communities of the freest nations that the world has ever seen. (Applause). There are the visions which appear before my mind.

These are the visions that are before us. Are they to be realized or are they to be relegated to the dim past ? If they are to be realized it will be by our own efforts, by ourselves for "nations by themselves are made," by our devotion, by our self sacrifice, by our patriotism tempered by the spirit of compromise and the spirit of moderation.

With these words I desire to move the first resolution (Applause).

**The Hon. Sir
G.M. Chitnavis.**

The Hon. Sir G. M. Chitnavis in seconding the resolution said :—The Hon'ble the mover Babu Surendra Nath Banerjea has given the history and the details of the Reform Scheme with his usual eloquence and ability. I will second the resolution without going into details. The Act, as now placed on the Statute Book, is considered by all thoughtful people to be very liberal in its scope and future possibilities. It will be for us by wise self-restraint and moderation to make it a success. Nation-building is not the work of a day. Long years of arduous labours lie before us. We have got the opportunity ; a great constitutional change has been made,

a change fraught with immense potentialities and responsibility to shape our own destiny ourselves. With this Act on the Statute Book, India makes a new start in her political development. She begins, we might well say, an honourable career of Self-Government. The great mass of educated people do realize that. It is a fact now virtually admitted by all sections of the community and men of all shades of public opinion. There may be certain defects as pointed out by both sections of the political parties in the country, but these defects and omissions are likely to be removed as soon as the experiment is tried and found to be a success. It must be admitted that the Reform Act is a great gift of England to India—it is our Magna Charta and is the result of the monumental and devoted labours of Mr. Montagu, Lord Chelmsford and a whole host of willing and able coadjutors. The future will be in our hands. Thanks to the great leaders of British opinion, India is taking her rightful place in the Empire, a place of pride won in the battle fields of Europe, Asia and Africa. What great changes that means to our country, what its consequences are sure to be on our relations with the several parts of the Empire, we can well imagine. Honest and sustained efforts are being made to bring India gradually in line with the other colonial Dominions. Attempts have been made to remove such long standing causes of complaint as the cotton duties which had penalised India in favour of Lancashire. Race bar in the matter of bestowal of King's commissions upon Indians is being gradually removed and honest attempts are made in spite of overwhelming difficulties to remove the insults and inequalities to which Indians are being treated in foreign countries. We have obtained a seat in the House of Lords and everything is being done to give a responsible and honourable place to India in the councils of the Empire. All this leads to the conclusion that the day will not be far distant when India will have complete political freedom, as is foreshadowed in His Majesty's Proclamation which has been hailed with great delight by the whole country. The Act undoubtedly is a first and substantial step in that direction. The Royal Proclamation makes our position still very clear. We hail with fervent gratitude all these blessings. It is only meet that a national welcome of this kind should be accorded to it. Not only in the Press, but also on the platform. What part the Moderates took in bringing about these reforms has been well described in the address of the chairman of the Reception Committee, but if more evidence were needed I would refer you to what that veteran statesman Dr. Subramanyam of Madras said. He says "In spite of all that has been said against the Moderates they were entitled to very great credit. He would like to say in common justice that they had rendered a great service in obtaining the scheme. The way in which they established friendly relations almost from the commencement with

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Mr. Montagu and the maintenance of that cordial relationship down to the very last and the way in which by the evidence of the representatives they impressed the Joint Committee, all these might be taken to have contributed materially to the Act as it stood at present." We pride ourselves upon the fact that the early passing of the Act is due to the conciliatory attitude, the moderation and the co-operation of the Moderate party and the above is a welcome testimony to the services the moderate party has rendered. And the more welcome the testimony is as it comes from one who is no partisan and writes in no partisan spirit. In speaking about the Reforms, I may however say that the change which is presently reported to have come in the attitude of the Congress, if true, in favour of Reforms has removed one obstacle to united action to make the reforms successful among the several political parties. I hope that other causes of differences may be removed and time may yet come when all political parties may work jointly with mutual respect and restraining influences to make the reforms the great success which their authors and the well-wishers of the Act so hopefully anticipate.

**The Hon.
Mr. Gokuldas
Parekh.**

The Hon. Mr. Gokuldas Parekh in supporting the Resolution said:—Mr. President, brother Delegates and gentlemen, I have much pleasure in supporting the Resolution which is now before you. All of you know that the experiment that is now being made is a novel one. There has not up to now been a single case of evolution from an autocratic Government into a Government responsible to the electors. This is the first experiment of its kind and I would liken it to a gift of a packet of seeds by persons who know that these seeds will be well cultivated. The gift has been made to you with the full knowledge that it will bring to you an excellent harvest and we receive it with the full knowledge that it is likely to do us considerable good and bring forth good fruit. Under these circumstances I submit that it would be altogether un-Indian if we accept the gift sulkily. We must in every case of a gift try to receive it gratefully and I trust that our people will try to do so. With these observations I beg to support the Resolution.

**The Hon.
Mr. Srinivas
Sastri.**

The Hon. Mr. Srinivas Sastri said:—Mr. President, brother delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is with the greatest pleasure that I come upon the platform to support this Resolution. It is by far the most important of the Resolutions that you will deal with to-day and to-morrow and if we dwell at some length upon it I do not think that we shall at all mis-spend our time. This Resolution opens with a regret that no liberalisation has been allowed in the Central Government of India. It is certainly a matter of regret. Our veteran leader has

already told you that all the deputations from India pressed the introduction of dualism in the Government of India with unanimity. That was rejected by the Joint Committee. But our regret at this may well be qualified and tempered by a certain consideration. While with one hand rejecting this common request of ours the Joint Committee have given us instead so many improvements in the Central Government that we are under no necessity at all to go into mourning or to shed tears at this omission (Hear, hear). They have given us three Members on the Executive Council of the Viceroy. They have given us what we did not dare ask for, namely, the power of voting the imperial Budget (Cheers). We never had this before and as far as I remember it was not one of the seriously pressed points in our programme. The Joint Committee however have realized that when this big step of Reform is taken and christened responsible government, it will be absurd to deny to the representatives of the people even the right of voting their own taxes and so they have—with qualifications it is true, with subtractions it is true—given us in the Imperial Council the right to vote the Budget. The Viceroy, if he pleases, may consider any vote that has been denied or any item that has been reduced as having been voted in its entirety. That, however is to be construed, as I have said, as a deduction from our power but not as a total denial of it. We have got this great gain. Then we have got fiscal autonomy which Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea has already mentioned. Then above all they have gone much further than we had intended and given us in the Imperial Council a First House consisting of 140 Members of whom 100 will be elected and a Second House of 60 Members of whom 40 will be elected. Now this is a constitution, you will grant, which is a very considerable improvement even on the English House of Lords. Where there is a difference or a kind of deadlock between the two Houses, all such matters in dispute are to be decided by a Joint Committee of both Houses where the elected Members will be in an overwhelming majority. Now all these things put together increase our power in the Central Government to such an extent that I think you will allow that my claim has been made good that really the denial of actual dualism in that Government is not after all a matter for unqualified regret.

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Mr. Srinivas
Sastri.

Now coming to the Provinces we have also obtained a good deal. We have obtained practical control over the administration and we have obtained practical control over Finance, over what is known as the power of the purse. I well remember the fateful December of 1908 when the Congress met in Madras and it was left to Mr. Gokhale (Applause) to explain and expound the Minto-Morley Reforms before they were actually put into operation. He stated at

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that time that while what we had there was merely association with Government, what we had up to that time was only consultation with the Government and thereafter we should have association with the Government and he then added—if I remember correctly—that that did not mean participation in the Government—that would come in time he said. I wonder if he realized then that that participation would come so soon but it has now come. Long kept out of the temple of self-government we were admitted into it by slow degrees, first, into its outer court in the year 1908, and we are now admitted to the full privilege of worship in that temple (Applause). Self-Government is now ours. Provincial Government, it is my privilege to tell you, is now practicable. Our good friends on the other side complain that we have not got provincial autonomy yet, whole and entire. That is perfectly true. It is another step that we have to take and I hope it will be the next step. But then I hope that I am not guilty of over-interpretation of the various privileges of the Bill and of the recommendations of the Joint Committee not yet unfolded in the Bill but they are certainly made the subject of Rules practically having the force of an Act. I do not wish at all to over-interpret but I am bound to assume that the provisions of the Act will in practice yield to us benefits on the footing that your Ministers, your representatives in the Legislative Councils, will be men of initiative, of courage, of patriotism, of ability to use what they have placed in their hands to the best advantage in the country (Applause). Taking it at that and supposing that our men will use the power they get to the best advantage, then what will our footing in the Provincial Government amount to? Please remember that we are going to have at least three Indians to one European in the Government of every Province, perhaps four Indians to every European—that is to say supposing there are three Ministers instead of two as you are sure one day to have. Now that means that the Government is predominantly manned by Indians. Now do not tell me that one of these will be a pure official responsible to Parliament and to the Secretary of State, that he will not be the chosen of the people. That is true only on the surface. If you examine it carefully you will agree with me that practically you will have three good Indians responsible all of them to the elected House of Legislature. That one who is in the Executive Council working with two brother Indians will not be able to separate himself for a long time or on any vital matter as if standing by himself on a different platform. The pressure of the atmosphere around him will be irresistible and for all practical purposes you may consider that the day of the unmitigated Bureaucrat, white or brown, is ended (Laughter and applause). You will then have for all practical purposes three men all of them responsible to the Legislative House.

And then what becomes of the division between Transferred and Reserved subjects. Now I make another statement which you may consider bold but which I consider none too bold on the supposition that when the power is placed in your hands to elect your own representatives you elect the proper men. A certain number of functions will no doubt be reserved to the Executive Government and they in the last resort will have power to administer them as they please, to make laws for us, not altogether as they please, but more or less on the lines we direct. But still to the Governor is now entrusted the power of over-riding the decision of the Legislature as regards the Reserved Departments but not absolutely without qualification. This power he will have to exercise under such difficulties as will make it impossible for any particular Governor to exercise it more than once in his regime. Every single exercise of this extreme power of over-riding the decision of the Legislature will make the subsequent exercise of it more difficult and I am perfectly certain that a Governor will be foolish in the extreme who repeatedly sets aside such decision, passes laws on his own account and goes before the Select Committee of Parliament with a case to make out and then also runs the risk of being over-ruled altogether or negatived by the vote of Parliament itself. In point of fact a Governor who appeals in such a way may not in any given case have the decision going against him, but the trouble will be so great, the bother of making out a case in England against the representatives of the people will be so great that, as I have told you before, I have every confidence, and you will agree with me, that he will not dare to exercise it too frequently. That then is a power which is bound sooner or later to fall into disuse. Practically therefore the Reserved Subjects considering that your Ministers are going to be three in number (I am using the word Minister loosely) and practically therefore even your Reserved Subjects, if we only know how to use our power, are already half transferred to us.

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Then as regards the power of the purse, you will be perhaps interested to hear that the Joint Committee set aside the recommendation of the Government of India in this particular and restored this item, the power of the purse, to the position which it occupied in the Joint report of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu. We have control all along the line, Transferred or Reserved, of the purse subject only to the qualification that as regards the Reserve Subjects the Government will have the power of restoring items which may be struck out or reduced by us. It is a serious qualification but it is still a qualification which is bound to grow less and less important in time. We have therefore practically a control over the purse in the Provinces. Now let me ask you seriously.

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whether we may not claim that even in the Provinces we have, if not complete, at least locally acknowledged Provincial autonomy. We have such a degree of Provincial Autonomy that for all practical purposes we may consider it fairly complete and that in a few years it is bound to be theoretically complete. At the time when these reforms were first announced you knew that the politicians in India were divided into two camps, we calling ourselves Moderates and the other party sometimes calling themselves Nationalists, sometimes with bravado styling themselves Extremists as well. They said that the true tactics were to deprecate these Reforms and say that they were nothing and to ask for the whole thing, not necessarily with a view to get the whole but with a view to get as much as possible in such a bargain. We told them that on the contrary that the truer policy was to stand forward and declare our cordial opinion that these Reforms are substantial and say that we welcome them and accept them as supporters and defenders of the Scheme and then to ask as friends and supporters to be entitled to certain extensions here and certain improvements there so that the Scheme will really be such as we deserve or can work with advantage. It was then said that these were bad tactics. We ventured to think that they were good tactics, not only good policy, but good tactics as well. You know that as a result of our differences we were obliged to separate ourselves and organise a camp of our own. Now the time has come to ask whether they or we have proved the true prophets (Hear hear, and applause). I venture to think that it is almost beyond question that we have proved the truer prophets (Cheers). Of course it is open to people to claim that everything that has been obtained, has been obtained through them and that we contributed nothing but obstruction and a little hesitation. But I think that it will be admitted even by certain people on the other side who have not altogether taken leave of their sense of justice and fairness—I think it will be universally admitted that we who took the view that it was the wisest and likewise the best course to appear as friends of the Scheme and as its supporters,—that we have contributed largely towards obtaining for India this very large measure of Responsible Government (Applause).

I will tell you in one word in many ways this Scheme has been improved, and when I say this Reform Act improves the Scheme, please understand that I am comparing the Reform Act as it is to-day not with the recommendation of the Government of India of the 5th March for they went back a good deal, but with the original Montagu-Chelmsford Report. You may remember that we were in various ways dissatisfied with that Report and were asking for a great many things in excess of that. Have we obtained anything? If ever that Scheme has been extended, if we have been able

to get improvements here and improvements there then our claim to have taken the right course in 1917 has been substantiated. I think we can claim that we have obtained a great many improvements. Everything in the Central Government which I have described to you is an improvement. But there is one other thing which you may remember. The Joint Committee has given us, and practically included it in the Bill as well, that we are going to have elected Presidents of the popular Houses hereafter. This is a thing to which the Government of India attach no importance. Seemingly they did not attach very great importance but they took very great care to write in strong terms that we should not have elected Presidents at all. I was one of these who believed at the time and still believe that without elected Presidents your popular Houses will be feeble, and will be slow in finding out their own privileges and ineffective in standing on their own feet. It is when it is presided over by an officer chosen by itself that it will obtain the fullest room for self-expression. Now that has been obtained and several other things which it will take too long a time for me to mention. I claim then that we were fully justified at the time in assuming the role of friends and supporters of the Bill for in that way we really have succeeded in extending the Bill and obtaining many improvements in it. Now having in that way obtained a big measure of responsible Government, what is the attitude that this House of Liberals is going to take in regard to it. The last Clause of this resolution lays down the necessity for hearty co-operation between all sections of the community, Europeans and Indians, officials and non-officials. The Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea has referred to the Europeans and their attitude, has referred to the Indian Civil Service and their attitude. But, my good friends if you will not consider me guilty of high treason to this camp, if you will not consider me a heretic and a renegade, permit me to say that this invitation to co-operate must now be extended in all honest good citizenship even to our brethren of the National Congress (Applause). They are Indians, they are the citizens of the future India, just as much as ourselves (Applause). Their co-operation, their full understanding of the Reform Scheme, their fullest sympathy with us in the working of the new Act are absolutely essential. It is a great pity that one of the leaders of the Congress should have gone there after having declared it as his opinion that the Extremist Party should capture all the seats in the new Houses. For what purpose? Not for the purpose of extracting from the Reform Act all the benefits and advantages which it is capable of conferring, but for the purpose of showing that this Reform Act is unworkable (Cries of shame, shame), that it will not do, that the whole thing must be torn up and a new constitution devised for the purpose of satis-

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fyng the political aspirations of India. Where will that lead to? To nothing but permanent anarchy and chaos. I am positive that counsel will not prevail even in the Indian National Congress. There is among them even now, I am happy to state from personal knowledge, a very considerable body of opinion (Applause) that this Reform Act is a substantial measure of Responsible Government (Applause). Unless everything goes against us even the Indian National Congress will be passing to-day a Resolution more or less on these lines (Applause). To some who are utterly consumed with the spirit of partisanship that may not be good news but to me it is truly good news. It is the happiest augury that the Indian National Congress from which we have had with so much regret to separate ourselves the other day, should have come round now to our view (Applause). What better triumph can there be for the Moderates than this. We have succeeded then more than we anticipated, even sooner than we had hoped (Applause).

Now, brother Delegates, I am fully persuaded on every side there will be a recognition that the New act will mark a new era and that therefore we must enter upon it with a new outlook on politics generally. Our whole attitude towards Government must change. Hitherto, whatever you may say theoretically, the Moderates and the Extremists employed a virulent policy. All of us had a suspicion of Government. We never felt fully that it was ours (Cheers). We always thought we were outsiders, sometimes threatening, sometimes cajoling, but on the whole we considered ourselves standing outside the external door and denied power in the inner councils of the Administration. It is quite otherwise now. When the new Councils are started, the Government will be ours (Applause). If that is so, it requires a fundamental change of outlook. We must turn right about towards the new Government. It may be very easy to turn right about on drill, it is not so easy to execute a right about turn in your minds, especially in your attitude towards the Government. During the last 35 or 36 years of our political existence we have always taken a certain critical attitude towards the Government, lacking in sympathy, always suspecting some inner motive, never feeling that our views would be listened to, but now every word of ours will have its own share in shaping our destinies. Every serious thought which we Indians may have will tell. All your programmes, your newspaper leaders, your platform speeches, everything will have its own weight in the Legislative Councils. You can all take a hand in the making of your laws, in the raising of your revenue, in fact in the shaping of your destiny. Where then is the hesitation in asking that every citizen in this country, whoever he may be, Extremist or Moderate, should change his attitude entirely.

should realize fully the power granted in the new Constitution, should with fear and trembling in his heart at the responsibility put upon his shoulders enter the sacred precincts of this new Constitution and worship fully, taking his place as a citizen of the Indian Empire (Applause). I wish to end on this note because it is a very serious responsibility that we have. You may remember that even in the private reports which we have had of the debate in both Houses, how Member after Member, those who were friendly as well as those who were not so friendly to us, spoke in accents of genuine hesitation, sometimes not unshared by me and others who are amongst us, who have shared the troubles of the past few years,—how Member after Member got up and said “We have conferred a great measure of self government on India, we are making a great experiment, what will come of it all. We hope that the future Ministers, the future representatives of the people, the future taxpayers of the country, will all realize entirely their fullest responsibility.” You will remember that the eyes of the whole world are on us watching how we use this new power. On that will depend in a great measure not only whether we Indians ought to get more power of a constitutional time hereafter, but also the future question of the whole of Asia—whether Asiatics can work representative institutions and develop responsible governments and use them in an orderly peaceful and thoroughly constitutional way. These are the mighty questions which our future conduct of our own administration will set at rest. It behoves us all to remember these immense responsibilities and that is why I for my part accept the terms of the last part of the resolution and would give the invitation to co-operate to everybody even to the other side. (Loud and continued applause).

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Mr. T. H. Campbell Howes supported the resolution. He said :—Ladies and gentlemen, it is customary, I believe, for a speaker at a public meeting to preface his remarks with an apology for his appearance. But I will make no such concession to tradition. On the contrary I make bold to say that when the opportunity of addressing you as a Member of the Reception Committee of this Conference was offered me, I seized it with avidity because I feel that on this occasion the voice of every non-official European who believes in the bare justice of constitutional reform in India and who is not dumb, should make itself heard as a man who has made a study of publicity methods I am naturally a firm believer in the efficacy of propaganda, and no propaganda worthy the name can be conducted by the select few. It is our business here to-day to speak for the great majority of Indian people, and to welcome on behalf of the men and women of our several communities the great Christian gift of the Reforms Act which Mr. Montagu like a modern Santa Claus has fashioned for us. It

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is our task to-day and our duty, to raise our voices counter to the voices of the Extremists on either side who would repudiate or wreck the measure. Though the bald statement may shock the susceptibilities of some among us, it is none the less true that we are to-day largely propagandists, and, as I have said, effective propaganda must be emphasized by quantity as well as by quality. Every additional voice that can be raised on our side is of service—and this is why I was quick to accept the honour of membership on this Conference's Reception Committee.

Although I cannot claim to be here with a mandate from the non-official European Community to support the wise and farseeing statesmanship of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu, I can, and do declare that my views are the views of every fair-minded Englishman in India who has given a little unprejudiced thought to the subject. The pity is that hitherto not too many of my community have ventured to do this, but the number of those who have done so is steadily growing, and every day that passes adds adherents to the policy I am proud to support, I dare say I shall be criticized—not to say attacked—in some quarters as a traitor to the salt of the European Association. The prospect does not alarm me unduly, for I recognise that the European Association's policy of yesterday and to-day can hardly be described as a popular one even among its members. Of the 8000 men and women who subscribe to the Association's funds I would be surprised if more than 500 had really studied either the Reforms Scheme or the provisions of the Reforms Act. And the 500 individuals who have done so, will, I fancy, not be among my critics. It is a theory of mine, supported by conversations with many friends, European and Indian, that every normal Englishman who takes the trouble to acquaint himself with the politics of this wonderful land must needs be as honest a Home Ruler as India's Demosthenes, Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea. Differences of opinion as to the rate of progress which India should make towards complete Self-Government there might exist, but on the broad subjects of constitutional Reform there can be no two views among honest and well-informed Englishmen who think for themselves. I have noticed criticism in India to the effect that the non-official European Community in this country did not agitate sufficiently—did not press their Association's views with sufficient force. And it has occurred to me that what Mr. Welby might fancy was mere apathy and sluggish lack of enthusiasm among his followers, was really passive support of that party which favoured sweeping Reform. Ladies and Gentlemen, I ask you to believe that among the men and women of my community there are more unprofessed, and even unknowing supporters of the fine statesmanship of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu than many Indians imagine.

It is a significant fact, upon which too much stress cannot be laid, that at the very moment at which Mr. Welby and Lord Sydenham were assuring Lord Selbourne's Joint Committee that the British commercial community in India were panic-stricken at the prospect of the Reform Act, at that very moment India was in the midst of a company promoting boom in which lakhs of Britishers' rupees were involved. While the House of Commons was being solemnly warned that British brains and capital would never consent to risk their future in a Reformed India, we Englishmen in this country were investing largely in the new industrial concerns which all of us, Europeans and Indians, hope will make of India's trade future something inconceivable bright in the annals of nations. And not only have Englishmen in India seized the very moment of the Reforms Controversy to prove their faith in the future of the country, and the good sense and business capability of India, but to-day, after the Reform Act has received the Royal consent we hear of vast shipbuilding enterprises actually contemplating emigration from the banks of the Clyde to the banks of the Hooghly. Facts are stronger and more convincing than words, and whatever may be the tone of my Community's official statement, nothing could more clearly prove that, neither in India nor in Great Britain, do British business-men fear for India's future. Ladies and gentlemen, I have referred to the eloquent fact of renewed industrial activity in India, but there is a feature of this incident in the history of India's development, which, to my views, is a sign and a glad portend of the future, I refer to the co-operation between Indians and Europeans in business enterprise, which co-operation is so strongly marked to-day. This friendly co-operation, this meeting of Indian and Europeans on the Director's Board of so many new companies, this joint taking of business risks, appears to be a happy augury for the future. Good businessmen of one community have been brought into close business relationship with equally capable men of another community. They will not be slow to appreciate the good sense of those with whom they work. Already these business meetings (comparitively new to Calcutta, but the recognised thing in Bombay) are producing social effects, and the friendship of the Boardroom is penetrating the drawingroom. And if when with merely the joint commercial interests of a company at stake Indians and Europeans, have so readily and easily learned the value of friendly co-operation, it is too much to expect that with the destinies of a continent at stake political co-operation is impossible between the best men of our communities? No, ladies and gentlemen it is not an optimistic opinion I express, but merely the commonsense view. Believe me, there are not many men of my community who regard the future with misgivings. On the contrary, very many of us gladly recog-

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nise that the Reform Act was long overdue, and we concede that a people which has fought by our side, has fought as bravely as the bravest among us for the liberation of other nations, a people whose business men are among the shrewdest, whose individuals can equal the best men we can produce at any given branch of human effort, a people whose philosophy and religious thought are models for the world—this people is entitled to self government at the earliest moment compatible with efficiency. It should not be necessary to appeal for co-operation between Europeans and Indian to make the Reforms a success. I know, I am convinced, that the good sense which distinguishes the Indian as well as the English man, will bring about this friendly co-operation so far as the non-official elements of both communities are concerned. And I am not concerned here with the remote possibility of departmental friction between officials, for I pay the Indian Civil service and the Public Services generally the compliment of crediting their Members with nearly as much fairness, sanity and commonsense as go to make a successful businessman.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my appearance here to-day is merely that of one with a message—a message assuring you, and all those who will read reports of this Conference's Meeting, of the sympathetic and friendly co-operation of fair-minded Europeans in making the Reforms a success, and in defeating the mischievous efforts of those enemies to fairness and progress—the Extremists on both sides. But I cannot conclude my remarks without paying the best of my abilities a tribute to the men to whom we owe the Reforms Act. To His Imperial Majesty, the King Emperor, the thanks and homage of every man and woman who love India are due for the epochmaking Proclamation with which the Royal Consent to the measure was announced. I have noticed unfair and ungracious suggestions and hints—more especially in that section of the press rightly dubbed “reactionary” to the effect that the text of His Majesty's fine proclamation was the work of Mr. Montagu—or at least inspired by the Secretary of State. Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure you will join with me in setting down these suggestions as merely the work of interested men anxious to belittle the significance of the Proclamation. We know that His Majesty has ever taken a deep interest in India and that his sympathies have gone out to the people of this country in greater measure perhaps than has been the case with any of his predecessors on the Throne. Under the circumstances, the malevolent suggestions that the Proclamation was not His Majesty's spontaneous acceptance and enlargement of his Parliament's policy, is nothing short of an insult to the Crown and to our intelligence. (1) I am sure that every Indian and European was profoundly touched by the mark of His Majesty's confidence in his subject's

loyalty in directing the release of political prisoners, and I am equally confident that those who have been, or will be released, as a result of His Majesty's act of clemency will justify that fine confidence. To His Excellency Lord Chelmsford who works so steadily and courageously with the Secretary of State in the cause of India's Constitutional freedom—who remains unmoved in the face of the storm of reactionary criticism that would have daunted lesser statesmen,—we are profoundly grateful, and with our thanks to a chivalrous and honest English gentleman we must combine the assurance that we will loyally assist him by every means in our power to help forward the success of the measure with which his name is associated. And what shall I say of Mr. Montagu? The greatest, most farseeing and most courageous Cabinet Minister of the Day—a man who combines the splendid vision of the idealist with the consummate tact of England's cleverest parliamentarian, a statesman who has identified himself throughout his brief but wonderfully productive career with the cause of India's progress,—to him India, and all who love the country, owe so much that only time will reveal the extent of his great life's work. It is to Mr. Montagu's credit that certain organs of the European Press in India has consistently combined to vilify him and his policy. He has been described by misguided and misleading English journalists in India as the political adventurer who is out to build for himself a reputation at the expense of the security of India and the Empire. Ladies and Gentlemen, the tactics of those who decry Mr. Montagu and his fine work are as old and as transparent as they are despicable. The untruthful vilification of an opponent is now recognised all the world over as the decadent politicians' confession of the weakness of his case. It is unfair methods such as these which have brought the reactionaries into such disrepute among the people of India, and I venture here to declare that unless much of the journalism in India conducted by my own countrymen is purged of its gross unfairness its narrowmindedness, its betrayal of the ideals of every honest Englishman, the regrettable bitterness that has pervaded politics in India will not die out. (2) Ladies and Gentlemen for all the reactionaries may slander him, if there is a Statesman in the world to-day who induces belief in the theory of the superman, it is capable, splendidly confident, unassuming, Mr. Montagu—the most practical of idealists and the greatest Secretary of State that has ever ruled at Whitehall. But there are others who have worked on behalf of the Reforms. There is, first, our Governor, Lord Ronaldshay, who, with Lord Willingdon, helped Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford to withstand the efforts of those Lieutenant Governors who maintained that the Act was too great a concession. His Excellency the Governor of Bengal has proved himself a wide and sympathetic friend to the Indian

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aspirations, and now has flung all the weight of his enthusiasm and power into the task of providing Bengal with industrial education. I have mentioned only one recent illustration of His Excellency Lord Ronaldshay's Statesmanship, for it was typical of all he has done. Bengal's industrial future lies largely in the schools, of the Presidency, and His Excellency has set himself to secure success in this, as in all other avenues of the Presidency's progress. The co-operation of Lords Sinha and Meston at the Imperial Conference, and more recently in the House of Lords to secure the passage of the Reforms Bill, has appealed to every imagination as typifying the India of to-day where European and Indian will work together for the country's welfare.

I have withheld mention of the name which is on all your lips until now, because I wished to dispose of the official and semi-official friends of Reform before alluding to one whose whole life, public and private, has been devoted to the cause of constitutional progress. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea the venerable leader and politician who is among us here to-day, must be a proud man, for to him may be ascribed actually and in all truth the inspiring of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford. As a leader in the Partition Agitation Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea a decade ago indirectly but none the less surely, inspired Mr. Montagu to a policy of liberalism, and I am sure our Secretary of State will be the first to acknowledge the help received from the man who has done more for this country's political advancement than any other leader of the people in India to-day. And I am of opinion that Surendranath's fearless and splendid opposition of Extremism, which opposition has safeguarded the cause of progress, is among the most courageous of his Acts as a politician. When he saw that rash counsels and the hasty extremism of hot-heads imperilled the country's political and internal safety, he formed the Moderate Party which he leads to-day, and which is now the most influential and most strongly supported of India's political parties. Mr. Bannerjea I repeat, must be a proud man for to him more than to any other non-official in the Empire belongs the title of "Father of the Reforms." A word of thanks is due, likewise to those ladies and gentlemen who supported Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea's most recent victorious political campaign in Great Britain, and to that remarkable, conscientious and brave lady Mrs. Annie Besant who, like Mr. Bannerjea, is not afraid to oppose Extremists, and whose untiring work and thoroughly up-to-date political campaign in Great Britain, helped Mr. Montagu's cause immensely. Mrs. Besant is an Irishwoman, and I am sure that she will agree with me when I suggest that if the cause of Irish Home Rule has been in the capable hands of Mr. Montagu, assisted by Mr. Bannerjea, Mrs. Besant and their

capable henchmen as educators of the public, Ireland would be as happy and contented a country as India promises to be.

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Although I have expressed my faith in the good sense of my community, I would here appeal to those few Britishers, who, misled by certain papers or their own lack of understanding, stand in opposition to the policy we are met to support. I appeal to this minority to "play the game." The story of human progress is a tale of evolution and I am sure no Englishman will deny that India's evolution has been rapid. The great majority of us hold that the time has come when the people of this country must in common fairness be given a fair share in the responsibility of administration, and that their participation in the government of the country should steadily increase until such time as India, emerging from her political apprenticeship, is given complete self-government. And it cannot be too often impressed upon the minds of our opponents that the way of the Reforms Act is the only way. Alternative schemes put forward by Extremists on both sides have been tested and considered by a committee of impartial men, and, without exception, these alternatives have failed before the acid test of impartial criticism. Had the opposition been able to produce a single sound alternative scheme, its non-conversion to our point of view could be defended. But in view of the utter failure by the parties of the extreme Right and left to produce a workable and statesmanlike scheme, their opposition to-day will be attributed by the world to mere petulance. We here, know that the Reform Act is a measure both generous and safe, and we all have confidence in the future. That mistakes will be made seems inevitable but such should prove to be only blessings disguised. Such mistakes as will be made should be regarded as salutary lessons that will add to our wisdom. A great measure of responsibility will rest on the first Minister and the new Councils appointed under the Act, and that all will rise to the occasion, I am entirely confident, I, for one, believe, (and I know that many highly placed officials in India to-day are of the same opinion) that when they shoulder responsibility our new Ministers, Councils, and voters will justify the trust reposed in them by His Majesty the King Emperor and his Parliament. The machine of Government will be a new one, but at the outset the mechanics will have the assistance of trained men in working it, and I am sure that the co-operation between the apprentices and the older hands will be tactful and cordial, and that the legislation and good government manufactured by the administrative machine will be of a stamp satisfactory to the owners of the plant—the nation with the installation of the new machinery, our work, gentlemen, will have only just begun. I am fond of hard work and a firm believer in the

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good effect on the average human constitution mental and physical. Therefore, I hope that none of us will be in a mood to shirk the work that lies ahead of us. We are not going to succumb to the prevailing mania of the day and "strike work", for our very existence and our future will depend upon the quality and extent of our personal labours. As a party, much lies ahead of us. We have, for one thing, to educate the voter, and influence the Minister, and if we as a party are to hold our own we must settle down to work. To prove how much as a European I realize, and have long since realized, that the success of the Reforms Act lies largely in our ability to educate the people rightly, I may mention what is an open secret that for some months past I have been planning the organization of new European owned papers whose liberal policy will reflect the spirit of the times. We hope in the course of a few months to be able to throw on the side of the Centre Party a publicity organization of newspapers and magazines that will carry a fair and reasonable policy towards Indian aspirations and which will encourage industrial development bringing Indian and Europeans together to the advancement of the best interests of the country, politically, socially and industrially. Ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for your patience in hearing me out and in concluding my remarks I would recall my message to you and to the world. The recent visit to Calcutta of two gallant Australian airmen has provided us with just the symbol and sign we need to-day. The flight was undertaken as an experiment—it was a tentative attempt to link the Empire. Pessimists spoke largely of "danger" and hinted at failure. The airmen remained undaunted. They had confidence in themselves and in their machines. They carried on. They succeeded. Captain Sir Ross Smith and Lieutenant Sir Keith Smith added another link to the chain which binds the nations of the British Empire firmly. Incidentally, the airmen linked India to Britain and to Australia, each to each. The Reforms Act, like the Australian flight has been called a great and daring experiment. Mr. Montagu is confident of success, and so are we. Pessimists prate of danger and catastrophe. But if the brave adventure of the Australian flight has been guided by pessimists there would have been a link less to-day in the Empire's chain of communications. And similarly, Great Britain and India are not going to be intimidated by hypothetical risks, from adding another link to the chain of loyalty that binds India to Great Britain—a loyalty that is all the greater because it has merited and received trust. Ladies and Gentlemen, the thinking men and women of my community are as assured of India's future well-being, political and commercial and social, as they are of their own pleasure in the thoughts of immediate co-operation with Indians in working out the destinies of the Indian Empire.

To the Resolution I would add a word of especial thanks to our own Peer, Lord Sinha of Raipur whose Statesmanship and eloquence have so naturally assisted in the passing of the measure into law. Lord Sinha's work has been referred to by abler tongues than mine and any attempt on my part to add to the chorus of praise his Lordship has so deservedly received were superfluous. His whole life and career stands before us a model of what an Indian of talent and determination can accomplish against great odds.

The Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru who also supported the resolution said :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, after the eloquent speeches of the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea and the Hon. Mr. Sastri, I think that is hardly necessary for me to enter into any details. But there are just one or two matters which I would beg leave hurriedly to place before you before I retire. Those of us who are still inclined to continue in their carping spirit with reference to the Reforms may well occupy themselves in contrasting the conditions which will now be inaugurated with the conditions which exist to-day. I can best illustrate my meaning with reference to the Province in which I have the honour to belong and I believe a similar line of argument may be adapted with regard to each one of the senior Provinces of India.

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Sapru.

Now take the Province of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. We have a population of 48 millions. I believe that I am right in saying that the total number of votes in my Province at the present moment does not exceed 3000 to 4000 all told. Under the new scheme you will have 14 to 16 lakhs of men admitted to vote. Take the Legislative Council of the United Province as it stands to-day. Oudh, out of a total strength of 48 Members of the Legislative Council of the United Province, has only 21 elected Members. Now under the new scheme, they will have a Council of 118 Members of whom 90 to 95 will be elected. I believe that more or less the same can be said of Bengal, Madras and Bombay. I am not quite sure whether I can recall to my mind the figures relating to those Provinces but I am not wide of the mark when I say that the result will be practically the same as in the case of these Provinces as in the case of my own Province. But then you may say "What is the good of having a large number of men to vote and what is the good of having a large number of men to sit on the Legislative Council unless they have full powers." Upon that power again I will remind you of two essential features of the Reform Scheme and I will also beg of you to contrast those features with the condition of things as they stand at present. Now supposing that in the Legislative Councils as they stand at the present moment, all the non-official Members combined to vote one way, they

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cannot defeat the official majority. It would be impossible for them to do so. But in the Councils they are to come into existence it is clear that by the non-official majority we shall have, you can carry any resolution. Now again you will remember that your function at the present moment is that of mere critics. You may either express your approval or your disapproval of any particular measure of the Government. Undoubtedly it has been the case that in the past also when public opinion has impressed itself emphatically and repeatedly on any particular measure, it has to a certain extent, if not wholly, influenced the policy of Government. But in the conditions which will now be inaugurated what will happen will be that at last with regard to a number of special subjects you will have complete power. Take for instance Excise, Public Works, Sanitation and last but not least from my point of view of the greatest service take education itself. All these subjects are going to be transferred to popular control. That is to say they will be administered by men who will be elected from amongst the Members of the Legislative Councils and who will therefore be responsible to the Legislative Assemblies. I was astonished to read the other day in a certain important newspaper a statement to the effect that all this talk about the transfer of education is camouflage, that University Education and Secondary Education had not been transferred. I do not think I shall be accused of divulging any secret when I say that last year about this time I happened to be working on the Finance Committee and I knew what tremendous difficulty we, the Indian Members, had there in convincing our European Colleagues or at any rate some of them that in the highest interests of the country it was desirable that education should be transferred. I say, not with any self pride but with feelings of gratification that we succeeded in convincing our European colleagues that having regard to the circumstances the time had come when national education should be entrusted to our men. I say that except with regard to one important matter—I will explain to you the importance of it immediately, the whole of the University Education from top to bottom has been transferred to popular control (Applause). All that has been reserved is the power of Legislation with regard to new Universities and that has been reserved because it is considered desirable from the educational point of view that there should be a certain amount of uniformity in the standards which can be attained, having regard to the entire control of the Provinces under the control of Government by a Central authority. It has been pointed out that the Chiefs' Colleges have not been transferred.

Let me tell you how the matter stands. Where are the Chiefs' Colleges? One is in Rajkot, one in Ajmeer, one in Indore. All these have been transferred. The only Chiefs'

College which has not been transferred is the Aitcheson College Lahore. We gave a considerable amount of time to the consideration of the question. The Aitcheson College occupies a very peculiar position. It is not accurate to say that it is wholly a Chiefs' College. It has not been transferred because it has been maintained either by the Native States or by the Central Government. Now let me remind you that these Chiefs' Colleges have nothing to do with the Universities in India. They hold their own examinations. They are outside the purview of the ordinary system of examination. Then again it has been pointed out that all education has not been transferred completely because European education has been reserved. As if we Indians have taken an absorbing interest, in the education of Europeans so far. Personally speaking I think that it is a distinct advantage to us that the education of Indians has been entrusted to Indian hands and that the education of Europeans has not been entrusted to Indian hands. It would have perhaps contributed to give rise to racial issues. (Cries of "Certainly"). We are not prepared to take that risk. I confess that it is criticism of this character which misguides the people and which gives a false note to the objection. It is for you to give a lead to the country on an occasion like this. I am not one of those who believe or who would like you to believe that the Reform Act is going to usher into existence the millenium. Nothing of the kind. I am not one of those who look on the Reform Act as giving us complete Home Rule or Self-Government. Nothing of the kind but I believe that the Reform Act places in our hands a powerful weapon for further progress. I do believe as those of us who believe in the destiny of this country and who are as strong Home Rulers as any one outside this Hall, that it is quite clear that this Bill gives to us opportunities which would not have been placed before us but for this Act.

The Hon. Dr.
Tej Bahadur
Sapru.

There is only one more matter to which I would invite attention and then I will retire. With regard to the Supreme Council it is perfectly true that no element of responsibility has been introduced therein. But remember, as the Hon. Mr. Sastri pointed out to you, that you can influence the policy of Government most effectively by the exercise of your right of vote on the Annual Budget. There is no greater power than the right of vote which you can exercise if you wish the Government to adopt one policy as against the other.

Lastly let me tell you that although we in the past have been accustomed to speak of the Acts and the Proclamations of 1838 and 1858 as a Magna Charta. I am one of those who have always believed that language of that sort was more or less metaphorical because if you closely analyse that Act or

that Proclamation of 1858, whatever else you may find, you do not find anywhere therein any promise or pledge of responsible Government for India. It is only for the first time now that the policy of England has been laid down in Statute form and confirmed by a Royal Proclamation. So far we were agitating for this Reform or that Reform without any definite goal in view. Now we have a definite goal and we can ask the Government of this country and the people of England to fulfil that expectation according to their own promise and according to their own pledge about which there can be no doubt whatsoever.

Mr. Erfan Ali.

Mr. Erfan Ali who also supported the resolution said :— It would be presumption on my part to add anything to what has been said by our leaders. I only rise to support the Resolution and to ask our people to help and co-operate and make the Act a success.

The Resolution was then put to the vote and carried unanimously.

Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer.

Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer said :—The proposition which is committed to my charge is this :

**RESOLUTION
V.**

Resolution V.

This Conference deeply regrets the long delay in the settlement of satisfactory peace terms with Turkey and views with grave concern any political action which may tend to affect the position or dignity of the Sultan of Turkey as the Khalifa or the guardian of the holy places of Islam.

This Conference earnestly calls the attention of His Majesty's Government to the depth and intensity of the feelings of His Majesty's subjects on this question and strongly pleads for an early and satisfactory settlement in consultation with the allies.

This Conference emphatically urges that any settlement which disregards the sentiments of the Moslem world, with which it is in agreement, will create widespread discontent and may be detrimental to peaceful progress. No settlement of the Turkish question can in the opinion of this Conference be satisfactory which contravenes the principles of justice and national integrity and even fails to redeem the solemn pledges made during the war.

Having read this resolution it hardly seems necessary to speak in favour of it, because its terms and its self-explanatory character must be apparent to all of you. But there are one or two considerations which I desire with your leave to place before you. It has been suggested in that speech which we have all listened to with the utmost delight, the

speech by the Hon. Mr. Sastri, that in order to work the Reforms which are ushering in a new era it is necessary to enlist the co-operation of all communities and the support of all classes in this land. From this aspect and for the future good of India, what problem can be more pressing in its urgency and intensity than this problem of the Khalifat. I know that it has been stated recently in some Anglo-Indian Journals that the enthusiasm on the part of communities others than the Moslems is artificial, that this enthusiasm is new born and is due to some machiavallianism or intrigue on the part of dark plotters (Shame.) I assure you friends that one who argues in that strain must disregard vitally all the signs of the times. Undoubtedly the feeling prevalent throughout India—and it has been growing in strength from the time of the Congress League Compact at Lucknow—is that the prosperity and contentment of the Moslem community in this country is bound up inextricably with the contentment and the well being of other communities as well. (Applause). That feeling of solidarity and national unity is getting to be so strong that it is not surprising that in a topic as to which the feelings of a large portion of men dwelling in this country are concerned so deeply and vitally—it is not surprising that the others should sympathise with them. But it is not only that; there is more in it. There are involved in it the desires and ideals of our Moslem brethren. And it is not only the desire and ideal of those Moslems who acknowledge the Sultan of Turkey as their Caliph and the spiritual head of their faith, who are bent on an adjustment of the peace terms in a manner favourable to Turkey but even those Moslems who do not acknowledge the spiritual supremacy of the Sultan of Turkey, these also are actuated by similar feelings and would resent the crumbling of a great Muslim power. They feel that Turkey is the last surviving Mahomedan Kingdom in this world and they desire that that Kingdom should be preserved in its entirety so far as it is compatible with the peace and integrity of the world. England as a great Asiatic power, as a great African power, cannot shut her eyes to the fact that from China to Morocco there is one common bond of feeling actuating the Moslems (Applause). Now it has been said, and in this respect I am afraid I may offend some of my Moslem brothers, that it is necessary therefore at once to assume the worst against everyone who is acting on this matter. I am reminded of the resolution passed not so very long ago urging non-co-operation with Great Britain, urging the boycott of British goods as a kind of threat in respect of this matter. I would strongly deprecate any such action in order to promote the success of the cause which we and our Moslem brethren have at heart. They should remember that this is not a British affair alone. It is an European matter concerning all the Allies. It must be universally admitted and acknowledged

Mr. C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyer.

that so far as British statesmen are concerned, they have tried their utmost but they have their colleagues to consult in this matter. Notwithstanding certain hesitating utterances from Ministers we have pledges from the highest possible quarters that everything that can be done will be done. I have been told that the Sheffield speech of the Premier is a great set back, but at the same time you will remember that the same statesman made a pronouncement on the 5th January 1918. Taking everything together, and having due admittance to the latest pronouncement of Mr. Montagu I think we are entitled to assume that the old pledges will be fulfilled and we ought to co-operate with English statesmen in order to strengthen their hands instead of alienating their feelings. If we do that we shall succeed these realities than by mere ascription of bad faith. It is from these points of view that I would ask the Conference to adopt this resolution.

**Khan Bahadur
Moulvi Abdus
Salam.**

Khan Bahadur Moulvi Abdus Salam in seconding the Resolution said :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I deem it a privilege to second the resolution that has just been moved in eloquent terms by our revered friend and leader the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea. Belonging myself to the Moderate Moslem party, represented by the Central National Mahomedan Association, and addressing an assembly of the leaders of the Moderate party in India, I will try to adopt the language of studied moderation in dealing with the Resolution, however strongly one may feel about it. But before dealing with the subject matter of the resolution, I will just say a word, about the significance of such a resolution being adopted by this Conference of Hindu and Moslem leaders of the Moderate party in India, and also about the significance of its being moved by a veteran and eminent Hindu Nationalist leader like the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea. And what is that significance? It is this, that the Hindu and Moslem leaders in India in their endeavour towards the realization of Indian Nationalism have sunk their differences, closed their ranks, and are united together into one solid phalanx of brotherhood into the service of India, their common Motherland, and as such they join in each other's joys and sorrows. And just as the blood of the martyred heroes of Amritsar and the Punjab has cemented the bonds of the new-born Indian Nationalism, the threatened expulsion of the ruling Turks who are an Asiatic race, from Europe has infused fresh vigour into the fibres of Indian Nationalism. It may suit some European writers to say that the Mussulmans and the Indians have no business to sympathise with the misfortunes of the Turks in Europe and Asia. They have just as much right to sympathise with the Turks as the English have the right to sympathise with the European Christians in Africa or Australia. In any case, the Indians have a greater right to sympathise

with the Turks than the English have to sympathise with the Poles, the Armenians, Yugo Slavs. The Indians have also the right to sympathise with the Turks, as the latter are the only Asiatic race that yet holds aloft the standard of sway over European soil, and as such forms a solitary set-off against the aggressive militarism of European races, who have made Asiatic countries their happy hunting ground. The Mussulmans have a right to sympathise with the Turks, because Turkey is the last independent stronghold of Islamic civilization in the world—a civilization which rescued Europe in the middle ages from the fetters of barbarianism and ignorance, and which, owing to its message of peace, equality and fraternity, charity and chivalry and negation of self, is still needed for the salvation of the world, and specially for the salvation of Europe from its fetters of narrow nationalism and hideous materialism, which culminated in the last terrible war. And moreover, the Sultan of Turkey is regarded by the bulk of the Moslem world as their Khalifat-ul-momenin, and as such is entitled to their religious homage. The British Government at the beginning of the war gave its pledge that the Khalifat was a question that was to be decided by Moslem opinion alone. Moslem opinion throughout India and in all parts of the Moslem world, including the notable Arab Amir Feilul, the Ally of England, has declared in unmistakable language that the Sultan of Turkey has been for centuries and is yet the rightful Khalifat-ul-momenin. And now the Indians, Musalmans and Hindus, Moderates and Extremists, unitedly demand in the name of all that is fair and honest, that the verdict of the Moslem world on this momentous issue should be upheld by the Peace Conference, at which England has a predominant voice. The maintenance of the Khalifat is absolutely necessary according to the canons of Islam for the validity of Moslem prayers as recently pointed out by that eminent authority on Moslem law, the Rt. Hon. Mr. Ameer Ali in a letter to the *London Times*. And the Moslem Divines and Ulamas in India have pronounced that for the maintenance of the Khalifat it is absolutely necessary that the Khalifat should have control and custody of the Holy Places and should be an independent Sovereign. Anyone, therefore, who takes away the independence of the Turkish Sultan or the custody of the Holy Places from the Khalifat, would be wontonly interfering with the integrity of the Khalifat, and would be violating the religious feelings of the Musalmans. The consequence would be one that would be too painful to contemplate. The rockbed of British policy in the East has hitherto been non-interfering with the religious beliefs and susceptibilities of its non-christian subjects and I earnestly pray and trust that the British Government, which has the largest Moslem population in the world as its subjects, may yet halt from pursuing a policy which would be subversive of

**Khan Bahadur
Moulvi Abdus
Salam.**

**Khan Bahadur
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Salam.**

its British character and traditions and leave behind sores that would fester in the Moslem hearts, and would not be helpful either to the peace and progress of the country nor to the successful working of the great constitutional experiment in India, just graciously announced by the Royal Proclamation. We Indians, do not understand why the principle of self-determination freedom and justice, which is to be applied so liberally in the case of Christian Poland and Christian Yugo-Slavia, is not to be extended in case of Moslem Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, Thrace and Armenia, where the population is exclusively Mahomedan or the Moslem population predominates over the followers of other religions. Why should Christian powers such as France, England, Italy or Greece rule over Moslem Mesopotamia, Syria or the hinterland of Smyrna under the cloak of "mandatories," and why should Moslem Constantinople which is regarded by the Moslems with veneration as their Islam-boul or city of Islam be internationalised, and placed under Christian Powers? And why should Palestine where the Moslem population preponderate and whose soil is consecrated and hallowed by the blood of Moslem Martyrs and Saints, be handed over to the Jews, who had their home in it in a remote part some time about the period of the Deluge? What the Indians, both Hindus and Moslems, complain of, is that one set of principles based on self-determination, freedom and justice should be applied to Christian Provinces, and another set to Mahomedan States, in violation of the pledge of the British Prime Minister (a pledge which it suits the London *Times* now to twist into an "Offer") and the violation of principles of self-determination, freedom and justice, trumpeted to the world by the Allies at a critical stage of the great war. The best Mahomedan and Hindu minds in England and India have spoken out on this grave and momentous question, and we yet hope and trust that the British Government and British nation would do nothing that is unfair, unjust and unrighteous in regard to the settlement of the Khalifat and the Turkish question. There can be no finality in unjust, unfair and unrighteous decisions; for we Asiatics have yet faith left in us, to believe in a moral order of things and in the righteousness of an overruling Providence which sets all wrongs right, slowly but surely. We Indians have done our duty as loyal subjects by warning the British Nation, and it is now for England, the old champion of freedom and justice, to decide. May God grant light and wisdom to its Statesmen to decide this momentous issue with due regard for England's reputation for honour and justice, and with due regard for the contentment of the Indian nation and the Moslem world. The Indians, Hindus and Musalmans, as citizens of the most important component part of the British Empire, glory in its glory and share in its triumphs and sorrows they freely poured

out their blood and treasure in the defence of the Empire during the crisis of the great war ; and they have therefore, the right to expect that their united voice on this grave and momentous question should count, equally with that of European Christians in its decision, may I add that the Indians have a right to be jealous that the great Empire to which they have the privilege to belong may be saved from the stain of dishonour or discredit in the settlement of the Turkish and Khalifat questions by the Peace Conference, at which England appears from all accounts to have the predominant and determining voice.

The Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea said :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I desire whole-heartedly to associate myself with the Resolution. The Resolution is significant of the growing friendliness and solidarity between Hindus and Mahomedans in all parts of this wide empire and of this other fact *viz.*, that the Mahomedan community have entered with us into the holy compact of a common nationality. Islam has rendered memorable service to humanity. In the middle ages when Europe was steeped in mediæval darkness, it was the Universities of Saville and Granada in Spain under Moorish Sovereignty which held aloft a torch of civilization and knowledge. From great centres like these the Mahomedans of the West spread their culture and civilization, which has leavened the life of European nations. You have read Gibbons' "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire". The greatest misapprehensions and foulest misunderstandings prevailed with regard to the character of the divinely inspired Prophet of Islam, and the nature and culture of his creed. It was Gibbons who uplifted the veil and enabled Europe to form a proper and correct appreciation of the culture and civilization of Islam and Gibbons' mantle fell upon Carlyle. Read that admirable lecture of Carlyle on "Hero Worship" and you recognise the personality of the great prophet of Arabia and the services he has rendered to humanity. Standing on this platform and speaking as a Hindu I feel that we owe a debt to the Islamic world, and there we have an opportunity of redeeming, however partially it may be, that debt of obligation to Islam. I feel that the Mahomedan world has a serious grievance. President Wilson in the 14 points which he has put forward laid down that the principle of self-determination was to be observed in the re-distribution of the Nationalities of Europe and elsewhere. This principle has been applied, as Mr. Salem has told you, to Poland and East Europe. Why should not this be extended to the Turkish Empire. Is this principle of self-determination to be limited by considerations of latitude and longitude or considerations of race and religion? I thought it was an universal and comprehensive principle transcending all considerations

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nath Bannerjea.**

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of race and religion. We claim to be Asiatics. It is not my proud privilege to belong to the Islamic faith I stand outside its pale ; but as an Oriental, as an Asiatic interested in the welfare of the Asiatic race I claim that the principle of self-determination should be applied in the case of Turkey. What has President Wilson to say—what has the Prime Minister of England to say—what has the Allied Powers to say to this ? But with Arthurial spear the veil will be torn open and the sacred mysteries of European diplomacy will be laid bare. When these secrets are disclosed, shall it be said the Allied Powers were guided and determined in their decision by considerations of race and religion ? I hope and trust another and a more satisfactory answer will be given to this question. I claim on behalf of the people of India, on behalf of the Asiatic and Oriental races, that the principle of self determination laid down with such admirable precision by President Wilson should be applied to the case of the Turkish Empire. Nor is that all The Prime Minister in the speech which he delivered in January 1918, if I remember right, said that Constantinople and the Homelands should belong to Turkey. We want him to redeem his word. It was a pledge and a promise made by the head of the British Empire by the First Minister of the Crown. Constantinople and the Homelands must therefore remain with Turkey. What is more, a plebiscite should be taken among the various people as to whether they would like it to live under the Turkish Empire or not. Then passing from these general considerations there are arguments which will appeal particularly to the British Government and to these arguments I desire to draw attention. In the first place England is the greatest Mahomedan Power in the world. She is in a special sense the custodian of Mahomedan interests and Great Britain must remember that in the darkest crisis of the War Mahomedan soldiers freely shed their blood in fighting against Turkey and in defence of the British Empire. What will they now say ? What will their relatives say ? What will the Mussalman Princes of India say—make them exalted Highnesses or what you like—when they find that Moslem treasure and Moslem blood were spent freely for the overthrow of the Turkish Empire ? This deep sense of dissatisfaction will be universal throughout the Mussalman world and is it not necessary to conciliate Mussalman opinion and with it Hindu opinion for the Hindus support Moslem opinion in this matter. On the eve of the working of the great Reforms scheme are not conciliations and co-operation to be our watchwords ? Are the Moslems of India likely to be conciliated ? Are they likely to co-operate whole-heartedly with the Government in the successful work of the Reform Scheme with this open sore festering in their bosoms. Every evening when they bend their knees in adoration to the Supreme Being turning their faces to the West they will be reminded of Mecca, they will be.

reminded of their Holy Places, they will be reminded of Constantinople, they will be reminded of the Spiritual Supremacy of the Khalif, and what will they think of their Government, the custodian of their spiritual interests which did not support their strongest religious feelings. As a Moderate I say, that to alienate the sympathies of the Mahomedan community would be a deplorable blunder on the part of the Government. It would be a wound which would sink deep into the hearts of the Mahomedans and with them the Hindus, and the utmost discontent would be created in the country—fatal to the successful and satisfactory working of the Reform Scheme. Therefore, in the name of this Conference in the name of both Hindus and Mahomedans I appeal to the Government to take note of Moslem sentiment and of Hindu sentiment, and give effect to it and spread the blessings of peace, happiness and contentment throughout the length and breadth of this wide wide continent inhabited by both Hindus and Mahomedans.

The Resolution was then put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The President : The Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru will now move the 6th Resolution.

The Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru moved the following Resolution :—

Resolution VI.

**RESOLUTION
VI**

This Conference wishes to record its emphatic condemnation of the outrages committed by the mobs at several places in the Punjab and elsewhere and its deep sympathy with the victims and their families.

This Conference while in no way wishing to anticipate the decision of the Hunter Committee must express its sense of profound horror and indignation at the manner in which the situation which arose in the Punjab in April and May last was dealt with by the officials concerned as disclosed in their own evidence.

This Conference is of opinion that it is imperatively necessary—

(1) to make amends for the outraged feelings of the Indian nation and that British honour and justice should be vindicated by taking steps to bring to justice any officials, high or low, civil or military, who may be found to have acted unreasonably and in excess of their powers or to have authorised such acts ;

(2) that reparation should be made for all serious hardship caused by unwarrented acts of severity ;

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Sapru

(3) that safeguards should be provided against the recurrence of such things in the future.

This Conference authorises its All-India Committee—

(1) to take such action as may be necessary on the publication of the Report of the Hunter Committee :

(2) to consider the necessity of the following safeguards among others and taking such further action as may be necessary :—

(a) that the introduction, exercise and duration of martial law should be subject to the same constitutional limitations as in England ;

(b) that martial law should not be introduced unless it is impossible for the civil courts to sit and exercise their functions ;

(c) that the power of creating new offences for breach of regulations and providing penalties therefor should not be delegated to military officers ;

(d) that if courts martial are allowed to sit when civil courts are sitting any person not subject to Naval Discipline Act or to Military Law who is charged with the contravention of any Regulation should be allowed the option of a trial by the civil court ;

(e) that the remedy in the nature of Habeas Corpus should be made available in all parts of British India.

(3) to further the object of the Resolution by arranging for a deputation to England or otherwise.

He said:—Mr. President, Ladies and gentlemen, the Resolution which I have now been asked to put forward before you for your acceptance may be discussed as a resolution on the subject of which there is no difference of opinion between one section or another section of the Indian community (Applause). I fully realize the responsibility of anyone who undertakes to make a speech on a subject of this character. It is the easiest of things to excite racial hatred or prejudice or to give rise to feelings of hostility on a subject like this, but let me assure you that I shall be sincerely sorry if any word I say on this subject was understood to be uttered in that spirit. At the same time I think that I would be untrue to my convictions and you would be as true to your conviction if you refrained in momentous occasion like this from giving expression to your genuine and honest feelings on this subject.

Now, gentlemen, the President of our Assembly in the masterly speech which he delivered yesterday gave you in one telling, striking sentence a catalogue enormities which were perpetuated in the Punjab a few months ago. I personally think that it would be distasteful to my own feelings as it would be to the feelings of peace-loving man to dwell upon those enormities at unnecessary length.

As everyone of you is aware at the beginning of this year which is now coming to an end, there was a considerable amount of excitement caused all over the country by the introduction in the Imperial Legislative Council of that measure of legislation which is unfortunately associated with the name of an eminent judge of the English High Court,— I mean the Rowlatt Bill. Every one of you know that it evoked feelings of great indignation all over the country. There were protests entered before the Bill was introduced, protests from all public platforms and in all the Indian papers. When the Bill came to be introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council, it presented the unique spectacle of complete unanimity on that subject among the Indian members of the Council. We begged, we implored, we entreated the Government either to drop that measure at that time, or at any rate to postpone that measure until such time as the Government themselves felt that their position was stronger in the country. At that time motives were attributed to us in all quarters. I was one of those Members of the Council who also opposed the Rowlatt Act and I would not accept any compromise although it was given out in some of the newspapers,—be it said to their discredit—that I had entered into a compromise in that matter with the Government. I know the whole story of that compromise but I am not going to enter into any self-defence. It is enough for me to say that neither myself nor my friend the Hon. Mr. Sastri, nor our distinguished leader, the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, entered into any unholy alliance with Sir William Vincent or any other Member of Council. (Applause). On the contrary, if the truth may be repeated, all three of us implored as earnestly as we could that the Bill should be dropped, and that if it could not be dropped immediately, it should certainly be postponed until the Council had more time to think over it. Anyhow, our view was not accepted and then our duty was quite clear. It was that we should offer in the highest interests, according to our light, of the country, opposition to the Bill and we did so. Speaking now in the light of all that has happened, I can tell you that I feel stronger now in the view that I took at the time and I am sure that these are also the sentiments of my friend the Hon. Mr. Sastri and the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea. While the discussions in the Imperial Legislative Council were going on—some of the leaders of my country suggested the inauguration of the ill-fated Satyagraha movement. I do not wish to question the honesty of those responsible for the movement, but speaking for myself and speaking for many of us, I do hold now, as I held then, that it was a most unfortunate movement and those of us who rightly or wrongly (I think rightly)—took that view, did not conceal their feelings either from Mr. Gandhi or others associated with him in that

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movement. But somehow or other—it is not necessary for me to go into the history of those preliminary contentions or exchange of views,—it came about that the movement was started. Now let it be remembered that the movement was not confined to any particular part of the country. It spread all over the country and the scenes which were witnessed prior to those at Amritsar and the Punjab were also witnessed in other parts of the country. I very well remember that there was an important procession which went through the streets of Allahabad. Of course my own views were opposed to the views of those who organised that procession but at the same time, I am bound to say, in fairness to the organisers of that procession, that there was no more peaceful procession that was ever organised and went through the town (Cheers). One very interesting question which arose in this connection is this. Why is it that of all places in the Punjab these processions or these demonstrations in favor of the Satyagraha Movement should have led to so much popular ebullition or so much official ebullition? Well, I can tell you that if there was not that unhealthy excitement about this movement in my Province, it was due to the wisdom, sanity and foresight of Sir Harcourt Butler (Cheers). Similarly, it may be said of other Governors who dealt with the situation according as the occasion required, but unfortunately in the Punjab the very starting of this movement was the signal for extraordinary excitement both among the people and among the officials. I am not here to pronounce any verdict or any judgment on the Satyagraha Movement but I wish to draw your attention to the remarkable scenes which took place in some of the districts in the Punjab. The after history of those scenes is quite fresh in your memory and I will not go into details of that history. Suddenly—I forget the date but I believe it was towards the end of March—we heard that there had been a popular explosion in Delhi which had resulted in a considerable loss of life. It was the 30th March. Well, that naturally raised a considerable amount of feeling all over the country. Delhi being so close to the Punjab it was quite natural that the feeling in the Punjab should be stronger than in any other place. Similarly processions took place in Lahore and Amritsar. I am not sure about Amritsar but a procession certainly did take place in Lahore. What happened in Amritsar in the beginning is quite fresh in your minds. One outstanding fact in the situation at Amritsar was that in a moment of fury the mob lost all self-control and—be it said to our disgrace and discredit—killed five or six Europeans. Well the first part of the resolution emphasises our feeling with regard to this incident and I will invite your attention to the wording of it “This Conference wishes to record its emphatic condemnation of the outrages committed by the mob at several places in the Punjab and elsewhere and its deep

sympathy with the victims and their families". Murder is murder and there can be no adjective as to a murder and I think if we are honest and just and if we want that justice should be done to ourselves and that those who have been wronged among ourselves should receive ample justice at the hands of Government—it is only fair just and right that we should unhesitatingly express our indignation at the conduct of the mob. I am quite sure that I am giving expression to the inborn instinct of Indians when I say that none of us can have the least sympathy in any shape or form, with outrages of that character (Applause) and they must be greatly mistaken who think that the freedom of any country can be achieved by murders or assassinations. But when I have expressed condemnation and denunciations on your behalf and in your name so far as the conduct of the mob is concerned, I think I should be wanting in my duty to this association and to the assembly if I did not think it my duty to express myself equally strongly especially in regard to what happened subsequently in Amritsar and other places in the Punjab. Now if I was asked candidly and plainly to say what it is above everything else which has preserved the faith of India in England in the midst of so many ups and downs in the history of our political life in the last 50 years, it is the conviction that the average Englishman loves justice and has a sense of justice. (Applause). Please do not understand me to say for a moment that there have not been instances in the history of English rule in India, and for the matter of that in the history of English rule in England itself where that sense of justice has not been dulled but let me point out to you that however dull that sense of justice may be in the long run, throughout English history, that sense of justice has vindicated itself in the end. It therefore came to us as a great shock and great surprise that there should be found a handful of Englishmen in any part of India who should so far forget all their traditions and all their history that they should resort to such acts and be guilty of things in the Punjab which have caused so much genuine irritation in every Indian house. Now I wish that the Hunter Committee had finished its labours and that its report was out and before us. If that was so our task in fixing the responsibility would have been ever so much easier, but realising as I do that the Hunter Committee has not yet concluded its sittings, that it still continuing its work, I do not think that I would be justified in naming any individual or in naming any particular officer and fixing responsibility upon him. But one fact stands out above everything else. The evidence that has been recorded in the Punjab leaves us no room for doubt whatsoever that at Amritsar, at Kasur, at Lahore itself and at Gurbanwalla, things were done in the name of law and order by a sort of military regime which it would be difficult to justify

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even by the most ardent supporter of martial law in this country (hear, hear). I need hardly remind you of the disgraceful manner in which people were made to crawl in Amritsar, or of the disgraceful manner in which students and professors were treated in the Punjab. Speaking for myself as one who has always been keenly interested in the students of my own Province and who has always maintained that the student problem in India is the one problem which has not been settled either by the Government or by the people, I cannot but feel deeply disappointed at the manner in which some misguided zealots treated the students in the Punjab. Is it seriously contended that by making students march 16 miles a day in the hot weather in June (Shame) you can instil into them any feeling of loyalty? I have not the smallest possible doubt in telling you that if I had been a student of that age and if I was so treated (Applause) my mind would have been embittered for the rest of my life (Applause). It is all very well for us grown-up men to exercise self-restraint, it is our duty to do so, but remember you have no right to judge a young man of sixteen or eighteen or twenty by the standard of a man of thirty or thirty-five or forty. Therefore not only were those who treated the students in the Punjab in this way wanting in a sense of perspective, but I think they were wanting in a sense of humour. They probably thought they were teaching the students a good lesson. I hardly think there was any good lesson to be taught in that way. I need not refer to any other details of hardship and severity which have been catalogued by our worthy president in his masterly speech. It is enough for me to tell you that when one reflects upon any one of those items mentioned in the president's speech one is amazed at the attitude of the men who thought they were rendering any service either to the people or to the British Government in India. Personally speaking I think that the zeal, the perverted zeal, of men who thought that they were saving the Empire by resorting to these unjustifiable, severe, and I may say barbarous, methods can only evoke one feeling and that is a feeling of unmixed condemnation on our part. You also know how some of the leading public men of the Punjab were dealt with, you also know how freely in some cases the general order of flogging was practised in Lahore and elsewhere (Shame). I need not refer to these things any further but what I will ask you now to do is to accept the second part of the resolution which sums up our feeling on the subject with as much self-restraint as it is possible to command in dealing with matters of this nature. This part of the resolution runs thus: "This Conference while in no way wishing to anticipate the decision of the Hunter Committee must express its sense of profound horror and indignation at the manner in which the situation which arose in the Punjab in April and May last was dealt

with by the officials concerned as disclosed in their own evidence.

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I have deliberately refrained from referring to two other matters because I do not wish to anticipate the verdict of the Hunter Committee who alone I think, would be here entitled to give a considered verdict on those two questions. When they have given their verdict on those two questions, it will be open to you to give your honest judgment as to whether you agree or disagree with their opinion. These questions are these (1) was it, having regard to all the circumstances that existed at that time, necessary to introduce martial law and could not the situation have been met by the Civil authorities in any other manner? (2) Assuming that it was necessary that martial law should have been introduced, having regard to all the circumstances that existed at that time, was it necessary that martial law should have been continued for some time after peace and order had been restored? I hold my own views on these questions and I have no doubt that many of you hold your own opinions about them, but I beg of you not to be in a hurry to express your opinion on those two questions until the Hunter Committee have submitted their report to the Government and to the Secretary of State. But our whole discussion this afternoon proceeds upon the assumption—and I will not put the case higher than that—that the introduction of martial law may have been necessary, and yet in the exercise of the power vested under martial law, the officers concerned exceeded the limits of propriety, justice and fairness. I will now proceed to the remaining portion of this resolution which is as follows:—

“This Conference is of opinion that it is imperatively necessary :—

- (1) “That British honour and justice should be vindicated by taking steps to bring to justice any official high or low, civil or military, who may be found to have acted unreasonably and in excess of their powers or to have authorized such acts ;
- (2) That reparation should be made for all serious hardships caused by unwarranted acts of severity ;
- (3) That safeguards should be provided against the recurrence of such things in the future.”

You will remember that so far as the leaders of your own party are concerned they have already either in the press or on various platforms given expressions to their views on the entire question. It is not as if only the responsible Sections among us—this is not my phrase but the phrase used by a respectable Anglo-Indian paper—want to make capital of what happened in the Punjab. I will only remind you of

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three or four distinguished leaders, and then I will ask any fair critic to say whether they are the men who can be described as professional agitators or whether they are not men who deal directly with the administration of law and order. Look at Sir Narayan Chandavarkar who was a Judge of the High Court ; look at a man like the President, who was a Member of the Executive Council, Madras ; look at Sir Dinshaw Wacha than whom no more peaceful man exists in the country—they have all expressed in unqualified terms their condemnation of what has been done in the Punjab and demand that justice should be done to India by bringing these people who are guilty of these offences to justice. Let me assure you it is not in any spirit of revenge or vindictiveness that we want these men to be brought to justice. It is nothing of the sort. It seems to me that if the faith of the average Indian in the impartiality of British Justice is to be continued, it can only be continued by showing that the law makes no difference between the official and the non-official ; between a person highly placed and a person occupying a humble place in life. The law, it has been said, is no respecter of persons, is no respecter of an accused, whether he is an official accused or a private accused. It is in that sense and in that sense alone that I ask that justice should be done to our countrymen by showing that the English Government will not tolerate any excess of this character by any officer however high or low he may be. Fortunately for us we find that this sense of justice to which I referred in the opening portion of my speech has asserted itself, six thousand miles across the seas. What do we find ? We find that as soon as the news of these acts were wired across the seas the entire English Press except one solitary newspaper expressed its condemnation exactly as we are doing to-day and has demanded that the authors of these acts should be brought to book. We read the other day that when the news reached England there was a profound sensation in Parliament and I should have been surprised indeed if the news did not cause a profound sensation in Parliament.

I will proceed to the third part of this Resolution which runs thus :—“This Conference authorises its All-India Committee :—

(1) To take such action as may be necessary on the publication of the Report of the Hunter Committee ;

(2) To consider the necessity of the following safeguards among others and taking such further action as may be necessary :—

(a) That the introduction, exercise and duration of

martial law should be subject to the same constitutional limitations as in England ;

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- (b) That martial law should not be introduced unless it is impossible for the Civil courts to sit and exercise their functions ;
 - (c) That the power of creating new offences for breach of regulations and providing penalties therefor should not be delegated to military officers ;
 - (d) That if courts martial are allowed to sit when civil courts are sitting any persons not subject to Naval Discipline Act or to Military Law who is charged with the contravention of any Regulation should be allowed the option of a trial by the civil court ;
 - (e) That the remedy in the nature of Habeas Corpus should be made available in all parts of British India.
- (3) To further the object of the Resolution by arranging for a deputation to England or otherwise."

This part of the resolution has been deliberately worded in this way by the Subjects Committee. It is not intended that you should be invited to give your consent to any one of these recommendations. They are points of reference to your executive to consider as to whether they would not provide ample safeguards in the future whenever a contingency of this character may arise. Now I don't propose to go at length into any one of these items in the last portion of the Resolution as that would take me into some technical questions of a constitutional character and I hardly think I would be justified in entering into a technical discussion in an assembly of this character. What I would only say is that clause (e) is a remedy for which there should be a general demand all over India (Applause) and that is the remedy of Habeas Corpus. As you all know it is only the Presidency High Courts which have the power to issue writs of Habeas Corpus within their Presidency limits. They cannot issue writs of Habeas Corpus outside the Presidency towns and there are also High Courts like Allahabad and Lahore which have no such jurisdiction at all. It is intended by this clause that the law should be so amended as to make the remedy of Habeas Corpus available to everyone whenever and wherever a contingency of this character may arise. I hope that you will agree with me when I say that now that we are on the road to self-government it is absolutely necessary that we should demand guarantees for the safety of the person just as there are guarantees in countries where there is self-government.

I have therefore to particularly recommend this clause to your consideration. The Committee will meet very soon and will consider the feasibility or the desirability of having all these safeguards and then you will be able to know what the Committee's decision is. Meanwhile I would only ask your consent to this reference to the Committee.

I have only one more observation to make and then I will retire. I sincerely hope and trust that it will be realized that there is a very strong and a very genuine feeling on the whole Punjab question in every part of India (hear, hear) and while every one of us realizes that the time has now come that we should change our point of view in regard to administrative matters and be ready and willing to co-operate with the Government, it is also felt that it is necessary to promote that feeling of co-operation in order that you might do justice wherever and whenever it is necessary. The feeling is deep among us that a gross injustice has been done to our countrymen in the Punjab and that officers who have been invested with powers under martial law have grossly abused their powers under that law. It is therefore to England that we look to redress this wrong and for remove that feeling from our minds and restore our faith in the fairness and impartiality of British justice (loud applause).

Mr. J. N. Roy.

Mr. J. N. Roy seconded the resolution. He said: Mr. President, I almost wish that I had not to speak on this resolution—not that I have not much to say but I am not sure that I can trust myself to speak all that I should like to say. Our President has strictly enjoined upon us in his speech restraint and sobriety and yet are we men and not give expression to our feeling of indignation and horror in the amplest measure possible as to what has occurred in the Punjab (applause)? The other day an Anglo-Indian journal in Calcutta said that the best thing to do about the Punjab is to forget and say no more about it. I wish I could forget. I wish I could forget the atrocities that were committed by the Indian mob. I wish that I could forget the far greater and worse atrocities that were committed by the soldier and civilian servants of the crown in the name of law and order. But can we forget? Can we forget the little boys who were whipped and all for nothing? Can we forget the disgrace, the humiliation, the punishment that was meted out to the youth of the Punjab and all for no offence whatsoever? Can we forget the handcuffs that were placed upon our hands—your hands and mine (hear, hear)—and all because they wanted to belittle that immortal alliance which has come about between the Hindus and Mahomedans in this Country? Can we forget the iron cage, can we forget the arrests, the unnecessary searches? Can we forget the Lewis Guns, the Aeroplanes,

the dropping of bombs on a defenceless crowd of Indians (shame, shame) and above all can we forget the Jallianwalla Bagh (cries of double shame and laughter). Some of my friends must pardon us if we cannot express ourselves in English as well as others. When my friend cried out "Double shame" he meant deep shame and there is nothing to laugh about. It is to us a matter of intense shame and humiliation that we have to recite these things or that these things were possible in the Punjab. Can we forget the Jallianwalla Bagh? General Dyer (cries of shame and hisses) tells us that he went there determined to kill. The more appropriate word is murder. He said "I fired in the densest part of the crowd and I stopped after firing 1700 rounds of ammunition because my ammunition ran short" (shame shame). Can we forget all this? If I were an Englishman I would not ask to forget or to be forgiven but I would ask for punishment.

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This resolution in one part of it speaks of the imperative necessity of making amends for the outraged feelings of the Indian nation and the vindication of British honour and justice. The vindication of British honour and justice is necessary and I have little doubt if I know at all the England I love so well that it will come. But in the word of General Dyer "It is not my job to do it". I am more concerned with the amends to be made to the outraged feelings of the Indian nation. It is up to us to see that these amends are made. How is that to be done? It would not do merely to start for instance a Mansion House fund, as you well might, to relieve the hardship of those who have suffered. More than anything else, more than any redress that we can think of, is the trial and punishment of those concerned, high or low, so that the world may be spared the spectacle of another such outrage as firing upon a defenceless crowd. They have got to be punished and in order that these things may not happen again the punishment must be such that it should be impossible for these people to commit these outrages again. I ask it in no revengeful spirit but I think it is justly due to my feelings and the feelings of my countrymen that this must be done (applause). Do you think such a thing would have been possible in any other part of the world? I cannot conceive it. If the Arms Act were not here, if arms were free, if these men knew that the people had arms, then I say that these cowards would never have dared (shame, shame and applause) to do what they did. If I were an Englishman I would neither ask to forget nor to be forgiven. I would ask to be punished and the first thing I would do would be to tear that Indemnity Bill to pieces—that ill-considered, that ill-begotten measure. I know that an Indemnity Bill usually follows martial law, there is something in that. But remember that in India this Bill was passed by the Executive. The men accused sit as their own judges.

Remember also that such support as the Legislative Council lends really means nothing at all for in the words of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu the present Legislative Councils are only an extension of the Executive. That Bill, as an earnest of their sincerity in the matter, should be thrown to the winds and then they must proceed to devise means to make reparation to our outraged feeling. There has been a great deal of talk about co-operation between ourselves and the officials. I cannot say that I have not also held that view. Co-operation is certainly a consummation devoutly to be wished for. It has got to come and it may be possible when the Reforms come into operation but in the meantime we have got to take note of one fact. Have you read the evidence. You must have read it. Has it struck you—it must have struck you as it struck me—that it did not matter whether it was a soldier or a civilian or a missionary who came to give evidence, it is the same mentality. Everyone seemed to think that they were right when some of these fellows said that if necessary they would do it over again. This horrible, this cynical, this barbarous mentality, I should have thought was foreign to the Englishman. But if it is not foreign to the Englishman in India, if it has grown to be part of his nature, then I say that before co-operation is possible—and His Majesty the King has appealed to us for co-operation—this mentality has got to be destroyed first of all and I for one am determined to see that this mentality is destroyed. I have longed to see the day when the reforms come into operation. I have parted with lifelong friends in politics because I felt I ought to support the Reform Scheme. The Hon. Mr. Sastri in his memorable speech this afternoon invited us to enter the Temple of Liberty. Sir, there is blood on the threshold of the Temple. You have to help us to wipe out those blood marks, you have to purify it before you ask us to enter the Temple of Liberty. (Cheers).

Nawab Abdulla Khan.

Nawab Abdulla Khan in supporting the Resolution said :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, as a Mahomedan let me first thank you gentlemen for your sympathy with us in regard to the Khalifat question. We are told that the Moderates are not as whole-heartedly with us as the Extremists. But your attitude has falsified the insinuation and filled our hearts with gratitude. We are a grateful people and will never forget your brotherly attitude.

The gentlemen who spoke have put the case of the unfortunate Punjab so ably before you that there remains little for me to say. All that we want is that the sort of official lawlessness which we witnessed in the Punjab and elsewhere may never be repeated. Gentlemen, I do thank you for your sympathy and appreciate your generous regard for those who suffered for their country and their community. But you

cannot imagine what pangs of misery were suffered by us who fell victims to the official lawlessness. Not one of us has ever wavered in our loyalty to the King Emperor. Our loyalty has been second to none. You may take my own case. I have been a Moderate of Moderates all my life so that my name has been like a red rag to the Extremists. Let me tell you here that we all Mahomedans are Moderates. Our Government is called the greatest Islamic power in the world, and I with a million others am cognisant of the fact that the future of Islam depends to a large extent upon the friendliness and good will of the British Government. But by their lack of sympathy, their irresponsiveness, Government are driving us to extremes. I am afraid the irresponsiveness of the Government was the root cause of the Punjab disturbances too. Had they listened to the unanimous voice of the people combined in their protest against the repressive measures proposed by the Rowlatt Committee there would have been no disturbances, no riots and no massacres. You can never know the extent of the misery of those who suffered from official lawlessness. No pen can describe it. No language can convey it, Take my own case. I am as I have said a Moderate of Moderates and have been so all my life. I have worked always on the side of law and order. My war services evoked the admiration of many Provincial rulers and even Sir Michael O'Dwyer congratulated me on what I had done. In the matter of recruitment, war loan, and other such things I did all that a loyal citizen could do. But one gloomy evening I was torn away from the bosom of my family and from my home on a charge only known to the authors of the outrage and all my efforts at clearing my character proved futile. I begged the authorities to let me know the nature of the charge against me but never got any reply. But my troubles are nothing compared to the wretched plight and blood curdling misery of lakhs and lakhs of people who were victims. You condemn the mobs who were guilty of excesses, poor mobs, who always play the scapegoat. They are mostly ignorant and illiterate, people who play like puppets in the hands of our politicians and suffer the consequence of heated imaginations. Why not condemn too those who excited the ignorant people and made them uncontrollable. Had we anything like Moderate influence working in the Punjab, I do not think matters would have taken on an ugly aspect as far as the people were concerned. If anywhere we want Moderate influence it is in the Punjab but there the Extremists Congress reign supreme. However I will not dwell upon the sad episode of the Punjab any further. The balm of mercy applied by our gracious sovereign has healed up the wounds. We are ready to forget the past and to start afresh but I appeal to Government to make the repetition of such outrages upon His Majesty's subjects impossible and what

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is more not to bring back the past to us and make our heroic and generous effort at co-operation impossible. I refer to the activities of the C. I. D. We know that the European officials are eager to co-operate for a tranquil atmosphere. We expect nothing less from the nobility of British character but it remains to be seen whether the C. I. D. officials will make it possible for us to forget the past and co-operate with the officials for the common good of India.

**Mr. G. K.
Gadgil B.A.**

Mr. G. K. Gadgil B.A. Barrister-at-Law, Bombay and Poona said :—Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, the proposition that has been placed before you for your acceptance does not require much recommendation. But in supporting it on behalf of the Bombay Presidency I must add my voice to the general voice of India that the indignation, the horror, and the grief that have been felt by the whole country is completely and fully shared by that Province also. On this question, though we are Moderates, I must say that it is very difficult to speak with moderation (Applause). I don't want to say as some of my friends have said, that I am a Moderate of Moderates, but in matters of this kind sentiment gets the better of reason. The feeling that predominates is of deep sorrow which has wrung the hearts of our countrymen who have read from day to day the official evidence placed before the Hunter Committee. It is difficult to imagine the reason of what has been done by British Military officers in the Punjab. What was the mentality of those who lent themselves to these excesses? You will find however that General Dyer has given an answer which it is not possible to forget and from which it is not possible to draw any other conclusion but what he clearly puts down. What did he say when he was asked "Could you not have asked the mob to disperse, was it necessary to fire on these poor and innocent people"? He said "Oh, they would have dispersed but they would have laughed at me". Well, what is the meaning of this? Of course as we say in this resolution, we do not want to anticipate the findings of the Hunter Committee. As lawyers—and I may say I belong to that profession—we say that the matter is sub-judice, and therefore we are not entitled to give a verdict on it. After the judgment is out we can criticise it as public men. But without anticipating the finding of the Hunter Committee we can put two and two together and everyone knows that it makes four. It is nothing more nor less than what General Dyer said "They would have laughed at me". That only meant that the bogey of prestige was raised by him. Where is the Englishman who would have suffered if these people had been allowed to hold meetings and carry on an agitation for the withdrawal of the Rowlatt Act? Was it not a constitutional agitation? You and everyone of us, whatever his caste, creed

or profession condemns any outrages that may have been committed by the mob. We feel sorry for the English ladies and gentlemen who may have been wantonly assaulted or insulted, and for the buildings that were burnt down. But what would you have thought if the Indian Penal Code had only one sentence for all offences under that code, namely hanging? The authorities dealt with different cases in the same manner, they lost all self-control and fired on innocent people. I have just received evidence from a man who was in the crowd the day that General Dyer fired bullets into them and he tells us that what happened was that some people went there because they were told there would be an important meeting at which peoples' feelings would be allayed. In these circumstances they went, they were dispersing, they were shot down. After the Hunter Committee's findings are out we have got to take steps to see that there shall not be any repetition of similar acts in this country. The most important part of the resolution is the second part. It is no use weeping over our dead countrymen and their bereaved families but we have to take practical steps hereafter and the first one is to ensure the liberty of the people. As Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru pointed out there is a strong demand for the application of the writ of Habeas Corpus to all parts of the country outside the original civil jurisdiction of the Chartered High Courts because that Section applies only to those within it. If we get that it will be impossible to intern a man without trial or giving any reason for his detention—that is a very fundamental right which deeply concerns us. The last part of the Resolution which I ask you to bear in mind fully is to raise funds to send a deputation to England to agitate for the impeachment of persons, high or low, and the trial of men who may be found guilty under the findings of the Hunter Committee. At present the Committee is in session, they are going to hear evidence and after their findings are before you, you will be justified in naming the guilty persons. I now ask you to pass this resolution with acclamation.

Mr.
G. K. Gadgil.

The Hon. Rai Radha Charan Pal Bahadur said :—Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen it is hardly necessary at this stage to dilate on the merits of the Resolution which has been so ably moved, seconded and supported but there is one aspect of it which, I think, should be considered by you and which, if it is possible at this stage, might be slightly amended, altered or added to. My point is this. You all know that since the Royal Proclamation the Punjab leaders have been set free but unfortunately the Hunter Committee have closed their doors, that is to say no more evidence, I understand from the newspapers, will be taken. Now that the Punjab leaders have been set free and are in a position to offer valuable evidence for the consideration of that Committee I hope and trust that the

The Hon. Rai
Radha Charan
Pal Bahadur.

voice of all India supported by this Conference will go forth to our responsible rulers and will induce them to open the doors of the Hunter Committee to the Punjab leaders to enable the latter to submit all materials for the proper consideration of that dire disaster which occurred a few months ago. I do not wish to dilate on the excesses that have been committed either by the Military authorities or by the infuriated mob. We all deplore on our part the excesses that were committed by the infuriated mob—infuriated at the arrest of their leaders—but I think we ought at the same time to express our gratitude to the great British Nation for the sympathy that they have shown when the telegraphic message of the evidence of General Dyer and others was communicated to them. The heart of the British Nation, I am sure you will all agree, is sound to the core whatever a few Anglo-Indian newspapers or Anglo-Indians here may say or do. We have that confidence in their sense of justice. It is that sense of justice that has made them rulers practically from one end of the world to the other, and I hope and trust that when the full report of the Hunter Committee will be placed before the British democracy due justice will be done and due reparation made to our countrymen in the Punjab. Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore in the early stages thoroughly voiced the feelings of his countrymen in those beautiful lines which he addressed to the Viceroy, and I am sure you will all agree with me that the doors of the Hunter Committee should not be closed against the Punjab leaders and that all available material should be permitted to be placed before them (Applause).

**Babu Amulya
Charan Dutt.**

Babu Amulya Charan Dutt supported the resolution. He said :—Mr. President, Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, in response to the call from the Chair I rise to support the resolution which deals with the most burning topic of the day. The ghastly disclosures made in the evidence before the Hunter Committee have created a situation the gravity and intensity of which it is difficult to fathom. They have deepened our sense of abject helplessness and undermined our faith in British justice, they demonstrate unmistakably that even after a century and a half of British Rule our person and property are completely at the mercy of a handful of English officials whose whims and caprices determine the law, and they have shown that in these days of the cult of self-determination and of right and justice. British officers are allowed in the name of law, order and tranquility to indulge in brutalities which do not yield in any way to the Hunish barbarities recently displayed in the fields of Belgium and Flanders. Humanity stands aghast at the harrowing tale unfolded in the evidence of General Dyer, Lieutenant Colonel Frank Johnson, General Beynon and other mighty heroes of Punjab notoriety. When we read their evidence the blood curdles in our veins, our thoughts go back to the graves and memories of these victims of the Punjab atrocities not unnaturally tending to widen the

gulf more and more between the rulers and the ruled which we had fondly hoped would be bridged up with the ushering in of the Reform Measures. The rulers of India must have by this time gathered that the strongest administration of the strongest ruler of modern days has deepened the discontent and resulted in an estrangement and bitterness of feeling which not even the gracious Royal Proclamation breathed in a spirit of true statesmanship will succeed in removing wholly. We have been asked by some people to draw a veil over this affair. This is a counsel of perfection which we wish we could act upon. But is it humanly possible for us to throw a veil over and forge the cold-blooded massacre of our kith and kin most of whom were absolutely innocent? Is it humanly possible for us to do so when we find the miscreants instead of being in *docus penitoratie* are taking a pride in what they did and parading their activities as the highest statesmanship, when we find the authorities to whom they are subordinate taking them under their wing, securing them immunity by legislation and evincing a morbid anxiety to defend them, and when we do not find any guarantee against such a wanton invasion of our rights in future? We would be blind to our own interests if we do not take such steps as would minimise the chances if not absolutely make impossible the repetition of such atrocities. Another piece of advice has been offered to us. We have been asked to keep silent until the Hunter Committee have submitted their report. The law of *Sub judice* does not apply to such proceedings and does not preclude the public from expressing their opinion formed upon the admitted and the uncontroverted and incontrovertible facts. If it was a question of sifting evidence and determining their comparative weight, it could be urged with some show of force that we should wait till the submission of the Committee's Report. The Indian public do not stand alone in this matter. British public opinion has been staggered at the disclosures and it has spoken in no uncertain voice. A good deal of data have been afforded by the evidence of the official witnesses themselves before the Hunter Committee and they have been regarded as sufficient by the British Cabinet to step in and to advise His Majesty to soothe public feeling by His Royal clemency. Sufficient data have also been furnished to us not only to enable us to formulate our line of action in this matter but also to formulate our demands. There is one matter which requires the immediate attention of the Sovereign authority in England. A veil of darkness was thrown over and not only the Indian public but also the English public and Government were kept in absolute ignorance of what was transpiring in the Punjab, in the dark days of last April, May and June. This veil was not lifted even before the highest authority responsible to Parliament and his sanction not obtained for the high-handed, arbitrary and atrocious acts resorted to in the name of law and order. Are we to take it that Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Lord Chelmsford are above all law and that they are not respon-

Babu Amulya
Charan Dutt.

**Babu Amulya
Charan Dutt.**

to any body ? We do not know how many innocent lives would have been saved if daylight had been let into the doings of the Punjab authorities. But darkness is the best and most convenient time for those acts which have outraged our sense of humanity. Mr. Montagu was asked for an explanation as to the British public being kept in ignorance of those matters. The one that he gave was most unconvincing. He could only wriggle out of the difficulty by throwing the whole blame on the cable arrangements—a more futile explanation could not be invented. The question we ask is this, are these criminal acts of omission and commission to be lightly passed over ! No. The real miscreants are to be spotted and punished. Are not guarantees to be provided against the repetition of this state of things ! While on the question of guarantees I cannot but pass in review the demand of a certain section of the Indian Nationalists. They demand a declaration of our rights as British citizens to be embodied in a Parliamentary Statute. I do not believe in declarations nor do I think such a declaration would improve matters in any way. Are there not already a sufficient number of Royal Declarations and pledges conferring on us the rights of British citizenship and binding British officials to carry them out. I would take the liberty to remind you that so far back as 1662 when England obtained the very first territorial and sovereign possession in India, the Government of the day in the very first grant of territorial rights to the East India Company declared that all persons being His Majesty's subjects inhabiting within the said island and their children and posterity born within the limits thereof shall be deemed free denizens and natural subjects as if born in England. The terms of this first grant are extended in it to all future British Territorial acquisitions. I need hardly remind you of the declarations of British sovereigns made from time to time which have a sanctity all their own. If these declarations and pledges could not prevent the outrages on our personal rights, I really do not know if any fresh declaration would do so. The real remedy lies not in pious declarations but in the change of the personnel and policy of the Government and in the adequate punishment of the real offenders in the Punjab affair however highly placed they may be. As regards the first remedy indicated above, I do not know whether the present Reforms which have failed to introduce an element of responsibility in the Central legislature and also provide for the appointment of Indian Members of the Executive Council from amongst the elected Members would bring out the desired state of things. Let us however hope that the future Indian Members of the Government of India will draw their inspiration from the example of Sir Sankaran Nair before them. Our duty to ourselves and to those who suffered in the Punjab does not end however with a hope. It calls us to do something more. It exhorts us to demand the punishment of those whose crimes and misdemeanours brought about this fright-

ful state of things in the Punjab. We demand their punishment but not in a vindictive spirit.

Vindictiveness is foreign to the Hindu nature. We demand it because British justice requires it. We demand it because punishment has a deterrent effect and future Dyers and O'Dwyes and administrators of their kidney, require a restraining influence. The impeachment of Warren Hastings had an undeniable moral effect. It considerably improved the moral tone of the officials of the East India Company. It is not only in the interests of the Indian people but also for the purposes of the vindication of British rule and British justice that we call for an adequate punishment and, if necessary, for the re-call and impeachment of those officials, however highly placed they may be, who form the chief *dramatis personae* in the Punjab tragedy and are responsible for it.

Babu Byadanath Mookerjee in supporting the resolution said :—Mr. President, Ladies, Brother Delegates and gentlemen, after so many speeches it is hardly necessary for me to add anything to commend this resolution for your acceptance. The report of the unfortunate situation that developed itself in the Punjab has roused the indignation of the people, and in this resolution you give an emphatic expression to the National feeling. But I would ask you to note that our people must not forget the most important fact that there is the Hunter Committee which has very earnestly applied itself to the investigation of the Punjab disturbances and that the verdict of the Committee is not yet pronounced. Remember that the officials who concerned themselves in the situation are at the present moment on their trial, so to say, before the Hunter Committee. The highest ends of justice require that you should now cease to criticize the conduct of those on their trial. Do not censure them now, do not make any remarks against them. No outsider can possibly know what the actual situation in the Punjab was. I may hardly remind you that to make any remarks against persons under trial would be totally inconsistent with the very elementary principles of justice. Wait then till the judgment is delivered. And I can assure you that if any person or persons are adjudged guilty by the Hunter Committee, it would not be necessary for any particular public body here to condemn them for the wrath of entire mankind would burst upon them and the guilty would stand self-condemned before the bar of human civilization. Do not then waste your energy now in thinking how best you can avenge yourselves. Remember, that you are a great people; long, long before in the morning of the world, your forefathers, first of all the races of the earth, had kindled the flame of civilization which penetrated through and dispersed the deep gloom that enveloped at the time the face of the globe. You are the inheritors of that great and ancient civilization. Be true to the spirit of that civilization. In the language of the Hon'ble

Babu Byadanath Mookerjee.

**Babu Byad-
nath Mookerjee.**

Mr. Bannerjea, the father of the modern Indian nation, we Indians are wedded to the loftiest traditions of the East, sanctified by the hallowed memories of the divinely inspired prophet of Islamism and of that saintly prince who flung away the splendour of royalty in order that he might become an apostle of humanity. You are the noble descendants of those saints with whom, as you know, forgiveness was a great virtue. Consistently with their teachings and with the teachings of those "Rishis" of old whose sacred memories you have kept enshrined in your heart of hearts, I would ask you to be patient now and not to allow yourselves to be tormented by the unsavoury memories of the past. It would do you no good to remember the unfortunate incidents, it would only irritate the national mind and it might prejudice the prospects of the Reform which, by itself, is a great safeguard against the recurrence of all such incidents in the future. I would then make a request of you and allow me to hope that you would grant it. Forget the un-sweet past, remove from your mind all bias, all irritation, and prepare yourselves in the right spirit to enter into the new era that has been inaugurated by the noble and inspiring declaration of the 23rd December, 1919, of our most beloved, our most excellent King Emperor. Look, there opens up before your eyes the land you saw in your vision, in all its full cheering grandeur in successive stages. Be joyous at this time, shake off all uneasiness of mind, and in your deep faith in your national destiny extend your hand of fellowship to all officials and non-officials, embrace in your bosom all your brothers of the British Empire, worship the spirit of conciliation and co-operation and love Britannia, fair Britannia, that has done so much to kindle in your minds a noble desire to preserve your national existence and through whose co-operation alone you can develop your nationhood. If you do all this I can assure you that all your national hopes and aspirations will attain fruition in the near future. In the spirit of the observations I have made I wish you to accept this resolution.

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

Rao Bahadur A. P. Patro moved the following resolution :—

Resolution VII.

Resolution VII.

This Conference is of opinion that the Indian Press Act should be repealed or at least that the Act should be radically revised so that no security or forfeiture should be called for except on satisfactory proof by the Government before a judicial tribunal that the liberty of the Press has been abused and that the conditions entailing forfeiture or deposit of security should be so defined as not to render an application to the High Court an illusory safeguard as shown in practice.

He said :—Gentlemen I need not state or discuss the reasons for this resolution. Ever since the Press Act has been passed you have had a very plentiful crop of prosecutions and demands from publishers and owners of printing presses to deposit money. There are three reasons I urge why the Press Act should be repealed, if not radically modified. I am in favour of repealing the Press Act altogether. If you have trusted the people for self-determination, if our Provincial administration is to be autonomous, if the Provincial Government is to be popular and if it is to be our Government, can you not trust those exponents of public opinion, can you not trust those who voice the feelings and sentiments of the people to be absolutely just and fair in their criticisms of the political and social problems affecting people and their advocacy of political principles? It is inconsistent if you retain this Act on the Statute Book with the self-determination that has now been given to us. If Provincial Governments are to be autonomous this mandate should issue from this Conference to the Members of the Legislative Councils that they should take the earliest opportunity of repealing this Act, or radically modifying it. There is already sufficient penal provision in the existing law. The Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code provide sufficient remedies for those persons who abuse the liberties of the Press. Every reasonable man will agree that there should be some provision which will be of assistance to the authorities in maintaining a healthy tone of the Press. Nobody will deny that such a measure of control is necessary, but it is not necessary to retain the provisions of the Indian Press Act which are so stringent and drastic, which call upon every printer and publisher to deposit security at the pleasure of the Magistrate and places them at the mercy of District Magistrates. According to the provisions of this Act if a man owns a Press or publishes a paper he will have to make a declaration and it is within the discretion of the District Magistrate to demand security from Rs. 500 to Rs. 2000. Several old Indian papers have been called upon to deposit money. Some others on account of their self-respect have ceased to publish. Certain very useful journals have been called upon to furnish security. I would not occupy your time by placing a complete list of the Journals and Presses dealt with under the Act—even the *Sanjibani* which has given new life to Bengal, which has led modern Bengal on very safe lines (and to-day when we find that the National life is so very strong in Bengal is it not due to the influence of the *Sanjibani*) that *Sanjibani* has been called upon to give security. In Madras the *Swadesmitram* has been called upon to give security. I need not refer to the litigation between the Government and *New India*. There it has been exposed completely how inadequate is the protection given in the Indian Press Act, that of appeal to the High Court. The measure is so stringent that the judges are bound to administer the law as it exists. The *New India* case has disclosed how drastic the provisions of the Indian Press Act are.

**Rao Bahadur
A. P. Patro.**

There is another reason why this Act should be repealed or radically modified. During the most troublous times of our day, during the disorders in the Punjab you have seen how very moderate the Indian Press has been in expressing the views of the Indian people. Take what has been published in the English Press and in the Indian Press, with regard to the Punjab disorders and compare them. Does the Indian Press deserve a greater measure of restriction and less freedom than the English Press? If you compare the two, I submit that you will at once come to the conclusion that there is a very strong reason why this Press Act should be repealed if not radically modified.

There is a third reason why I would ask you to consider the matter and give your opinion, namely, that at a time when you are to have Responsible Government and the Government is yours why should you place yourself in a position of distrust. We will not have self-reliance if we allow such a measure to exist in the Statute Book. Therefore we should agitate that this measure should be repealed or radically modified. The formation of Publicity Bureau in every Province affords an adequate channel to the Government to correct the mistakes or misstatements of the offending Press—why then a Press Act with such penal provisions is here? I will tell you how this Act is worked in practice. For instance the other day the Government of India issued a proclamation that dye-stuffs should not be purchased from any agency but British agency. A leading newspaper said that this was very uneconomical and that it would be a great hardship on the commercial community here, because British merchants would buy from other countries and add to their own profits and sell at two three times the price of purchase. When this was discussed in two or three leading articles that journal was called upon to shew cause why it should not forfeit its security. Instances like this which have been frequent will convince you how drastic are the provisions of the Press Act. Unless the Press Act is radically modified or removed from the Statute Book we will not be acting consistently with what we have passed in the fourth resolution. For these reasons I would ask you to carry this resolution.

**Mr.
G. A. Natesan.**

Mr. G. A. Natesan in seconding said:—I second the demand made in this Resolution for the repeal or radical modification of the Press Act, for it seems to me that if ever there was a time in the history of our country, when the Press should be restored to its full freedom it is now. You will remember that in the inspiring and touching Proclamation of His Majesty signifying his assent to the Reforms Act there is this striking passage: "it is my earnest desire at this time that so far as possible any trace of bitterness between my people and those who are responsible for my Government should be obliterated".

As a first step towards this His Majesty has been pleased by the exercise of his Royal clemency in regard to prisoners, to touch the hearts of the Indian people and even the outraged Punjab has been touched to some extent by this act of Royal clemency and the release of political prisoners imprisoned unjustly. The first of a series of repressive legislation which has given rise to a good deal of discontent in this country is the Press Act. I trust that the Government of India and the Secretary of State will now take upon themselves the responsibility of doing away with the Press Act or at least introduce into it such radical and fundamental changes that it will be impossible for the Executive, whether it be an irate Secretary of a Government or a Member of the Government disgusted with any particular individual, to demand security by a mere letter to a Presidency Magistrate.

Mr.
G. A. Natesan.

We are not afraid of Government. No self-respecting journal should be afraid of Government but we do not want that any journal should be placed in such a position that a mere executive order of a magistrate should compel it to deposit security, that it should be denied the elementary right of defending itself, that it should be denied the privilege which everyone charged with criminal offence enjoys. Any man accused of any crime is entitled to defend himself. If I am guilty put me in a Court of Law and try me. This is what the Press Act denies and therefore we say that it should be repealed. Next to the exercise of the Royal clemency, the Press Act should be repealed or radically modified because it has been a running sore and in the best interests of India and the New Government you are asked to abolish it, so that this running sore should be healed.

Babu Panch Cowrie Banerji supported the resolution in a speech in Bengali.

The Resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The President :—We shall now adjourn for half an hour for lunch and meet again in this Hall at 3-15 P.M. To-morrow we shall meet here at 11-30 A.M., but it will be upstairs.

On the Conference reassembling after lunch, Babu Debi Prosad Khaitan said:—Brother Delegates, with the kind permission of the Reception Committee, I have been given the privilege of inviting you all to an evening party to-day at No. 1 Harrington Street. I must confess that I have been placed on a very embarrassing position as I have been told that invitation cards have not reached all my brother delegates. You must excuse me for the shortcoming that has happened. Let me extend a cordial invitation to all this evening and I do hope that you will all be able to come. The time is from 6 P.M., to 8 P.M.

The Moderate Conference continued and concluded its sittings on 1st January 1920. There was a very large audience and Sir Sivaswami Aiyer presided.

The Hon. Sir
Deva Prosad
Sarbadhikari.

The Hon. Sir Deva Prosad Sarbadhikari said :—I beg to place before you for your acceptance the Resolution which has been circulated, but it has been altered to a certain extent which makes it necessary for me to read it out to you. It now runs as follows ;—

**RESOLUTION
VIII.**

Resolution VIII.

This Conference is of opinion that as a necessary preparation for the goal of responsible Government in recognition of the just claims of Indians to bear arms in the defence of their country and in fulfilment of the pledge of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, it is essential to take early steps to place the defensive organisation of the country on a national basis—

- (a) by throwing open King's Commissions to Indians on a liberal scale not merely to officers who have risen from the ranks and proved their merit but to the members of the educated classes on conditions similar to those obtaining in the British army ;
- (b) by throwing open to Indians all arms of the regular defensive organisation such as the artillery, the navy and the air force ;
- (c) by taking steps for the organisation of the territorial army which will serve as an auxiliary force to the Indian army and will bear at least the same proportion thereto as the proposed European auxiliary force will bear to the British army in India ;
- (d) by providing adequate military training and instruction in India to the highest standard possible and of the same character as in the case of the British Army in all subjects of military instruction whether technical or administrative, including military and naval engineering, the construction of aircraft and submarine engineering, the knowledge of tactics and strategy, etc.

He said : It is a good augury to my mind that I am able to invoke your new year's good wishes and those I hope of the authorities in favour of this resolution. To my mind this resolution is a logical sequence of the resolutions that you adopted here yesterday and the day before. Last year when the Moderate Conference met at Bombay the Reform measure was still in embryo and as an embryo it was threatened by untold woes, misfortunes and misadventures, all of which have fortunately now disappeared, and when responsible Government is in view a very necessary corollary of and preparation for that.

must be a preparation for self-defence and defence of the Empire. You are aware, ladies and gentlemen, that a resolution like this, a resolution that seeks to disturb equanimous and sedate vested interests and the existing order of things, is apt to evoke a pious invocation like that about the cobbler and his last. If we were to wait for a settlement of all differences of opinion by commissions and commissions after all do not settle differences of opinion but create further differences but that is another story,—if we were to wait for a settlement of all differences of opinion in all conceivable matters before people made their minds known, before they formulate their grievances and demands, I am afraid all human progress would be impossible and that would be my answer to any one who would put forward the Esher Army commission with its very limited terms of reference. I do not know what that commission will be able to achieve having regard to its terms of reference and also unfortunately having regard to the president who will be at the head of its deliberations in India. However much that may prove unsatisfactory from the point of view of those who have this resolution at heart, I have very high hopes that Sir Krishna Gupta, who has been called upon to take part in this commission will as an individual be very helpful in pressing forward our view before the authorities and if military organisation from the Indian point of view is at all to be undertaken on lines such as we venture to indicate in this resolution that view is bound to commend itself to the authorities.

The Hon. Sir
Deva Prasad
Sarbadhikari

I may tell you, gentlemen, that this resolution is not the offspring of the heated imaginations of the Subjects Committee fatigued after a long days work yesterday or the day before. It has been carefully considered by people who have studied the matter in consultation with those who are going to take up a further critical businesslike study of the subject, not on sentimental grounds or grounds of expediency, but on the larger ground of the justice and necessity of the situation. Further than that, this question has been before the country and the Congress for the last 35 years in one shape or another. Our demand for civic emancipation has been as persistent, as loud and as strong as for the larger and better employment of Indians in the army. We need no longer go back to the history of Protabaditya and Mohun Lall in practical proof of the righteousness of our cause. History is being made now and though in Bengal we have been somewhat backward of late, the reawakening came many years ago. As far as I remember signs of it appeared soon after the Panjdeh affair, which some of you will remember, in the early eighties of the last century, when 500 Bengalis offered themselves for service in answer to the Russian menace then as much Bolshevic as now. Who do you think headed that movement? My valued friend Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea and we

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were his willing lieutenants. Nothing however came of that. Nothing came of the suggestion for many years although every Congress programme has included resolutions for military employment, for volunteering, and for relaxation of the Arms Act regulation. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee told you yesterday that that master agitator had never failed but he failed so far. The opportunity came on August 4th 1914 and some of his lieutenants found an opening. The Madras Telingees came at the call of Clive and made the discussion of British Indian politics possible in this swamp, where Charnock and his lineal descendants placidly smoked their hookas under the Banyan tree in Boitakhana. This would never have happened if Clive had not dared to differ from his counting house masters in Madras. Madras has sent us another strong contingent headed by the president while the sturdy Nair with the Parsuram martial traditions has been called upon to take up duties elsewhere—duties which are no less important than those in the consideration of which we are engaged in here this morning. Sir Sankaran Nair who on the strong recommendation of Lord Chelmsford is one of Mr. Montagu's councillors will, I am sure be able to press this point of view in the national programme with much greater force because the Nairs are still a traditionally martial race although living under civic and religious institutions. The President referred to his entire success as a recruiting sergeant in Madras in connection with the Indian Defence Force but he did not refer to the Moplahs and Carnatics who have been giving such an excellent account of themselves at the front and of whom Lord Chelmsford has been speaking so appreciatively of late. We may not be able to furnish Moplahs and Carnatics but my Bengalee friends will not forget that on the model of the Madras Telingees the East Indian Company made a pipe army which was their main stay in those days before the Beharis, the Bhojpuris and Stalwarts from the Upper provinces or the Punjab, or Afghanistan, or the Nepali Gurkhas replaced the feeble Bengali warrior who took a notable part in the establishment of British ascendancy in this country. However, as I have said, I need not go back to history in furtherance of our claim; as late as the 6th August 1914 will answer my present purpose. War was declared on the 4th August, it was made known to the general public on the 5th and on the 6th the Bengalis were able to place their services and the services of their friends at the disposal of the authorities for any employment in military life that the Government might think fit. Cautious steps had naturally to be taken. We were asked for knowledge of tactics and strategy. We also had begun with a display of tactics and strategy. As you know, it is a part of British tradition in the display of tactics and strategy to send their doctors in advance where they want to get a footing. So did we. Our

medical men formed the vanguard and at once placed their services at the disposal of the Government. Red-tape negotiations had to follow, but within three months 140 members of the medical profession in private practice had been told off to ease the situation. Unpreparedness had led to an inevitable breakdown and the appearance of these 140 doctors as temporary members of the Indian Medical Service was a great help. We were also able to organise and equip that ill-fated ambulance vessel, the *Bengalee*, which unfortunately sank off Madras. But that did not damp our ardour. We soon organised and got ready a land ambulance force and what account they gave of themselves in Mesopotamia is now a matter of history. Amarendra Chowdhury and six of his colleagues were amongst the illustrious dead in Mesopotamia. A number of them went into captivity and all the hardships of one and a half year of captivity in the hands of the enemy were cheerfully borne. And when they came back what did they do? Not at all daunted by the sufferings they had gone through but rather encouraged, they sought their places in the combatant ranks. The second ambulance corps had in the meantime been organised but had to be disappointed owing to a misunderstanding to which I shall not refer more than to say that the disappointment was not the fault of the organisers. We pressed the Government and thanks to the good offices of Lord Carmichael, the authorities saw that it would not do to allow discontent to grow in the country and the disappointed men were made the nucleus of the Bengali battalion which not long after took the shape of the Double Bengali Company and under Dr. Mullick's fostering care soon extended into seven Battalions. Then came the Transport Corps, the Signalling Corps, the Railway Corps and various other military and semi-military organisations where the more educated man had his chance and I certainly claim that they gave a good account of themselves. They were all well-spoken of in the Despatches by the officials and I would like to know what answer these officials will give when this halting programme of ours comes to be considered. Now what do we ask for? The natural rights of men—rights almost as natural as those of food, air and light—the defence of the Empire. The 140 medical men we supplied soon rose in all the provinces where the propaganda was undertaken to 941 against a permanent strength of 840 in the I.M.S. and these 1700 medical men have been carrying on the work and doing it well. Without looking to the health of the troops no war can be won now a days. We therefore propose to look after the health of the army; we propose to furnish the brains of the Army and we propose also to furnish the sinews and muscles because given proper training and opportunities, every Indian including the much decried Bengali will make good in this notable direction. What they can do Subadar Major Bose has been

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able to say. As regards what can be done in volunteering there is Mr. J. N. Bannerjea who has earned the Long Service Medal and is still a ranker. The descendants of men who gave up their lives for their European comrades and contented themselves with rice gruel are no more than non-commissioned officers and cannot hope to be commissioned officers of the army. We want all this to be changed and if responsible Government comes, this thing that we ask for is a logical corollary. I do not propose, but I plead with all the earnestness that I am capable of that you not only accept but insist upon this resolution. As Sir B. C. Mitter said in his address, I too have a hereditary right in moving this resolution and that right I hope will not be denied to the son of the first naval surgeon in the Burmah War before last who as brigade-surgeon stood by the death bed at the siege of Lucknow of Sir Henry Lawrence who died, doing his duty (Loud and continued applause).

**The Hon. Mr
Srinivas Sastri.**

The Hon. Mr. Srinivas Sastri said :—I have much pleasure in seconding this Resolution. In doing so I will only dot the i's and cross the t's of the speech you have just listened to. I would lay special emphasis on a part of the preamble of this resolution "as a necessary preparation for the goal of responsible Government". That clause brings this resolution within the scope of the resolution to which I had the honour to speak yesterday. So considered it seems a necessary corollary to any large step in responsible Government that we take. In fact a great many amongst our wise leaders think that even if we obtain a much larger measure of responsible Government, even if we obtained the whole of it, we should still be far from enjoying the full fruits of it if the object of this resolution had not been previously attained. That this is perfectly true is clear from the fact that not only our wise leaders but the wise leaders of our opposition have long ago realised it. I well remember that in our first struggles for a bit of the reform that we are now going to have, we heard the remark from the extremists on both sides that if we are fit for it we must fight for it. From the Anglo-Indian side it came in this form : "If you are fit for responsible Government take it." A great many of our own friends the Indian extremists who liked nothing so much as a deep-rooted agitation said "Look here, there is nothing to be gained by your political programmes and your political speeches. You may send deputations to England but you will never get anything in that way. If we are fit for responsible Government, 'come along and let us take it." What either party meant was that no responsible Government has ever been obtained in this world except as the result of a combat between forces on one side and forces on the other. Our adversaries, to use a mild expression, in

this struggle for responsible Government really mean this that they would not grant us anything in the nature of power in the civil administration till we fight for it. This is the way most nations have obtained any constitutional power and this was the only way in which they would part with constitutional power in this country "not till you can fight and force us to be free shall we make you free if we can help it." That was the line that they took up. I don't think the better mind of England at any time would have endorsed this unblest doctrine. It was something like what we used to hear in the case of the widened electorates. As often as we asked that the franchise should be thrown open in this country as a preparation for responsible Government, these hereditary adversaries of ours came forward and said "Look here, your masses are uneducated, you have no system of universal education in your country. How absurd is the idea of starting a widened franchise before you have that." Then when we went to them for some measure of universal education they turned their back on us. For one reason or another there could be no political education, there could be no universal education. They kept you ignorant and when you wanted political power they said your ignorant men could not vote. That was the line pursued. It was the same "not till you can fight us for it." Thank Heavens we have been able, without anything like the application of force, to obtain the promise—I will not yet say fulfilment—of responsible Government—I can assure you I do not feel—and very few people feel—that we still shall have the reality. As I have said already, we shall not have the full enjoyment of the fruits of responsible Government till alongside the growth on our civil side we have also obtained the privilege of being enrolled in the citizen army. Here again we hear this curious proposition. Our Anglo-Indian friends ask "Do you suppose that we are going to remain in this country as merely defenders of your frontiers, putters down of insurrection and internal rebellions, leaving you the conduct of civil affairs in this country? We never will. So long as you want us to fight for you, so long also shall we rule over you." Now this is another naked doctrine preached to us by those who were eloquent about the civilising mission of Great Britain in the East. They say "we are out to conquer countries, to add provinces to our Empire, but what for? To raise the fallen, to bring civilisation and all its advantages to those parts of the world where still there is darkness and barbarism." If this is the case why should they be destined to play the part of defenders while we develop on the civil side? To this there is no answer except this that we came here for the sake of power, for the sake of commerce, for the sake of exploiting these poor defenceless countries and we will not surrender anything till we must." Well this is a doctrine which is not always openly acknowledged but it is

The Hon. Mr.
Srinivas Sastri.

The Hon. Mr.
Srinivas Sastri.

still present in the minds of people who have the ordering of affairs in their hands. Sometime ago there came a call to the people of this country to recruit. The authorities felt themselves in such a powerless condition that they thought that without the help of the people of the country it would be impossible for them to play the role they had hitherto reserved to themselves of defenders of the country. What was the response to it? Sir D. P. Sarbadhikari has just spoken to you of the part that Bengal played in that campaign. No other part of the country can say that they rose so readily and so amply in response to the call that they then made. I have heard this comparative failure used as an argument against the just aspirations of our people. Time and again from on high and in low quarters it has been urged against us that the people who were loud in their protestations of love of country but did not consent to enlist in the time of danger, did not deserve any privilege. We are in this unfortunate predicament. When we desired to enlist we were not promised the two things that we expected. I am not amongst those who think that no blame attaches to us in that respect. I do believe—and I may be frank with myself and with you—that we ought to have done better upon that occasion, that for one reason or another we allowed ourselves to be diverted from the straight path of courageous citizenship on all kinds of extraneous considerations. There were some people who should have spoken in favour of recruitment but did not do so. Because they were disappointed for some reason or other in various directions they broke away from the call of duty. There were yet others who for reasons best known to themselves chose to be silent when they should have spoken. It is not a matter of pride altogether, but then the answer to this comes from those generous minded Englishmen who judge us in the light of ordinary human experience. I have heard two Governors and many people high in authority tell me “No, I won't blame your people for what has been called a failure. It is no failure. Among the most courageous nations, if the practice of arms had died out for a hundred years, the same phenomenon would be noticed.” That, I think, represents a truthful explanation of that episode. We could not rise to the occasion because we had long been kept down, hindered from the ordinary right of a citizen to defend his own country. Now this is one of the things that England has yet to do in this country—to give us back, whole and entire, the right to defend ourselves (Applause). I think one of the bitter lessons of this great war that has just concluded is this, that no nation however well equipped, can hope, when the trial comes, to stand either by itself or without calling upon the reserves of strength in the nation. (hear, hear). We do not know what international complications await us in the future. We are by no means certain that we can rely even

upon such strength as England can bring to bear upon any future struggle without our own army being uplifted in defence of our hearths and homes. It is impossible in a military sense to feel safe anymore in this country. This power, the power to have a citizen army is one of the great acts of restitution that England owes to India. It ought not to be delayed by a day longer than is absolutely necessary. A state of preparedness cannot come in a day. It takes a long time even physically to fit out an arsenal and the other appurtenances necessary for our proper training, and above all to instil into us those martial qualities, which when once lost, take generations to regain. All these matters require plenty of time and therefore the sooner the English people recognise this and begin, the better. You don't know, and I did not know till I had a peep into the arena of European politics, that of the many parts of this big administrative machinery which you call the Government of a country, the most conservative part, with the most old world ideas, is the military department. Their prejudices and their worn-out policies they hug till they know not what they are doing. Then they wake up all of a sudden. I know nothing military that moves quickly except the Indian military Budget (laughter) which year by year mounts up until within 20 years it has more than doubled itself and Heaven knows whether in the next three years it is not going to treble or quadruple itself. Except in the matter, therefore, of encroaching upon the poor resources of the Indian taxpayer the military department is very slow indeed, and particularly slow in taking a big advance in its policy. Military policy is always secret, never allowed to be known to the people. Now this policy must change entirely. It must take the more generous line that Mr. Montagu and others have imparted to the other side of the administration. Not till then shall our responsible Government be as full, as many-sided and as fruitful as it should be to this great country (applause).

Mr. V. R. Gupta—I feel great pleasure in supporting this resolution which has been so ably proposed, seconded and supported already. I will specifically devote my attention to one portion of this resolution with regard to the King's Commissions that are to be given to the Indians. You may know that three days before the announcement of 20th August was made about the Reforms, another announcement was made that the colour bar was to be removed with regard to the King's Commissions in the Indian Army and it was also announced at the same time that 9 new Commissions were to be given to Indians. This part of the story I am sorry to tell you, is in itself not a very desirable story to tell, because there was absolutely no colour bar before that announcement. This colour bar had already been removed by the benign Proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858 and the nine commi-

Mr.
V. R. Gupta.

Mr.
V. R. Gupta

ssions which it was said were going to be given to the Indians were already given to them long before this announcement was made. And these commissions were not the ordinary commissions of Subadar Major and others given to persons who rose from the ranks, but the King's Commissions given to the people over the signature of His Majesty himself. All that was done by that announcement was that they were transferred from what we call the Inland Land Forces to the Indian Army and what they suffered was that they were put below the officers who had the same rank but had taken their grade on the same day. So in fact some of them have lost their ranks to the extent of 400 in number and put lower. This is the history of that announcement over which so many of us were so jubilant. This is the result of what Mr. Srinivas Sastri spoke of just now as being nothing short of the machinations of the War Office. In the Legislative Council we were told that commissions were to be given free to Indians, but afterwards it turned out that these were not King's Commissions but commissions given ordinarily to those who rose from the ranks. So in one way or another we have been led to believe that steps were being taken to meet our aspirations to be officers in the Indian Army, but practically up to the present moment you will find that very little has been done. After the announcement of 17th August 1917, two years have elapsed and these commissions ought to have been given to Indians. At least what was promised by the Secretary of State ought to have been done. How many commissions do you think have been given? There are only five boys learning at Sandhurst and only five have been admitted within the last three months. So in fact no new commissions have been given. So ten boys are learning at Sandhurst and that is all that has been done in fulfilment of the promise about which we have heard so much. I ask whether this is right? I think this question of commissions in the Army to Indians ought to form one of the foremost items in the programme of our work in the future. We have given some attention in the years past to this question of the Army and the Congress has passed resolutions several times but in my humble opinion the question has not received quite as much attention as it deserves. You know that the art of Generalship, the art of leading armies to fight battles, has been one of the proudest possessions of the martial races of India, but with the advent of British rule all that has disappeared. From the early days of the East India Company King's Commissions were given to Indians but since the Mutiny all that has been stopped and only commissions to those who rise from the ranks are given. In fact they are not properly speaking commissions because these persons have not got the necessary education and other requirements necessary to make good Generals. They are

only officers to whom subordinate duties are entrusted. I say that the descendants of those who have been fighters from the earliest days cannot sit quiet and see this inequality continued. Another point to which I would draw attention is this. At this particular moment when we are talking of Self-government, can you possibly consider that Self-government is consistent with the present position of the Indian Army? The nationalisation of the Indian Army is the logical sequence of responsible Government. If the Army is kept in its present position without any sympathy with a Government which will be a national Government what will be the result? The whole of the Army will have practically nothing in common with our Government and do you think that in these two departments the Army working by itself but looking to the people for the funds necessary, and at the sametime having no sympathy with the people, and the Government responsible to the people but having absolutely no power over the army, can possibly work together? It is inevitable that this will lead to open opposition and I do not know what will happen in the long run. So I think it is absolutely necessary that when we have these political Reforms, we should at the same time have some voice, some sort of sympathy with the Indian army otherwise I think the two will not and cannot work well together. It will come to this that we will have a sort of mercenary army which will be paid by us but will have no sympathy with us. History gives us several instances of the bad effects of having mercenary armies and I think this army of ours mercenaries as they will be, having absolutely nothing in common with us will lead to worse things even than mercenary armies have led to in the past. So we have got to look at this problem from that point of view. We must face this problem in the right way if we are going to pay our regiments and if we are going to defend our hearths and homes against peoples and countries who may think of attacking India. I am not one of those dreamers who think that we shall have continued peace hereafter through the coalitions and combination of several nations. Who knows how soon the frontiers of India and even the seas around India may be threatened from outside. We cannot count with certainty upon Great Britain's hands being free that she will in such an eventuality be able and willing to support and defend India against such attacks. So the chief necessity of our nation is that we must be ready to defend ourselves and be in a position to do so successfully, and unless we succeed in putting ourselves in such a position and are able to defend ourselves, it will ultimately not lead to very beneficial results. As has been very rightly said we can have no real responsible Government or self-government without power to defend ourselves.

Mr.
V. R. Gupta.

So in conclusion I want to say that if we are to have Self-

government, if we wish that India should actually take her place among the nations of the world, that India should proceed peacefully and not look to others in time of need for purposes of defence, I think the committee which will be appointed to further the best interests of the country under the Reform Scheme should take this problem in hand and do all in their power and go before the Army Commission, which is now sitting and try and secure for Indians the Kings Commission and also see that a regular volunteer force is organised on a sound basis, leaving absolutely no room for doubt about the loyalty or otherwise of the Indian people, and if we succeed in obtaining this I will say that we have won responsible Government (applause).

**Mr. B.
Venkatapati
Raju.**

Mr. B. Venkatapati Raju who also supported the resolution said :—The demand embodied in this resolution for your consideration and subsequent acceptance cannot be styled either Moderate or Immoderate, because it is a legitimate aspiration and vital for the national growth. How long are we to wait before we educate our children and our children's children in a martial spirit on patriotic lines? Is it not our duty to instil into their minds martial fervour and love of country with an unswerving determination to hold their own against any other nation that might attack them? The country will not be invincible until and unless our children are properly trained and equipped. Are we to tolerate the jeers of the English papers who say "you cry for home rule and are we to protect your hearths and homes? Are we to protect your souls?" Certainly not, we never wanted that. What we demand is that you should give us opportunities and we will defend our own hearths and homes (applause). How has Japan become great? It is because their Government realise that her subjects should utilise their energies in assimilating Western knowledge in all branches of life: not only in civic administration but also in military affairs. And it is natural that that nation should have risen in the scale of nations and become an important factor in world politics. Have we not performed feats of heroism in olden days? Every part of the country, whether you take Madras or Oudh, Bengal or Bombay,—in every part of the country you find history telling us that we have exhibited valour and strength. Is it not fair that the Government who want us to participate in the civil administration should also enable us to defend our country? We know why during the last 150 years of British rule instead of the country becoming stronger and stronger, it has become weaker and weaker. The only reason for this lamentable state of things is that our rulers have not had sufficient confidence and trust in their subjects. Can they possibly hope to secure the firmness of our attachment by distrusting us? They must increase our affection and loyalty and homage by the silken ties and fetters of trust and love. Trust begets trust. If they

trust us we will be grateful to them, be more loyal to them. None of us, either here or elsewhere want separation from the Empire, but what we do want is to stand on our own legs. What is the object of inviting us to be a member of the League of Nations if we cannot tell them that in any case of emergency we can and will support the Empire. Are we to depend always upon others for protection? I am telling you what you all know when I say that the Arms Act has killed the martial spirit of India to a very great extent. It is neither wise nor proper for the Government to kill the martial spirit of its subjects. We want to stand upon our own legs and therefore we must bestir ourselves and we expect our leaders to put forward strenuous and vigorous efforts to secure for us this much needed reform, because unless we have got men not only with intellectual ability but also with valour and strength, we will not become a self respecting nation so that other nations may also respect us. Not by granting us more posts or by promises to allow us to administer more subjects, will we become great, but by our preparation and by our ability to stand on our own legs, shall we secure the admiration of the peoples of the world. This resolution does not need many more words from me to commend itself to your universal acceptance. I request you one and all to carry the resolution with acclamation.

Major S. N. Bose said;—Mr. president, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is an honour to be allowed to stand shoulder to shoulder on the same platform with the giant political leaders of India to support the resolution which to my mind is one of the most important resolutions in this Conference. I shall not mention here again why we want this to be carried, as the reason has already been given by my predecessors. I shall draw your attention to clause (b) of the resolution—why do we ask for all these various arms? The Government may say that you have got the Infantry why do you want more? Ladies and Gentlemen, we have got the Infantry and a very good Infantry too but to have an efficient National Army we want them all. What does the Infantry do? It carries rifles. Rifles are used for preparing and for making the final assault. Usually Infantry has to advance under the cover of Artillery. We cannot ask somebody else to help us whenever we are in need of protection. We cannot do without Artillery. The next item is the Air Force. They are the eyes of the army and it is impossible for an army to move now-a-days either for offensive or defensive purposes without the guidance of the Aeroplanes. As regards the Navy,—it is absolutely necessary to save the skin of the country. Every one of you know how the German Government had suffered during the Great war for the efficiency of His Majesty's Grand Navy. The efficient British Navy not only kept the Seas clear but kept

**Major S. N.
Bose.**

Major S. N. Bose.

the enemy at bay the whole time. To have an efficient National Army we cannot do with one department only leaving the others. I should say that if we are to be given anything, let us be given the whole or nothing at all. A voluntary Army is no good. It is a mere sham. They know practically nothing of the real warfare. It is not at all an efficient body. If we are to have anything we must try and get the best. I consider that it is not a very difficult thing for the Government to grant us this. If they can trust us, they can give us. In France, in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, in the Dardennes and in the Frontier too we were trusted, and we did not give a bad account of ourselves as the world knows. If we could be trusted then, why can we not be trusted now? Given this efficient National Army it will not only do good to the country but will be a power to the Government as well. As regards the remarks from our illustrious and respected leader Hon'ble Mr. Sastri why there was no response from other provinces, if I may be allowed to say so on behalf of the young Indians I should say, the fault did not lie with them, but with the Government. The rigorous application of the Arms Act not only made us forget the use of arms, but taught us to look upon it with a dread. It helped to kill the sporting life of old, so the fault lay with the Government more than with the people. The leaders are trying to have compulsory education for Indians. Let them combine with that compulsory physical training too. Let the muscles be developed with the brain. Let the Boy Scout movement be much more wide spread, let us have Cadet Corps for all the senior schools in the country and all these will form the basis of an efficient National Army which will be a glory to the country and a power to the Government.

Lt. Sarcar.

Lt. Sircar on being called upon to support the resolution said :—Mr. President and gentlemen, I still hold my commission and therefore I am not permitted to take part in the proceedings and speak on this occasion. I trust you will kindly excuse me.

Mr. Hunter.

Mr. Hunter in further supporting said :—I came to India about a month or so ago to see your country. I had no idea of either entering into or taking any part in Indian politics but after attending this conference during the last two days and hearing the every able speeches which have been made by your leaders I came to this conclusion that the Moderate party was really the party which has the interest of India and the interest of the Indian people at heart and I had no hesitation in seeking to associate myself with it (applause). We have just emerged from a very terrible and devastating war, a war which has turned the world from end to end and I cannot help thinking that it is a calamity which we all hope will never happen to the world again. You have heard of course that as one of the results of that war, there has been some talk of forming a League of Nations. I think Lord Palmer who is a very great

and a very able man indeed, although he may be what your learned and able leader Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea called "a mere lawyer" but is still a very able man, is on the League of Nations and if this idea can only be brought to bear fruit, it may be that we shall all be safe from any future war. It may after all be only an ideal and we do not always realise our ideals. In the recent war I think I can say that not one of the countries associated with England has played a more important part than India. She has given of her best not only in treasure but in the lives and blood of her soldiers who have fought and fought bravely in France, in Flanders, in Mesopotamia and in other centres of war. I have spoken with many officers from the front and all of them bore witness that if it had not been for the soldiers of India we might at time have been in a very tight corner. As some recognition of the part that India had played you have, I think, received what have been called the Reform Act. This Act which you have received is not perhaps all that you hope for ; it is not perhaps all that you are justified in asking, but it is something and I cannot help feeling that from that beginning very great things are going to take place. Hitherto, as I understand Indian politics, you have been on what I might call a sea of destruction. You are now launching upon what may perhaps be aptly termed the ocean of construction and if I may say so you will find that the art of construction is a much more difficult one than the art of destruction. The future of India, to my mind, is in the hands of yourselves. You have this Act which gives you a measure of self-government and I am quite sure from what I have seen of India and from what I have seen of Indian statesmen and Indian leaders, that they are going to make the very best of the opportunities which are now given to them. You will have of course, education and the beginning of everything must be education. It is a two-edged weapon, but I hope that you will use it well so that the most beneficial results may ensue.

Mr. Hunter.

With regard to the resolution which I have the honour to support I must say that it has my very fullest appreciation. I quite agree with what the previous speakers have said that the part which India has played in the war and the consequent responsible position which she is now going to occupy justifies her in having an army which is compatible with her needs and which can only, I am sure, do her bare justice. Let me repeat that I have the very great appreciation of this resolution which has my most hearty support. I do hope indeed that you will have an army, that very soon you will have a Woolwich, a Sandhurst and a Wellington and other Military Colleges, because it is only natural to hope that with the system of education that India has, she can raise an army which will do her justice and which I am quite sure will in the course of a

very few years do her infinite credit. I have very great pleasure in supporting the resolution.

Mr.
Sachindranath
Mukerjee.

Mr. Sachindrath Mukerjee, who also supported the resolution, said ;—I rise to join my voice in supporting this proposition which has been just now placed before you with so much ability, eloquence, and force, and to commend it to your unanimous and enthusiastic acceptance. For years and years the subject of the admission of Indians into the Army has formed one of the chief planks in our political programme. For years and years we have knocked at the doors of Government urging our claims to be allowed to defend ourselves, our hearths and homes, but so long our voice has been a voice crying in the wilderness and our claims have not received any recognition, but now that we are to have and enjoy responsible Government I hope and trust (and this hope goes forth from the heart of the nation) that we shall be granted the privilege of defending our motherland. This is the aspiration that inspires us to-day and God grant that this ambition of ours may be realised at no distant time. In the resolution that has been placed before us this morning, the plea has been put forward that upon the grant of responsible Government it is essentially necessary that we must have a national Indian army. After the lapse of so many years we are on the eve of entering the Promised Land. I regard it as the crowning achievement after strenuous labours, of that noble band of pioneers who regarded no sacrifice too great, no labours too much, for the service of the mother land, and now thanks to them and their unceasing labours we are enabled to enter the Promised Land. It is essential that we must stand on our own legs so far as the defensive organisation of the country is concerned. In that speech made by him at that meeting held in honour of our great leader the Hon. Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, Sir Krishna Gupta said that with one foot free and one foot chained how would we hope to enter the Promised Land. This is perfectly true. Now that one foot is to be set free while the other remains in chains how can we enjoy the new condition of things. Therefore from this Moderate Conference the plea of the whole nation goes forth that we must have our proper share and our rightful share in the army. It has been rightly said that it is of essential importance that military training should be made compulsory. The claim of Indians for the nationalisation of the Army stands on the basis of justice and fairness. If you search the pages of history you will find that Indians have not been wanting when called upon to fight for their own motherland. It is not as if we had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. History has taught the lesson that Indians can prove themselves capable. Let us therefore hope that this great boon will not be any longer withheld from us. We have good material in our young men who can form

worthy units. With such admirable units we can create for ourselves a glorious place among the nations of the earth. Therefore I ask you to give your whole hearted support to this resolution.

Mr. Alexander also supported the resolution. He said : Mr. Alexander.
I am not a politician and this is the first time I find myself on a platform among so many great leaders. I am only an industrial man and it is industry I am mainly interested in. The only qualification I have for speaking on military subjects is that I am a manufacturer of leather which goes to the making up of boots for the army. I sincerely trust that you will have your own army and when you do you will want equipment and a necessary part of that equipment will be boots for your army and you will come to me for that (lughter). But it is not for this reason that I associate myself with this party. I ask you to believe that I am earnest and sincere in associating myself with you and that you can rely upon me to the last day of my life. You have among you excellent fighting material and if you are given a chance I am sure you will make good. It was not right that the Government should have denied you the right to carry arms and the reason why they have deprived you of this right is that they suspect you. That suspicion ought to have been removed long ago. It is because you have been debarred so long that you do not know the proper use of arms. The time has now come when this right must be restored to you and I am sure you will in a short time prove yourselves quite efficient. I associate myself wholeheartedly with this resolution and I trust you will excuse me for my peculiar way of expressing myself.

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

The President : The next proposition I wish to put before you relates to the treatment of Indians in South Africa and in British East Africa and elsewhere and it runs in these terms :—

Resolution IX.

RESOLUTION IX.

- (a) This Conference strongly protests against the attempts made in South Africa to deprive the Indian Settlers of rights hetherto enjoyed by them by means of the Asiatic Trading and Land Amendment Act and by other Legislation of a similer character calculated to drive them out of the country.
- (b) This Conference appeals to the Imperial Government to affirm and protect the unrestricted rights of Indians to emigrate to British East Africa and the African Colonies which have been taken from Germany and to support the Indian Settlers in these Colonies and all

Mr. Alexander. future Indian immigrants in the unrestricted exercise of their civil, municipal and political rights.

This proposition was passed by the Subjects Committee last night but I have made a few verbal alterations which in no way alter the substance of the proposition.

The Resolution was then put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The President :—I wish to put a proposition of a very uncontentious character but of great importance from the Chair. The proposition which I wish to put forward was originally included in the draft resolution relating to the Punjab but it was thought that it was not altogether relevant to that question and should find a separate place. The Resolution relates to the abolition of flogging in the Indian army and it is in these terms ;—

**RESOLUTION
X.**

Resolution X.

This Conference is of opinion that the punishment of flogging which was abolished in the British Army nearly 50 years ago should be immediately abolished in the Indian Army.

I do not think that any words of mine are needed to recommend it to your acceptance.

The Resolution was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

The President : The Conference will now adjourn till 11-30 a.m. to-morrow. The Subjects Committee will meet at No. 1. Harrington Street at 7 o'clock this evening.

The Moderate Conference resumed its sitting at 11 A.M. on Friday, January 1st. 1920.

The following Resolution was moved from the chair that :—

**RESOLUTION
XI.**

Resolution XI.

This Conference is of opinion that the Government and the people should do all in their power to support and promote the Indian Boy Scout movement and take steps to bring it into line with Baden Powells Boy Scout Movement.

In putting it the President said :—I dont think any words are necessary to commend this Resolution to your acceptance. As explained by Subadar Major Bose the Boy Scout movement is calculated to furnish the most valuable material for the

formation of an army. Apart from its value as a feeder to the Army, it has a most important influence on the character of our boys. For all these reasons it is essential we should do everything in our power to strengthen and extend this movement.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

The Hon. Mr. Pravash Chunder Mitter moved that :—

The Hon.
Mr. Pravash
Chunder Mitter

Resolution XII.

RESOLUTION
XII.

This Conference recommends that the subjects of Indian States who have settled in British India or under the British administration in India may be declared eligible for political franchise and for election to the Legislative Councils in the same manner as British Indian subjects.

In moving it he said :—This Resolution requires a word of explanation. You are perhaps aware that in the report of the Southborough Committee, it was decided that all subjects of any state in India or any British subject would be entitled to vote in the elections and it was also decided by the Southborough Committee that the subjects of any state in India were eligible for election as a member of council, but in the Report of the Joint Committee, one of the points of reference to the Local Government is this :—the question whether the rulers and subjects of Native States may be registered as electors or whether their election should be left to be settled in each case by the local Government concerned. So that you find, gentlemen, that in the report of the Southborough Committee the position of the subject of Native States was much better than it is at the present moment although it may be that when the Local Government has reported, their position will remain just the same. Now gentlemen, as you are all aware there are many subjects of Native States who are for all practical purposes at one with us. They have settled in India. They have invested all their surplus funds in India, they are one of us in every sense of the word. Therefore having regard to the economic and commercial progress and with the co-operation between these gentlemen and ourselves we may very well expect great results ; so it is not unnatural that these gentlemen have approached British subjects and pleaded before us the justice of their cause. Now, gentlemen we are all believers in the doctrine of self help and it follows, therefore, that we are all believers in the constructive policy and in order to fully strengthen this constructive policy it is necessary that there must be co-operation between all sections of Indians and to further the cause of co-operation we must have with us our fellow Indians who are subjects of Indian states and who are interested in British India in the same way as we are. When we remember that in the Southborough Committee men like our

esteemed leader Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, our esteemed countrymen Lord Sinha and Mr. Sastri were in favour of giving votes to every Indian subject, I am sure it will not require many words from me to commend to you the resolution which I have the honour to propose.

**Rao Sahib Ram
Deo Chokany.**

Rao Sahib Ram Deo Chokany in support of the Resolution on the subject of the right of Franchise to subjects of Indian States said :—It is with a feeling of profound confidence that I commend this Resolution to your acceptance. Happily, never in the history of British Rule in India has any distinction been observed either by the people of India or by the Government between British Subjects and the subjects of Indian States. Both the classes of people have ever lived in perfect amity, mutual good-will and affection. The subjects of Indian States have settled in British India and with the welcome they received and the field they got for advancement, they have made great progress in trade and commerce to the benefit not only of themselves but also to that of British India and, in fact, I may say without immodesty that the part they have played in the development of trade, commerce and industry has contributed to the progress of India as a whole. The subjects of Indian States, on their part, have never betrayed the welcome accorded to and the confidence reposed in them. As I have already said they have settled in British India. Whatever wealth they have earned has been sunk either in commerce and industries or properties or in non-sectarian charity—always to the permanent benefit of the places where the wealth has been earned ; they have not taken away nor did they ever intend to take away any portion of their wealth to the places of their origin. I have no doubt that it is these circumstances which have in the past led to such mutual sympathy and affection, so much so that the subjects of Indian States have always identified themselves with the joys and sorrows of their brethren in British India and this will be continued in future. It is with some degree of pride in the catholicism of the Indians that I recall to mind that all movements which have not been restricted to any province have been styled All-India and not All-British-India and no distinction has ever been observed between the two classes. Never has any Indian, whether a politician or not, demanded that any such distinction should exist or be brought into existence. The Southborough Committee which included not only Europeans of high standing and repute but also Indian politicians whom we honour and respect and in whose opinions we have confidence, after having heard all the evidence available throughout India and after having made a tour throughout India and thereby gaining direct knowledge of the circumstances and conditions of each province and after due deliberation which covered a period of several months,

unanimously recommended as regards not only the Imperial Legislative Assembly and the Council of State but also the Legislative Council for each and every province that British Subjects and subjects of Indian States should have the same rights and privileges as regards the power to vote at an election and to be eligible for election as members of the Legislatures. This was as it should have been. It came as a surprise when it was found in the Government of India Bill presented to the Joint Committee and in the report of the Joint Committee that the question whether the rulers and subjects of Indian States may be registered as electors or may be elected to the Legislative Councils should be left to be settled in each case by the Local Government of the Province.

Rao Sahib Ram
Deo Chokany.

Gentlemen, it is a matter of great regret that the position of the subjects of Indian States having thus been left in some doubt they are compelled to feel some gloom when the rest of the atmosphere in British India is bright and, to use the words of His Majesty, a new era is opening and it should begin with a common determination among all the peoples in India to work together for a common purpose. I have no doubt that the Local Governments will rise to the occasion and give an opportunity to the subjects of Indian States to co-operate with the British Subjects in making the glorious scheme that has just passed both the Houses of Parliament a grand success. At this stage I might be permitted to state with frankness that the keeping aside of subjects of Indian States from the boons and privileges conferred on the people of India by the new Government of India Act would be sowing the seed of a feeling among the British Subjects of superiority to their brethren whose places of origin have been in Indian States. This cannot but lead to ill-will which may result in dissension. It will be harmful to the interests not only of each province but of India as a whole. Gentlemen, I have no doubt that you will use your utmost endeavours that these fears should be cut at their roots. They should not be allowed to germinate. And there is no reason why any such distinction should be drawn. The Chamber of Princes is going to be established. In the Council of State there will possibly be some Indian Rulers, there will be exchange of views between the rulers of States and the Government of India. People of one province in British India residing or carrying on business in another province will be entitled to vote and stand as candidates for election to the Legislature in such other province. There is no difference between those coming from another province and those coming from a Native State. The latter have never been found to be faltering whenever the interests of India have required it, as is evident from the part they played in making the War Loans, the War Funds, etc., a success. There is no justification, therefore, why the subjects of Indian States should be treated

differentially. Many such subjects by reason of their having settled in British India or the descendants of such subjects have no doubt become British Subjects. If the distinction is not removed much time and trouble will have to be spent in investigating in each case as to who is a British Subject or who is a subject of an Indian State; hair splitting arguments are bound to be advanced in support of or against such position in each case and consequently it will lead to great embarrassment at the time of election. All this can be easily avoided by the Local Government of each province adopting the very reasonable and sympathetic attitude recommended by the Southborough Committee. This will lead to mutual co-operation, in the train of which will follow love and confidence between all the peoples of India without any exemption, redounding to the glory of India as a whole, and the progress of India will go on, without any friction, to the mutual benefit of all. Gentlemen, I am quite confident that you will have no hesitation in rising to the occasion and giving evidence of your liberality and desire to co-operate to achieve success along the new and glorious path which now lies before us by signifying your unanimous approval of this resolution.

**Mr. Tarit
Bhusan Roy.**

Mr. Tarit Bhusan Roy in supporting the resolution said :— I need hardly tell you that although this is my very first attempt at making a public speech it is with very great pleasure that I have come forward to accord my support to this resolution. You are all aware of the fact that this is a resolution which concerns the Indian commercial community. You know perfectly well as to how largely subjects of Indian States have settled themselves in our country and made all parts of India their home. When this resolution was being discussed last evening the question arose as to why the subjects of Indian States who had settled down and were not temporary sojourners why they should not be similarly treated with us British subjects and whether we should not accord to them the privileges which are embodied in this resolution. Speaking for myself I see no reason why the subjects of Indian States who contribute to our revenues and share all the burdens with us should not enjoy the privileges of citizenship in our country. Speaking as a member of the commercial community I say this that we British Indian subjects shall be quite unable to hold our own in the domain of commerce and trade unassisted by our friends who are subjects of the Indian States. The position is still very bad and it would have gone from bad to worse but for the timely and invaluable assistance that our friends from the Indian States have rendered us in asserting our position in the realm of commerce and trade. It is our duty, therefore, in view of the Proclamation of His Gracious Majesty to stretch out the hand of brotherhood and comradeship to our fellow Indians, the subjects of the Native States.

I believe in the justice of the demand embodied in this resolution, and this fact alone ought to constitute its greatest claim to its acceptance by you. With these few words I commend this resolution to you (Applause).

Mr. Tarit
Bhusan Roy.

The resolution was put to the Conference and carried unanimously.

The President then put the following Resolution from the chair :—

Resolution XIII.

**RESOLUTION
XIII.**

This Conference tenders its heartfelt thanks to Sir Rash Behari Ghosh for his munificent gifts to the cause of higher scientific education in this country, and trusts that all wealthy citizens would emulate his noble example.

The resolution was put and carried with acclamation.

The President :—The next Resolution which has also to be moved from the chair is Resolution No. XIV. It runs as follows :—

Resolution XIV.

**RESOLUTION
XIV.**

- (1) The Liberal Party of India will work for the success of the constitutional reforms by following a policy of co-operation, and of promoting good understanding among the different communities and interests in the country. It will aim at a higher standard of rational efficiency by means of administrative reforms, the wider spread of education, the improvement of public health, economic development, and amelioration of the condition of the backward classes of the population.
- (2) The organisation of the Liberal party shall be known as the National Liberal Federation of India and the future sessions of the All-India Moderate Conference shall be designated the annual session of the National Liberal Federation.
- (3) The Indian Association of Calcutta, the Bengal National Liberal League, the National Liberal Association of Western India, the Deccan Sabha of Poona, the Madras Liberal League, the United Provinces Liberal Association, the National Liberal League of the Central Provinces and Berar, and other Liberal Associations or Leagues which may adopt the objects and methods of the National Liberal Federation and may be admitted by the Council (hereinafter referred to), shall be component parts of the National Liberal Federation of India.
- (4) The work of the Federation shall be carried on between one annual session and another by a council

consisting of not more than fifteen members from each province in addition to office-bearers, elected at the annual session.

The office-bearers shall be the President of the last previous annual session of the Federation, who will be the Chairman of the Council ; the ex-Presidents, who will be the Vice-Chairman, and two General Secretaries.

- (5) Members of the Council shall pay an annual subscription of Rs. 25.
- (6) The members of Associations or Leagues which are component parts of the Federation and such other persons as may be elected by their Committees are eligible for Membership of the annual sessions of the Federation. Those who attend the session shall pay a fee of Rs. 5.
- (7) The Council shall take all necessary steps to carry on work in India and in England.

The President in moving the resolution said :—These proposals have been brought forward in the Subjects Committee after a good deal of discussion and much consideration and I trust they will commend themselves to you as suitable for the organisation of our Party. I may mention here that these proposals which are put forward are not of an immutable character. They are more or less tentative. We hope that they will prove a satisfactory working constitution for the next year ; and if we find that there are any defects in this constitution which has now been tentatively proposed, it will be open to us to revise it in the light of experience. I now put the proposition to the vote.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The President :—I now call upon the Hon. Dewan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao to move resolution XV.

The Hon. Dewan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao said :—
The resolution which I have the honour to move reads as follows :—

**RESOLUTION
XV.**

Resolution XV.

- (a) That the Council be instructed to do all that is necessary and possible in connection with all action that has to be taken under the Government of India Act of 1919 and the reports of the Punjab Enquiry Commission and the Indian Army Commission, as well as to bring about the repeal or a radical amendment of the Indian Press Act and also the repeal of the Rowlatt Act.
- (b) That the Council be further instructed to organise a deputation to proceed to England to urge before the statesmen and publicists there the views of the Con-

ference on the aforesaid subjects, and do such other work as the Council may decide.

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- (c) This Conference is of opinion that it is desirable that the various provincial organisations of the National Liberal Federation should consider the following subjects and frame suitable programmes of constructive work in connection therewith :—
- (1) The placing of the principles of Land Revenue Settlements on a Legislative basis.
 - (2) A definite programme of development of Irrigation if necessary by borrowed Capital.
 - (3) Development of Provincial Railways and reform of the present method of Railway administration and of the Railway tariff so far as it affects each province.
 - (4) An immediate expansion of free Elementary Education with the ultimate goal of introduction of Compulsory Education at an early date.
 - (5) Reforms connected with the Elementary, Secondary and higher education (Collegiate and Technical).
 - (6) Development of Agriculture and the improvement of the economic condition of the agriculturists.
 - (7) Reform of the Excise administration with a view to minimise gradually the consumption of liquor and with a view to the ultimate introduction of total prohibition.
 - (8) Development and expansion of Industries and the organisation of better credit for the rural Classes.
 - (9) The amelioration of the condition of the backward Classes and the improvement of the present condition of labour and the housing of the poorer Classes.
 - (10) Retrenchment of public expenditure and reform of existing methods of administration with specific reference to the improvement of District administration.
 - (11) Organisation of Medical relief and Sanitation.

I propose only to make a few remarks on the whole subject of our organisation as the Liberal Party. The only addendum that I wish to bring to your notice is in Clause 1 "That the council be instructed to do all that is necessary and possible in connection with all action that has to be taken under the Government of India Act of 1919 and the reports of the Punjab Enquiry Commission and the Indian army Commission, as well as to bring about the repeal or a radical amendment of the Indian Press Act." The resolution which has been put from the chair relates to the organisation of the Liberal Party in this country. The question of organisation is of the utmost importance to the future of our Party. The old words "Moderate" and

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Rao.

"Extremist" have been present before the country for some time but to some extent they do not; I venture to think, represent accurately what our future political parties will be. As has been suggested by the President in his presidential speech, the time has come when possibly we will have to adopt a new nomenclature. Therefore the resolution that has already been carried foreshadows the organisation of the Liberal Party and whatever the circumstances may be under which we organise ourselves into a separate party, the circumstances hereafter will be entirely different. We are now on the eve of the introduction of Responsible Government in this country and that I assume the existence of a system of party government, a system where different political parties with different political views and different political programmes will come before the country and educate electorates while they are in power, to carry out their ideas into practice. Now gentlemen, you are aware that in the United Kingdom and most of the Western countries those engaged in political work are distributed into various groups. The liberal organisations in the United Kingdom count by the hundred but the memberships are counted by thousands and millions and the amount subscribed by them to the party funds is probably three millions.

The Conservative party is similarly distributed all over and do their work throughout the year. Simple organisations in London direct the energies of their respective political parties so that when the time comes for action, each of these political parties may have a programme. Such a time has now arrived. Under the system of Responsible Government in the provinces you will see that hereafter we certainly cannot attack the bureaucracy for everything that will be done. Our ministers with popular legislatures at their backs will be responsible for a substantial proportion of the work in the provinces. It is therefore incumbent that we Liberals in this country should organise ourselves into a definite political party, which, I venture to think, is no indication of our hostility to any existing organisation, but which with a definite purpose will try to do its best, with a definite political programme when opportunity presents itself under the new conditions. Therefore whatever may be the origin of our Party, it is now incumbent that in this country political parties with definite political aims must come into existence. I submit, therefore, that this organisation of ourselves into a Liberal Party with some amount of definiteness for the work which we intend to do, is none too soon and I venture to think that hereafter our constructive ability should mainly be directed to evolving a new programme which will suit the different provinces and the different things which we the Liberals will be able, with some amount of reasonable certainty, to carry into effect. (Hear, hear).

Now gentlemen, with regard to party funds, a good deal has already been said about the fact that it is absolutely necessary to provide our central organisation with plenty of funds. Our energies will hereafter have to be devoted to getting together those funds and carrying out propaganda work throughout the country and for that purpose I trust that all those that are here and also those that are not here, but are interested in the various Liberal Leagues throughout the country, will put their heads together and make the central organisation which it is proposed to be established, a workable and financial success. That is an essential condition of our Party and I trust that you in Bengal and we in Madras as well as those in Bombay and in other parts of the country will co-operate with each other having regard specially to the large volume of work which has to be done not only in this country but also in the United Kingdom, so that we shall be able to provide ourselves with ample funds for the great volume of propaganda work that lies before us. I do not propose to say anything about clauses (a) (b) and (c) of this resolution. You are aware that the Punjab' Enquiry Committee is now sitting. The Hunter Committee's findings about the misdeeds perpetrated in the country and the issues in regard to that Commission will have to be fought out in this country but not so much in this country as in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Therefore that is one matter in regard to which you will have to send a deputation to England. Then the Indian Army Commission is assembling in a few days. The question of the whole military organisation and military defence of this country is of the utmost importance and unless we start an agitation which will force the authorities to listen to us, we shall not be able to make headway in regard to starting a national defence force. Now gentlemen, these two by themselves are enough to require all the energies of our party leaders who should go to England at the earliest possible opportunity, for it is certain that unless you can afford to send a deputation to England, these questions will not be dealt with adequately in this country. Besides this there are various matters connected with the rules under the Government of India Act. These rules will have to be framed very soon and possibly the whole question of the framing of the rules will have to go before the British Parliament, perhaps in May or June, this year. Our deputation has done, I venture to think, a great deal of good work but the continuation of that work till these rules are actually framed is also a matter of great necessity. There is no doubt that if your work is to be done well and done in time you will have to find, as has already been stated, ample funds for the organisation of this Liberal Party.

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Ramchandra
Rao.

I will now proceed to say a few words in regard to the

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last clause of this resolution which is again subdivided into eleven sub-clauses. The existence of a separate Liberal Party, as you have already been told, can only be justified if you have a Party programme which you can place before the country for consideration. Now gentlemen, this is only an attempt to focus the attention of the various Liberal Leagues in the country to arrange what may be suitable as regards each province in connection with these eleven items mentioned in this resolution. Some apprehension was expressed yesterday that this was rather a large order and that it would not be possible to adopt many of these suggestions. Those who are familiar with the proceedings of the Minto-Morley Councils for the last ten years will be familiar with the fact that every one of these items has attracted a considerable amount of attention from the people and from the existing Government and I venture to think that we cannot start in a better way than by taking up these subjects and placing them before the country for solution. The first item in this programme is the placing of the principles of the Land Revenue settlements on a legislative basis. This has been under consideration since 1900. This was a recommendation that was made by the Decentralization Commission. Now that you have an opportunity of bringing the matter up and helping it forward by means of your large non-official majorities and through your own ministers and the Legislative Councils, I think it ought to be the aim of everyone to see that this item is adopted as soon as possible. With regard to items 2 and 3 similarly there has been a considerable amount of literature in the existing Councils and possibly one or other of these two items may not be of much importance in some provinces though they may be of great importance in others.

The questions of free and elementary education and that of secondary and higher education have already been before the country for the past ten years and education Bills have already been introduced in some provinces. But the whole question is complicated by the question of finance. How to solve this question is a matter for serious consideration. I have no doubt that if we are to take advantage fully of the new constitutions, the question of free compulsory education is one of those which you have to take up almost immediately. The other question of the Excise Administration and the consumption of liquor is one which has been urged not only by the Temperance Reformers but also all those who are interested in the well-being of the poorer classes. I would ask you to consider the large numbers of resolutions in which non-official opinion has expressed itself in the Imperial Council as well as in the various provinces and all that I ask you to consider is that what we have been urging must be taken up as soon as we have the opportunity

to solve it in our own way in regard to the retrenchment of public expenditure. You are all aware that the great motto of the Liberal Party in England is retrenchment in Revenue. I trust that the question of retrenchment of public expenditure, the economies that can be practised and the funds that this will give us for the new programmes that will be put forward in the councils, will also receive attention.

I venture to think that there is nothing about which anybody need be frightened in the ten or eleven items mentioned here and I trust that the various Liberal Leagues in this country will be able to place a suitable programme for adoption before the country and that public attention will be concentrated on the adoption of this programme.

I do not wish to detain you further. The evolution of a Party programme which can be considered by the country is the sole justification for this Liberal organisation. The country is large enough not only for two parties but for a dozen political parties if they have clear political ideas and definite political programmes. Our critics who have misrepresented us will not draw the conclusion that this organisation has been started with any idea of hostility to any existing organisation but with the view to the crystallisation of a programme of the aims of the party to which all of us are committed. With these words I commend this resolution for your acceptance.

The Hon. Mr. Nara Sinha Raju in seconding the resolution said :—I am happy to associate myself with this resolution and to second it. You may remember that the continuance of this session to this day is mainly due to this resolution. The Subjects Committee was not able to come to a conclusion one way or another the day before yesterday, and we had to appoint a committee which met yesterday morning. The subject was again considered last night, and quite in keeping with the spirit of our Party, we were able to come to a definite and unanimous conclusion and this resolution is now placed before the Conference for its acceptance. It has been already pointed out by the mover of this resolution that the formation of this party is merely an evolution of the new Reform Act, and not at all in opposition to the existing national institution. From the fact that our illustrious countryman, Dewan Bahadur C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, the Hon. Mr. Sastri, and many other of our leaders have associated themselves with both the National Congress and this Conference shows that we are not sitting here in opposition to the National Institution (Applause). This is my personal view. You have already heard views to the contrary. During these two or three days reference has often been made to

**The Hon. Mr.
Nara Sinha
Raju.**

The Hon. Mr.
Nara Sinha
Raju.

the words "Our Party" and there was some difficulty in understanding what the main principles were in determining and entitling them to speak of themselves as "Our Party". The preamble of the resolution, which has already been moved from the chair and unanimously approved by this Conference, contains two main principles which underlie the formation of this Party. This resolution which is now before the Conference is divided into two portions. The first portion refers to the All India programme and the latter portion refers to the programme to be framed under those general principles by the various Liberal Leagues of the provinces. My friend, the Hon. Dewan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao, has explained the importance and necessity of this clause. With his experience in the council for nearly six years he was able to place before you with ability and exhaustiveness the necessity of the various principles upon which the Liberal Party is working. Before we meet for the next session we have to educate the electorates and we have to appear before the electorates and lay down our own principle and the way in which we propose to work for the amelioration of the electorate. Most of these resolutions indicate that we belong to a progressive school and not to a conservative school. If we examine the discussions in the past in the various Legislative Councils of the Provinces, we find that every one of these items finds a place in the programme of this party. Most of the leaders of this party were members of the Minto-Morley Reform Councils. By their experience of the past they have worked out the detail of this programme. The main principle of our Party is co-operation. With the guidance and experience in the past the leaders have given much thought to the principles underlying this resolution. If our young men of the present day associate themselves and form themselves into a group under the leadership and experience of these persons, I am sure we will be able to give a splendid account of our work in the future Councils. Every one in this country should remember that we are, as it were, placed in a school-room now. Ten years hence our work will be examined by a Parliamentary Committee. There is sufficient indication in the Joint Committee's report that we are to be judged by the results of our work in the direction of the amelioration of the masses. Everyone of the sub-clauses is intended to cover this ground and we must stand the test and prove ourselves worthy of the present reforms, and also prove that we deserve more—the complete grant of selfgovernment at an early date. With these remarks I commend the resolution to your acceptance.

The Resolution was put and agreed to unanimously.

The President then moved the following Resolution :—

Resolution XVI.

**RESOLUTION
XVI.**

This Conference appoints the Hon. Dr. Tej Bahadur Sapru and the Hon. Mr. C. Y. Chintamani as General Secretaries of the National Liberal Federation for the year 1920.

He said :—Before I put this proposition to the vote, I should like to say a word with reference to the most valuable services which have been rendered by Mr. Samarath during the last year. The burden of organising the work of the first session of the Moderate Conference fell upon Mr. Samarath. How well he discharged that duty we all know, and what services he has rendered since then as a member of the Moderate Deputation which went to England, we have also been made acquainted with from the accounts which have appeared in the papers. I therefore consider it a privilege to have an opportunity of testifying in your name our appreciation of the very valuable service he has rendered. He is not now in India and we do not know whether he will be in a position to accept the responsibility of the office of Secretary for another year. The names that we have put into this proposition will, I am sure, commend themselves to all the members.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

Sir B. C. Mitter in moving the resolution proposing the new Council for the year 1920 said :—The proposition I am putting forward before you is merely a formal one, but none the less it is an important one which refers to the Council of the National Liberal Federation for 1920. I am reading to you now the names that have been proposed.

Sir. B. C.
Mitter.

Resolution XVII.

**RESOLUTION
XVII.**

That the Council of the National Federation for the year 1920 be constituted as follows :—

CHAIRMAN.

SIR P. S. SIVASWAMY AIYER, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.

VICE-CHAIRMAN.

THE HON. BABU SURENDRANATH BANERJEA.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1920

BENGAL.

1. The Hon. Sir Rajendra Nath Mookerjee, K.C.I.E.
7, Harrington Street, Calcutta.
2. Sir Binod Mitter, 10, Elysium Row, Calcutta.
3. The Hon. Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhicari C.I.E., LL.D.,
20, Suri Lane, Calcutta.
4. Rai Boikunth Nath Sen Bahadur, C.I.E., Murshidabad.

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5. Babu Ambica Charan Mazumdar, Faridpur.
6. Babu Ananda Chandra Roy, Dacca.
7. Rai Nalinakshya Basu Bahadur, Burdwan.
8. The Hon. Babu Kissori Mohan Chowdhuri, Rajshahe.
9. The Hon. Mr. P. C. Mitter, C.I.E., 34-1, Elgin Road,
Bhowanipore, Calcutta.
10. Babu Krishna Kumar Mitra, 6, College Square,
Calcutta.
11. The Hon. Dr. A. Suhrawardy, 56, Mirzapore Street,
Calcutta.
12. The Hon. Babu Mahendra Chandra Mitra, Hooghly.
13. Mr. J. N. Roy, Bar-at-Law, 1, Alipore Lane, Calcutta.
14. The rev. B. A. Nag, 1-2, College Square, Calcutta.
15. Babu Satyananda Bose, 78, Dharramtalla Street,
Calcutta.
16. Lieutenant K. C. Nag, Bar-at-Law, Mymensingh.
17. Mr. Syed Erfan Ali, 10, Old Post Office Street,
Calcutta.
18. Mr. D. C. Ghose, 54, Kansaripara Road, Bhowani-
pore, Calcutta.
19. Babu Devi Prasad Khaitan, 125, Harrison Road,
Calcutta.
20. Babu Jatindra Nath Basu, 14, Balaram Ghose
Street, Calcutta.
21. Babu Tarit Bhusan Roy, 6, Abhoy Charan Mitter
Street, Calcutta.
22. Babu Nibaran Chandra Roy, 43, Patal Danga Street,
Calcutta.
23. Mr. Mahboob Aley, 160, Lower Circular Road,
Calcutta.

BOMBAY.

1. The Hon. Sir Dinshaw Wacha, Jiji House, Ravelin
Street, Bombay.
2. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, Pedder Road, Cumballa
Hill, Bombay.
3. The Hon. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Cumballa Hill,
Bombay.
4. Sir Hormasji Wadya, Marine Lines, Bombay.
5. The Hon. Mr. Gokuldas K. Parekh, New Queen's
Road, Bombay.
6. Mr. W. A. Chambers, Fort, Bombay.
7. Mr. N. M. Samarth, Girgaum Back Road, Bombay.
8. The Hon. Principal R. P. Paranjpye, Fergusson
College, Poona city.
9. The Hon. Mr. B. S. Kamat, Ganeshkhind Road, Poona.
10. Mr. J. R. Gharpur, Angre's Wadi, Girgaum Back
Road, Bombay.
11. Mr. G. K. Gadgil, Bar-at-Law, Gadgil House,
Poona City.
12. Mr. D. J. Dalvi, 73, Charni Road, Girgaum, Bombay.
13. Mr. V. R. Gupte, Bar-at-Law, Poona.

14. Mr. G. R. Abhayankar, Government Pleader, Sangli, S.M.C. Sir. B. C. Mitter.
15. Mr. N. M. Joshi, Servants of India Society's Home, Sandhurst Road, Bombay,

MADRAS.

1. Mr. N. Subbarau Pantulu.
2. Dewan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai.
3. Dewan Bahadur L. A. Govindaraghava Aiyer.
4. The Hon. Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri.
5. Dewan Bahadur M. Ram Chandra Rao (Ellore).
6. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer.
7. Mr. G. A. Natesan.
8. Dewan Bahadur T. Desikachari (Trichinopoly)
9. Moulana Abbas Sulam.
10. The Hon. Mr. B. Venkatapati Razu (Vizagapatam).
11. Mr. Ch. V. Narasimha Razu (Vizagapatam).
12. Rao Bahadur Annamelai Chettiar.
13. Rao Bahadur C. S. Subramaniam (Bellary).
14. Rao Bahadur A. P. Patro (Berhampore).
15. Mr. M. C. Mukundaraja Iyengar (Ramnad).

UNITED PROVINCES.

1. The Hon. Pandit Jagat Narain (Lucknow).
2. The Hon. Rai Anand Swarup Bahadur (Cawnpore).
3. The Hon. Munshi Narain Prosad Asthana (Allahabad)
4. Rai Krishnaji (Benares).
5. Lala Sheo Charan Lal (Allahabad).
6. Mr. A. P. Sen (Lucknow).
7. Babu Bisheshwer Nath Srivastava (Lucknow).
8. Munshi Gulzari Lal (Allahabad).
9. Dr. Surendra Nath Sen (Allahabad).
10. Pandit Hriday Nath Kunzru (Allahabad).
11. Babu Gauri Sankar Prasad (Benares).
12. Pandit Parmeshwar Nath Sapru (Fyzabad).
13. Rai Braj Narayan Gurtu (Cawnpore).
14. Pandit Kishen Prosad Kaul (Lucknow).
15. Dr. Monohur Lal (Aligarh).

PUNJAB.

1. Mr. Alfred Nundy (Dehra Dun).
2. Dr. S. K. Dutta.
3. Mr. Manohar Lal.
4. Mr. Ratan Chand.

BIHAR AND ORISSA.

1. The Hon. Rai Dwaraka Nath Bahadur.

CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR.

1. The Hon. Sir Gangadhar Chitnavis, K.C.I.E.
2. The Hon. Sir Bipin Krishna Bose, K.C.I.E.
3. Rao Bahadur R. N. Mudholkar, C.I.E. (Amraoti).
4. Mr. M. V. Joshi.
5. Dewan Bahadur Seth Ballabhdas.
6. Rao Bahadur R. G. Mundle.
7. Rai Sahib Mathura Prosad.
8. Rao Bahadur K. V. Brahma.
9. Mr. N. A. Dravid.
10. The Hon. Rao Bahadur M. G. Deshpande.

Continuing he said :—I would like to say only one word with regard to the Punjab. We have received some information that a Liberal organisation is going to be formed in the

Punjab (applause). We have also heard that the Hon. Mr. Sastri is going to proceed there on our behalf to organise that association (applause). We wish him all success (applause).

Mr. D. C. Ghosh.

Mr. D. C. Ghosh seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION XVIII.

Resolution XVIII.

That the third annual session of the National Liberal Federation of India be held at Madras in the year 1920 on such dates as may be fixed by the Council in consultation with the Committee of the Madras Liberal League.

Mr. Natesan.

Mr. Natesan in moving the resolution said :—Ladies and Gentlemen, I exclude the President for reasons which very soon will be obvious. As one of the secretaries of the Madras Liberal League with the full concurrence of the gentleman who occupies the presidential chair and with the unanimous approval of all its members who are now here, I have the privilege to invite the next sessions of this conference or if I am to designate it in the form which we have now adopted,— I have the privilege to invite the next sessions of the National Liberal Federation to meet in the city of Madras. I have been asked by my Bengalee friends here to make this invitation attractive, I say at once it is not possible to do so. In the first place I have not the eloquence of my Bengalee friends, and secondly the city of Madras from which I happen to come, does not possess the gorgeous attractions of Calcutta and its suburbs. We have not many spacious palaces and big buildings and we have not many rich zemindars, many rich persons or high titular dignitaries. All that I can assure you of is a warm welcome. The climatic conditions of our province will also enable us to give you that warm welcome (laughter). The work before us is of a stupendous character and I have no doubt that even if our welcome is defective in any way the combined energies of all the Liberals, and the Great Party which is now being organized in a definite form, will enable us to go forth before the country and show that we have done something which will be to our credit.

The Hon. Mr. Nara Sinha Raju.

The Hon. Mr. Nara Sinha Raju in seconding the resolution said—We have enjoyed the hospitality of Bengal and it is only fit and reasonable that we should return the compliment, though we fear, not in such a grand fashion but in our own humble fashion. Therefore I second this resolution and request you all to muster strong at Madras to demonstrate that this National Liberal Federation which is now formed is growing in strength day by day by our enthusiasm and earnestness in our endeavours to attain the objects of this Federation. With these words I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution.

The President :—I trust you will accept the invitation with acclamation.

The motion was carried with acclamation.

Mr. R. D. Mehta in moving a vote of thanks to the chair said :—This Conference began by your venerable leader proposing that our noble chairman should preside over our deliberations. It now ends by me, the youngest member (laughter) proposing a vote of thanks to that chairman. I remember sitting in conclave in 1884. The first man who promised to go to Bombay to attend it is the gentleman whom we are all pleased to call our venerable leader. He has proved himself to be a leader of the right sort whom we should all venerate. It was in 1884 that we resolved to form that great organisation, the Congress, and many of those gentlemen who were with us then have now joined the majority and whose loss we deeply deplore. Among them was one who, though he did not take an active part yet was a foremost figure. I refer to the father of the chairman of the Reception Committee. The quiet but forceful manner in which Sir Romesh Chandra Mitter talked to his friends brought into our fold a large number of Bengalee gentlemen who had kept themselves aloof and hesitated to join the Congress. It has now come to pass that we have reached the goal of our ambitions, that goal that we have been trying strive for and attain ever since 1884. It is a matter of congratulation to us that we see now before us the signs of a brilliant future. I will now leave our venerable leader aside for a moment. He has been actually the pivot around which the whole thing has turned and I need not say a word more on that subject.

Mr. R. D.
Mehta.

It is a matter of congratulation to all of us, and to you, Sir, in particular, that during your term of office we shall receive the benefits of the Montagu-Chelmsford scheme and the Reforms Acts (a voice-Bills). Of course I am not a "Lawyer" that I can use the correct word Sir, I shall say that the proposer, seconder and supporters of each resolution have come forward with a sort of begging request to accept these resolutions. I am going to do nothing of the kind. I am proposing a vote of thanks to our President, and in doing so, I have one appeal to refer to which I fear has been lost sight of by this assembly. An appeal was made by His Most Gracious Majesty, our August Sovereign, to all British officers that they should show sympathy; and work in concert with the Indian people. These are the highest and noblest possible words that you could ever expect to get from your sovereign,—words of absolute sympathy. I hope I may be allowed to make an humble request or suggestion to our King, Secretary and Under Secretary of State not to send out Governors of the type of Lord Sydenham (hisses).

Mr. R. D.
Mehta.

We indeed don't want any more Lord Sydenhams. We want men like Lord Hardinge and Lord Chelmsford (A cry of no, no not Lord Chelmsford). Who says no, I ask why not? I am in favour of Lord Chelmsford most assuredly (cheers). Do pray tell me, gentlemen, which Viceroy of yours had taken the bold step that Lord Chelmsford took absolutely without fear and secured for us the benefit for which we should ever remain grateful (cheers). Every one is liable to make a mistake. No one is infallible. We want men like Lords Carmichael, Ronaldshay, Willingdon and Sir George Lloyd. These are Governors whose conduct we Indians appreciate. Lord Sydenham as one of the officers of Government, as one of the Rulers of the land, what did he do? He wanted to show that he was friend of the Indians when he was here, but when he left the shores of India, the Indians were forgotten and he did not care a straw for them, absolutely disregarding the particular benefits that should be accorded them. We know to our great regret that we do get such men and it would be a great satisfaction to me if we could prove to our August Sovereign that such people do exist in the British Government, people who would call a spade a diamond and again, when it suited them, they would turn round and call a diamond a spade. I don't believe in these people who can face in two different and opposite directions. Lord Sydenham should be very severely taken to task. I totally condemn the part he played in regard to Montagu-Chelmsford Bill. My namesake, Sir Perozeshah Mehta, once had occasion to take him to task severely in Bombay, I boldly state this and I hope what I have been saying about Lord Sydenham will reach his ears (Laughter) and if he corresponds with me I shall send him an answer which will, I fear, be not quite to his liking (Laughter and cheers).

And now, Sir, I come back to my point. I will only say that I am much obliged to you for allowing me this privilege. I want to ask you, ladies and gentlemen, how has your president conducted the proceedings of this assembly? Has he not conducted our Conference with great tact and skill and with the utmost courtesy and cheerfulness? I don't ask you to reply to this in any other way than by carrying this resolution with acclamation (applause). In the name of this Conference I thank you, sir, for the great trouble you have put yourself to in undertaking this long journey in order that you might join us in our deliberations. We are all very thankful to you for all the trouble you have taken on our behalf. In the time you have devoted towards promoting the success of this Conference and for the great ability tact and courtesy with which you have guided our deliberations. We thank you once more for all that you have done for us and wish you a pleasant journey back and a bright and prosperous New Year. (applause)

The Hon'ble Mr. Chintamani in seconding the vote of thanks said :—Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I esteem it an honour and a privilege to have been asked to second this proposition that we should accord our most hearty thanks to our distinguished President for his conduct of the deliberations of this Conference. A remark has been made that the attendance at this Conference has been scanty. A reputed friend of ours who has been known to fame for many years as a particularly beloved friend of our illustrious leader the Hon'ble Babu Surendranath Banerjea, has written a long article this morning, in which he pointed out that while many public meetings have been held in this public hall for many years none has been attended by so few people and evoked so little enthusiasm as this Conference. Not being a permanent resident of Calcutta, I will not undertake to say that there were no meetings here, attended by large numbers, but this I will say and I am sure, you will all agree with me when I say it,—that, whether one may regard the attendance at this Conference as large or comparatively small, there can be no difference of opinion among persons who can estimate values correctly that hardly a more important meeting was ever held in this hall during the last three days. Here we have met, old members of the Indian National Congress, faithful followers of the creed of the National Congress, men some of whom have built up that organization and others who entered public life and have grown in public life under its auspices. Here we have met to deliberate upon problems of the greatest national importance and, I think, without vanity, we may take credit to ourselves that we have brought to bear upon our deliberations a sense of responsibility and a regard for public welfare second to none in the country.

The Hon.
Mr. Chintamani.

It was 33 years ago that in this very hall the second session of the Indian National Congress was held. I was too young to know of it then or to attend it. My knowledge of it is derived from a study of its proceedings and from what I heard from all our leaders. But I think those who did take part in its deliberations, one of the most distinguished among them, the Hon'ble Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, will bear me out when I say that the proceedings of this second session of our Liberal Federation will not suffer by comparison with the proceedings of the second session of the Indian National Congress, judged by the character and importance of the subjects which have engaged our attention, the decisions we have taken upon them and the ability and eloquence with which those decisions have been supported from this platform by the several distinguished speakers who addressed you during the last three days. (Applause).

That congress was presided over by the patriarch of Indian liberalism Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji (Applause). It has been our

**The Hon.
Mr. Chintamani.**

privilege at this conference to have for President a distinguished lawyer from my own—my friends from Madras will permit me to say—my own Madras Presidency. Having been an exile from that presidency for many years, now I cannot say that I have enjoyed opportunities of intimate knowledge of Sir Sivaswami Aiyer's work from day to day and from year to year, but I have had the honour of knowing him for many years. I knew when I was in Madras, and I have known since I left Madras, that among the many distinguished men to whom our Presidency gave birth there has been none who had more sincere, more warm-hearted, more numerous friends and fewer enemies than Sir Sivaswami Aiyer. You have seen during the last two days how courteous, how gentle, how obliging, how unwilling to assert himself even when assertion might have been justified, he has been in the conduct of our proceedings, and with what unsurpassed patience he has guided us through many difficult stages in our deliberations in the Subjects Committee. These are the qualities which have always distinguished Sir Sivaswami Aiyer in private as well as in public life. It would be impertinence on my part to say any word upon his eminence as a lawyer except this, that he would not have been made Advocate-General if he were not a very distinguished lawyer. As an educationist he has for many years done meritorious work in the senate and the syndicate of the Madras University and the seal of approval was set upon that work, by his colleagues of the Fellows by his election as their representative in the Legislative Council and next by the Chancellor of the University by his nomination to the position of Vice-Chancellor. His reputation as an educationist has travelled far and wide beyond the Madras Presidency and of this you had concrete proof in the invitation that was sent to him from Benares and Allahabad to go over to the United Provinces and fill the place left vacant by the death of the ever to be lamented Sir Sunder Lal as Vice-Chancellor of the Hindu University. Sir Sivaswami Aiyer readily responded to the call. As an humble member of the Court and Council of that University I can say this that his resignation of the office of Vice-Chancellor is a very serious loss to that institution, a loss which is felt and regretted by every single member of both the administrative and academic bodies of the Hindu University. Sir Sivaswami Aiyer has been for many years in the Indian National Congress. You will not find his name at many sessions among the speakers but if with a little more patience you will go through the lists of delegates and members of the Subjects Committee you will find that he has been there at many a session. His work in the Legislative Council and his qualities as a politician were adjudged so useful and valuable that he was selected for the Office of Executive Councillor. It was no easy task to succeed to so brilliant a man as the late Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer, but during the five years that the Office was filled

by Sir Sivaswami Aiyer he lent a distinction to it and contributed substantially to the moral and material progress of that Presidency. He is one of those Indians who have vindicated the title of our countrymen to the highest position in the gift of the Sovereign by performing his duties with ability, integrity and public spirit. Now, ladies and gentlemen, at this time when we are at the parting of the ways, when the system of Government in this country is being transformed in its character and constitution from that of a bureaucracy not responsible either in letter or in fact to the people of the country, to a system which in part will be really responsible to the people and in the whole will be responsive to public opinion, at this juncture when Indian public men are called upon to show that they are not less fit for the discharge of responsible functions than they have proved themselves fit for constitutional agitation, we could not have selected a worthier President than one who has shown in his own person that in every sphere and not the least in the realm of statesmanship, Indians could be trusted to give a creditable account of themselves (cheers). We have taken this afternoon a momentous step when we passed the resolution creating a definite organization for ourselves. We have been assured, and the assurance will stand repetition that it is in no spirit of antagonism, in no spirit of rivalry, to any other party, or to any other institution in this country, that we have resolved to solidify our own organization. I can assure any member of our party present here who may be cherishing a secret suspicion that there are here or elsewhere in the ranks of our party any such overzealous partisans of our own organization as to wish that any other organization might commit mistakes, that nothing is farther from the thoughts and wishes of any one of us than any such desire. The greater the agreement between the opinions of any other political organization and of our own, the more shall we be pleased. We would not have taken the decisions we did if we did not feel, sincerely feel—that they were the conclusions that we came to for the greater good of the country. That being so and the good of the country being the only motive that led us to organize ourselves what could be dearer to our hearts than that other organizations should also arrive at the same conclusion as ours? I hope and trust that this organization of ours will grow from success to success and from strength to strength, not in rivalry, not in antagonism, but in a spirit of perfect amity and concord, addressing itself solely and wholly to the task of improving the condition of our people, to the vindication of our title to full responsible Government and that in the course of years the same success might attend the labours of this conference as has attended the labours of the National Congress as we have known it, by the enactment of legislation, which will be the next step in advance of the Government of India Act of 1919. Sir Sivaswami Aiyer will be the head of our organization during the coming 12 months. The resolution which

The Hon.
Mr. Chintamani.

has been put before you by my esteemed friend, Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao shows what heavy and arduous duties are before us during the next 12 months, in keeping a vigilant eye on the rules and regulations to be framed under the Act, on the lists of "Transferred" and "Reserved" Subjects and on the question of financial contribution to the Central Government from the provinces. We have to consolidate the gains we have made this year and we shall have to do heavy work in connection with the Punjab Commission and the Army Commission. It is a source of great encouragement to our workers that our Chairman should be a tried and proved statesman like Sir Sivaswami Aiyer and that our Vice-Chairman should be our never failing, always young, and always energetic worker and leader, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea (cheers). So long as our party can look up to leaders of this calibre, so long as the country can boast of such citizens as our Presidents of this year and last year, so long need no one despair, so long may every one go forward with the assurance that we are bound to succeed, that the country is bound to advance and prosper until we attain the last stage of responsible Government (applause).

**The Hon.
Mr. S. N.
Banerjea.**

The Hon'ble Mr. S. N. Banerjea in supporting the vote of thanks said:—Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, I rise to support, and I do so whole-heartedly, the resolution which is now before you and in regard to which you will at once be called upon to pass judgment. This Conference despite what our critics may say, has been a success, a great and unqualified, I was going to say, unprecedented success and this is due, Sir, very largely to the tact, the judgment, the skill and statesmanlike guidance of our deliberations by yourself. It is necessary that we should now measure our success in this Conference. It is necessary to dissipate the mendacious statements which every now and then appear in the newspapers regarding us. One of these statements have been referred to by my esteemed friend Mr. Chintamani and it stands refuted. We were told that when yesterday we met down below there were only 300 present and that that number was not exceeded. I made enquiries as soon as I came here. I knew that it was an absolute falsehood, absolute mistake, I was going to say an absolute lie but I will not use that word and will merely say that it was an absolute misstatement. I made enquiries, and what did I find? If I found that the organizers of our meeting down below had got 2800 chairs and that every one of them was filled and that there were several who were standing. Therefore, I am entitled to hold that instead 300, there were nearly 3000 people present. Now let us look at the number of delegates who were present at the Conference. The number of delegates came up to nearly 1000, the actual number was 950. The number of visitors amounted to 1700. That makes 2650. Let me tell you this that at the last moment we had to refuse the

issue of visitors' tickets for fear of not being able to find accommodation. If we had built a pandal, as Sir B. C. Mitter said in his address, and if we knew that this was the measure of success that was in store for us, we should have been able to pack it with at least 5000 people in this our second Conference. Sir, therefore, I am entitled to hold that this Conference has been a great success, an unqualified success and that we may congratulate ourselves upon it. And look at the character of the representatives you have had at this Conference. Every section of the community was represented. Representatives of great zemindars, representatives of ryotwari interests, my friend Mr. J. N. Roy, representatives of the Mahomedan community and of the backward classes, were all associated with us in our deliberations. Therefore we are entitled to hold that our Conference was truly national in the widest sense of the word. Well, ladies and gentlemen, my friend Mr. Chintamani has told us that we are at the parting of the ways. I quite understand that we are entering upon a new era. Large numbers of our friends have come from the mofussil of Bengal, and I desire to make an appeal to them. There are nearly 500 delegates who have come from Bengal. We have got 25 Districts and let our critics note the fact that I am going to mention. Out of the 25 Districts, 23 are represented in this Conference. Only two districts remain unrepresented. I am going to mention their names. They are Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri, which are frontier districts. Darjeeling is hardly a Bengal district and is inhabited by Bhutias and Lapchas and others. Jalpaiguri is the other district and it partakes somewhat of the same character. Therefore I am entitled to hold that the whole of Bengal, the intellect, the better mind of Bengal, the conscience of Bengal, is here. I think we may congratulate ourselves also on this fact. Now brother delegates, you have come from the mofussil. You are nearly 500 strong. You have come in large numbers at considerable sacrifice of convenience and sacrifice of your daily urgent work. I have an appeal to make to you. Go back to your homes, form your organizations. Let there be an organization, a Liberal organization, in every district. You have already got the nucleus of such. You have got district associations. Convert them into Liberal Federation organizations and spread your principles, your doctrines, far and wide. For propagandist work money will be needed. Put your heart into the work and money will be forthcoming. During my long career now extending over a period of 45 years I have never found that any cause suffered through want of money if our soul and heart were in it. If you are determined to make your propagandist work successful, money will be forthcoming. God will bless you. He will point out to you the way to get it. Enthusiasm is a thing that spreads like wild fire. It catches and spreads from person to person. Communicate that enthusiasm to your fellow countrymen

and then you will find money will be forthcoming and your propogandas will succeed. Moderate and liberal principles will prevail and spread throughout Bengal. I am sure, as we are about to enter upon a new era, we must begin the work with renewed zeal and devotion. Use the zeal and devotion that you displayed in connection with the anti-partition agitation and the Swadeshi movement. Stir up the old fire. I am sure it is not dead. In this great and noble work, to you is entrusted, in a large measure, the success of the great experiment which is now about to be inaugurated. You can make it or you can mar it. Will you make it or are you going to mar it? I ask you to enter into a solemn covenant, to devote yourselves to the work of spreading the principles of the Liberal Federation and I am sure, when we meet next time in our Conference, the number will be at least five times what the number is to-day. I hope my appeal will not fall upon heedless ears. May I make the same appeal to my friends who have come from other parts of India? I am sure if we all combine, if we all unite to make this Federation a success, it is bound to be a success. I am sure my appeal will not fall upon deaf ears.

With these words I beg that this vote may be carried by acclamation. (Applause).

The vote was carried by acclamation and three lusty cheers were given for the President.

**The Hon.
Mr. Srinivasa
Sastri.**

The Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri said :—Although I am not in the programme at this stage, I feel that I ought to say a word as to the perfect harmony which has marked our proceedings during the last three days. The one and only false and jarring note that was struck was, I am grieved to think, struck by me. I used the word "Partisan" during the course of my speech yesterday and it has caused my friend, Mr. Chintamani, to devote a part of his most eloquent and persuasive speech in noticing that point. I am sincerely sorry—Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Chintamani, unfortunately for me, has a most tenacious and obstinate memory (laughter) otherwise I would ask him to erase it from his memory altogether. All that is left to me now is to ask him to dissociate from his memory any unpleasantness that the use of that word has caused, and I ask you and expect you to do the same and take it as if that word had not been uttered (Applause).

The President.

The President in returning thanks said :—I feel greatly overwhelmed by the extremely kind words of appreciation which have been spoken just now by my friends, Mr. R. D. Mehta, Mr. Chintamani and Mr. Surendra Nath Bannerjea and which have been received by you with so much warmth of feeling. I fail to find words suitable enough for acknowledging the kindness with which you have treated me. When the call came to me to

occupy the Presidential chair, I assure you that I was filled with no small misgivings as to the manner in which I might be able to fulfil the task which you wished to entrust to me. The trammels of office have prevented me unfortunately from being in active touch with the great political organization of this country and I felt that this want of active touch, combined with the many other deficiencies of which no one can be better aware than myself would prevent me from discharging the task to your entire satisfaction. If any measure of success has at all attended me in my attempt to discharge the duties which you have thrust upon me, I ascribe it entirely to the help, advice and assistance I have received from the two distinguished gentlemen on my right and on my left, the Hon'ble Mr. Surendra Nath Bannerjea, the Veteran leader and guide on all political activity in this country, and to Sir B. C. Mitter, one of the most distinguished men in Bengal. I have also to acknowledge the patience, courtesy and good humour, which have been displayed by the members of this Conference and by the members of the Subjects Committee. We have had, perhaps, one or two sharp corners to turn, but they have been turned very adroitly and with the greatest amount of good humour. I am glad to say that there has been no occasion whatsoever for any unpleasantness or for any one to feel that there was any want of forbearance or want of a spirit of compromise or a spirit of conciliation on the part of either any member of the Subjects Committee or any member of this Conference, and if the Conference has been a success, as I take it from the assurances of your leaders and the manner in which these assurances have been accepted that it has been, it is due entirely to the assistance and co-operation which you have so generously rendered me in the discharge of my duties. Let me offer my most cordial thanks to the members of the Reception Committee (applause) on behalf of the delegates who are assembled here, for the minute attention which they have paid to their wants and requirements, and for the precise manner in which these wants have been attended to (cheers). Let me also offer my hearty thanks on behalf of all the delegates to the Volunteers, who have rendered most valuable help to the Conference, and, so far as I can see, they have performed their duties in a manner which does infinite credit to them. I have often seen volunteers in some of these gatherings of ours taking an active part in the proceedings and indulging in demonstrations, partaking some times in broils, but the conduct of the volunteers at this Conference has been most exemplary, and I am glad to say that they have been of the greatest assistance and service to the delegates present here.

Ladies and gentlemen, the year that has just commenced has begun with the happiest auguries for the political future of this country. Under the brightest auspices we have entered upon a new era in our political life. This era could not have been begun by a more auspicious announcement than the

The President.

The President. Gracious Proclamation of His Majesty the King Emperor. That Proclamation has been described as the most momentous Charter in the History of this country. I go further and say that this Charter is simply associated with the idea of the rights and privileges to be conferred and it rather seems to me to partake of the character of a Royal Edict, an Edict, comparable in its loftiness of inspiration and great statesmanship to the Edict of that great Emperor Asoka. But this Edict is inscribed not on pillars of stone but in our grateful hearts. Not merely does it promise us benefits and privileges to come, but it also calls upon us to discharge our duties to the service of the country and to self-sacrifice for the cause of the country. I consider that Proclamation as partaking not merely of the character of a Royal Edict, but as going still further and partaking of a much more solemn character. I am not given to the language of the extravagance and if you will only reflect carefully and examine the language of that proclamation, I feel sure you will consider me justified if I say that this Proclamation will be our political Bible for a long time to come. It enunciates two principles which ought to guide us in the shaping of the destinies of our country. It lays down, in the most admirable and succinct form, all those duties of citizenship which are incumbent upon every citizen of this Empire and it contains many solemn injunctions and wise exhortations to do our duty in such a manner that we may be able to reach our goal in as short a space of time as possible. Not the least of the other precepts contained in this Proclamation which I admire, is the appeal which His Majesty has made for co-operation and harmony not only between all classes of His Majesty's Subjects but also between the people and the officers of Government. Unless we adopt the principle of co-operation, ungrudging co-operation and good-will, we shall not be able to carry out the work that is before us or to achieve the success which we all have at heart. In the minds of many of our people there is a deep-rooted distrust of the official world, whether European or Indian. It seems to me that this distrust is hardly justifiable in the large majority of cases. The great majority of the officials who take part in the administration of this country, are our own countrymen. Let us not believe that because they are officers of the Government taking part in the administration which has been hitherto controlled by the bureaucracy, they do not identify themselves with our interests, are not patriotic citizens, and as anxious as ourselves to advance the welfare of this country. I myself have had the good or bad fortune to have had a brief spell of office, but I venture to believe that this brief spell of office I have had has in no way affected my love of country or my desire to advance the interests of the country in any way ("hear hear" and cheers). On the other hand I consider my official experience to have been of the highest value to me in enabling me to take a wider outlook and to judge

of things with a greater fullness of material and information and in enabling me to perceive that there are many other sides to a question than that which occurs to the man in the street at first blush. Participation in official work may have a cramping tendency in some cases, but let us not suppose that this is inevitable and let us not ignore the advantage it carries with it of inculcating a sense of responsibility and sobriety and a desire to judge things with reference to the various possible views which may be taken of it. Far be it from me to say that these theories are entirely wrong. I only desire to impress upon you that they ought not to be treated as invariably correct. I only ask you to believe that they are as sincere patriots and as deep well-wishers of our country in the official ranks as we can find outside them. I ask you not to taboo them as a class, not refuse to co-operate with them but to lay to heart the solemn injunction of His Majesty to co-operate with them all, whether officials or non-officials, to co-operate with all, whom we may find prepared to work for the good of the country in a sincere honest and patriotic spirit, if we only read carefully what I have called our political Bible and honestly endeavour to observe in practice the advice which His Majesty has given us, the progress of our country is absolutely assured. We need not entertain the least misgiving that if we only make a wise use of the new opportunities, the large opportunities which are now opening out to us, our most cherished aspirations are bound to be fulfilled soon.

Passing from the question of the future of our country I should like to say just a few words with reference to the future of our Party. Our Party, many of us feel, is in the minority in the country. At any rate the vocal strength of our Party is in the minority. How far the silent masses can be counted upon as supporters of the Moderate Party is a matter upon which we may be entitled to our own opinion and justly entitled, but it is likely that it may be contradicted by the more vocal of our countrymen. One thing, however, I feel sure of, and that is that it is not possible for any nation to continue in a transport of excitement, or to continue to guide its conduct and its policy by the dictates of passion, prejudice or by any want of sobriety. Sobriety and judgment are bound in the long run to rule the affairs of the world. It may be that we feel discouraged at times by the fact that we are not able to muster in thousands as the members of the other Party claim, but let not that depress us in the least. I cannot help believing that signs of responsibility and sober judgment must assert their influence in the affairs of the nation. The outlook therefore for all parties is far from gloomy. In fact I may say that it is most encouraging. Temporary discomfiture or temporary lack of numbers need not in any way dishearten us. If we only carry out the programme which has been chalked out, if we only take steps to strengthen our organi-

The President. zation, to extend it, to increase our influence in all parts of the country and in all directions, and if we go about it with enthusiasm, and if our enthusiasm is reflected and others are fired with the same enthusiasm, we are bound to succeed. I have no doubt that our party is bound to succeed in obtaining the ascendancy sooner or later, not merely among the silent masses but even among the vocal classes (applause).

Before I close I should like to remind the officials who will be entrusted with the duty of carrying out the Reform scheme of the wise words which were uttered by Mr. Montagu in the speech which he made upon the conclusion of the Third Reading of the Reform Bill. Those officials who have to take part in the carrying out of the Reforms have to remember that they have to co-operate with the people whose signs of nationalism are daily growing. If those wise words of exhortation which have been uttered by Mr. Montagu are borne in mind by those officials whose privilege it will be to carry out the reforms, and if the appeal of His Majesty sinks into the hearts of all classes, I have no doubt whatever that our further progress is assured. I have no desire to occupy your attention any longer. Let me repeat once more my acknowledgment of the great kindness, the immense kindness of which I have been the recipient (Loud and continued applause).

The Conference broke up with loud cheers for the President, for Mr. S. N. Banerjea and several of the other leaders.

APPENDIX.

LIST OF MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE

All-India Conference of the Moderate Party

Held at Calcutta on the 30th and 31st December, 1919, and 1st January, 1920.

Province—BENGAL.

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